

Vol-16, No. 1
Pausa – Magha 2067 January 2011

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PRINTED AND PUBLISHED BY:
Ishwardas Mahajan on behalf of Swadeshi Jagaran Samiti, 'Dharmakshetra', Sector-8, R.K. Puram, New Delhi-22,

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LETTERS 2

**NEWS
NATIONAL 32**



INTERNATIONAL 33



WTO 36

CONTENTS

COVER ARTICLE 4

Rivers: The life line of India

Swadeshi Samvad



7 VIEW POINT

Export surplus food grains

..... **Bharat Jhunjunwala**

9 EMPOWERMENT

Securing Socioeconomic Rights of Occupational Collectives

..... **Muralidhar Rao**

13 POLICY SCAN

The stage managed crisis to justify the approval for FDI in multi-brand retail

..... **Devinder Sharma**

16 FARM SECTOR

Do we owe anything to bread providers?

..... **D.G. Bokare**

20 INTERNATIONAL

Nobel to Obama: For dismembering India?

..... **MR Venkatesh**

24 LANGUAGE

Swadeshi Samskrit goes International!

..... **K.S. Iyer**

26 TECHNOLOGY

Computer Networking for Effective Dissemination of Information on Farm Mechanization

..... **Sadachari Singh Tomar**

28 REPORT

India ignored central Asia for too long: **Dr. KN Pandita**

30 NEWS-DISSECT

The Moving Pen

..... **Kashmirilal**

Well done SJM

News regarding the Orissa High Court verdict on Vedanta University was a pleasant surprise. Events of recent months are a clear indicator of the fact that if there is a dedicated team of people and if they work consistently on any particular issue they can defeat high and mighty. SJM Orissa needs to be congratulated for their effort. Yes there has been guidance from the top leadership also but the credit goes to the people on ground.

A multi national corporate house like Vedanta had come to believe that they can manage the politicians and loot this country. But the resistance by poor and resource less people on ground is a big blow to these plunderers.

It is a matter of great satisfaction that people of this country have not sold their conscience and are still ready to face the powerful.

– Dilip Gajaria, Saket, New Delhi

Will the buck stop

Exposure of senior journalists like Vir Sanghvi and Barkha Dutt that baffled India seems to have no immediate and visible effect on the malaise that plagues the sector. Media was long back turned into an industry having hardly anything to do with the ethics and morals that in past used to be its mainstay. In spite of occasional exposures of black sheep in media people largely believed the written word and journalists were held in esteem. With the arrival of electronic media glamour got attached to it attracting talented young men and women in droves. Journalism became an attractive career option. But, more than anything else it cultivated a hope in the common people about an effective tool to checkmate the unscrupulous politicians and unaccountable & faceless bureaucrats.

Now that hope also stands shattered. People feel let down by the media and Journalists. Now whenever we are forced to watch endless discussions on channels it sounds so hollow and irritating. More dejecting is the fact that no media organization has taken any step to punish the guilty. While Vir Sanghvi has stopped his column, Barkha continues to be the self-appointed moral authority to ask questions. It is time to ask will the buck stop somewhere.

– Vijendra Aggarwal, Noida, U.P.

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For subscription please send payment by A/c payee Cheque/Demand Draft/
Money Order in favour of 'Swadeshi Patrika' at New Delhi.

Annual Subscription : 100/-
Life Membership : 1000/-

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Quote-Unquote



There is no need for trial by media. We started our investigations into corruptions on day one.

Pranab Mukherjee

Union Minister for Finance



The more the UPA Government resists instituting a JPC probe, the more it confirms that the buck does not stop with A Raja.

J. Jayalithaa

AIADMK Chief



A Raja should be arrested, sent to Tihar Jail and criminal proceedings initiated against him.

Gurudas Dasgupta

CPI Leader



Secular Democracy will need reinterpretation to reconcile to a theocratic state of J&K as a confederating unit of Secular Democratic India.

Dr. Kashi Nath Pandita

Expert on Iran and Central Asia



UN Security Council reform is not an issue that is formally on the agenda.

Susan Rice

US Ambassador to UN

Discernible transformation

Irrespective of the debate over which year marks the beginning of a new decade, 2010 will be remembered for a long time to come. It has been a memorable year in more ways than one. Firstly the idea that the world's economic centre of gravity is moving eastward has become an undeniable reality. This was evident in a variety of ways. That shift in economic activity has also affected global power structure was also manifest in the year just gone by. Several influential voices all over the globe who were contesting the extent to which eastward movement in power structure was taking place just a year ago are conceding that 'Westerners' confidence in the system that they built stands shaken. They also seem to reconcile to widening growth gap between mature and emerging economies. China and India are growing by 10% and 9%, compared with 3% for America and 2% for Europe is quoted as one example. The global financial crisis, many argue, has given the shift in economic power from America and Western Europe to Asia a big thrust. Emerging Asia rebounded from recession much faster than the developed world. The Economist in its leader writes, "For the past 400 years the West has enjoyed a comparative advantage over the rest of the world when it comes to optimism. Western intellectuals dreamed up the ideas of enlightenment and progress, and Western men of affairs harnessed technology to impose their will on the rest of the world. The Founding Fathers of the United States, who firmly believed that the country they created would be better than any that had come before, offered citizens not just life and liberty but also the pursuit of happiness." "But these days, less than half of Americans think their children's living standards will be better than theirs. Experience has made them gloomy: the income of the median worker has been more or less stagnant since the mid-1970s, and, thanks to a combination of failing schools and disappearing mid-level jobs, social mobility in America is now among the lowest in the rich world", it adds. Just few months back the same magazine had argued that, "a closer look at the figures suggests that the shift in economic power from West to East can be exaggerated. Thanks partly to falling currencies, Asia's total share of world GDP (in nominal terms at market exchange rates) has actually slipped, from 29% in 1995 to 27% last year. In 2009 Asia's total GDP exceeded America's but was still slightly smaller than western Europe's (although it could overtake the latter this year). To put it another way, the output of the rich West is still almost twice as big as that of the East." Notwithstanding what people say the fact remains that not just the balancing of power at international level between different regions of the world, the shift is taking place also within regions. Hitherto poor, needy and underprivileged nations are witnessing a more assertive role. Global meets are no more predictable west-dominated-conclaves as they used to be. Emerging and poorer nations are more certain, vocal and confident. They also know what they want and how they can achieve their objective. Wikileaks exposure of secret cables has also made 2010 a historical year. These leaked cables in turn have also exposed the manner in which international diplomacy was being conducted.

India too has its share of contribution to make 2010 an inimitable year. It may, in case of domestic developments, well qualify to be the year that will be a game changer. Take for example the number of scams being unearthed all over the country. 2G scam, Adarsh scam, CWG scam, food grain scam, and mining scam. Similarly the judicial verdicts against the illegal conduct of corporates; be that Vedanta and Posco or over ground workers of separatist forces in Jammu and Kashmir Chattisgarh and elsewhere. the list is almost unending. But the most unforgettable aspect with far reaching consequences has been the exposure of media and journalists. It was the year when leaked Radia tapes established the dirty role some journalists play in total contravention to their journalistic ethics. India, however, will not remember last year for its negatives only. For the country it was the year when India emerged as a sports power announcing its arrival in both CWG and Asian games. It was the year of victory for the people of India. That 'stupid' common man of India, long ridiculed for his docile nature rouse to the occasion whenever the call was felt and demonstrated the resilience and capability of Indians and their readiness to play the role expected from an emerging power. Will this positive trend continue? Let us hope so.

Rivers: *The life line of India*

Swadeshi Samvad

- *Rivers are integral part of our ecology, economy, spirituality, religion, & in fact entire life pattern.*
- *But alas we as a nation have completely forgotten the importance of these holy rivers.*



Sh. Arjun Munda, Sh. Mohan Singh Gaonwasi, Dr. Ashwani Mahajan, Sh. Swami ji (Sonari Asharam), Sh. Kashmiri Lal on dais

Perhaps no country of the world has as many rivers as India has. No country has as pure river as Ganges. There is no equivalence to the great Indian delta (Plains of India) in the world, which is the gift of the rivers originating from Himalayas. All the seven great rivers and hundreds of other tributaries and distributaries have their importance in the areas wherever they flow, providing livelihood to the inhabitants. Rich monsoons in each nook and corners of the country (though rain fall varies across the nation) replenishes the flow of these rivers and also the underground water though out the country.

Rivers are integral point of our ecology, economy, spirituality, religion, and in fact entire life pattern of the nation. Rivers are the

most trusted source of irrigation. Overflow of water from rivers during rainy season, collected in ponds and lakes is a boon for millions, who earn their livelihood by fishing. Rivers has been an important mode of travel, which needs to be developed even further. Flora and fauna, for which is India's specialty is a most valuable gift of the rivers.

But alas we as a nation have completely forgotten the importance of these holy rivers. Criminal neglect of the rivers, perverse thinking leading to adoption of so called development model, based on maximizing consumption has led to not only excessive exploitation of this important gift of nature, but has also made them dirty and dry. Making the things worse big and small dams on these rivers

have not only affected the free and unhindered flow of these rivers, but has caused damage to even the basic characteristic of their rivers has been totally lost.

A two days national seminar was organized by Swadeshi Jagaran Manch (SJM) on the theme '**Condition of Rivers in India**' at Jamshedpur on 11-12th December, 2010. The seminar was aimed at an in-depth discussion on the issue and positive solutions. The seminar was inaugurated by Shri Arun Ojha, All India Convener, Swadeshi Jagaran Manch. Shri Mohan Singh Gaonwasi, Ex Cabinet Minister, Uttarakhand and a famous Environmentalist, Dr. Ashwani Mahajan, All India Vichar Mandal Pramukh, SJM, Shri Saryu Rai, Ex MLA and a leading activist fighting for the cause of existence of rivers in Jharkhand and Shri Amar Preet Singh Kale, Spokesman of BJP Jharkhand State were present on the dais.

Inaugurating the seminar Shri Arun Ojha elaborated on the importance of rivers in India and said that rivers are the life line for India. He minced no words when he attacked the western model of development and accused the technology emanating from the present day science, as the main responsible factors for the present condition of the rivers in India. He also spoke vehemently against the proposed planning of joining of riv-

ers in the country. He said if this happens, it would be disastrous for the country. We have to challenge the western science, as we cannot accept the destruction in the name of development. Mentioning the Tehri Dam, Shri Ojha said that very existence of Ganges is at stake due to construction of this Dam for mere 2400 MW electricity, that too after reaching full functioning of this Dam.

Ex Minister of Uttarakhand and a renowned environmentalist Shri Monhan Singh Gaonwasi, who spoke on two occasions during the seminar, said that rivers have been an integral part of our lives and also our spiritualism and religious sentiments. He explained how rivers in India and the universe are so well connected with each other, that important baths in rivers are linked with the position of the stars. He said that declaration of the Ganges as the national river is a mere show business. He demanded that Yamuna, Shipra and other important rivers be declared national heritage.



Sh. Anna Da, Sh. Arun Ojha, Dr. Ashwani Mahajan, Swami Chinmayanand, Sh. Kashmiri Lal with delegates

The Gangotri Valley as a Spiritual Cultural Eco-Zone

Primarily the special designation of an eco-zone should entail the following 6 objectives -

1. Preservation and increase in green cover – thus promoting growth of both flora and fauna and thereby bio-diversity.
2. Encouraging and permitting only those activities on a local level which would help in achieving object 1 and at the same time benefiting the local population economically – thus to achieve development using a ‘green’ vision.
3. Prohibiting of several incompatible ‘developmental’ and other activities like dam building, excessive tourist inflow, huge cement constructions etc. which would ecologically harm the area.
4. To maintain and preserve the ambience of a wild and pristine Himalayan forest.
5. To maintain and preserve the Ganga and adjoining tributaries in the form of wild mountain rivers and streams – pristine, uninterrupted, free flowing and free from pollution.
6. To maintain the Gangotri valley as a place of spiritual and cultural importance – as a place of pilgrimage, meditation and worship. □

Dr. Ashwani Mahajan who spoke at the inaugural function and also in one of the sessions namely ‘Economics of Rivers’ said that rivers are the rare gift of God to this nation. We need to preserve them at any cost. He said that we need to revisit the present model of development because this present model of development is causing

the havoc to the hole ecology including rivers. Development countries are not ready to change their life styles and therefore the existence of the earth is endangered. Speaking in the session on economics of rivers, Dr. Mahajan criticized the basic philosophy of pursuit of individual self interest which guides the economic theories of the day. He emphasized the need to use the natural resources for the welfare of all. Supporting his point with the data he explained that the projections about the need of extra electricity generation are being given looking at the demand for electricity for the consumption of rich. He said that we can provide electrify all villages in the country by using hardly 1 percent of the projected increase in electricity generation. This implies that the rest 99 percent extra power generation is to satisfy luxury demand by the rich. The existence of rivers cannot be put on stake for the luxury of the few, he said.

Ex MLA Shri Saryu Rai em-

Important civilization developed along rivers are :-

- ✓ Nile River valley civilization (3000-2000 B.C.E)
Egypt & Nubia
River – Nile
- ✓ Mesopotamia civilization (3000-2000 B.C.E)
Rivers – Tigris & Euphrates
- ✓ Indus Valley Civilization (5000-2500 B.C.E)
Harappan civilization, Mohenjo-Daro civilization
Rivers – Indus- Ravi, Sutlej, Chenab, Jhelum, Vayas
- ✓ Ancient Chinese Civilization (7000-5000 B.C.E)
Rivers – Yellow and Yangzi

phasized that today we are talking only to save big rivers. Small rivers, tributaries and distributaries are equally important. He said that we talk of cleaning the rivers, in fact more important is to keep the rivers clean. He said that the government and the bureaucrats are flouting the river policy and law of the land. We should understand that it is disastrous to divert the natural flow of rivers.

In the technical session Geologist Dr. Arun Kumar Singh underlined the importance of rivers in the development of human civilization. He said that development of art, culture, worship, ritual & festivals find their origin in the rivers.

A paper by Shri Hemant Dhayani was circulated among the participant. The paper made a demand to declared the Gangotri Valley as a spiritual cultural Eco-Zone.

Taking time out of his busy schedule, Chief Minister of Jharkhand Shri Arjun Munda also graced



A view of delegate session in progress

the occasion, during a technical session on “Economics of Rivers”. Shri Munda expressed his solidarity with the cause of protection of rivers and promised the support of his government to save the rivers of Jharkhand.

The valedictory of the seminar was addressed by Shri Kashmiri Lal, All India Organiser, Swadeshi Jagaran Manch. Narrating his experiences with regard to dangers stemming from building of dams on important rivers including Ganga, affecting the free an unrestricted flow of rivers, he

gave an emotional call to stop playing with the nature. He warned that if we do not stop unholy play with the nature, it would not spare the humanity.

The seminar was convened under the convenership of Shri Manoj Kumar Singh. Shri Bande Shankar Singh, Co-Convener, SJM Jharkhand State played the key role in organizing the seminar. Shri Dinesh Mandal, Regional Co-convener of SJM was also present throughout the Seminar. The seminar was graced by the presence of Shri Deepak Sharma ‘Pradeep’, Regional Co-convener, North Zone and Dr. Chander Mohan, Regional Convener of Western Uttar Pradesh. Shri Sharma also presided over one of the technical sessions. The seminar was attended by representatives from at least 10 states. Geologists, Geographers, Economists, Academicians and Representatives from all walks of life attended the seminar and it was the opinion of participants and the media, that a beginning has been made and the seminar would definitely prove to be a mile stone in the fight to save rivers. □□

Rivers and Human Civilization

Human Civilization throughout the world has developed along rivers. Approximately five thousand years ago first complex, politically centralize civilization began to crystallize independently along a number of river valleys throughout the Southern half of Asia and Northern Africa. These civilization constitute the next step in the organization and centralization. □

Export surplus food grains



*India continues to languish in the Global Hunger Index despite availability of surplus food grains. The government must export the surplus grains and distribute the profit thus obtained, suggests **Dr Bharat Jhunjhunwala***

We have today food grain stocks of 60 million tons which are nearly three times the required buffer stock. We have storage capacity for holding only 52 million tons. About 7 million tons of grains are lying in the open and rotting. Reportedly about 6 million tons have already become unfit for human consumption. The surplus is likely to increase further in the coming months. The monsoon crop has been good. Heavy rains have led to recharge of groundwater and the winter crop is also likely to be good.

Surprisingly, India continues to languish in the Global Hunger Index despite availability of surplus

food grains. The Index is made by International Food Policy Research Institute. India was placed at 65th rank last year. It has slipped to 67th rank in the 2010 index. This is not to say that hunger has increased. There has been improvement. We secured 31.7 points in 1990. This has reduced to 24.1 points in 2010. But other countries have made yet greater improvement hence our rank is slipping. The laggard athlete runs forward but is yet said to be 'behind' in the race. Similarly, we are moving ahead in reducing the level of hunger but are falling 'behind' other countries.

The Supreme Court has suggested that the surplus grains may

be distributed free to the poor people instead of letting them rot in the open. But there is doubt whether this will lead to better nourishment. Haryana is among the more prosperous states of the country—especially in agriculture. Yet its hunger status has been declared to be 'alarming.' Punjab and Tamil Nadu are not much behind. These states do not appear to have shortage of grains. It seems the problem is lack of balanced diet. Grains are provided at steeply subsidized price to the poor BPL card holders. They have available food grains aplenty. It seems, however, that they are unable to buy oils, pulses and vegetables due to shortage of cash. This imbalance in diet may be the cause of these states being high on the hunger index. Distribution of yet more grains is unlikely to improve the nutritional status of their people since these are already much available. The second cause of our low rank in the hunger index appears to be the culture of consumerism. The family uses available cash for the purchase of TV instead of nourishing vegetables. Distribution of grains is not feasible from the administrative point of view either. Huge leakage will take place as is happening in the Public Distribution System. It is not advisable to make



free distribution of grains in view of these factors.

The problem of malnourishment is inherent in the model of economic development that we have espoused. In the present policy, the poor man is first deprived of his job and made destitute. Manufacturing by automatic machines is encouraged. Then the destitute is provided with free- or subsidized grains through the government machinery. The homemaker is not able to provide balance food in absence of cash to buy oils, pulses and vegetables. The government had provided huge subsidy on urea till few years ago. That led to over-application of nitrogen and deficiency of potash and phosphates and to decline in soil productivity. Similarly, excess intake of grains is leading to imbalanced diet and resulting in malnutrition. The present development model also encourages purchase of gadgets like TVs. These are considered symbols of prosperity. In the result the family spends the limited available cash on such purchases instead of balanced nutrition. The leakages that take place in distribution are also inherent in the development model. The role of government is expanded to undertake such tedious jobs leading to increased opportunities of making leakages.

The solution is to dismantle the welfare state and provide direct cash support to all citizens. There is a need to implement an advertisement policy that encourages the viewers towards healthy lifestyles. The government must export the surplus grains and distribute the profit obtained. The price of wheat in the global markets is Rs 17 per kg today. The wheat has been procured at Rs 12

per kg. It is better to export the surplus and give Rs 17 cash to the people instead of giving them grains valued at Rs 12.

Some increase in domestic prices is likely to take place due to exports. This should not be considered wholly negative, however. The farmers' income will increase and benefit scores of our people. Increased prices will lead to higher production in the coming years and help secure food security of the country. The farm workers will get a share of the higher prices through higher wages and that will help reduce malnourishment. The negative impact of higher grain prices will mainly take place on the urban consumers. We should not sacrifice the food security and welfare of our millions of rural people for appeasing this already well-off population.

The Minimum Support Price policy of the government is being held to be responsible for the creation of surplus stocks. The Government is committed to buy all the grains offered for purchase at a pre-announced price. Farmers prefer to grow grains because they are assured of this minimum price. As a result we have excess production of grains and shortfall in the production of oils, pulses and vegetables. These facts are true. But it does not follow that the Support Price policy is bad. The food security of the country owes itself largely to this same policy. Till eighties we were dependent on food imports. Today we are in a position to export because farmers have increased production on the back of this policy. Millions of farmers have been benefited. It seems to me that the Government must procure yet more food grains

The problem of malnourishment is inherent in the model of economic development that we have espoused.

and, if necessary, export them even at a loss. The developed countries are doing precisely this in order to maintain domestic production of food items. We should increase both production and exports. Another strategy to manage surplus is to include other minor crops like mustard, groundnuts, soya bean and pulses in the Minimum Support Price policy. This will lead to diversification of crop pattern and make available oils and protein to our people.

The World Bank has suggested that countries like India not impose ban on exports of food grains as a permanent policy. It has said that free trade in grains will be beneficial for importers as well as exporters. The suggestion is in line with this writer's suggestion to export surplus stocks. But there is a critical difference. The World Bank suggests that exports should be allowed even in times of domestic shortages if international prices are high. This can be immensely harmful for the sovereignty of the country. Remember that U.S. President Jimmy Carter had imposed ban on exports of grains to Russia to plod that country into leaving Afghanistan. We will unnecessarily push ourselves into similar unwanted situations. We should limit exports to surplus stocks. □□

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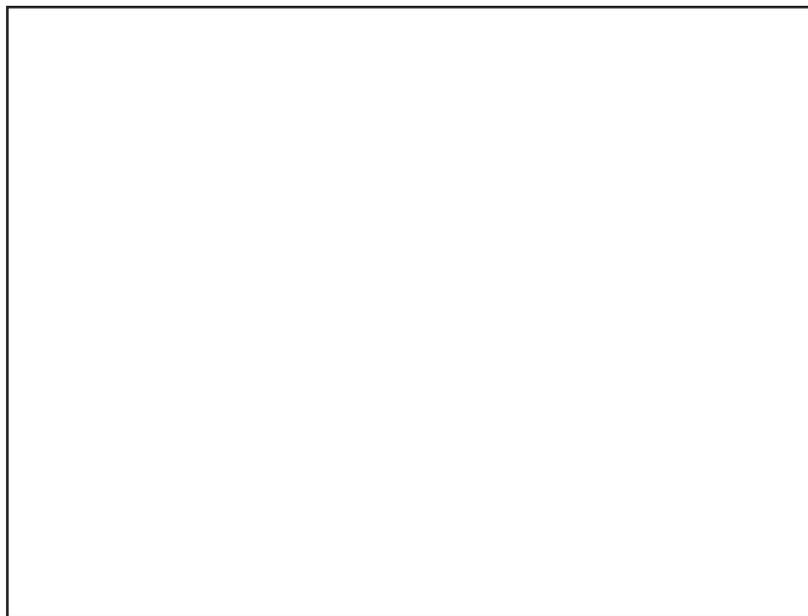
Securing Socioeconomic Rights of Fisher folks

Health & Education of women and children is the first causality of loss of livelihood of fisher folks as a result of lop sided development process, finds Muralidhar Rao.

If democracy means transformative politics with two important components (i) securing the socio-economic rights of individuals and occupational collectives and (ii) a helpful frame work to exercise such rights then we as a nation have not succeeded significantly in fulfilling these objectives particularly with respect to fishing community.

A study of the problems from a close quarter, which the fishing community is encountering, gives a sense about how badly they have been left behind in our march forward as a nation; a nation that proclaims to be the largest democracy of the world. Yes elections do take place regularly in our country and fishing community also participates in this festival of democracy. But their occupational needs and issues related to their livelihood and living standards have not been amply taken care off.

After visiting the villages of fishermen on east coast in Orissa (Puri, Cuttack and Jagatsinghpur) in Andhra Pradesh (Srikakulam, Vijayanagaram, Vishakhapatnam and Nellore) Tamil Nadu (Ramnathapuram and Villupuram) and



Sh. Mahinder Pandey, Sh. Nitin Gadkari and Sh. Muralidhar Rao in Fishermen Convention in Vishakhapatnam

Pondicherry and meeting and interacting with grass root workers, leadership of the community and various other related people it is obvious that a lot more needs to be done to make the democratic agenda successful in their context.

Let us remember fishing is not a marginal or trivial sector of our economy. Fishing after agriculture & handloom, sustains a sizeable population of India.

In order to have a glimpse of

what troubles this sector we must appreciate that fishing activity involves a wide range of physical assets. A fisherman has to begin with an indigenous boat (catamaran) that costs a minimum of Rs. 20,000 or a mechanized boat costing up to 26 lakhs. Second important component is the fishnet that is available in different variants and costs anything from Rs. 15000 to 15 lakhs. But to my utter surprise I did not met a single fisherman who had been provided any loan or any other financial support by any bank. Bank and financial institutions have failed this sector completely making the fishermen community vulnerable and dependent on private money lenders.

Banks and financial institutions have failed this sector completely making the fishermen community vulnerable and dependent on private money lenders.

"Visakhapatnam Charter" Adopted by National Convention of Fishermen

Traditional fishing has always been an important occupation both in terms of livelihood and in meeting the food security necessities of our country. After agriculture and handloom textile, this sector stands out as one of the main stay of our self employed economy. More than 2crore population including women in primary, secondary and tertiary sectors, living in approximately 3500 coastal villages and port towns along the 8118 KM coast line depend on this avocation. Fishermen venture into the sea risking their lives every day. They are the sentinels guarding the seacoast day and night.

The reliable estimates put the maximum sustainable yields (MSYs) between 3.9 and 4.2 million tonnes. More than half of this production is reported to be within the depth of 50 metres. It is in this zone that the traditional fishermen ply their craft. Against our potential of 4.2 m.t, presently the average fish catch stagnated at 2.81million tones. Of this, 63% is coming from the West Coast and the rest from the East Coast. Today approximately 2,08,000 traditional crafts, 55,000 motorized crafts, 1,250 mechanized boats and 100 deep sea fishing vessels are operating in our marine waters.

Now our fish exports stand at Rs 8000 where as the total output exceeds Rs 31,700 crores. Today, India stands at 27th rank in value and 23rd place in volume in marine exports. With these physical and human resources around, this sector has immense potential in terms of wealth creation, employment generation and food security as well. Unfortunately, such a vast resource has been neglected by the Central Government. The traditional skills and knowledge of those engaged in fishing presently are being underutilized.

Large scale land acquisition along the coast line

In the last few years along the entire east coast, pursuing the growth paradigm, both the state and central government have promoted huge Industrial and power projects, construction of ports in private sector. The establishment of such projects has in many places caused displacement and disruption of fishermen community. In many places they were evicted without providing them adequate compensation, proper infrastructure for the continuation of their profession or with any other alternate employment to support their families. Their lives have become miserable due to this kind of alienation from the traditional avocation. Shockingly, the fishermen belonging to scheduled categories in Orissa have been forced to give up even the small tracts of agricultural land which they have been cultivating as additional source of income. Nowhere, these people were made partners or share holders of these growth project. The promises made either at the time of acquisition or thereafter were not honoured. At many places these poor and illiterate people were not only deprived of their natural right of having unlimited and unfettered access to seas but also were subjected to police high handedness and harassment in the form of fabricated cases.

Multiple departments dealing with different aspects without having an integrated approach were also aggravating the situation. Ministries of. Agriculture, commerce and E&F are quite often functioning at the cross purposes.

Pollution due to Industrial and Chemical effluents

The large scale industrialization in the form of chemical factories, thermal power plants, has taken a toll on output of marine produce. The social impact study was not under taken before undertaking these projects. In Nellore district, AP, along a coast of fifty km around 22 power projects are coming up which burn more than 3,17,000 tonnes of coal every day. They release 2,000 tonnes of sulphur violating all norms of the coastal Regulatory Zone (CRZ). Similar situation prevails in other places like Cuttack- Puri-Paradeep coast. These alarming developments on the coast line would have devastating impact on the livelihood, marine livestock and also on the health of the people. Fishermen of coastal villages have specifically complained about the fast diminishing fish output and also reported the incidents of marine livestock extinction on several occasions, due to continuous flow of effluents into the sea. In some places, the fall in fish produce is alarmingly as high as 70%. This has resulted in steep reduction in their incomes and forcing the men to migrate to far away towns and cities in search of employment and creating distress in the families.

Absence of ' Minimum Infrastructure'

The Central and State governments have miserably failed to provide the basic infrastructure needs like

parking bays for boats, fish landing facilities, jetties, cold storages, fish drying platforms, net repairing places, fish handling centers. Market places or auction halls are also missing in many important fish landing centers. Minimum infrastructure facilities like electrification and drinking water are also not provided. In the fishermen habitats, health facilities are either absent or non functional. Regarding road connectivity, these villages, have been neglected in all these states.

The support from the government for these fishermen in providing the R&D back up in boat and gear designing, information related to the availability of the fish which is a moving resource, handling of fish is completely inadequate and neglected.

Non availability of credit from banks

The credit availability from the nationalized banking sector is not seen in any of these villages in the east coast or even in the advanced centers like Visakhapatnam and Chennai fishing harbours. The fishermen taking loans from private moneylenders at exorbitant rate of interest to purchase crafts and nets. Consequently, many of them are being caught in the debt trap. Working capital for the purpose of motor fuel which constitutes the main recurring expenditure is an additional burden on them. Also is no support from the governments in the form of subsidies. This situation is driving fishermen families into abject poverty and forced migration.

There is no other profession which is more dangerous than sea-fishing. And yet, there is no insurance cover for these people. It is in this context, the impending legislation on Coastal Regulation Zone, 2010 assumes importance.

The draft circulated by the Central Government in this connection is viewed by the fishermen associations as completely biased in favour of the large corporate sector. The concerns related to housing, sea erosion, construction of new ports, promotion of tourism, mining in the continental shelf are not adequately addressed. That was the reason for the protests all along the coastal towns and villages. There is wide spread apprehension among all the fishermen that the legislation in the proposed form would harm the entire coastal eco system and jeopardize the lives of millions of people.

And therefore this Convention of Fishermen of East Coast put forward the following charter of demands:

1. Credit facilities to fishermen from nationalized banks on par with agriculture. Creation of rescue mechanism to bail out those caught in debt trap.
2. Insurance cover for all those involved in sea fishing.
3. Special efforts to transfer the modern innovations and technological developments in harvesting, processing and marketing to fishing community.
4. Creation of infrastructure such as parking bays, jetties, fish landing facilities, drying platforms, cold storage, distribution centres and road connectivity.
5. Guaranteeing unhindered access to the sea for those engaged in fishing. Fishermen should have the first right on the territorial waters similar to tribals having first right over the forests.
6. Any land acquisition in fishing villages must have to be in consonance with the development plan of fishermen. In compelling situations, the fishermen should have their due share in the long term benefits accruing from such projects.
7. Coast guard should also provide cover to the fishermen harvesting in the sea.
8. Protecting the fishermen interests whenever government of India enters into international trade agreements.
9. Stringent measures to prevent industrial effluence dumping into the sea.
10. Effective protection to the fishermen of Tamil Nadu who are affected adversely by the intrusions and harassment from the Sri Lankan side.
11. Exemption of central excise and sales tax on diesel required for fishing vessels.
12. Sustenance allowance for fishermen during conservation period and cyclone days. □

Lack of institutionalized support to such an important segment of our population is a reflection on efficacy of our governance and priorities of present political establishment. In several places the government which was supposed to reimburse promised rebate on diesel in the form of sales tax has not been paid to fishermen even after 2 years. Vishakhapatnam alone has pending due amount of Rs. 20 crore that Andhra Pradesh government has yet to reimburse.

Lack of institutional credit availability also results in siphoning off of entire profits and surplus if any, by moneylenders and private micro-finance institutions. It is therefore essential to have a targeted credit plan through a special purpose vehicle, if necessary, to realize the dream of having inclusive growth.

Another serious threat to fisherman is the diminishing fish resource. Unregulated dumping of chemical and industrial effluents has adversely affected the fish resource. Decrease in fish resource is as high as 70% at many places on east coast has been reported.

To make things worse the A.P. government is proposing huge power plants (Nellore Distt.) with a total capacity of 26000 MW. Just imagine the quantity of coal that will be consumed and chemical and sulphuric effluents that will emanate from such power plants. We shall, therefore, be ready for having polluted and encroached coastline in near future. Let me hasten to add that even the land belonging to fishermen is being

Bill to protect fisherfolk's traditional rights on anvil

The Fisherfolks Rights Bill, guaranteeing traditional marine rights, is on the anvil, Union Minister for Environment and Forests Jairam Ramesh has said.

Conceived on the lines of the Forest Rights Act that guarantees traditional user rights and land rights to tribals, Adivasis and forest dwellers, this Bill would provide security of dwelling and habitation, apart from marine resources, to the 70-lakh fisherfolk living along the coastal areas. The draft text was posted on the Ministry's website and the Ministry was open to suggestions.

Mr. Ramesh was unveiling the M.S. Swaminathan Research Foundation-led integrated mangrove fishery farming system here. The initiative is an attempt to introduce "sea water as a social resource" where saline farming will thrive along with fishing practices. The project envisages cultivation of salt-resistant vegetation such as mangroves and halophytes alongside aqua culture for, salinity-ravaged soil has made farming difficult.

Referring to the Vedaranyam Salt March led by Rajaji in April 1930 which was launched a week after Mahatma Gandhi ended his Dandi March, the Minister proposed an eco-restoration-cum-conservation project at the salt memorial. Cultivation of mangroves as protection shields and development of a genetic botanical garden for salt-resistant species were a component of the initiative. Describing the endeavour as one that would generate round-the-year-livelihood, MSSRF chairperson M.S. Swaminathan said integrated fishery farming practices could prove beneficial to salt workers of Vedaranyam who had seasonal employment for just 6 months. □ (The Hindu 27/12/2010)

taken away. Same story is being repeated everywhere including Puri, Cuttack, Paradip in Orisa. It seems that entire development process on the east coast is not centered on human development as is being claimed. This lop sided development process is resulting in loss of livelihood of fishermen and the worst victims are women and children and their health & educational needs become causality.

Land acquisition on the east coast is also highly exploitative. Governments everywhere seem to be bent upon facilitating and serving corporate interests at the cost of fishermen community. In many

places natural right of fishermen of having direct and unhindered access to the sea is also denied. In the case of Gangavarm private port of Vishakhapatnam, for example, promised fishing Jetty for the displaced fishermen village has not been constructed till date. All such promises by the governments are not honoured most of the time. Some time in some villages fishermen have to face police bullets for raising their voice. This off course is the most inhuman and atrocious handling of the human issue.

Governments, both central and state, have not come out with any proposal about any progressive legislation for the purpose of land acquisition wherein local fisherman are consulted and or their long term interests are taken care. □□

Some time in some villages fishermen have to face police bullets for raising their voice.

Onion Prices

The stage managed crisis to justify the approval for FDI in multi-brand retail



*There is more to onion prices than what meets the eye. And it is time to peel the onion, layer by layer, pleads **Dr. Devinder sharma***

No sooner did the onion crisis erupt on your small screen last week, following the retail prices jumping from Rs 35/kg to Rs 60-80/kg, Minister for Commerce Anand Sharma was the first one to make a statement. Even before the Food and Agriculture Minister Sharad Pawar opened his mouth, Anand Sharma had told the nation that the onion crisis was because of hoarding, and that the country had enough stocks.

This year production of onions has been a record with at least

one million tonnes more onion produced than the previous year.

I wonder how and why Anand Sharma made this statement. After all, agriculture is Sharad Pawar's beat and normally Cabinet Ministers tread carefully by not transgressing into the domain of a fellow colleague. Even if Anand Sharma commented because he looks into trade, the fact remains that he has never commented earlier when prices of sugar and dal for instance had touched the roof.

rise defies any logic. I agree with Sanjeev Chopra. He was being forthright and honest.

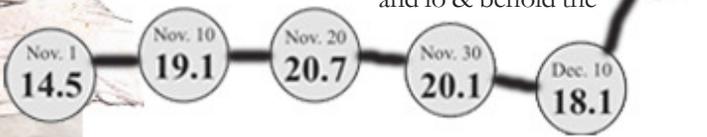
While all kinds of explanations were being tossed around, what became increasingly clear was that the trade — middlemen, in this case — had made a killing. But what remains hidden from public glare is that the entire onion price crisis is stage managed. It has been created to justify the need to bring in big box retail.

Within the next two days the government went into a massive salvage operation.

Knowing well that onion prices have in the past brought down the government, not once but twice, UPA-II didn't want to take any chances. Exports were immediately banned, import duties were brought down to zero, crackdown against hoarders began simultaneously, and lo & behold the



As the evening progressed, and the UPA government went into a tizzy, Nafed's managing director Sanjeev Chopra expressed surprise at the sudden price rise. He told the media that there was roughly 20 per cent more supply, and despite the rain damage to the standing crop in September when the sowing takes place in Maharashtra and Rajasthan, the price



prices began to come down.

Meanwhile tomato and garlic prices began to rise. While tomato prices ruled high in Delhi (rising to Rs 40 a kg in retail markets), again there was no reason for tomato prices to rise. In fact, as metros witnessed tomato prices going out of reach, the irony is that Jharkhand farmers were dumping tomatoes on road for want of a fair price. <http://bit.ly/hPvuHR>

Coming back to onions, before the prices had even stabilised at Rs 50-60 per kg, Anand Sharma moved swiftly to talk to his fellow colleagues on Dec 23 about the need and possibility of opening up to multi-brand retail. In other words, in the midst of a crisis situation, Commerce Minister found time to 'discuss' with his Cabinet colleagues the possibility of inviting multi-brand retail into the country.

For the benefit of some of our readers, when we say multi-brand retail we are talking of big box retail like Wal-Mart and Tesco.

At a time when the Cabinet Secretary was monitoring the onion price situation on an hourly basis, Commerce Minister was confabulating with his ministerial



Jharkhand farmers dump tomatoes on roads

Ranchi, Dec 25 (IANS) Call it irony. At a time when tomatoes are selling for up to Rs.40 a kg, farmers in Jharkhand are dumping them on roads because they are not getting money that meets even their production cost. At Rangamati, on the Ranchi-Jamshedpur national highway just 70 km from here, angry farmers are throwing away their produce.

'There is bumper production of tomatoes. There is no place to keep them. In the evening when we return home we dump them on the roads. Who is going to bear the transportation cost?' farmer Gurudas Mahto asked. Echoing his view, Jagdish Oraon said: 'Why should we sell tomatoes at any cost less than what it cost us?'

Farmers say it costs them Rs.5-6 to produce a kg of tomatoes. They want Rs.8-10 from the middlemen, who are willing to pay only Rs.4-6. The government is indifferent, say the farmers.

Jharkhand agriculture department secretary A.K. Singh told IANS: 'The farmers should form a cooperative to sell their products in the market. The government can assist in the formation of the cooperative but can't buy vegetables or sell them.'

Farmers content they cannot afford to sell in the market. 'It is impossible to travel 70-100 km every day to the market. It is the duty of the government to form such cooperatives in each block and in villages,' said Khagendra Mahto, another farmer. □

<http://news.in.msn.com/business/article>

colleagues about multi-brand retail. Finance Minister Pranab Mukherjee, Home Minister P Chidambaram, Defence Minister A K Anthony had taken part in these discussions. Why the urgency? Anand Sharma replied: "Policy formation is a dynamic process, and we are very progressive and forward-looking."

Surely, Mr Sharma. We know what you mean by 'progressive and forward looking'.

In fact, he also met media persons the same day to tell them about the dynamics of FDI in retail. A journalist

asked him about the link FDI in retail has with the soaring onion prices. According to The Hindu (Dec 24) "While Mr Sharma rejected the argument that there was a link between the soaring onion prices and the opening up of multi-brand retail to foreign direct investment, the demand for liberalising the sector has been intensifying, especially in the wake of the wide gap between wholesale prices and retail prices."

Now if you are wondering how can someone be planning (and succeeding) in raising onion prices across the country, I want you to remember the sudden eruption of dropsy several years back,

This year production of onions has been a record with at least 1 million tonnes more onion produced than the previous year.

Leaked Cable: Hike food prices to boost GM crop approval

In a January 2008 meeting, US and Spain trade officials strategized how to increase acceptance of genetically modified foods in Europe, including inflating food prices on the commodities market, according to a leaked US diplomatic cable released by WikiLeaks.

During the meeting, Secretary of State for International Trade, Pedro Mejia, and Secretary General Alfredo Bonet “noted that commodity price hikes might spur greater liberalization on biotech imports.”

It seems Wall Street traders got the word. By June 2008, food prices had spiked so severely that “The Economist announced that the real price of food had reached its highest level since 1845, the year the magazine first calculated the number,” reports Fred Kaufman in *The Food Bubble: How Wall Street starved millions and got away with it*.

The unprecedented high in food prices in 2008 caused an additional 250 million people to go hungry, pushing the global number to over a billion. 2008 is also the first year “since such statistics have been kept, that the proportion of the world’s population without enough to eat ratcheted upward,” said Kaufman.

All to boost acceptance of GM foods, and done via a trading scheme on which Wall Street speculators profited enormously.

Mass food riots in several nations ensued, as did an investigation by the U.S. Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs, resulting in a finding that, yes, unrestricted speculation in food commodities caused soaring prices.

In a comment at the end of the cable, the diplomat also revealed a level of pessimism about Spain’s willingness to help force GM foods on Europe:

“This was a very good substantive discussion. However, it is clear that while Spain will continue sometimes to vote in favor of biotechnology liberalization proposals, the Spaniards will tread warily on this issue given their own domestic sensitivities and other equities Spain has in the EU.”

That pessimism was largely unfounded, as “Spain planted 80 percent of all the Bt maize in the EU in 2009 and maintained its record adoption rate of 22 percent from the previous year,” noted a report by the International Service for the Acquisition of Agri-biotech Applications (ISAAA).

which took quite a human toll. Dropsy was blamed on poisonous argemone seeds which had slipped into mustard oil extraction process. This was, as we now know, done to build a market for packed mustard oil. And surely, the sales of loose mustard oil has gone down drastically after that incidence.

Howcome, argemone seeds

never found their way into mustard oil after that?

More recently, according to a leaked US diplomatic cable released by WikiLeaks, in a January 2008 meeting, US and Spain trade officials strategized on how to increase acceptance of genetically modified foods in Europe, and among the measures included inflating food prices on the com-

Sudden eruption of dropsy several years back was blamed on poisonous argemone seeds to build a market for packed mustard oil.

modities market.

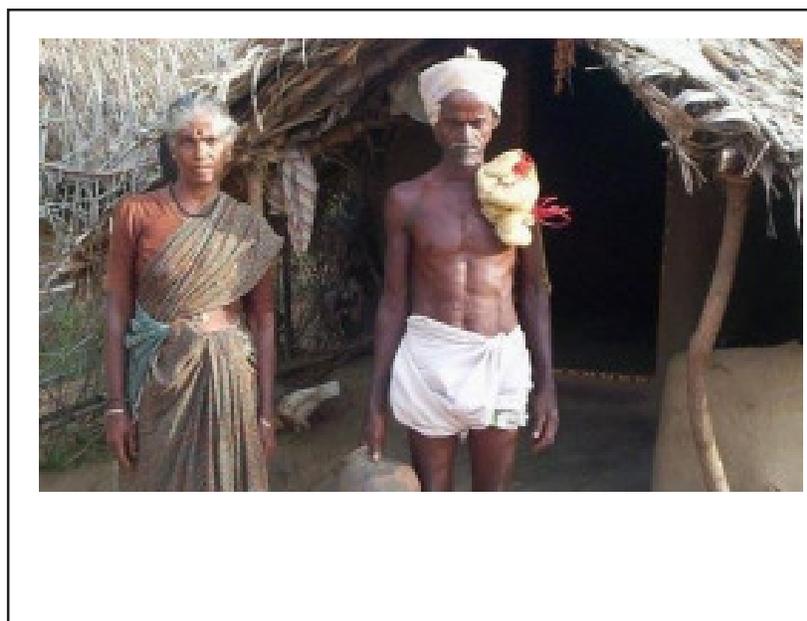
Allowing big box retail into the country is no less a priority for Manmohan Singh government than the nuclear treaty. President Obama had pressurised India to open up when he visited India in November. Before that, British Prime Minister David Cameron had sought the opening up of Indian market for big box retail when he had made a visit. And more recently, French President Nicolas Sarkozy had also promised more investments if India opens up to retail FDI.

The G-20 has also directed member countries to remove all hurdles in accepting multi-brand retail. It was primarily to meet this directive that the Department of Industrial Policy and Promotion (DIPP) had floated a completely flawed discussion paper on allowing FDI in multi-brand retail. Consultations with the stakeholders (?) have also been completed by the Ministry of Commerce.

Both Sharad Pawar and Anand Sharma are in favour of it. Since there is opposition to multi-brand retail FDI within the Congress party, the onion price drama had to be stage managed. While your tears have by now dried, let us wait and watch how soon the UPA-II gives us another breaking news. □□

Do we owe anything to bread providers?

Despite some relief packages by the clueless government indebtedness induced suicides of the farmers has not stopped till date. Helpless RBI is saying that it cannot compete with moneylenders. If this continues chaotic conditions would prevail in the society, warns D G Bokare



The farming community is still not out of woods as the government has been neglecting this sector and at the same time favouring the industry sector with the sole objective to get creditability in the world community of elite class for having achieved higher GDP and the increasing Sensex. Rulers don't think there is anything worth talking about the farming sector. Rather they feel a burden to achieve any economic progress for the consumption in the elite capitalist world.

Farmers are still suffering on account of support prices being lower than cost of production and having no access to easy loans from the market. He is still neck

dipped in debts owed to local moneylenders. The farmers have almost become bonded labour of a kind. The government is not showing any real concern to release the bonded labour from the clutches of local moneylenders. The programmes launched by it such as Kisan Credit, Card, micro-finance (we know the frauds committed by some such companies in Andhra Pradesh, lately), self-help-groups, NABARD banking network, which prefers to work in urban area than its prime concern in rural area, etc. have failed in solving the real problem. This is nothing different than playing with the lives of farmers across the country. It has appoint-

ed a number of committees during the past six decades to solve the problems of indebtedness of this community. There is no clue with the government to solve this age old problem of indebtedness of this community. Despite throwing some relief packages on the face of the farmers, it has not stopped the suicides till date. RBI is expressing its helplessness by saying that it cannot compete with moneylenders due to various reasons.

Main Issues at stake

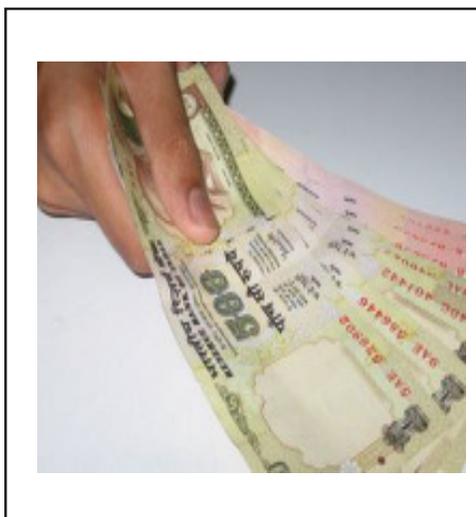
First, we deny the farming community the support prices for farm products based on cost of production with reasonable profit to help farming community to enjoy reasonably sustainable good life style. The demand for cost of production-based support prices has been there right from early 1970s. Still the government is playing a hide and seek game on this account. Every year, it announces support prices for some commodities but does not disclose the basis for the same, like cost of production and profit margin considered for fixing support price for any farm produce. The State announces support prices unilaterally without giving any break up and assumptions considered for this or having any open dia-

logue with the farming community on this issue. Then there is a protest from the farming community, mainly the rich, to demand higher prices than declared. The government shows as if it has considered the issue on humanitarian ground and declares small increases in the support prices. Again there is no basis for this also. This small increase is some time lower than the effect of inflation taken place during the year. The leaders of farming community pat their backs and try to take credit for such small increases while addressing the meetings of farmers. The whole process is short of any transparency about cost of production and inflation aspects.

Second, the government announces very often that it would abolish money lending business from the scene and relieve farmers from exploitation on a permanent basis. Everybody gets carried by this kind of announcement from their own elected government. This game too is being played for decades without any result. Some committees and the top brass of Reserve Bank of India have tried their hands to solve this problem. Nothing has been achieved so far in this matter. Rather RBI has almost pleaded for their inability in solving this problem due to its complex nature. NABARD, Self-help groups (they charges interest more than normal banks), micro finance companies (frauds of large

amounts have surfaced recently in AP), Kisan Credit Cards (as per Narsimham Committee, 58 % of rural households do not have bank accounts), registering all the moneylenders and making them to file details about loans and interest charged (many states legislated for this but never shown any seriousness in implementation), etc. could not replace the local moneylenders. Nothing has succeeded so far. Bankers, both nationalized as well as private, are reluctant to finance small farmers having holdings up to one hectare. These banks cannot offer competitive mechanism to satisfy the farmers on 24x7 hours service at door step, maintaining privacy and confidentiality of borrows' transactions, one-to-one business interest, quicker and hassle-free prompt loan-approval, and easy access to more loans when in difficulty, etc. Banking staff is reluctant to visit villages.

RBI says: Despite penetration, the formal credit delivery structure has not percolated down to the villages. The villagers, especially the poor, have to necessarily depend on moneylenders for their survival. It seems from this that any attempts to stop money lending will affect the poor people by cutting off all access to credit. The main problem seems to be that the credit institutions that were



created to replace the moneylenders have become very formal with cumbersome procedures. Equally important, the formal credit delivery channels also lack the personal bonds that moneylenders enjoy. The moneylenders lend loans for consumption purposes without hesitation, for example marriages, illness, education of children etc. This is not available with the formal banks despite cooperative banks existing in nearby places. Inadequate and delayed credits by banks force farmers to approach moneylenders, despite higher interest and coercive methods. Hence, bank's loans become overdue and get branded as NPA (non-performing-asset). It is difficult to enforce legislation since in most areas, very few moneylenders have a valid license and no new licenses have been renewed for a number of years.

RBI's report dated 2nd November 2010 confirms other aspect of neglect of farm credit during the first half of this year when compared with credit to other sector. While credit flow to industry was highest at Rs. 1,07,386 crores, flow to agriculture sector

The govt. announces very often that it would abolish money lending business from the scene & relieve farmers from exploitation on a permanent basis.



was only Rs. 13,481 crores. The credit loans for personal housing schemes were more than agriculture at Rs. 16,195 crores.

What could be solutions?

The above confirms that despite hype from the government about 'looking after' propaganda for the farmer community, the things have remained at the same levels which were at about a few centuries ago. The government has miserably failed in this matter of not replacing the moneylender category from the rural credit sector to stop exploitation of farmers. RBI has indirectly accepted its failure. Shall we allow the farming community representing more than sixty percent population of our country and providing food for all the citizens to suffer permanently? Shall we allow them to commit suicides in lakhs as they have been committing in the past ten years? Shall we allow the gov-

ernment to take false credit by throwing a few thousand crores' relief-packages for the rural community whenever the people cry for justice? **Pipli (Live)** film has exposed the government and media on this account. Shall we neglect the farming community providing bread for all of us, by allowing state to take a false credit for achieving higher GDP (The Economist of London has called it some years ago as **Grossly Distorted Picture**) by the monopoly industry sector and highly speculative index of stock market? What is more important for the people of our country- higher GDP and higher Sensex or food safety for all? Wisdom lies in abandoning the failed model of the West and develop a local-centric economic development model. A few more radical decisions are required to correct the balance in our economy before we land in

In a democracy, the state is expected to provide some basic needs to all the citizens for achieving better growth of the society & welfare of its people.

anarchic conditions:

1. Zero-rate of interest on loans: Basic reason for farmers not getting out of the clutches of moneylenders or banks not providing loans to small farmers is the exploitative rate of interest and moneylenders' urge to make quick buck. The government too is not interested to have out-of-box thinking. Best course, therefore, could be to radically change the policy decision as regard interest charges to provide security to almost half the population before it slips below poverty line. The state must provide loans at zero-rate of interest to all the farmers and small industries. This would expedite the process of abolition of moneylenders and private sharks in private sector permanently. By implementing it, none of them would be able to compete with the state at zero rate of interest on loans. Till the entire economy becomes interest-free, the government should provide the loss of interest on loans in its annual budgets. The amount involved would be too insignificant when compared with tax losses suffered by the state on account of money parked in overseas tax haven countries by elite class of our society. As per America-based Global Financial Integrity's latest report released in early November 2010, the amounts siphoned out from the Indian economy and kept in tax haven countries/islands during 1948 to 2008 is more than US \$ 213 billion, the present market value of which is over \$462 billion (Indian Rupees equivalent to more than twenty Lakh crores). An equal amount or more is lying tax-free in underground economy within the coun-

try. In fact, underground economy is overtaking the official economy. There is nothing to feel awkward about this policy of interest-free loans as many senior economists have talked about this in their analytical discussions. These include J. M. Keynes, Dudley Dillard, R. F. Harrod, Milton Friedman, Kenneth Kurihara, Paul Samuelson et al. Rate of interest should not be left to the market forces to avoid exploitation of borrowers.



This is being practiced in developed countries today for reducing unemployment. The rates of interest in the USA, Europe and Japan are very close to zero. India should not feel awkward in the matter.

2. State provides basic necessities: In a democracy, the state is expected to provide some basic needs to all the citizens for achieving better growth of the society and welfare of its people. These include food, water and capital. All these three cannot be handed over to private parties to avoid exploitation. Indian government has totally left capital to wolf in private sector. Former Prime Minister Mrs. Indira Gandhi had realized this and accordingly decided to get hold of capital sources from the economy in the hands of her government and to avoid use of this by private players for exploitation besides cornering the government by using money power. She nationalized all the major banks for this purpose. Other two i.e. water and food is presently getting in private hands. The process has already started through the public-private-partnership (PPP) programmes. This

will only increase hardship of ordinary citizens on the same lines of suicides by farmers. The government is doing this under the garb of economic reforms. If the government is sincere about the welfare of the citizens, it should stop this practice to handover its responsibility to private players.

3. Transparency in support price working: The government is jeopardizing the interest of farming community from both sides. One, it does not disclose its working of support prices declared for farm products each year. It does not tell the farmers what cost of production and the effect of inflation has been considered by the state while arriving at the support prices. The cost of production of farm produce and also of cooperative societies' products is openly available to anyone in the country. There is no secrecy in this matter. Second, the government declares unilaterally the support prices without taking farmers in confidence during the process of cost calculation. In that case the government should apply the same principle of declaring the support prices for indus-

trial goods too. Farming community is the largest group of consumers of industrial products. The state does not want to displease the industrial lobby for obvious reasons. It does not disclose the cost of production of its goods to the consuming people that includes a largest group from the rural sector. The data are kept 'secret' even from the law makers i.e. Parliament. Many stalwarts like A. B. Vajpayee, Bhupesh Gupta, N G Gorey, V. B. Raju, Krishna Kant, Brahmanand Panda, Gurmukh Singh Mussafir, j. S. Tilak, Mahavir Tyagi, Baboobhai Chinoy, et al. had raised the demand for placing the cost audit reports of major industrial products on the table of Parliament in 1992. The treasury benches, irrespective of the political party flag, all the time denied an access to this report on the ground that these reports were classified documents, as such secret. Mussafir had cryptically asked: Even from the Parliament?

If the government is sincere to improve the health of rural population, it should take the above steps at the earliest before the farming lobby takes drastic steps in the matter. The leaders of the farming community are also working for their own personal political ambitions. They have least interest in going in details of this issue to help the farming community. If this continues in future, the chaotic conditions would prevail in the society for which the government will have to blame itself. Farmers would come on streets in a large number sooner that we think. □□



Nobel to Obama: For dismembering India?

Moving a substantial number of troops by Beijing into Pakistan-Occupied Kashmir has put American strategists in a tail-spin who aim to set up a base in Kashmir to control the entire South Asian region including China, believes **M.R. Venkatesh**

When the Norwegians met in February 2008 to propose names for the Nobel Peace Prize, they were perhaps aware of the possible controversy that nominations for Barack Obama could generate. After all, Obama would assume office as American President only on January 20, 2009. And till then, it is common knowledge Obama did not do anything spectacular to deserve the Nobel.

The chairman of the Committee, Thorbjorn Jagland, said the prize has often been used to “encourage” laureates, rather than reward them for achievements. “The committee wants to not only endorse, but contribute to enhancing that kind of international policy and attitude which (Obama) stands

for,” Jagland then rationalized.

Elaborating this idea of encouragement, a February 2008 article in the Wall Street Journal, titled “Nobel Committee’s Decision Courts Controversy” by Guy Chazan and Alistair Macdonald, quotes Jagland pointing to the example of Willy Brandt, the West German Chancellor who won the prize in 1971, which “encouraged” Brandt to pursue Ostpolitik - the push to normalize West Germany’s relations with the Communist Bloc. Brandt was elected Chancellor in 1969 and held office till 1974.

Nothing illustrates this paradigm of “encouragement” better than the nomination of Henry Kissinger in 1973, despite the fact that many political observers held him

to be the architect of the Vietnam War. Since then, it is generally believed, Henry Kissinger has been trotting around the globe at every opportunity to “justify” the award.

Clearly, it would seem that the idea is to first award the Nobel Peace Prize and hope that the awardee justifies it (by achieving a political objective much desired by the Western world). The award to Obama was part of this grand design of “encouragement.”

Kashmir: obvious target

It must be worrying Obama and his aides that twenty months after assuming office, the President’s track record is anything but spectacular. Crucially, his ratings in the US are probably slightly better than that of Omar Abdullah, incumbent Chief Minister of Jammu & Kashmir. Naturally, all these are having a negative impact on the electoral prospects of the Democratic Party in the US.

To improve his ratings and justify the peace prize, Obama needs to achieve something spectacular during the remainder of his term, and this is possible only in the realm of foreign, rather than domestic, policy. From an American perspective, a stunning attempt at peace can be tested only in Iraq, Afghanistan, the Gulf, or Kashmir. Obama seems determined to pull out of Iraq, while Afghanistan does not excite many. On account of Israeli pressure, nothing dramatic can happen in the Gulf region. That leaves Kashmir as a potential target for the American President to redeem himself.

Probably everyone (except the Indian establishment and media) is aware of Obama’s compulsions. That explains the rise in violence in Kashmir.

Fire two bullets for a stone thrown

Strangely, the Indian response to this complex situation has been bewildering. Strategically, this is the time to fully back our security forces. In the writer's opinion, our response should have been to fire two bullets (or rubber pellets) for every pebble thrown in Kashmir. Instead, we are endlessly debating the dilution or even scrapping of the Armed Forces Special Powers Act (AFSPA), little realising the potency of force in such circumstances.

Indeed, Obama in his acceptance speech after being awarded the Nobel Peace Prize precisely pointed to the use of force: "as a head of state sworn to protect and defend my nation, I cannot be guided by their examples (Gandhi, King) alone. I face the world as it is, and cannot stand idle in the face of threats to the American people. For make no mistake: evil does exist in the world. A non-violent movement could not have halted Hitler's armies. Negotiations cannot convince al Qaeda's leaders to lay down their arms. To say that force is sometimes necessary is not a call to cynicism - it is recognition of history; the imperfections of man and the limits of reason." This is consistent with the Hindu concept of Raj Dharma, and is a handy statement should we be confronted globally about the use of force!

Yet one witnesses supine indifference of the government compounded by complete abdication of responsibility by sections of the media. Media debates border on the ludicrous, including overt suggestions of granting independence to Kashmir. Some have taken on the task of voicing the supposed grievances of Kashmiri Youth to



A non-violent movement could not have halted Hitler's armies.

justify violence in the Valley. Little do such "analysts" realize that if Kashmiri youth is disillusioned, so is the youth from all other states of India. So why single out Kashmiri youth?

The intelligentsia is hardly better. Ever since violence broke out in the Valley in late 1980s, the Indian intelligentsia has suggested that the LoC be made the final border – in other words, gift Pakistan what it has grabbed rather than fight and reclaim the territory. This time around the intelligentsia is willing to give up the Indian side of Kashmir, and is tacitly readying the nation for the secession of Kashmir from India.

Given the state of confusion within political parties, media and intelligentsia, the proposed visit of Obama has been viewed in some quarters as the most opportune moment to launch the agenda of 'liberating' Kashmir from India (and also Pakistan) in the next couple of years. For if a few hundred stone-pelters in Srinagar can bring our government to its knees, imagine what the mighty American Government with all its coercive powers can achieve?

Divine providence saves the day for India

John Perkins, in his celebrat-

ed book "Confessions of an Economic Hit Man" provides shocking insights into how successive American governments have overthrown various regimes in South America, Asia and Africa, merely to suit their interests. Naturally, the fear that India (especially in the context of suspect EVMs) could figure on this hit-list is not far-fetched. Even otherwise, Indian governments are not famous for standing tall in the face of such onslaughts.

Thanks to the legacy of partition, world capitals are well aware that Kashmir is our soft underbelly. Then there is the proclivity of American Governments in general and the imperative need of Obama in particular to broker peace. It is therefore a matter of time before Washington makes some decisive moves on Kashmir. Obviously its aim is geo-political – to set up a base in Kashmir to control the entire South Asian region including China. The game plan is obvious – dismember India, dominate Pakistan, and control China.

While Indians continue to be oblivious of history or geo-political developments, the Chinese response has been remarkable. Clearly anticipating American des-

peration, Beijing has moved a substantial number of troops into Pakistan-Occupied Kashmir. Naturally this has put American strategists in a tail-spin.

In an article in the New York Times (27 Aug. 2010), titled "China's Discreet Hold on Pakistan's Northern Borderlands," Selig S Harrison lets the cat out of the bag: "The United States is uniquely situated to play a moderating role in Kashmir, given its growing economic and military ties with India and Pakistan's aid dependence on Washington. Such a role should be limited to quiet diplomacy. Washington should press New Delhi to resume autonomy negotiations with Kashmiri separatists. Success would put pressure on Islamabad for comparable concessions in Free Kash-

mir and Gilgit-Baltistan."

The Indian stand is that Kashmir secession is non-negotiable and American intervention a strict no-no; yet Harrison finds nothing untoward in his audacious suggestion that the two portions of Kashmir be united voluntarily by India and Pakistan and allowed to walk free into the American embrace! But why blame the Americans when our own people in the political and strategic establishment seem desperate to toe the American line?

It is increasingly obvious that an independent Kashmir suits America; and not a Kashmir controlled by India, Pakistan or China. Outraged at Chinese intrusions in Kashmir, Harrison suggests "Precisely because the Gilgit-Baltistan region is so important to

China, the United States, India and Pakistan should work together to make sure that it is not overwhelmed, like Tibet, by the Chinese behemoth." Possibly he also wants New Delhi to lend its shoulders to the Americans to fire at the Chinese.

Surely, the Chinese have outwitted the Americans, for now. In contrast to the indolence of New Delhi, Beijing seems to be in no mood to justify the Nobel to Obama. And in the process, it has inadvertently saved Kashmir for India, if only we take advantage of the temporary respite.

PS: We may well have got the monkey off our back and replaced it with a chimpanzee. But a nation with an irresponsible government and indifferent people deserves nothing better. □□

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Jaitapur nuke plant will be a social disaster: TISS

An impact assessment report by Tata Institute of Social Sciences (TISS) has come down heavily on the proposed nuclear power plant at Jaitapur in Ratnagiri district of Maharashtra stating that the project will have a “huge negative impact on social and environment development” as it is sitting on a high to moderate severity earthquake zone.

The TISS findings in ‘Perception Matter- People’s Report- Social Impact Assessment of Jaitapur Madban Nuclear Power Plant’ also suggested that the government subverted facts and called the fertile agricultural land as “barren”.

The report compiled by a TISS social scientist Mahesh Kamble highlighted the people’s demand for more transparency from the government on the project and also their concern about building nuclear power plants on earthquake Zone-IV. It also indicated that the project - which requires about 968 hectares of land spread over five villages - will have a huge negative impact on the social as well as environmental development of not just these villages and the surrounding areas, but also on the Konkan region in general.

The Nuclear Power Corporation of India (NPCIL) has planned to build at least six units of 1560 MW each power plants at the site in collaboration with French nuclear energy major Areva. Union Environment and Forest Ministry has given a conditional go-ahead to the

plant. However, it is facing staunch opposition from locals who fear environmental degradation in the fragile Konkan area.

Meanwhile, NPCIL clarified that the Jaitapur site is in Zone-III and not in Zone-IV. Actually, the Jaitapur Nuclear Power Project site selection has been done keeping ample safety margins, it said. “The code set by Atomic Energy Regulatory Board (AERB) for site selection for setting up of nuclear power plant (NPP) prescribes that there should not be any active geological fault within 5-km radius from the proposed site of NPP,” NPCIL spokesperson N Nagaich said.

Kamble told media that his study was based on discussions with activists from Ratnagiri arranged by advocate Girish Raut, an environment activist in Mumbai and later with various groups of people in the area.

The social impact assessment review was prepared by researchers in April. Some of the findings suggest that a large part of land to be acquired for the project is being used for agriculture, horticulture and grazing purposes, and that the government has subverted facts by labelling it barren land.

“Farmers and horticulturists have spent lakhs of rupees to make the land cultivable over years & even the government has supported them. This includes Alfonso mangoes & cashews. Now, when the time has come for them to reap their investments, they are afraid of

losing their land as the government now claims it is barren land,” says the report.

It adds that even the fisherfolk of the region are against the project. “Their fear that the fishes will migrate to deeper waters due to release of hot water from the reactors is not unjustified. Apart from fishing, other allied activities will also be adversely affected,” says the report, which was prepared after interviewing villagers.

One of the major concerns expressed in the report is the lack of transparency in dissemination of information about the project on the part of the government and the Nuclear Power Corporation of India Ltd (NPCIL). “It is necessary that the government ensures full transparency in implementation. But the information can be accessed only through RTI, and people seem to be losing faith in the government,” the report states.

The report states there is a lack of clarity on the exact amount of land that has been earmarked for acquisition. “Even the amount of compensation and the kind of rehabilitation that the project affected will get is not clear.

Moreover, there is a lot of manipulation of information, which is disturbing people. Notification of area from high severity earthquake zone to moderate seismic severity zone seems to be one of them. The government is not only hiding facts, but also manipulating them,” alleges the report. □□

Swadeshi Samskrit goes International!

Even after the attainment of independence, efforts to revive Samskrit – the soul of Indian culture– proved virtually useless, since the newly formed National Government comprised of the wine of old British bureaucrats in the new bottle of National Government, says K.S. Iyer



What is Swadeshi? While some people think that it is a very difficult concept to define, many are not interested in it, including many of our MP's and MLA's, who are supposed to be the guardians of our nation. Well! If some people find it difficult to understand the concept of Swadeshi, surely the difficulty lies either in our educational system or in our legislators who are not conscious of their responsibilities to posterity or both. However, people who are not supposed to be so educated like a farmer, an

agriculturist, a trader, or an ordinary housewife seem to be practicing 'Swadeshi', though they may not be in a position to indulge in intellectual quibbling on the concept of 'Swadeshi'! The concept of 'Swadeshi' is deeply rooted in an individual's love for ones fellow countrymen, its heritage, traditions, culture, civilization and all that is noble and virtuous, capable of contributing to the welfare of the people of the land. Yes, Swadeshi is a multi-dimensional concept, whether it pertains to our educational system, public health,

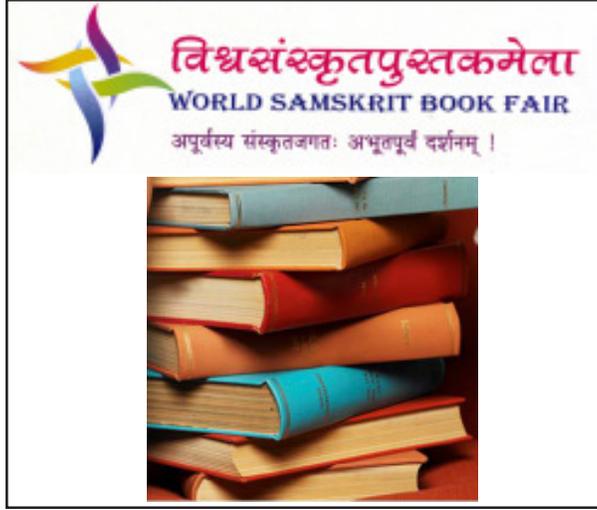
Yes, Swadeshi is a multi-dimensional concept, it pertains to our educational system, public health, defence and communications, (Particularly telecommunications!)

defence, communications, (Particularly telecommunications!) or any other field of activity in our country-SWADESHI! It does not require a doctorate in philosophy or economics to understand the concept of 'Swadeshi'. A clean conscience and clear head are enough to understand the concept of 'Swadeshi'.

After the treacherous attack on India by the Chinese in 1962, Lal Bahadur Shastri convened an all party meeting at Delhi to which Shri Guruji Golwalkar, the then Sar-Sanghachalak of RSS was also an invitee. When all the national minded leaders – needless to say, except the communist leaders– were hotly discussing about the urgency and the need to provide a 'nuclear umbrella', some felt that it could be obtained from US, some suggested it could be from France, while certain others suggested that Germany would be preferable! At this point of discussion, it was left for Guruji Golwalkar to draw the attention of the leaders to repose faith in our scientists and rely on Self-Reliance. Confidence begets confidence! The entire assemblage applauded the suggestion of Guruji Golwalkar, exhibiting thereby the dormant 'Swadeshi Spirit' in the nation.

The 'Swadeshi Spirit' manifests itself, time and again, whenever there is a threat to our na-

tionhood and national culture. Such a threat started with the introduction of the Macaulayan system of Education that sought to root out the Indian culture, by declaring Samskrit Patashalas as illegal. However, Samskrit language and Samskrit culture survived with a remarkable tenacity, inspite of the mechanizations by the British ruled Government of India. Even after



the attainment of independence, efforts to revive Samskrit – the soul of Indian culture – proved virtually useless, since the newly formed National Government comprised of the wine of old British bureaucrats in the new bottle of National Government. Despite many follies and foibles, Samskrit enthusiasts present in various organizations – irrespective of caste, culture, creed, religion, ideology or political affiliations- continued their efforts unabated and formed various organizations to spread the cause of Samskrit – the root of Indian culture. Thanks to their efforts!

Today we are having many, many organizations, among which mega-organisations like Rashtriya Samskrit Sansthan, Government of Karnataka, Samskrit universities, Samskrit Academy, International Association for Samskrit Studies (PARIS) , Akhil Bharatiya Samskrit Prakashak Sangh, Na-

tional Manuscript Mission, Oriental Research Institutes, Samskrit Promotion Foundation and Samskrita Bharati have formed a team to organize a 'World Samskrit Book Fair' known as 'Vishwa Samskrita Pushtaka Mela' at the National College ground, Bengaluru (Banglore), from 7th January 2011, to 10th January 2011. Here, they promise to showcase the vibrant world of Samskrit, like never before!

As a precursor to this mega-event, Bangalore is already inundated with 1008, 'Ten days spoken Samskrit' classes from November 2010, which must have subsided by now! The highlights of the four day mega-event include Book Fair, exhibits, conferences and workshops and cultural programmes.

It is not surprising that for a mega-event of this nature, Swadeshi in outlook, the estimated expenditure is roughly Rs. 3.25

crores. While more than 150 Samskrit Book publishers from all over the globe will be participating in the Book Fair, it will be packed with other programmes like 'Release of more than 500 new publications, an enlightening 'Exhibition', 'A Samskrit Village Replica', 'A National Samskrit Conference' and a glamorous 'Cultural Extravaganza' – all reflecting the values of life, cher-

ished and nourished by our ancestors of yore!

The National Advisory Board, constituted to show case 'the vibrant world of Samskrit, like never before, in the form of world Samskrit Book Fair at Bangalore – comprises of 17 members who are either present or former Vice-Chancellors of Samskrit universities, 9 members who are Heads of Samskrit Academies and research institutes, 16 distinguished dignitaries drawn from different related fields – with Justice H.N. Venkatachaliah, Former Chief Justice of India as President and three other Vice-Presidents (Justice R.C. Lahoti, Justice Dr. M. Rama Jois and Shri N. Gopalaswamy, eminent personalities who need no introduction). With Dr. Prahaladacharya (Former Vice-Chancellor, Rashtriya Samskrit Vidyapeeth, Tirupati) and Shri Chamu Krishna Shastry (Secretary, Samskrit Promotion Foundation, New Delhi) as a moving spirit behind this historic event, the country is certainly destined to realize its dream of 'Expanding its Horizons of Fulfillment to a New Level Through Samskrit! □□

Samskrit Promotion Foundation & Samskrita Bharati have formed a team to organize a 'World Samskrit Book Fair' known as 'Vishwa Samskrita Pushtaka Mela' at the National College ground, Bengaluru (Banglore), from 7th Jan.–10th Jan. 2011.

Computer Networking for Effective Dissemination of Information on Farm Mechanization: An Appraisal

Problems in implementation of Computer networking for effective dissemination of information on Farm mechanization still persist. Taking the lesson from the present poor impact of computer net working the agencies should be asked in future to take appropriate actions, suggests Dr. Sadachari Singh Tomar

The computer networking covered initially 231 centers in 1995-96 under NARP, 437 centers in 1998-99 under NATP and with various other schemes by investing about Rs 200 crores. it was for E-governance, not merely for normalization of research and administration, but also as medium of servicing the society better. The PM's High Powered IT Task Force's 108 recommendations sowed the seed of e-governance and thus computer network progressed.

The points, which emerged during the assessment as major issues, may be implemented for betterment. The available resources may be utilized in more effective ways. There will be lot of economic benefit due to improvement of its use & implementation. The e-governance, where we mean electronic governance as an information age model of governance that seeks to realize process and structures for harnessing the potentialities of ICT at various levels of government/ Public Sector for purpose of enhancing governance.

Medium term benefits: the available literature, data and other information will now be brought under computer network by having good quality CNE with better management.



Long term benefits: the funds can be planned to utilize effectively so that the available IT Net can give better output. The outcome of the project will be useful in enhancement of e-governance by providing help in professional excellence in process of re-engineering, exemplary leadership and ICT achievements, better performance in service delivery and helping in innovative operations and better practices. Thus new entrepreneurs and professionals of central / state governments/ UTs, Districts, local bodies, civil societies, PSUs, industries etc may get the benefit

from this project.

The study was carried out with following objectives

1. To assess the impact of computer network for effective dissemination of information related with multi-operational power equipment, precision machinery for field crops, farm tools and equipment, human safety machines, plant protection and other Agricultural Engineering sector.
2. To study the constraints affecting the dissemination of information related with farm machinery and other Agri. Engineering /Technology aspects.

Computer networking a new sector in 1995 had some problems in implementation of programme in initial stage. Which should have been improved but study shows that the problem persists.

3. To analyze the data for effective application of IT to disseminate information on farm mechanization and other Agricultural engineering aspects.

Thus the e-governance through computer network which is coming of age is being evaluated in agriculture and allied sector. As one faces the pressure to perform, he seeks a technological solution to deliver better services to the people and also to establish a computer network connection with his constituents. There is race to use Information and Communication Technology (ICT) to improve the functioning of Agricultural Sector in our country. Developed countries with better e-infrastructure are going to full steam to make all services available electronically to the agricultural sector by a promised deadline. Developing countries, though struggling to lay cables and fibers, are also trying to catch up with them fast. There are a number of efforts/ experiments that have been carried out in various parts of the world but it may be one of the 1st efforts in agricultural research sector in India. The present effort is to assess the inner view of the story of efforts for e-governance of main computer network, which is in agricultural and allied sector of the country.

The tours were conducted to get first hand information, to tally the records, to validate data,

to facilitate the problems during collection, compilation and distribution. The review was made and important data was considered for present analysis.

Results and discussions:

For the web site analysis the web sites of ICAR institutes, SAUs, KVKs and few other national and International organizations were selected and their web sites were down loaded for analyses to know the impact. The web sites of various organizations covering information in different aspects of farm mechanization were analyzed and reported.

Computer networking was new sector in 1995 which had some problems in implementation of programme in initial stage. Which should have been improved but study shows that the problem persists and network is not very good. There are many sectors which require improvement. There is need of more research in this sector because IT is very important today, especially to cover whole NARS. Taking the lesson from the present poor impact of computer networking the agencies should be asked in future to supply proper CNE in proper time. The ICAR HQ, ICAR institutes, KVKs and SAUs must take proper care in IT sector. It will be appropriate that very neat and clean procurement procedures and management process must be followed and the

pre bidding document (BD) conditions should not be changed after order is placed to benefit bidders. As per provision laid down in the BD specially the obsolete models should not be purchased any way, supply must be of most recent series modes incorporating the latest improvement in design as per BD. There is need of decentralize payment or strictly follow the norms so that bidders have to follow the conditions and install, commission CNE and imparts training. There is also a need of designate computer/ARIS I/C at each site and provide them recent trainings/ knowledge. Being new emerging area it requires wholehearted support so that this IT area can give good result for effective dissemination of information/ e-governance. There is need of blacklisting firms who supply bad quality CNE, not installed and given training in time and have no interest in future maintenance/AMC. The agricultural engineering and technology being the major booster of agriculture and have progressed well therefore, there is urgent need to disseminate information of multi-operational power equipment, precision machinery for field crops, farm tools and equipment, human safety machines, plant protection and other Agricultural Engineering sector through web site and LAN in more effective way. In future projects we must take full care on above points to improve dissemination of information/ success and fixed the responsibility of bad monitoring. □□

(Author is Principal Scientist Agri Engineering Division of IARI)

India ignored central Asia for too long: Dr. KN Pandita



Dr. KN Pandita, Sh. Ajit Doval, Brig. Vinod Anand and Dr. Mahesh Chander Sharma

India has ignored central Asian Region for too long. It always looked at the region through Moscow opined Dr. Kashi Nath Pandita, an eminent intellectual and well known central Asian expert. He was delivering a talk on the subject ‘Iran and Central Asian Region in Indian perspective: prospects & possibilities’ in Vivekananda International Foundation Chanakyapuri New Delhi. Dr. Pandita began with the difference in perception among people about the identification of the area called Central Asian Region and delved deep into the close relations India has had with the people & territory since times immemorial. He talked about the social, economical, cultural & political aspects of the people inhabiting this region.

During the cold war period when elsewhere USSR was intact and the central Asian region coun-

tries existed as its confederating units India interacted with this region through Moscow only. This interaction was very formal and limited, he added. Even after dissolution of USSR India was very slow to react to the changing realities, he added further. Dr. Pandita who has been very closely connected with the area and is a keen observer of the developments there spoke in depth about the implications of the power games going on in the natural resource rich region for India and its future. He recalled several instances and personal anecdotes to highlight the reluctance of Indian establishment to act in accordance with requirements in the region. Dr. Pandita was of the view that information about the natural resource rich region was lacking in Indian establishment as compared to our adversaries and our reach, response and inclination to develop a long

term relation was missing.

Involvement of China, Russia and USA and China-Pakistan nexus creating trouble spots for India and the developments in Afghanistan also were dealt with a fair amount of authority. Dr. Pandita declared assertively that no matter whether USA or Pakistan likes it or otherwise India shall not and will not exit from Afghanistan, the country with which it has had very close links and also for strategic reasons. Dr. Pandita also referred to Indian role in reconstruction of Afghanistan particularly the infrastructure of that country like 218-kilometer road linking Delaram to Zaranj, which lies on Afghanistan's border with Iran. Of all India's projects in Afghanistan, the Zaranj-Delaram road triggers the most unease in Pakistan. This is because the route will reduce Afghanistan's dependence on Pakistan & increase India's land access to Afghanistan.

Talking about Iran, Dr. Pandita asked for a patient dealing. He was of the opinion that in spite of several irritants and some irrational reactions from that country India has to understand that Iran is our way to Central Asia. Asking Iranian leadership to compare the mature Indian reaction to the Iranian consent to anti India resolutions in OIC with its reaction to Indian vote against Iranian nuclear programme, Dr. Pandita suggested caution in the interest of both the countries. He was all for the IPI gas line advising all the concerned players to be pragmatic in finding out a way. Talking about Wakham

Corridor, he suggested India to probe options of an underground approach to central Asia under international guarantees to ensure a transit route to the land locked region. Dr. KN Pandita was optimistic about the capabilities and ability of Indian leadership, both political as well as the diplomatic to make sure that the delay in paying attention to the most important region will be compensated with the accelerated action plan to make up the loss of time. He singled out Ayni Airforce as one of the major policy failures of India.

An informed question answer session followed the speech by Dr. Pandita. Quality interventions were made by equally knowledgeable audience and Dr. Pandita was remarkably convincing and impressive in his response. Muralidhar Rao, National Secretary of BJP for example wanted to know the views of the learned speaker about the opinion in decision making circles that given the future needs of India in both economic and strategic terms and in relation to its aspiration for a permanent seat in UN security council was not it worthwhile to have a leaning toward US lead West? Dr. Pandita



Brig. Vinod Anand, Dr. Pandita and Muralidhar Rao.

opined that in case of UN security council seat a 2/3rd majority support of UN general Assembly was a must. In such a scenario ignoring majority of the nations with a vote in general Assembly will not be ideal. So a balanced approach was needed he added. Sh Ashok Bhan a senior Congress leader of J&K wanted to know the extent of impact of Iranian shift on Kashmir on the developments in the trouble torn valley the place that is fast emerging as Islamic state under secular democratic set up. Dr. Pandita responded by saying that irrespective of the extent to

which Iranian noise on Kashmir impacts valley it is imperative to understand that can a secular democratic India afford to have a theocratic Islamic state as an confederating unit? Definition of secular democracy will

need to be reinterpreted in that case he lamented. There were questions about the role of leading Muslim scholars of India and their role, and also about possibility of CAR playing a role in food security of the country. Dr. Pandita was eloquent in his reply to all the queries. While Mukul Kanitkar, Secretary Vivekananda International Foundation started the programme in traditional VIF way, Brig. Vinod Anand senior fellow at VIF made the opening remarks and also the vote of thanks. Ajay Bharti, editor swadeshipatrika introduced Dr. KN Pandita. He revealed that was First Kashmiri to obtain Ph.D. from Teheran University and first Kashmiri to collaborate with Tajikistan Academy on Central Asian matters. He served for a long time as professor in the Persian Department and the Centre of Central Asian Studies at the Kashmir University. He was the director of Department till his retirement. He has authored several books including My Tajik Friends, Iran and Central Asia, Baharistan-i-Shahi and A Muslim Missionary in Medieval Kashmir. □□



Attentive Audience

Visiting Gulbarga An Impressive Show

On 25-26 December, I went to see the Gulbarga Campu 2010, a 10 days programme of Bharat Vikas Sangam-3. Spread over 35 acre tract of land, was just like a Yajana. It is being envisaged by Govindacharya and Basav Raj Patil, an ex-MP now running a large group of educational institutions with indigenous thoughts and ethos. It was inaugurated by Man. Sudarshan ji, former Sarsanghchalak of RSS. Everyday programmes were held with new ideas and themes and on the day I went it was primarily a students' day and the main dignitary to address it was Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam.

Regarding Dr. Kalam's popularity amongst youth there is a joke. It is said that had there been a MP constituency where the voters were only school children, Dr. Kalam would have won without visiting it and all other candidates would be compelled to withdraw their names! I realized the truth behind this joke when I heard him addressing the mammoth gathering of school children, teachers and parents, principally. From the beginning to the end, there was rapt attention in his hour-long speech. I don't think all the students were understanding what Dr. Kalam said in his English, because there was vigorous clapping whenever the speech was rendered into Kannada. But he was asking them again and again to repeat lines after lines, and was asking questions in such a way that all the students were taking full interest in whatever he said. He was taking these

small students very seriously and was acting as a primary school teacher, friend and story-telling grandma three in one.

When a girl student complained on loudspeaker that he had not heard properly what he said, he repeated the previous one or two sentence and proceeded only after verifying whether he was audible. I was imagining that if some student had asked me this thing, I would have asked her to consult



The Moving Pen

kashmirilal@rediffmail.com

her class fellows for this and would have proceeded with it. What he spoke in brief was concentrated in four words: Aiming high, working hard, perseverance and lastly righteousness in thought and deeds. At the end he asked students for any questions and answered five questions to their utmost satisfaction.

What he had admonished the students in these four words, was applicable on the Vikas Sangam as well. The organizers had visualized a total visitor number up to 15 lacks, it was definitely aiming high in Dr. Kalams words. I had seen this tract of land three months ago also, it was a virtual jungle, and transforming it to the present shape was an apt example of hard work. Organisers were contacting from President to Primary school teachers, from spiritual leaders to farmers for the last two years continuously - an example of perseverance. Regarding purity of mind and thought, our readers know well, I think. Of course, on the next day, meant for the

youth, the show was not as big as on the previous day. Thousands figure had receded to hundreds. On reading the brochure I was titillated to find one Central Government Minister to be seated on the same stage with Man. Sudarshan ji. On enquiry I was told that he abstained from coming. Bechara saved from explanation to Madam. CM of the state as well as one other central minister had not arrived for the programmes due to unavoidable circumstances. But it happens usually with political leaders due to their exigencies. Nobody seemed concerned about

them and audience was busy listening to erudite speakers from the social field. I found the overall view very inspiring but final inspiration will be received after the finale.

Email of the Month

Why we start with saying that Our PM is Honest Personally?

Though about 30 to 40 emails flood my mail boxes every day, only a few are read, and rarely some stick to my mind in such a way that I felt compelled to discuss it with others. One such email this month is by an eminent writer Madhu Kishtwar, editor of Manushi. It starts with wondering: "Today, the Indian media—both print and television—is focusing on the recent corruption scandals involving the UPA Government with unusual zeal. However, I fail to understand why almost every commentator, every TV anchor, every editorial writer feels compelled to pay ritual obeisance to the "personal honesty and integrity" of Dr Manmohan Singh

while dealing with the scandals emanating from his cabinet colleagues. They do so even when there is clear evidence that the Prime Minister was well aware of various shady deals, as in the case of Telecom scam, and that he did nothing to stop the brazen economic crimes indulged in by his ministerial colleagues over the last 6 years.” Then she goes on bravely discussing his crimes and corruptions one after the other. Read on.

“Corruption is not only about personally accepting monetary bribes and stacking them away in hidden bank accounts overseas, buying benami properties or accepting diamond sets for your wife. Corruption can come in insidious avatars, such as knowingly turning a blind eye to the misuse the entire machinery of governance to serve private ends of a few individuals, even to the point of endangering national security. For example, not a single person has been punished thus far for supplying sub standard bullet proof jackets to the police handling the 26/11 terrorist attack in Mumbai. Not surprisingly, we are right now witnessing yet another scam involving substandard bullet proof vests. She names Mr. Lally, an IAS officer for his appointment as CEO of Prasar Bharati despite his dubious character and names such other cases as well.

But the bravest part is her criticising the judiciary’s black sheep by name and not sparing the President’s appointment even. Notice: “Dr Manmohan Singh cannot escape responsibility for appointing people with dubious credentials to occupy key positions of power—starting with the appointment of Pratibha Patil as the President

of India. This despite the fact that that Congress leaders of her own district protested vehemently against her appointment because of her and her close kin’s direct involvement in criminal cases. Thereafter, all key institutions, including the Election Commission, the Central Vigilance Commission have been filled with people whose credentials have been questioned not just by the opposition but by courts also.” She also raises But let us come to his final attack and that too personal on Dr. Manmohan Singh. Read on.

“In fact, his defeat in the one and only election he ever fought is related to his lack of personal integrity. He was defeated in the predominantly middle-class South Delhi constituency because people in general and Sikhs in particular were enraged when Manmohan Singh denied the role of the Congress in the 1984 anti Sikh carnage and instead attributed the 1984 massacre to the RSS. The RSS may well be guilty of many other communal riots but the “credit” for the 1984 massacre goes entirely to Congress politicians, including Rajiv Gandhi who even justified the killings saying: “when a big tree falls, the earth is bound to shake.” The Congress Party also ensured that those who masterminded and executed the 1984 pogrom did not get punished.

Similarly, in the case of Gujarat riots, the Prime Minister happily joined the chorus initiated by his boss pillorying Narendra Modi as “Maut ka Saudagar” even though it is well known that Congress party cadres merrily joined the riotous mobs unleashed by BJP-RSS combine in Ahmadabad and elsewhere. This failure to own

responsibility for the conduct of his party men and passing the entire responsibility on to Modi is in large part responsible for the lack of credibility of Congress Party in Gujarat and the severe erosion of its political base in Gujarat.

Likewise, getting a Rajya Sabha seat from Assam claiming he is a resident of the state when he has never had any such connection with Assam is a definite indicator of questionable political integrity.

A PM who compromises national interest, as in Kashmir, just to indulge the personal fancy of the PM in waiting, a PM who looks the other way while his Cabinet colleagues brazenly loot public funds and get away with extorting thousands of crores by way of kickbacks, a PM who is widely perceived and lampooned as a “rubber stamp” does not merit being called “an honest man” or a “man of integrity” because integrity in his job demands putting national interest above partisan politics and personal loyalties. Integrity also involves taking full responsibility for all his acts of commission and omission which have earned UPA II the dubious distinction of being publicly named as the most corrupt and rudderless government in post independence India.” Namaste Sardar ji.

SMS of the Month

What leaders could not say in hour long and week long speeches against rising prices of onions is said in two lines of SMS I received from two persons:

- Beware! Income Tax Department is keeping a watch on all high value transaction.
- Pl STOP buying Onions, Garlic and Tomatoes. ☐☐

Jairam Ramesh Takes-U turn in Cancun

In a major shift from its stated position, the Indian government told the world that it was willing to commit to legally binding emission reduction targets as part of an international climate deal. This move revises India's climate change policy irrevocably and as experts warn will impact the economy adversely.

In the 17-year climate talks, India had thus far led developing countries in the stance that global warming was a problem caused by rich countries, and it was up to rich countries to reduce their GHG emissions. Developing countries argued that their emissions were far lower, and that thrusting enforceable caps on them would hamper their development.

Speaking at the high level segment of the annual UN Framework Convention on Climate Change conference, Ramesh said that "all countries must take binding commitments under appro-

priate legal form" to control their emissions of greenhouse gases (GHG) - mainly carbon dioxide - which are causing climate change.

Minister was not expressing his personal opinion, he was actually espousing the views of Union Cabinet. The Cabinet has approved a proposal, mooted by Jairam Ramesh, diluting the line. The proposal stated, "India will not take any international legally binding agreement, (at the moment)." This opened the window for Ramesh to shift India's position with his statement, suggesting that while India would not take on commitments right now, it could do so in the future.

The UPA had committed to Parliament that India would not take on any international legally binding commitments to reduce greenhouse emissions. It was also part of the Cabinet decision drawing a clear red line against such a move. □

Infra sector fails to meet targets

Several infrastructure sectors have failed to meet the targets set for April-October 2010, a government report has revealed. While ports, coal and electricity sectors have missed their targets, the biggest gap is in case of roads, where the deficit is 26.5%. According to the report prepared by the ministry of statistics and programme implementation, against the ministry's resolve under Kamal Nath to accelerate highway development, the National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) widened or upgraded only 859.93 km of roads, against a target of 1,168.97 km. The progress was 33% lower than 1,283 km achieved during the corresponding period last year.

The next biggest shortfall is seen in the shipping sector, where the cargo handled was 8.8% lower than the target of 351 million tonnes for April-Oct.. While overall goods traffic carried by railways was 516.91 million tonnes, 1.9% lower than the target set for the period, major ports handled cargo around 30 million tonnes less than what was expected. Coal production was 7.3% lower than the target set for the period and actual production was down by 21.65 MT against the target. Overall power generation during April-Oct. 2010 was 480.234 billion units, 2.5% lower than the target for the period, according to the report card.

Another area of concern is fertilizer production,

which was 5.7% below the target. While crude oil production was 0.7% below the target, the production of natural gas was 1.1% below the benchmark set by the petroleum ministry.

Terms of Reference of One Man Committee set up by DoT Notified

The Department of Telecommunications (DoT), the Ministry of Communications & Information Technology has notified the Terms of Reference of the one man Committee comprising Justice (Retd.) Shri Shivraj V. Patil, a retired Judge of the Supreme Court of India, set up to examine appropriateness of procedures followed by the Department in issuance of licences and allocation of spectrum during the period 2001-2009.

The Terms of Reference of the Committee include the study of circumstances and developments in the Telecom sector that led to the formulation of the New Telecom Policy 1999 and subsequently, introduction of 4th Cellular Telecom Mobile Service (CMTS) licence in 2001 and the examination of the internal (intra-departmental) procedures adopted by DoT during the period 2001-2009 for a. Issue of telecom access service licences and b. Allocation of spectrum to all telecom access services licences during the above period.

Apex court asks municipal chief to decide on hawkers

The Supreme Court dissolved a three-member committee formed to decide on the issue of hawkers in Mumbai. The panel comprised an ex-city civil judge, a senior BMC official and a traffic police nominee. The apex court has now given the power to the municipal commissioner and he will appoint a senior officer to look into the matter. The Mumbai Hawkers' Association had in 1985 filed a petition in the Supreme Court challenging the implementation

of hawking-zone guidelines.

In December 2003, the apex court had observed that hawking was not a fundamental right. It had held that the right to hawk was co-related to the pedestrians' right to pavement. In 2007, the SC had permitted 23,000 hawkers to sell their wares on the city's footpaths till the Maharashtra government framed a policy on the lines of the National Policy for Urban Street Vendors. □

UP grain scam: ED joins CBI probe

In what is expected to add more teeth to the investigation into the multi-thousand crore food grain scam in UP, the Enforcement Directorate (ED) decided to join the CBI investigation. The Allahabad HC had asked CBI to join the probe into the unprecedented food grain pilferage in UP between 2004 and 2007 when Mulayam Singh Yadav was the chief minister.

The case relates to the smuggling of grain meant for PDS, mid-day meals and such other schemes out to other states and also neighbouring countries. The ED, sources say, will probe money laundering charges and foreign exchange violations in the grain scam, now considered much bigger than the initial guesstimate of Rs 35,000 crore. Vishwanath Chaturvedi, who first moved Supreme Court seeking a faster probe, talks of an involvement of no less than Rs 2 lakh crore, given that it involves 34 of 71 UP districts. More than 450 Class-I government officials and another 800 middle and lower-rung subordinates apart from some 10,000 private entities are likely to be involved in the scandal. The CBI may require 5,000 FIRs to cover the scam in totality, says a source.

Delhi becoming hub of Maoists

The arrest of a 42-year-old Maoist operative with huge cache of explosive materials on Dec. 3 2010 has once again put the focus on Delhi as a transit hub for Maoists. Ever since the arrest of the top ideologue of the banned CPI(Maoist) Kobad Ghandy, several top Maoist operatives have been held in and around the Capital, where they have been found mingling into the huge urban population easy and are able to avoid detection by the police. The arrested Maoist operative has been identified as Loknath Panth, hailing from Gulmi district in Nepal.

Interrogation of Panth has revealed that he had been frequently coming to the Capital for procuring explosives and transporting them to Nepal. "His interrogation revealed that he was staying at the house of his Nepali friend in Karol Bagh who works as a cook at the residence of a businessman in Karol Bagh area. During interrogation of Panth, a senior police officer said, it was learnt that private licence holders, who keep explosives for commercial purpose, are behind the illegal supply of explosive materials from India to Nepal-based Maoists.

Nehru library head flouts rules

Controversial historian Mridula Mukherjee is a member of the editorial board that brought out the official history of the Congress, although she is the director of Nehru Memorial Museum & Library (NMML), an autonomous body under the ministry of culture. As per the rules, she is prohibited from associating with any political party.

"Congress and the Making of Indian Nation", a two-volume publication brought out by the Congress and released recently during its plenary session, has finance minister Pranab Mukherjee as chief editor and commerce minister Anand Sharma as convener of the editorial board. The book was released by Prime Minister Manmohan Singh, who is also the culture minister, and Congress president Sonia Gandhi.

There is a team of professional historians associated with the project. Mridula, her husband Aditya Mukherjee, a professor of history at Jawaharlal Nehru University, her sister Sucheta Mahajan, also in Jawaharlal Nehru University's history department and Bhashyam Kasturi, her colleague in NMML, and Rizwan Qaiser, from the department of history and culture, Jamia Millia Islamia, are all part of the team. Kasturi is a contract employee. □

Deals with India will support more than 50,000 American jobs: Obama

Noting that export orders of worth USD 10 billion from India contributed to over 50,000 jobs in the US, President Barack Obama said growth in export market imperative for US economy. Obama, in his address to the President's Export Council at the White House which discussed the ways to promote a strong and growing economy, said the world wants products made in America, adding that for every USD 1 billion that US increases in exports supports more than 5,000 jobs.

"So at a time when jobs are in short supply, growing our export markets is an imperative, and growing our exports today will create the jobs of tomorrow. Ninety-five per cent of the world's customers and the fastest-growing markets are beyond our borders," he said.

"If we want to find new growth streams for our economy, we've got to compete aggressively for those customers, because other nations are competing aggressively. And as long as I'm president of the United States, we are going to fight

for every job, every industry, every market everywhere. And we intend to win," he asserted. "That's why I set this goal. We're on track to meet it. Exports are up nearly 18 per cent so far over last year," Obama said.

"I visited India to highlight the role American business played there and took the opportunity to sell our exports to one of the fastest growing markets in the world," Obama said.

"While I was there, we reached several landmark deals – from Boeing jets & GE engines, to medical & mining equipment – deals that are worth nearly USD 10 billion in exports & will support more than 50,000 American jobs," said the US President.

On the US and South Korea agreement on a landmark trade deal last week, Obama said that he expects this deal's tariffs reductions alone to boost annual exports of American goods by up to USD 11 billion. This agreement, including the opening of the Korean services market, will support more than 70,000 American jobs, he added. □

Assange signs \$1.5 mn autobiography deal

WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange has signed contracts worth \$1.5 million for penning his autobiography. Assange, whose whistleblowing website has provoked US rage by releasing secret diplomatic documents, said the money will help him to defend himself against the sexual assault claims made by two women in Sweden, which he denies.

"I don't want to write this book, but I have to," he told The Sunday Times in an interview. "I have already spent 200,000 pounds for legal costs and I need to defend myself and to keep WikiLeaks afloat." The 39-year-old Australian said he will receive \$800,000 from a US publisher Alfred Knopf and \$500,000 from a British deal with Canongate. The total sum from the deals, including those with other markets, will reach over \$1.5 million.

China's dams concerns Kazakhstan

China's dam-building spree in its far-west Xinjiang region has triggered concerns in the neighbouring Kazakhstan, where officials say two main rivers have begun to see water-levels recede at an alarming

rate. Officials from the Central Asian nation are expected to raise the issue with Beijing early next year and press for more information on hydro-projects in Xinjiang, according to officials in the Kazakh government.

The Irtysh and Ili rivers, crucial to Kazakhstan's water security, have their source in Xinjiang. Since 2000, China has accelerated development in the region, which has seen intermittent ethnic unrest. Kazakh officials say China's development push in Xinjiang, which includes a number of dams and irrigation projects, is the main reason behind the falling water-levels in both the rivers. The rivers drain into the Balkhash lake, which sustains the livelihood of more than two million Kazakhs. Negotiations have made little headway so far, say officials. The dispute, which stretches to over a decade, could hold crucial lessons for India in managing water-sharing issues with China over the Brahmaputra river. China's plans to build dams in the difficult terrain of Tibet are still at a nascent stage compared with its projects in Xinjiang.

With South Africa in, it will be BRICS

The BRIC (Brazil, Russia, India and China) grouping will become BRICS with the inclusion of

South Africa, according to sources in the government. The third BRIC summit in China next year will see South African President Jacob Zuma present as an observer. Membership of the soon-to-be five nation grouping will then be frozen for some time. This means that aspirants for membership like Egypt and Indonesia will have to wait till the BRICS stabilises.

India is comfortable with the planned inclusion of South Africa as both countries consult each other on a wide variety of international issues. The G-4 countries (Japan-India-Germany-Brazil) regularly have consultations with South Africa on the expansion of the U.N. Security Council to include more permanent members. "By most calculations and any yardstick, South Africa has good credentials to represent Africa on the UNSC," the sources said.

The BRICS will add more muscle to the original four-nation team in pressing for reforms in multilateral financial institutions and G-20 meetings based on the principle of multi-polarity. This has led to the BRIC emerging as a symbol of gradual transfer of economic power from the West to emerging economies.

Indian businessmen part of Dubai forum

Indian businessmen based in the Gulf region have been named part of a forum that has been established in Dubai to unite the business community from the country. The formation of the Indian Business Leaders Forum was announced by India Trade & Exhibition Centre Middle East (ITEC me) established in Sharjah with the mandate from the Indian Ministry of Commerce & Sharjah Chamber of Commerce & Industry.

To be headquartered in Dubai, possibly at the world's tallest tower Burj Khalifa, the membership of the forum will be given by invitation only. Indian Business Leaders from other the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries shall be invited to the Forum, a statement said. GCC is political & economic alliance of 6 Middle Eastern countries— Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, the United Arab Emirates, Qatar, Bahrain, and Oman. A similar Board of Governors of young achievers & 2nd generation business leaders is under formation & will be announced shortly while the Board of Governors shall be expanded in due course of time, the statement said. It said that the Ambassador of India to UAE, MK Lokesh, has consented to be the Patron of the Forum & Consul General of India shall be the ex-officio member of both the Board of Governors.

US can't seal Af-Pak border: Pentagon

Acknowledging that terrorists have a safe haven inside the tribal areas of Pakistan from where they operate and cross over to Afghanistan, a top Pentagon official said that it would be a tough job to seal the Af-Pak border. "As far as the border itself, I think it's naive to say that we can stop, you know, forces coming through the border," said Col Viet Luong Commander, Task Force Rakkasan and 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division.

"In order to secure the border, as well – as you know, it takes a lot. It takes effort on the other side, by the Pakistanis," said Luong, who is responsible for eastern Afghanistan which includes the volatile Khost province and 261 km of Af-Pak border. In a special video conferencing with Pentagon reporters from Kabul, he said, "as our footprint is expanded along the security line of effort, it's harder and harder for these guys to come and bed down in these villages."

"You can get more effects by defending in depth than you are in line. So we pick and choose where – the best places that we can defend the border, and then be able to target those guys where they feel safe in. I think that's been the key to our success," he said.

Escaped Girl reveals Taliban's all-women suicide squad

Pakistani Taliban have established an all-women wing of suicide bombers to carry out terror missions across the country, dramatically revealed a 12-year-old girl who managed to escape from the clutches of the rebels from near the Afghanistan border. Meena Gul's brother, a Taliban commander, told her: "You will go to heaven before any of us, if you blow up yourself the way I tell you."

The Express Tribune reported that the girl was caught by security personnel from the Munda area near Dir district in January this year. The statements she gave nearly 11 months back came true following a woman's suicide bombing in Dec 25 that killed 46 people in Bajaur. Meena Gul managed to escape from the Taliban guerrillas when militants' hideouts were reduced to rubble in a bombardment. She spoke about a women's wing of the Taliban waiting to carry out suicide attacks.

A resident of Afghanistan, Meena Gul's family had travelled across Pakistan, residing in Karachi, Lahore & refugee camps in Peshawar, police records show. □□

US tariff on Chinese tyres

The World Trade Organisation has upheld the duty imposed on Chinese tyres by the US. The United States in September last year had imposed additional duties on imports of certain passenger vehicles and light truck tyres from China for a period of three years to remedy the market disruption caused by those imports. Following this China had alleged that the additional duties were inconsistent with the GATT 1994, the Agreement on Safeguards, and China's Protocol of Accession.

It also said that various elements of the USITC's determination regarding market disruption were inconsistent with the Protocol of Accession. China further charged that the level and duration of the additional duties were inconsistent with the Protocol of Accession, and that the section 421 definition of significant cause was itself inconsistent with the Protocol of Accession. This led to WTO establishing a panel in January this year on the issue, which ruled in favour of the United States recently. Both sides have the right to appeal the panel's findings to the WTO Appellate Body within 60 days.

Russian WTO Membership

The European Union and Russia have reached an agreement on trade issues during wide-ranging talks between European Union officials and Russian President Dmitry Medvedev in Brussels that paves the way for Moscow's entry into the World Trade Organization as early as next year.

The European Union permanent President Herman Van Rompuy announced the breakthrough at a press conference. Moscow is the European Union's third-biggest trading partner and the only major one that is not a member of the World Trade Organization. As a result, it must settle differences through bilateral negotiations with separate states. Russia received U.S. backing for its WTO membership in October, after 17 years of negotiations, and hopes to join the trading block in 2011.

EU duties on Chinese screws

European duties on Chinese screws break trade laws, according to the WTO. The European Union (EU) has been told to stop levying import duties on Chinese screws, nuts and bolts. The ruling by the WTO marks the first time the trade body has ruled against the EU in favour of China. The panel of WTO ex-

perts said the EU's import duties broke trade rules and said they must be revised. According to the organisation's rules, both sides now have 60 days to appeal against the ruling. The Chinese claim stated that the EU had wrongly calculated the threshold, a complaint the WTO upheld. "The rulings make it clear that the EU's anti-dumping legislation & practice are discriminatory & inconsistent with WTO rules," China said in a statement.

Drop in anti-dumping investigations

The WTO Secretariat reported that during the period 1 Jan. – 30 June 2010, the number of initiations of new anti-dumping investigations showed a 29% decrease compared with the corresponding period of 2009. The number of new measures applied also decreased during the first semester of 2010 when compared with the first half of 2009. In particular, during Jan. – June 2010, 19 WTO Members reported initiating a total of 69 new investigations, compared with 97 new investigations reported by 18 WTO Members for the corresponding period of 2009. A total of 14 Members reported applying 59 new anti-dumping measures during the first semester of 2010, with a decrease of 5% than the 62 new measures reported by 16 Members for the corresponding period of 2009. Fifteen new investigations were opened by developed Members and 10 out of 59 new final measures were applied by developed Members during the first half of 2010. This compares with 15 new investigations begun and 15 new measures applied by developed Members during the first half of 2009.

U.S. challenges China wind power aid

The United States has accused China of illegally subsidizing the production of wind power equipment & asked for talks at WTO, the first step in filing a trade case. USTR estimated Chinese manufacturers of wind turbines & related parts & components could have received several hundred million dollars in questionable government grants in 2008 under China's "Special Fund for Wind Power Manufacturing." "Import substitution subsidies are particularly harmful & inherently trade distorting, which is why they are expressly prohibited under WTO rules," Trade Representative Ron Kirk said in a statement. "These subsidies effectively operate as a barrier to U.S. exports to China. U.S. wind turbine manufacturers such as General Electric & United Technologies are eager to compete in China's fast-growing market. □□