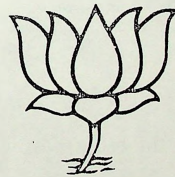
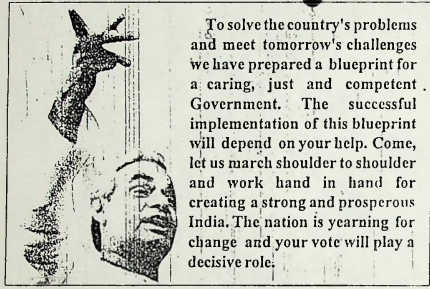


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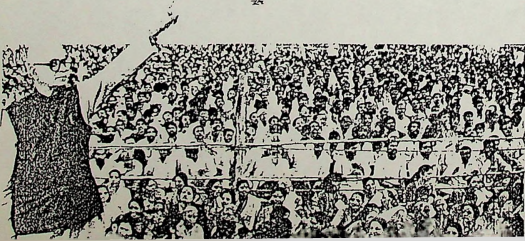


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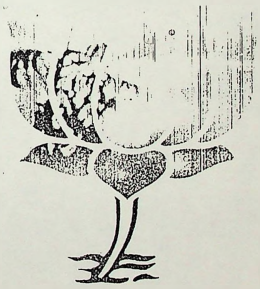
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To change the culture of governance  
Vote BJP



Election Manifesto 1996

For a Strong and Prosperous India



Election Manifesto 1996

10A  
30/4/96  
A. Prasad

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## OUR VISION, OUR FAITH, OUR COMMITMENT

*It is out of the past that the future is moulded.*

*It is the past that becomes the future...*

—Swami Vivekananda

Even as this century draws to a close and the millennium turns, India stands at a critical crossroad of history. Centuries' old hopes and aspirations of our people yearn for a true expression. The destiny of our land and its people cries for fulfilment. At such crucial turns historical choices are made and instruments of change adopted. That destined vehicle of change is the Bharatiya Janata Party.

Never before in the long history of our land has the country been governed by such a morally rudderless and financially corrupt regime. Seldom have our trusting people been duped by a baser band. With the people's hopes belied and their aspirations thwarted, our ancient land stands today face to face with the option of a real change, a chance for a true departure from the last 50 years of Congress misrule, an alternative and an option: The Bharatiya Janata Party.

Our people are looking towards the BJP to become just this instrument of change. The party is ready to shoulder this great duty and responsibility. The task is nothing short of rekindling the lamp of our eternal 'Dharma', that *Sanatan* thought which our sages bequeathed to mankind — a social system based on compassion, cooperation, justice, freedom, equality and tolerance.

To realise this goal, the BJP will launch a new social, economic and political order. It will strive to transform the existing system of governance, to make it responsive and answerable to the concerns of our citizens. It will strive to make

the economy cater to the largest demands of the largest number. The party will endeavour to place in the service of the nation a political organisation that is conscientious and clean. Above all, the BJP will secure for India a place in the comity of nations which befits its vast cultural, intellectual, economic, scientific and human wealth.

We realise that correcting the mistakes of the last 50 years of Congress misrule, of piecing together the shattered dreams of our citizens, of restructuring our polity which has been delivered a body blow by the present regime, of restoring the state's authority and reviving faith in the Government, is by no means an easy task. But we also realise that only the BJP has the ideological commitment, moral conviction and political courage to shoulder this task and gently guide our nation into the next millennium. The present millennium began with the subjugation of our ancient land; let a reinvigorated, proud, prosperous and strong India herald the next millennium.

In this noble mission, we shall be guided by our Manifesto — it contains our commitments to the nation and its citizens. Our State Governments in Uttar Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Rajasthan, Gujarat and Delhi have demonstrated that for the BJP, these commitments constitute a sacred covenant with the people. We do what we say. This Manifesto shall be the covenant of our Government.

With a BJP Government at the Centre, the next five years will be devoted to implementing our Manifesto based on the four concepts of *Suraksha, Shuchita, Swadeshi and Samrasata. Hindutva*, or cultural nationalism, shall be the rainbow which will bridge our present to our glorious past and pave the way for an equally glorious future: it will guide the transition from *swarajya* to *surajya*. Our Manifesto reflects the application of these four concepts in good governance and their role in moulding the nation we dreamt of on the dawn of Independence — a prosperous and strong India, a country

where every citizen regards this land of ours, this Bharatbhoomi, that stretches from the Indus to the seas, as his sacred motherland.

The BJP believes in one nation, one people, one culture. We are, therefore, committed to promoting social reconciliation rather than conflict. We are resolved to put an end to the politics of competitive communalism, of appeasement, and of casteism. The politics of pitting caste against caste, community against community and class against class has torn asunder our social fabric. The BJP will rewave this fabric into a harmonious pattern.

To translate this Manifesto into reality, to fulfil our destined role of leading India into the next millennium, the Bharatiya Janata Party seeks the support and cooperation of all our citizens.

# OUR NATION, OUR STATE, OUR GOVERNMENT

## *A New Direction, A New Dispensation*

Nearly half a century of Congress misrule has all but shattered the internal polity of the country. There is not one institution of the Republic left that can be said to now be in a state of total health. The Legislature, the Executive, unfortunately the Judiciary, and even the media have been afflicted by the mindlessness of the Congress' exploitation and loot of our country.

The Bharatiya Janata Party well recognises that to correct this great wrong of the past five decades requires the skill and commitment of a Vishwakarma. With humility, we address ourselves to this task.

The first is to restore to our state its authority. Perhaps never since the scourge of the Pindaries has the writ of our state been as enfeebled as by this Congress misrule. The primary task, therefore, is to restore to the state, and to governance, its honour and its prestige — 'izzat' and 'iqbal'. For this the BJP will institute a set of measures. This is a challenge that is principally moral and only then functional. The BJP commits itself, therefore, to:

1. Addressing purposefully to the many challenges being posed to us in Jammu & Kashmir and in the North-East of India. We are of the view that in both these strategically important border regions of the country, misgovernance, neglect and emotional separation from India lie at the root of the problems. Terrorism and challenges to the state will be met forthrightly; changes in law where warranted will be brought about expeditiously; the approach will be firm but always fair.

2. Launching a major nationwide drive to identify influx of illicit arms and their possession. Proliferation of small arms affects directly the law and order in the country as also the security of the nation. We recognise that narcotics smuggling and narco-terrorism are linked. The country must be rid of both. The law in this regard will be made more effective and implemented.
3. Toning up the administration (as enumerated subsequently) and reforming its functioning, accountability and responsiveness.
4. Rationalising the number, structure, composition and role of paramilitary forces, including recent initiatives like National Security Guard (NSG), Rapid Action Force (RAF) and Special Protection Group (SPG). We will review the personal security arrangements: We believe that the security of the high dignitaries of the country is the responsibility of the state. This security, however, should neither be exaggerated nor intrusive. It should not ever be at the cost of the collective convenience of the citizens of the country. The BJP will reform this.

## AN AGENDA FOR CHANGE

### Constitutional Reforms

The BJP believes that Centre-State relations, which have been on a downslide for the past 50 years, need to be improved. We also believe that reforms are needed for a stronger Union and equal rights for all citizens.

1. The BJP will implement the main recommendations of the Sarkaria Commission, such as:
  - (a) Restoring the balance of resources in favour of the States;
  - (b) Ending the misuse of Art 356 to dismiss State Governments and dissolve State Assemblies. We will explore the possibility of making it mandatory for the Union

Government to seek Parliament's approval by two-thirds majority for dismissal of State governments ; and,

- (c) Consulting State Governments before appointing Governors.
2. We promise to carve out Uttaranchal, Jharkhand, Vidarbha and Chattisgarh and give them full statehood. We will further consider setting up a Commission to examine the formation of smaller States. Delhi will be given full Statehood.
  3. The BJP will provide Jammu, Kashmir and Ladakh in J&K State with regional development councils.
  4. We will abrogate Article 370 of the Constitution, which puts Jammu & Kashmir on a separate and separatist pedestal, for the State's full and final integration with the Union.
  5. We will set up an inter-State council under Article 263 of the Constitution to settle all inter-State and Centre-State disputes to avoid ad hoc responses to issues like that of Cauvery waters.
  6. The BJP is committed to Article 44 of the Constitution. We will adopt a Uniform Civil Code which will be applicable to every community and foster a common Bharatiya identity, apart from ensuring gender equality. Regressive personal laws will cease to have legal validity.
  7. The manner of appointment of Constitutional functionaries will be reviewed.
  8. We will maintain a national register of citizens and introduce a multi-purpose identity card.

#### Electoral Reforms

The BJP carries a conviction that amongst the many causes that have brought the state of our polity to its present plight, a major factor is faulty elections. We will, therefore,

immediately on assuming office, implement various electoral reforms. For free, fair and fearless elections, the BJP will:

1. Update and adopt the Goswami Committee report;
2. Grant statutory status to the Code of Conduct drawn up by the Election Commission and give it teeth;
3. Introduce a scheme of state-funding of candidates to all legislatures;
4. Provide suitable incentives for open, official corporate funding to all recognised political parties;
5. Undertake fresh delimitation of Lok Sabha and Assembly constituencies on the basis of the 1991 Census;
6. Make it mandatory for political parties to submit audited accounts for public scrutiny annually;
7. Examine the feasibility of introducing the list system;
8. Expedite the process of issuing identity cards to all voters and make it a mandatory requirement for voting;
9. Scrutinise all voters' lists to ensure that no legitimate voter is excluded;
10. Take steps to curb expenditure on elections by imposing a ban on advertisements, cutouts, etc;
11. Introduce electronic voting machines to hasten the process of counting;
12. Examine the possibility of simultaneous elections to Parliament, State Assemblies and Panchayats;
13. Ensure speedy and exemplary punishment for those who indulge in booth-capturing;
14. Officials found guilty of involvement in poll rigging will be given exemplary punishment;
15. Amend the anti-defection law whereby a member of any

Legislature who changes parties will lose his or her membership of the House; and,

16. Prevent the misuse of Doordarshan and A.I.R. by the ruling party.

### Corruption & Its Cure

The BJP treats this affliction as the single greatest wrong that the Congress misrule of the past 50 years has brought about on our land. The corruption that now corrodes our country is of the spirit, it is moral, and it is also financial. The challenge thus to governance is principally of setting an example — of impeccable probity and unimpeachable accountability of all public men and women. This must not cover simply the elected representatives of the people but also the executive, the police and, indeed, even the judiciary, where the touch of corruption can already be felt. The BJP will address itself to this challenge and task, by adopting measures that are mentioned hereunder. We do not claim that this is either the ultimate blueprint for the reduction of corruption or the last word on it. It is an expression of our commitment; a first step to setting right a very great wrong of many years' malignancy; a beginning and that, too, with ourselves. For a clean public life in which morality and ethics find due recognition, the BJP will:

1. Make it obligatory on every elected representative to make public his entire income and wealth within 90 days of election;
2. Introduce extensive regulations and requirements upon those who hold public office so that no conflict of interest is ever permitted to influence a proper discharge of their duties;
3. Appoint a Lok Pal to entertain complaints of corruption against anybody holding public office, including the Prime Minister;
4. Take measures to modify and reform the methodology of

Government approval for contracts, schemes and large money value agreements so as to make them more transparent. The powers of patronage, the right to say 'Yes' or 'No' to simple daily requirements of the citizens will be reduced drastically. A Government that intrudes the least, we hold, governs the best. We will endeavour to combine this with open and transparent governance;

5. Expeditiously deal with cases of corruption unresolved and in which no action has been taken in the past 10 years;
6. Take steps to ensure that investigative and intelligence agencies like RAW, IB and CBI are not used to subvert the political designs of the ruling party.

### Judicial Reforms

For speedy, fair and inexpensive justice, the BJP will:

1. Appoint special judges to clear the huge arrears at all levels of the judiciary;
2. Fill the vacancies in the High Courts and the Supreme Court without any further delay;
3. Legislate to the effect that courts do not give unending adjournments and complete cases within one year.
4. Constantly review the salaries and pension benefits of all judges so as to attract the best legal talent to the Judiciary;
5. Expand and strengthen the existing legal aid facilities for economically weaker sections of society; and,
6. Set up a National Judicial Commission which will be responsible for making judicial appointments in the High Courts and the Supreme Court.

### Panchayati Raj

For better local self-governance at the village-level, the BJP will:

1. In the light of recent experience, make changes in the Constitution 73rd and 74th amendments to further strengthen the Panchayati Raj system; and,



2. Endeavour to make the panchayats financially self-sufficient.

### Administrative Reforms

For a caring, just and accountable administration, to provide high quality services the citizens value and for a new paradigm in public administration, the BJP will:

1. Make the district administration accountable for any outbreak of violence; institute a time-bound inquiry; publish the findings; punish the guilty; and, compensate the victims;
2. Update and implement the National Police Commission report in a time-bound manner;
3. Ask each Ministry/Department to set clear performance standards, including cost consciousness, in quantifiable terms and monitor the adherence to these standards;
4. Introduce a scheme of fixed minimum tenure for some identified posts at higher ranks, e.g. Chief Secretaries, Secretaries to Government, DGPs, etc;
5. Disfavour extensions to bureaucrats and police officers;
6. Institute an annual Sardar Patel award for the best three district officers, as a beginning;
7. Ensure uniform housing and other related facilities for officers in the same grade and in the same station. The system of allotment of houses will be made transparent;
8. Introduce a system of allowing lateral entry of personnel from the private sector, NGOs, educational/research institutes into Government;
9. Identify areas from which Government must withdraw so that departments can be wound up in a phased manner;

10. Strengthen the department of administrative reforms at the Centre and in the States; and,

11. Give the citizens what is their due. A huge divide today separates the citizen, the society and the state. This is principally on account of the state not treating the rights of the citizens as sacrosanct; not fulfilling its obligations towards the citizens sincerely; and, not providing to the citizens the services that are its bounden duty. The BJP will, therefore, identify such areas as warrant immediate correction, as they affect the daily life of the ordinary citizen, and implement reforms in them within a given timeframe.

### Shri Rama Mandir at Ayodhya

The BJP is committed to the concept of one nation, one people, one culture — our nationalist vision is not merely bound by the geographical or political identity of India, but defined by our ancient cultural heritage. From this belief flows our faith in 'Cultural Nationalism' which is the core of *Hindutva*. That, we believe, is the identity of our ancient nation — *Bharatvarsha*.

*Hindutva* is a unifying principle which alone can preserve the unity and integrity of our nation. It is a collective endeavour to protect and re-energise the soul of India. To take us into the next millennium as a strong and prosperous nation. *Hindutva* is also the antidote to the shameful efforts of any section to benefit at the expense of others.

We hold that only by recognising the limitless strength of cultural nationalism, can the nation be moulded. When the BJP joined the movement for the construction of the Shri Rama Mandir at Ayodhya, it was to strengthen just these foundations.

On coming to power, the BJP Government will facilitate the construction of a magnificent Shri Rama Mandir at Janmasthan in Ayodhya which will be a tribute to *Bharat Mata*. This dream moves millions of people in our land; the concept of Rama lies at the core of their consciousness.

## OUR ECONOMY AND DIRECTION

### *Economic Growth and Employment Through Swadeshi*

Four decades of Congress misrule have ruined the economic creativity of our country; these decades failed to place the country on a sound economic footing, befitting India's stature as the largest democracy in the world. The experiments of the Congress, with vastly divergent models, have brought the country, from time to time, to the brink of crisis. The passive victim of all these experiments has been the long suffering Citizen of our country; even as under-nourishment, malnutrition, illiteracy and deprivation afflict a large percentage of them; even as the quality of life gets fractured between India and Bharat.

We commit ourselves to bringing certainty in economic policy. The Bharatiya Janata Party is proud of India's heritage and has an abiding faith in the creative genius of every Indian. We are committed to an economy that enables India to achieve its destiny in the forefront of the nations of the world.

In 1991 the present Government claimed that it inherited an economy which had a slender foreign exchange reserves. Accepting IMF conditionalities, it initiated a programme of deregulation of industry, trade and exchange rate policies, a radically different approach to foreign investment. The consequential foreign exchange reserves that it will be leaving, as a legacy to the successor government, are, however, fragile, being composed mainly of quick-sand components of foreign institutional investments and FCNR deposits. Foreign direct investment (FDI) is only a minor component of them. An enormous \$ 7 billion becomes ripe for debt servicing in 1996-97 itself. In its zeal to contain fiscal deficit—a task in which it failed, the fiscal deficit continuing around 7% of GDP—it pruned developmental expenditure beyond acceptable limits, in consequence constraining growth.

Despite the proclaimed deregulation, over the past five years, all earlier structures and institutions of the License-Quota-Permit Raj remain intact. Social infrastructure has been neglected and the lot of the poor and deprived has further deteriorated. The country's defence requirements were also neglected, thereby putting the nations' security in jeopardy.

The neglect of infrastructure by this Government has left a legacy of a fractured physical infrastructure—roads, railways, post, power, telecom—are grinding to near immobility, in the process constraining growth elsewhere in the economy. In its methodology for containing the budget through limits on monetisation of the deficit, this Government has compulsorily resorted to heavy borrowings, which in turn has resulted in illiquidity to the rest of the economy and a heating up of the interest rates. Our domestic industry, starved of liquidity, is in danger of slipping into recession.

In totality, this Government will leave an economy more fragile and shattered than what it inherited in 1991. The challenges thus, to us in our bid at governance, are formidable.

### Our Economic Thought

In outlining our strategy, we recognise that the post-Cold War world has adopted the market place for fast economic growth. However, our thought is defined by the following:

- i) Market may ensure growth, but it cannot ensure redistributive equity and justice. The state continues to have a role to play;
- ii) The poor and deprived have, therefore, to be helped by the state to cross the poverty line and to attain a sustainable minimum quality of life;
- iii) On the economic front, the old order, based on comparative advantage of labour or resources, is giving way to a new order built on the basis of human resources, skills and technology. A proper policy can

make it India's strength; and,

- iv) A society such as ours has to innovate its own strategy, to adapt itself to the high-tech challenges of a supposedly borderless world, without the attendant social stresses, economic instability and the abandonment either of its identity or of its own socio-cultural ethos. This is the essence of our Swadeshi approach: A self-reliant India, asserting its national economic interests, not as autarchy, but as a pre-requisite to meeting the challenge of globalisation; of preserving our identity without compromising our sovereignty or self respect. We reject unbridled consumerism and believe in adherence to sustainable consumption and growth.

Foreign investment will be required and encouraged for world class technology. But when foreign savings have to supplement and assist the economy in circumstances where domestic savings are inadequate, we compromise with the nation's long term interests. While many countries which started late but arrived much earlier than India, managed their growth on savings levels around 35-40% of GDP, the Indian domestic savings rate has steadily declined to a low level of 20% of GDP during Congress rule. This is grossly inadequate for even the current level of investment, let alone the levels required for a faster growth of the economy. Not only have private savings declined, more worrisomely, governmental savings are now virtually nil.

We recognise two immediate priorities—first, providing the physical and economic infrastructure that is appropriate for the stipulated growth in our GDP; second, providing the required social infrastructure for a minimum sustainable quality of life.

To attain these and yet contain fiscal deficit requires a different approach. The BJP will work towards pruning non-developmental expenditure; minimise the commercial activi-

ties of Government; severely cutting back on bureaucracy; shedding the structures of controls and regulation; and re-equipping itself for its new role of providing a framework for free market operations for growth, accentuating programmes for poverty eradication and social infrastructure.

### Fiscal Reform and Taxation

We believe that taxation alone cannot be the base for revenue. A stable and fast growth is possible only through a high order of investment matched by an appropriate level of domestic savings. The present Government has done a great disservice by encouraging avoidable consumerism and diverting the depleted savings into speculative rather than safe and productive channels.

- We will structure our fiscal reforms so that savings and contracted savings are augmented to levels that will take care of a higher order of investment needed for faster growth.
- In taxation, we will ensure that not only levels and rates of taxation are such that growth is not constrained, but that the burden-sharing of taxes is equitably distributed among all affluent sections of society. We will mitigate the undue rigours of indirect taxes—today indirect taxes constitute 71% of tax revenue—so that productivity and growth are not hampered.
- We will devise a suitably structured value added tax (VAT) so as to ensure better burden-sharing among goods and services that contribute to value addition.
- In tariffs we will ensure that the domestic sector gets a level playing field, and does not become uncompetitive.
- We will also strive to lighten the debt burden on the nation. This in turn will contribute to interest rate stabilisation.
- We will not hike Excise Duties on items of mass consumption.

- We will examine the aspect of sales tax reform and equalisation.
- We will ensure operational autonomy of the RBI.
- We will adopt firm measures to prevent the generation of black money.
- We will rationalise and simplify the present tax structure and raise the Income Tax exemption limit to Rs. 60,000.
- We will provide weighted deductions taking number of dependents on earning member.
- We will exempt all investments in approved organisations, private or public, from the levy of Wealth Tax.
- We will give tax reliefs to employment-oriented industries in non-municipal areas.
- We will ensure minimum contribution to Government exchequer by all profit-earning business units. The concept of "zero business units" will be done away with.
- We will give special tax concessions to writers, artists, academics and others engaged in intellectual and cultural pursuits.

#### Price Stability and Consumer Protection

It is our firm belief that the price level can be controlled only through maximisation of production and a minimisation of costs of production. This is to be achieved through technology upgradation, economics of scale and free competition. Towards this end, the BJP will:

- Ensure an efficient, low-cost, corruption-free PDS, so that there is a regular, assured, timely and adequate supply of commodities to the consumers in the rural, tribal, remote and backward areas of our country:
- Supply better quality foodgrains through the PDS by

enhancing the norms for quality standards rather than easing them as has been done by the Congress;

- Make pulses, cooking oil and soap also available through PDS, in addition to food-grains, sugar and kerosene;
- Improve the Consumer Protection Act of 1986, and ensure its application; and,
- Encourage consumer movements.

#### Black Money and Corruption

Starting from its Jana Sangh days, the BJP has been waging a relentless battle against the twin evils of corruption and black money. We are committed to rooting out corruption, thus also the malignancy of black money!

- We will encourage capital creation through funds from such a parallel economy, retaining the right of Government to tax the revenue flows from such created capital.
- The BJP will open up sectors such as social forestry, wasteland development and housing for rural and urban poor.
- We will also review the rationale of the Urban Land Ceiling Act, in this context.

#### Infrastructure

We hold that power, telecommunications, transport (surface, sea and air) constitute the basic building blocks of our development. With hardly 50% of the roads surfaced, about 40% of the traffic volume is handled by the National Highway System (NHS) which constitutes hardly 2% of the road network.

- Our Railway network has grown only by 16% over five decades. The ports have become the greatest constraint on our world trade. The dimensions of the power and telecommunications situation cripple development.

- We need to actively develop a National Waterways network.
- To meet our minimum needs, a staggering 10,000 MW have to be added annually for the next 15 years. Irrigation needs press upon our resources. All these call for large investments.
- We propose, therefore, to lay the foundations of a strong bond market in the country which can take care of the massive financial requirements. We invite foreign capital in the field of infrastructure.
- We will initiate a framework which will facilitate quick redressal of the acute infrastructure crisis based on international co-operation and partnership.
- We will strive to confine the role of the state to that of a facilitator, withdrawing in favour of suitably structured independent regulatory authorities.

#### Public Sector

Currently the policy relating to public sector is in disarray.

- The BJP believes in confining the public sector only to sensitive areas where the nation's security is involved and to areas where the presence of public sector is necessary for providing a moderating or counter-poising role to the ill effects, if any, of an unchecked private sector.
- Public sector presence will continue in areas furthering social objectives.
- The remaining public sector that would continue will be managed with the least interference by Government.

In the case of disinvestment from ailing, non-profitable or sick public sector undertakings, the BJP will constitute a Disinvestment Commission for taking care of disinvestment from the country's public sector.

- While disinvesting, care will be taken so that the workers interests are not harmed.
- The National Renewal Fund will be realigned to take care of the constant requirements of retraining and redeployment of workers that may be necessary in a fast growing economy.
- Sales proceeds from PSU disinvestment will be utilised only on capital expenditure.

#### Foreign Trade and Capital

Foreign Trade Policy has in the past degenerated into one of providing palliatives. It has now become necessary to strengthen the interface between industry and trade.

- We will select core industries and a system of destinations and initiate an integrated production for export planning with selective intervention so that this sector, so vital to the economy, acquires dynamism.
- We will also strive to forge such alliances with or memberships of regional trading blocs that will give further impetus to our exports.

The BJP welcomes foreign investment, because we hold that it supplies knowledge, technology and know-how and sharpens the quality and competitive edge of our economy.

- We will, however, strive to minimise our dependence on foreign savings.
- We will prioritise foreign investment in sectors that will promote exports in preference to sectors that will cater solely or exclusively to the domestic market.
- Keeping in view that dissemination of world class technology is an objective of foreign investment, we will give preference to overseas investors who have domestic partners.

- We will encourage foreign investment in infrastructure, areas of high technology and R & D within India.
- As for MNCs in consumer non-durables, we do not consider them as areas of priority.

### Industrial Policy

Industry in India has to be enabled to become more productive, more innovative. Only then will it fulfil its main role: Enhance the national wealth, provide greater employment in ever increasing numbers and thus assist the growth of other sectors, including agriculture. For, we recognise this inseparable interdependence. Our exports must compete with the best in the world, add to our resources and fiscal health, and thus enable India to achieve the status that we believe is its destiny. The BJP assures all about creating a healthy investment and industrial environment.

The BJP believes in the continued role and relevance of the small-scale sector. This important segment of our national economy, which has been entirely ignored by the Congress and whose very existence is threatened by the present policy of economic liberalisation, will receive all encouragement and help from a BJP Government.

The following principles will guide the industrial policy of the BJP:

#### A. Economic Sovereignty

The party regards the preservation of the nation's economic interests as a component of our external economic relations. Globalisation, to us, is not a synonym for the obliteration of national economic interests. Indeed, in the ensuing global competition we need to be constantly mindful of preserving them.

#### B. Modernisation

BJP stands for a modern and progressive India, open to

new ideas, new technology and fresh capital. A modern India to the BJP is not a Westernised India; a pale copy of the Western economic models.

#### C. Decentralisation

We stand for a decentralised economic order. The BJP stands for political as well as economic democracy. The role of the Government must change from the restrictive to the supportive and encouraging.

#### The BJP will therefore:

- Debureaucratise industrial approvals and cut down the plethora of restrictive controls. Industrial Development and Regulations Act will be replaced by Industrial Development Act;
- Encourage research and development as part of the process of industrial growth and over-all modernisation;
- Hazardous industries will be permitted only in specified areas. Separate industrial satellites will be set up exclusively for such units;
- Small-scale sector will be given all importance and encouragement. We will establish agencies to help the small-scale sector in purchasing, marketing and selling their products; and,
- Ensure a healthy capital market.

## OUR CONCEPT OF EMPLOYMENT AND LABOUR'S ROLE

### *Creating Jobs and Opportunities*

Apart from employment which will be created in the normal course by the growth of the economy, special employment schemes will be undertaken by the Bharatiya Janata Party to eradicate unemployment.

The BJP proposes to introduce a scheme of voluntary National Service to undertake the task of national reconstruction and also in order to instill a sense of discipline and nationalism among the youth of the country. This service will aim at reclaiming waste land for commercial use — for instance, after reclaiming the waste land, it will be used for horticulture, social forestry or any other purpose that will provide the youth involved in the reclamation with continued income. Similarly, the National Service will be used for river management schemes.

Apart from this, the BJP proposes to :

1. Increase employment opportunities in all sectors of the organised economy;
2. Introduce policies and programmes to :
  - (i) Develop agriculture, particularly in regions which are at present less developed and backward.
  - (ii) Promote industrial growth with special attention to village, cottage and small-scale sectors. Special emphasis will be laid on agro-industry.
  - (iii) Undertake large-scale housing activity that will generate both jobs and additional shelter in both rural and urban areas.

- (iv) Provide transport facilities with special emphasis in improving availability of transport in rural areas.
- (v) Augment employment opportunities in villages through Schemes like Antyodaya, Gokul Gram, Gopal Gram, Saraswati Yojana as already being implemented by BJP governments in Rajasthan and Gujarat.
- (vi) Provide and improve infrastructure, especially in rural areas, such as roads, small dams and water conservation projects.
- (vii) Promote vocational training.

### **Labour**

BJP believes in healthy trade unionism. It will :

1. Rationalise and simplify Labour Laws;
2. Recognise unions on the basis of secret ballot and have provisions for comprehensive bargaining;
3. Introduce worker participation from the shop floor to the board room in all public sector projects, public limited companies and foreign companies operating in India;
4. Protect workers against inflation;
5. Evolve an effective mechanism and ensure better implementation of laws to protect labour from occupational health hazards arising from industries like asbestos, cement, slate, mica, chemicals, textiles, etc. The workers will have the right to be informed about the possible health hazards they could be exposed to on the shop floor; and,
6. Not allow an exit policy without fulfilling corresponding obligations towards labour.

## Government Employees

BJP will set up a permanent Employees Welfare Board with a view to resolving the long-standing problems related to:

1. Time scale promotion;
2. Revision of pay scales and award of bonus;
3. Implementation of awards;
4. Housing; and,
5. Social welfare measures and travel concession for retired personnel.

## OUR SCIENTIFIC TALENT, OUR TECHNOLOGY

### *Harnessing Nature For Human Welfare*

The BJP believes that science and technology must play its due role in transforming India into a prosperous and strong country. The BJP will apply appropriate scientific and technological methods for increasing productivity, eradicating poverty, hunger and disease and providing meaningful employment along with the basic amenities of life. We believe that science and technology need to be harnessed to improve the lot of the vast section of our population living below the poverty line. We hold that science is not merely harnessing nature for material wealth but is as well for liberating and enriching the mind and enlarging the human spirit. The BJP will use science in the service of the poor and develop technology that has a humane face. Towards this end, we will:

1. Foster a scientific temper among the people;
2. Use science and technology for increasing productivity and generating employment;
3. Implement a vigorous programme of science education and research for improving quality of life;
4. Establish a network of centres for application of science and technology to rural areas, implement "lab-to-land" programmes and develop a strong low-cost agro-industrial base;
5. Put new life into National Laboratories to develop them as centres of excellence in applied research;
6. Direct these laboratories to evolve appropriate technology for Indian needs;



7. Accelerate the production of scientific literature in regional languages and evolve a national terminology for science and technology;
8. Create the right working conditions for our best brains to remain in India and serve the country and not migrate to other lands;
9. Make a systematised effort to bring national laboratories and industry together by setting up "Technology Parks" to be patronised by industry. This will promote cooperation between industry's resources and talent in laboratory;
10. Safeguard national interests and our intellectual property rights by encouraging research and development;
11. Undertake research in the field of drugs, micro-biology, bio-technology, bio-fertilisers etc.; and,
12. Strengthen research in indigenous systems of medicine.

## OUR FOREIGN POLICY

### *India, the New Millennium, the World*

In a post-Cold War world India will be confronted by many new challenges and opportunities. To meet them, to benefit from the opportunities, mindful of the existing global disequilibrium and in consonance with India's national interests, our foreign policy in the emerging decades will be based on the human values of peace, equality and cooperation.

The BJP holds that as a departure from the recent past, Indian diplomacy should be conducted in tune with India's position as a strong power and a major player in the world arena. A billion people who do not depend upon anyone for feeding or clothing themselves are a power which cannot be ignored. Our nation needs to regain its lost pride and the BJP alone can undertake this task. While we believe in partnership with everyone, we reject the very thought of patronage by anybody. The BJP's foreign policy will be guided by the following agenda:

1. Sovereign equality amongst nations; a rejection of political or economic hegemonism.
2. Promotion of Asian solidarity; development of South Asian Regional Cooperation; and, emphasis on improved relations with neighbouring countries. The BJP does not accept outside interference in this region as being beneficial for it.
3. Pakistan continues to follow a policy of fomenting insurgency, seeking to create instability and unrest in India. The BJP stands committed to thwarting all these attempts. In this context, we state:
  - (a) The BJP affirms unequivocally India's sovereignty over the whole of Jammu & Kashmir, including Pakistan-Occupied Kashmir; and,

- (b) The BJP declares that it will not accept any interference in our country's internal affairs.
4. Our relations with the USA will be based on mutual respect and a congruence of interests. We note, however, that US policy for this region continues to suffer from lack of vision and that it disregards India's political and security interests.
  5. India and Russia have a long tradition of good relations and have much to gain from the compatibility of their geopolitical interests in Asia. The BJP will endeavour to further explore the avenues of bilateral cooperation in this direction.
  6. Our relations with the People's Republic of China offer an opportunity to now put them on a footing of friendship and cooperation. For this we need to resolve the border question in a fair and equitable manner. It cannot, however, be ignored that the People's Republic of China continues to support Pakistan militarily and otherwise.
  7. The BJP greatly regrets the continuing bloodshed in Sri Lanka, particularly as India all through its history has had warm fraternal ties with all sections of the population in that country. The BJP is confident that within a united Sri Lanka it should be possible to fulfil the aspirations of the Tamil people.
  8. The BJP pledges to maintain warm and friendly relations with Nepal, with which India has the closest cultural, religious and historical ties. The BJP will work actively for resolving all outstanding issues. We welcome the restoration of democracy in Nepal.
  9. The BJP views with great sympathy the struggle for restoration of democracy in Myanmar. It extends its support to the task of reconciliation and reconstruction in that country with which India has a long border and age-old religious, cultural and historical ties.

10. The BJP will try to consolidate further the close and friendly ties between India and Bhutan.
11. In our relations with Bangladesh, illegal immigration into India from that country has proved a major irritant. This issue has cast its shadow on our bilateral ties and needs to be resolved early.
12. Millions of sons and daughters of Mother India, settled abroad as Overseas Indians, are considered by the BJP as an asset to the country. Their emotional attachment to the motherland is still deep. This must find due expression. Schemes will be drawn up to attract substantial investments by non-resident Indians. They will be welcome to set up industrial units and industrial parks, and invest in the infrastructure. The BJP will examine afresh the issue of dual citizenship.
13. The BJP will launch a vigorous campaign for a permanent membership for India in the UN Security Council.

The BJP stands committed to peace amongst all nations; prosperity for all the peoples of the world; and, an international role for India that befits this great and ancient nation.

# OUR NATION'S SECURITY

## *Protecting Our Country*

The BJP accords the highest importance to the security of our Nation, our Society and our Citizens. We charge the present Government with imperilling our security, internal and external, as never before.

Our defence expenditure has been cut steadily in real terms during the Narasimha Rao regime. This has seriously compromised our combat effectiveness. The present Congress Government has been functioning without a full-time Defence Minister for over three years, and this negligence of India's sword arm has begun to affect the morale of our gallant forces.

The BJP will correct this damaging imbalance. We will accord due importance to all security-related issues — the emerging global realities and regional complexities demand this as the very minimum response from our Government.

## **Internal Security**

The nature of the state and its relationship with society has a direct bearing on the level of the citizens' national commitment. An insensitive and uncaring state erodes the citizens' allegiance to the nation. The BJP will restore national commitment to its rightful place by establishing a harmonious relationship between state and society. We will:

1. Defuse tension in long-festering trouble spots;
2. Ensure protection of life and property from insurgents and foreign mercenaries;
3. Provide our security apparatus with a free hand to deal with terrorism;
4. Revitalise and reinforce law and order machinery;

5. Institute police reforms and upgrade the capability of the force; and,
6. Legislate tough deterrent laws against terrorist and disruptive activities (TADA was repealed to pander to vote bank politics) while safeguarding democratic rights.

## **Jammu & Kashmir**

The absence of political far-sightedness and clarity of national objectives has resulted in our nation continuing to have to pay a price even 50 years after Jammu & Kashmir became a part of the Republic. The failure of successive Congress Governments to formulate a Jammu & Kashmir policy that takes into account the State's internal problems has led to a situation where this strategic border State has emerged as the principal challenge to Indian nationhood. The BJP realises the magnitude of the challenge and dedicates itself to the task of not only solving the internal problems of the State but also reclaiming the portion of our territory which has been illegally held by Pakistan for nearly five decades. Without repeating the mistakes of yesteryears and merely reacting to Pakistan's moves, we will:

1. Immediately strengthen the civil administration by inducting able and honest administrators;
2. Provide a free hand to our security forces to deal with the menace of terrorism and induction of men and arms from Pakistan, while ensuring that democratic rights are not violated;
3. Cleanse the local police and administration of malcontents who have aligned themselves with the terrorists or are pro-Pakistan;
4. Declare Doda a disturbed area and invoke the Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act to prevent this district from becoming a haven for mercenaries and terrorists;
5. Launch a massive welfare programme for all regions of the State and ensure there is no seepage;

6. Hold free and fair elections in the State after terrorism has been brought under control and every person, including the Pandits who have been forced out of the Valley, is provided with an opportunity to participate in the polls;
7. Rehabilitate all persons displaced from terrorism-afflicted areas of Jammu & Kashmir; and,
8. Set up regional councils for Kashmir, Jammu and Ladakh.

#### North-East

The north-eastern States of our country continue to suffer from the violence perpetrated by insurgency and ethnic strife. Poor governance, a callous administration, scepape of development funds, and Congress' politics of manipulation have contributed to the alienation of the people and the growth of insurgency. In Assam, ULFA and Bodo militants have begun to strike with regularity; in Nagaland and Manipur the NSCN continues with its depredation; and, in Tripura, militant tribal outfits have once again reared their ugly heads. The tide of illegal immigration from Bangladesh has only worsened the situation. The BJP will address itself to the problems of our north-eastern States and institute a grievance redressal system monitored from Delhi. It will also take the following steps to restore the rule of law in the troubled States:

1. Check the inflow of foreign arms and terrorists from training camps across the border;
2. Strengthen the security apparatus and intelligence network;
3. Provide all citizens with identity cards on a priority basis;
4. Check the narcotics trade and attendant ills in the region; and,
5. Plan and execute an integrated and accelerated economic development programme.

#### Himalayas

Over the past five decades, our Himalayan bastions have been strategically pierced. Despite that, the attitude of successive Congress governments has remained unchanged: Strategically, the Government has failed to restore a balance there, leave alone regain the initiative. In the process, we have also lost large national territories to the People's Republic of China, thus demonstrating an absence of strategic thought about our Himalayan bastions. The BJP will evolve a security policy for the Himalayas so that India's national interests are fully safeguarded.

#### External Security

We believe that pro-active diplomacy, especially defence diplomacy, coupled with adequate preparedness of our armed forces, is the key to securing our frontiers against aggression. This requires both strategy and tactics. The BJP will:

1. Set up a National Security Council;
2. Re-evaluate the country's nuclear policy and exercise the option to induct nuclear weapons;
3. Though the BJP stands committed to a nuclear-free world, we cannot accept a world of nuclear apartheid.
  - (i) The BJP will thus not agree to the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) unless there is a simultaneous agreement for a time-bound global elimination of nuclear weapons in their entirety.
  - (ii) The BJP will not agree to the Fissile Material Control Regime (FMCRC).
  - (iii) The BJP will not agree to the Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR).
4. Expedite the serial production of Prithvi and make Agni I operational for the deployment of these missiles. In addition, hasten the development of Agni II:

5. Immediately upgrade conventional weapons and weapons systems of the armed forces;
6. Strengthen the intelligence-gathering system, inclusive of all intelligence agencies, initiate a Centre-State initiative on intelligence gathering and sharing, step up air surveillance of our territory, and acquire state-of-the-art electronic equipment;
7. Strengthen the Air Force fleet with new generation aircraft;
8. Make a qualitative and quantitative improvement in our naval capabilities;
9. Invest in R&D in areas of defence and missile technology so that we become increasingly self-reliant;
10. Peg defence-related expenditure to real requirements; and,
11. Re-examine the role, structure and composition of the numerous para-military forces and reorganise and reform them.

#### Jai Jawan

The BJP is rightly proud of our valiant soldiers who have dedicated their lives to defend our nation from external aggressors and internal subversives. We believe it is our duty to take care of our serving jawans and look after those who have retired from service, as well as their families. To fulfil this duty, the BJP will adopt the following programmes and policies :

1. The terms of service, including pay and allowance, housing, education for children and pension, of all ranks will be improved so as to attract men and women of high calibre. The present shortage of men and officers does not have to be met by lowering standards of entry;
2. Widows and dependents of jawans who die in action will receive higher benefits and compensation;
3. Pension disparities will be levelled and anomalies sorted out expeditiously;

4. Hospitals for veterans will be set up throughout the country so that no ex-serviceman, irrespective of his rank, is denied medical care;
5. Ex-servicemen's welfare will be included in the concurrent list;
6. The services of our retired soldiers will be used to the maximum extent possible, especially in insurgency-affected areas. Wherever there is a stipulated percentage for employing ex-servicemen, it will be fulfilled;
7. Necessary changes will be made in agricultural and urban tenancy laws to secure the proprietary rights of servicemen; and,
8. District Sainik Boards will be strengthened.

#### Illegal Immigration :

#### Demographic Invasion — A Threat to Our Security

We believe that illegal immigration from our neighbouring countries, especially Bangladesh, has a direct impact on our nation's security and has an unsettling effect on our demography. Given the sheer dimension of numbers — there are as many as 1.7 crore illegal immigrants, the bulk of them Bangladeshis, living in various parts of the country — illegal immigration is not only transforming the geography, but the sociology, the economy, indeed even the politics of this country. India is facing an explosive issue. If our demographic balance is allowed to be disturbed by inept policies and political considerations, various demographic entities are bound to come in conflict, thus adversely affecting our security environment. The invasion of illegal immigrants from Bangladesh has led to an alarming growth in a section of the population in our North-East, in Assam, in West Bengal, parts of Bihar and Delhi. In certain areas a section of the population has grown by almost 100 per cent.

The BJP proposes to:

1. Complete barbed wire fencing along the India-Bangladesh border, beginning with the plains, to prevent infiltration;
2. Detect illegal immigrants, delete their names from voters' lists and arrange for their deportation without any further delay;
3. Declare all property deals between Indians and illegal immigrants as null and void;
4. Amend immigration rules and other laws to impose stringent checks on illegal entry into India; and,
5. Expedite the issuance of identity cards to all citizens of the country.

## OUR VILLAGES, OUR FARMERS, OUR POOR

### *Towards a Revitalised Rural Economy*

Our country has an abundance of natural resources — fertile lands, flowing rivers, rich mineral deposits and verdant forests. More than anything else, we have a large army of farmers that shoulders the onerous task of feeding our people. But the wrong priorities of the last 50 years of Congress misrule and the lopsided model of development pursued by policy-makers have impoverished vast sections of our farmers, rendering agriculture economically non-viable. Worse, bulk of the monies earmarked for infrastructural development, health, education and civic amenities has been canalised to the urban areas despite the fact that the majority of the population lives in villages.

Less than a quarter of the country's population, 23.31 per cent, lives in urban areas, compared to the overwhelming 76.69 per cent which lives in villages. As many as 71.4 per cent of our people are economically dependent on agriculture: This sector of our economy, therefore, generates the highest employment as well as provides the biggest market. Yet, this sector continues to be neglected by Congress policy-makers.

The Bharatiya Janata Party believes that India cannot emerge as a powerful nation until the lot of our farmers is improved, adequate attention paid to the agricultural sector, an all-out war launched against poverty, and investments are made in agro-industry as well as small-scale and cottage industry catering to the requirements of our villages. Our country's progress is linked to the well-being of our villages, our farmers and our poor.

**Congress' Policy: Not To Have A Policy on Agriculture**

In the absence of any well thought out agricultural

policy focussing on rural development and reconstruction, agriculture is fast becoming a losing proposition for our farmers. While fixing agricultural prices, successive Congress Governments have not taken into account the expenses incurred by our farmers on seeds, fertiliser, power, water, pesticides, machinery and labour. No effort has ever been made to bring about parity in the prices of industrial and agricultural produce.

As a result, our farmers are forced to sell the fruit of their labour at low prices even while they have to pay ever-increasing prices for the necessary inputs. Not surprisingly, this has contributed to the impoverishment and indebtedness of our farmers, pushing vast sections of them dangerously close to or even below the Poverty Line. According to the Planning Commission's own estimates, almost 42 per cent of our rural population lives below the Poverty Line.

No less alarming is the fact that the number of our villagers dependent on per acre of land has been steadily increasing, compared to other countries where this dependency has dramatically decreased with governments investing in agro industry which offers alternative sources of employment. No effort has been made to set up an adequate number of small-scale and cottage industries in our rural areas to absorb idle hands. This has also contributed in no small measure to the impoverishment of our farmers. In 1950-51, the ratio of the disparity between the per capita income in rural and urban areas was 1:2; in 1995-96 it stood at 1:4. Similarly, while per family income has risen by 52 per cent in urban areas since 1952, it has increased by a mere 7.8 per cent in rural areas.

Ironically, these neglected villages form a vast market — and from this market, as much as Rs 48,000 crores flow to our urban areas every year. By killing our villages, we will be destroying this market. Conversely, by developing our villages, we will be strengthening this market, which in turn will benefit our urban areas. In other words, urban India cannot survive without rural India.

But this simple truth has been ignored for the last 50 years. Today, three out of every four Indians live in villages, condemned to a life of exploitation and increasing social, political and economic marginalisation.

### **BJP's AGENDA FOR OUR FARMERS, OUR POOR**

We pledge to reverse this trend of social, political and economic marginalisation of our rural population and empower our farmers. We are committed to restoring agriculture to its rightful place and thus steering our people into an era of prosperity and social equality by the opening decade of the new century.

No country can be great if its people remain poor. The first task for us will be to wipe out the dark curse of poverty. We will allocate greater resources for effective poverty alleviation programmes; we will invest in agriculture and small-scale industry; we will build from the bottom up, for that is the only way we can build an enduring edifice of development.

#### **To develop rural India, the BJP will :**

1. Allocate 60 per cent of Plan funds for agricultural and rural development;
2. Treat villages as the basic unit of development and provide each village with basic facilities like roads, irrigation, drinking water, education, health and sanitation;
3. Provide shelter to the homeless in our villages;
4. Develop agriculture, enhance production and improve living standards in our villages by —
  - (a) Fixing agricultural prices after taking into account all expenses incurred by farmers;
  - (b) Reducing the per acre cost of production;
  - (c) Increasing the average per acre production;

- (d) Reducing the overall dependence on agriculture;
  - (e) Providing alternative employment to displaced farmers;
5. Give agriculture the same benefits as industry;
  6. Set up an Agricultural Costs and Prices Commission in which farmers and agricultural specialists will together comprise two-thirds of the members. The Commission will be autonomous and its recommendations will be binding.
  7. Announce the total cost of inputs, the total expenditure incurred by farmers, and thereafter announce the support prices;
  8. Link support prices to the price index;
  9. Ensure parity between agricultural and industrial products in respect of pricing;
  10. Conduct extensive research to evolve methods of dryland farming;
  11. Give priority to the farmers' interests while determining the exim policy for agricultural produce;
  12. Enforce prompt payment for agricultural produce. There will be automatic interest addition to payments delayed beyond two weeks;
  13. Extend crop and animal insurance to all agricultural produce. Insurance schemes will also cover natural calamities;
  14. Establish a chain of warehouses with facilities for grant of advance payments of up to 80 per cent of the agricultural produce deposited;
  15. Encourage the use of fruit juice in the production of all beverages;
  16. Allow free movement of foodgrains throughout the country;

17. Free sugar industry from licensing, and production of molasses from all restrictions on production and movement, as well as ensure that farmers receive an adequate share of the total prices;
18. Maintain the subsidy on fertilisers;
19. Improve the Public Distribution System;
20. Establish farmers' service centres;
21. Give comprehensive documents to farmers which cover land records, ownership and all other relevant papers;
22. Reform land acquisition laws and ensure that agricultural land acquired for any purpose receives prompt and full compensation at market rates;
23. Free bonded labour and rehabilitate them; and,
24. Launch employment guarantee schemes in rural India that will cover the largest possible number of people.

To revive village industry, the BJP will :

1. Establish an extensive chain of tiny and small-scale industrial units;
2. Give the greatest impetus to this sector. To make agriculture sustainable, the BJP will sharpen the edge of agro-based rural industries and food-processing;
3. Provide all facilities, including easy access to credit and marketing to rural artisans and craftsmen;
4. Set up a National Artisan Development Bank;
5. Set up special institutes for skill upgradation; and,
6. Give a thrust to wasteland development, social forestry and horticulture.



**To provide irrigation facilities, the BJP will :**

1. Launch time-bound irrigation projects and complete ongoing projects;
2. Give priority to small and minor irrigation projects;
3. Remove disparities between districts within States;
4. Encourage the use of alternative sources of irrigation through incentives and better water management;
5. Ensure that farmers are made to pay only for the water they consume; and,
6. Draw up a master plan for flood control and harnessing of flood waters for irrigation. Offer prompt compensation for crops lost in floods.

**To provide power for agriculture, the BJP will :**

1. Encourage rapid electrification of our villages so that no village is left without power by the turn of the century;
2. Ensure adequate supply of power for agricultural activity;
3. Set up small power stations and sub-stations in rural areas for supplying power exclusively to villages; and,
4. Electricity Boards will be made to pay compensation to farmers if they fail to supply assured quantity of power. Similarly, farmers will be required to pay their power bill on time.

**To strengthen the cooperative movement, the BJP will :**

1. Free cooperatives from political interference;
2. Prevent the intrusion of vested interests;
3. Simplify rules and regulations governing the functioning of cooperative societies;
4. Make entry in passbooks mandatory for all money deposits;

5. Only those entirely dependent on agriculture will be allowed to become members of farmers cooperative societies; and,
6. Ensure free and timely elections to cooperative bodies.

**To implement land reforms, the BJP will :**

1. Enforce the implementation of Land Ceiling Laws in all States;
2. Set up designated courts to expeditiously deal with all land ceiling disputes and monitor enforcement of verdicts;
3. Expedite distribution of ceiling surplus land among landless farmers;
4. Monitor the use of distributed land and prevent its alienation from beneficiaries;
5. Reclaim cultivable land lying fallow;
6. Time-bound registration of all lands; and,
7. Decide ownership rights at the level of Gram Panchayats without any delay.

**To alleviate poverty, the BJP will :**

1. Enhance public outlays for poverty alleviation and social infrastructure;
2. Restructure the PDS, confining it only to the poor and the needy. Burgeoning food stocks with a vastly reduced off take and a decline in the per capita consumption of cereals from PDS are powerful indicators of poverty rather than the misleading inflation indices. PDS prices and the regulated intervals of offtake will be suitably adjusted so that the scheme becomes meaningful for fighting hunger and malnutrition. PDS will also be dovetailed to provide 'Food for Work' in employment programmes linked with poverty eradication;
3. Identify poverty through indexation reflecting not only the level of consumption of calories but also the minimal social

infrastructure status such as literacy, housing, drinking water, health and sanitation;

4. Implement 'Antyodaya' schemes throughout the country because we hold that sustainable employment is at the core of poverty eradication. These Antyodaya schemes will be targeted at the poorest of the poor: Five crore families will be selected for immediate relief;
5. Allocate more resources for food-for-work programmes so that they can be implemented round the year, as well as monitor their implementation; and,
6. Introduce Langur Yojana and Annadan Yojana to ensure that no man, woman or child goes hungry.

To ensure cow protection, the BJP will:

1. Impose a total ban on the slaughter of cows and cow progeny by amending Article 48 of the Constitution to cover bulls and bullocks, and prohibit all trading (state as well as private) in the slaughter of cows and cow progeny;
2. Implement a policy for improved cattle-breeding; and,
3. Provide tax exemption to the income of Goshalas and Pinjrapoles.

The BJP recognises the fact that from times immemorial, cow-protection has remained one of the basics of Indian culture and Indian agriculture, and it is on the patient back of the cow and its progeny that the entire structure of Indian agriculture rests. Over 70 million animals are employed in farming operations in Indian villages, more than 80% rural transport needs are met by the bullock-cart. Our livestock is also an effective protection against environmental degradation.

The BJP regretfully observes that millions of cows and cow progeny are slaughtered every year, most of them for export.

## OUR HUMAN WEALTH

### *Literacy and Health For All*

The Bharatiya Janata Party is committed to the creation of a Bharat whose citizens will not suffer from the dual affliction of illiteracy and malnutrition. We believe that the state should invest in developing every citizen's potential to contribute to the regeneration of our country. To achieve that, we will stress on health and education both of which are challenges that have to be met by the first decade of the 21st century. India has to emerge as a powerful, self-reliant and proud nation. True development will be possible only when we draw sustenance from our citizens; they are our true wealth.

### Education

The past five years have witnessed this core area of human resource development being increasingly deprived of state support. As a result, quality education is fast becoming the preserve of the social and economic elite of the country. The vast multitudes, who have been victims of inequity, continue to be denied the cherished ideal of literacy. The BJP will stress on providing equal opportunity of education, literacy and information. Towards this end, we will:

1. Increase state spending on education progressively to at least six per cent of our Gross National Product;
2. Spend more on primary education and enrol the help of non-government organisations in this area;
3. Provide free education in order to universalise access to primary education;
4. Offer incentives in the form of free text books, nutrition programmes and stipends to check dropout rate so that at least 80 per cent children, both boys and girls, who enrol complete primary school education;

5. Reduce learning period and introduce self-employment oriented vocational training programmes at high school level;
6. Introduce an anti-cheating law which will be applicable to all States and whose abuse will be prevented through adequate safeguards;
7. Launch community-level adult education programmes to provide functional literacy to at least 90 per cent of our adult illiterates in both villages and the cities;
8. Set up a special monitoring authority to scrutinise the quality of education and remove gender disparity;
9. Ensure autonomy to universities, encourage them to mobilise resources for research and higher education, and provide academic freedom to our scholars, especially in the social sciences;
10. Improve the pay and emoluments of teachers at all levels and remove anomalies in college/university promotion rules;
11. Enrol industry's help to set up more technical and agro-industrial institutions that will provide affordable education;
12. Abolish the system of capitation fees and monitor the functioning of private engineering and medical institutions;
13. Launch a scheme for low interest bank loans for meritorious students who want to go in for higher education; and,
14. Thwart attempts by foreign universities, colleges and institutes of dubious reputation to open branches in India and prevent the outflow of foreign exchange on studies abroad unless the course is relevant to our needs and requirements.

### Health

We believe in increasing state investment in health and nutrition programmes because this is the only path to the

creation of a productive workforce by the beginning of the next century. Our goal will be health for all. Towards this end, we will strive for:

1. Ending the scourge of malnutrition;
2. Drastically reducing our infant mortality rate and under-five mortality rate by spending more on pre-natal and post-natal health care programmes;
3. Immunising every child against killer diseases;
4. Providing every panchayat with a free primary health care centre with facilities for mother and child care, as well as access to these centres;
5. Canalising a substantial portion of the health care allocation on preventive rather than curative aspects;
6. Promoting awareness on cleanliness and disease prevention;
7. Re-evaluating existing programmes to tackle sexually-transmitted diseases, with special focus on AIDS;
8. Making the screening of blood at blood banks mandatory and provide for punitive punishment for any violation;
9. Holding doctors, para-medical and non-medical staff at Government hospitals and health care centres accountable and instituting a mechanism for swift disposal of all complaints;
10. Revising pay and emoluments of staff at Government hospitals and health care centre to attract the best talent;
11. Promoting alternative medical sciences with special emphasis on Ayurveda and Unani systems;
12. Protecting traditional medicinal plants, trees and cures;
13. Preventing drug prices from escalating to a point where they become non-affordable for the masses;
14. Introducing health insurance schemes at a minimal cost to the subscriber; and,
15. Instituting a mechanism to monitor and collate health-related information.

## OUR AGENDA FOR WOMEN

### *Nari Shakti : Towards Empowerment*

We hold that 'Nari Shakti' is not merely a phrase, it is the enunciation of our approach. Towards this end, the BJP will empower women, ensure that their dignity and rights are not trampled upon and help develop their full potential. We are also committed to protecting the rights of the girl child. The BJP will:

1. End discrimination in any form against women and encourage gender sensitivity. All national policies will be subjected to gender analysis;
2. Reserve 33 per cent seats in all elected bodies, including State Assemblies and Parliament, to make women real participants in a resurgent India of the 21st century;
3. Actively promote the legal and economic rights of women which must be equal to those of men and not subject to the debilitating clauses of personal laws;
4. Introduce a Uniform Civil Code that will:
  - (i) Give women property rights;
  - (ii) Ensure women's right to adopt;
  - (iii) Guarantee women equal guardianship rights;
  - (iv) Remove discriminatory clauses in divorce laws; and,
  - (v) Put an end to polygamy;
5. Create conditions in society and workplace to ensure equal opportunities in employment and promotion, and end sexual harassment;
6. Enforce the principle of equal wages for equal work whether in the organised or unorganised sector;
7. Evolve a scheme for part-time jobs for women;
8. Promote a health care system that will focus on the non-reproductive health needs of women, especially in rural areas;
9. Provide state support for single and working mothers through grants and subsidy, and formulate a forward looking housing policy to help women;
10. Make women partners in the management of community assets and properties;
11. Enrol the help of local self-governments to set up latrines for women in the rural areas;
12. Set up a micro-credit system with the help of a national corpus to which both the Union and State governments, apart from banks, will contribute.
13. Encourage the setting up of cooperative societies in rural areas to be managed by women and to benefit women entrepreneurs;
14. Introduce skill-based training programmes and employment schemes which are area-specific;
15. Design a special programme to provide women who were denied education with functional literacy;
16. Amend laws that deal with molestation, rape and dowry to provide for in-camera trial, swift justice and tough deterrent punishment as well as rehabilitation of the victims of these crimes;
17. Amend the Prevention of Immoral Traffic Act to make clients as culpable as commercial sex workers;
18. Rehabilitate commercial sex workers and set up a special fund to provide health care and education to their children;
19. Enact a law that will make registration of marriages with foreigners mandatory;

20. Make it compulsory for the mother's name also to be mentioned in all Government and non-Government records, starting from a child's birth certificate to a person's death certificate.
21. Set up designated courts in every district for expeditious trial of civil and criminal complaints relating to women;
22. Rapidly induct more women in the police force and appoint them in senior positions as well as set up a 'Crimes Against Women Cell' in every police station;
23. Enact a special law to deal with the crime of domestic violence against women;
24. Promote a social agenda designed to discourage negative influences and end discrimination against the girl child in any form;
25. Ruthlessly punish those who indulge in unethical practices like prenatal sex-determination test and female foeticide and infanticide;
26. Invest in the girl child's health, nutrition and education, from infancy through adolescence;
27. Universalise primary and secondary education to narrow the gender gap and offer incentives for the girl child's education in the form of free uniforms and books;
28. Strictly enforce age of consent laws and end child prostitution; and,
29. Have a fresh look at the UN convention for the elimination of discrimination against women (CEDAW) to determine whether the reservations expressed by the Government of India are justified.

## OUR POPULATION POLICY

### *Towards a Sustainable and Balanced Growth*

Our people are our primary concern — their basic needs of health, education and employment must precede everything else. To ensure an equitable disbursement of resources so that the largest number of our people benefit from development policies, we must arrest the country's runaway population growth. An increasing population can only mean a decreasing share of the fruits of development. Successive Congress Governments have ignored this crucial area of development planning, often for petty political motives. This has resulted in a steep rise in population and severe demographic imbalances. The Bharatiya Janata Party believes that children are born — and have the right — to be happy, and not merely for existence. We will, therefore, put population-related issues, especially family planning, firmly back on the national agenda, and launch a people's movement against the impending population explosion through persuasive policies. The BJP proposes to:

1. Act on the reports of the National Development Council and the Swaminathan Committee to formulate a National Population Policy that will stabilise the population growth by the first decade of the new century;
2. Enact a law that will debar those with more than two children from holding elected office, with 1996 as the cut-off year;
3. Provide incentives to those among the economically weaker sections who opt for the "two-child" norm in the form of special facilities for health, education, nutrition and employment opportunities. At the same time, the BJP will also introduce disincentives like limiting subsidised ration and maternity benefits to two children with 1996 as the cut-off year. These disincentives will apply to all sections of

society, irrespective of their social, economic or religious status to discourage large, unsustainable families;

4. Ensure universal access to family planning information and quality facilities by involving non-government organisations, and promote awareness among the people, especially women, through counselling and educational programmes;
5. Introduce family planning methods and facilities that will allow women greater freedom of choice without imperilling their health;
6. Launch a special campaign to educate local communities about negative practices and encourage women to seek reproductive health services;
7. Offer a special incentive in the form of a fixed deposit that will mature in 21 years for those couples who have only a girl child or those who adopt a girl child under a "Dattak Putri Yojana".
8. Make family planning an integral part of our development policies to ensure widest applicability of these incentives and disincentives.

## OUR ENVIRONMENT

### *Only One Earth*

The BJP holds as a firm conviction that our "only one Earth" is the endowment of all our wealth and natural resources. This, however, is not for endless exploitation. Our environment has to be protected, not only to prevent the sanctity of Mother Earth from being profaned but also because our forests, our rivers and our skies sustain a multitude of lives. No less important is the crucial role that environment plays in our nation's security. Environment must be protected by subscribing to the concept of 'sustainable development', a philosophical tenet that is integral to our civilisational and cultural consciousness. The BJP will:

1. Introduce a National Environment Policy incorporating a healthy balance between development needs and preservation of natural resources. The interests of and consultation with States will be fully ensured. To implement the policy, the Ministry of Environment and Forests will be recast as the Ministry for Ecological Security;
2. Implement better management and harnessing of river waters as well as sources of ground water;
3. Control land, air and water pollution by industry and urban centres. Municipal sewage treatment plants will be made obligatory;
4. Formulate a programme for developing sustainable cities, with special emphasis on waste management and use of natural resources like water;
5. Make environment studies a part of school, college and university curriculum and make environment issues an integral part of the visual media so that our children develop a caring and protective attitude towards the ecological environment.

C.P.I.(M)

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# MANIFESTO

**Eleventh Lok Sabha Elections.**

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# Manifesto

## Eleventh Lok Sabha Elections

To UNO

Brothers and Sisters,

Once again all of us are in the midst of a very significant electoral battle.

These elections come at a time when our country and people face the deepest multi-dimensional crisis afflicting India since independence.

The gains made by the freedom struggle, the sacrifices of countless martyrs and the vision of an independent India wedded to the principles of democracy, secularism, self-reliance, social justice and federalism is today coming under severe strain.

The policies pursued by the Congress government under the IMF/World Bank dictates have led the country on a path that severely mortgage our economic sovereignty. During the last five years, the entire self-reliant basis of independent India is being systematically dismantled. The country is neck deep in foreign debt. The plight of the working people has worsened with relentless price rise, growing unemployment; poverty is increasing, the disparities between the rich and the poor further widened alarmingly. And in the process, the ruling politician-businessmen-bureaucrat nexus has been looting the country through unprecedented institutionalised corruption.

During the same period the unity and integrity of India has been continuously assaulted by the communal forces. The brazen destruction of the Babri Masjid represented the gravest attack on India's secular fabric. The communal holocaust that followed claimed thousands of lives sowing the seeds of insecurity deeper amongst the minority community. India's intricate social fabric —



multi-religious, multi-linguistic, diverse cultural traditions and customs — woven together in the long years of common struggles and co-existence is being perilously threatened. The Congress government during the last five years instead of meeting this challenge squarely has adopted a policy of compromise towards these communal forces bolstering their activities.

The unity and integrity of our country is further threatened by the continued separatist activities both in Kashmir and in the North-East.

The threats to national security were demonstrated in the manner in which our country's borders were infringed and sophisticated weapons dropped on Indian territory in Purulia to fuel anti-national activities.

The federal democratic polity is coming under severe strain. The institutions of parliamentary democracy and Centre-State relations far from being strengthened have been further undermined. The economic policies have widened regional disparities. The youth of the country is being bombarded by degenerate culture through 'open-sky' media onslaught.

These years have also seen growing atrocities on Dalits. The consciousness of the oppressed castes against the injustice mounted on them over the years has grown. The struggle for social justice strengthened. At the same time, divisive caste appeals spread animosity and widen social divisions. The rights of the tribals continue to be encroached while their living conditions deteriorate.

These five years have seen a stark degeneration of moral values. There has been an alarming rise in the criminalisation of social life. Increasing cases of dacoity, unheard of atrocities against women and the girl child have characterised this period.

The unprecedented criminalisation of politics and institutionalised corruption is threatening the very basis of parliamentary democracy. The ruling Congress is leading this degeneration ably assisted by the BJP.

Thus, in every sphere of our existence, the last five years have seen the country reach a sorry pass. The irony of the situation is that despite Indians matching the world's best of creative endeavours, despite some outstanding scientific advances, this period has seen the miseries of the people mounting. This has not only been a period of missed opportunities to ameliorate the lot of the people, it has been a period when the livelihood and security of vast

millions has sharply deteriorated. What is at stake today is the very existence of a modern India centred around a vision that emerged in the long arduous struggle for our independence. The choice that the people will exercise in the coming elections, will determine the direction in which India will develop. The urgent need is to stop this rot. The alternative is to degenerate into a fratricidal internecine strife while the economic independence of our country itself is under threat. The urgent need is to uphold all those values that cement the unity and integrity of our country and put the country back on the rails of a vibrant self-reliant proud independent India.

It is with this sense of urgency that the CPI(M) appeals to our fellow Indians to come forward to save India today to change India for the better tomorrow. Defeat those forces which have brought India to such a sorry pass, elect those whose patriotic credentials, whose commitment to secularism are above suspect. It is only the united Left democratic secular forces that can today meet the challenges of our times and carry India forward with its head held high to the twentyfirst century.

#### CONGRESS(I) RULE

The last five years of the Congress rule has been a period of chronic instability for the people of our country.

The economic policies of unbridled liberalisation has led to largescale privatisation. Multinational corporations have gained entry into the core sectors of telecommunications, power, coal, steel, oil etc. The public sector is being sold off. The financial sector - banks, insurance, etc is sought to be privatised. At the same time, the country's total debt has crossed Rs. 6 lakh crore. The interest payment on this in the current year is over Rs. 60,000 crores - equivalent to our entire fiscal deficit in the current year. The net result has been the mortgaging of the economy and undermining its self-reliant basis.

These policies have meant a bonanza for the big business and misery for the mass of the people. Companies like ITC, Reliance, Larsen & Tubro, Mahindra & Mahindra have seen an increase in their profits by over 300 percent. At the opposite end every aspect of a common man's existence has worsened.

The conditions in rural India, which houses two-thirds of our population has distinctly worsened. The real wages of agricultural

workers has fallen. Their cost of living index has risen the sharpest. There are widespread reports of starvation deaths. The refusal to implement land reforms has kept the vast mass of peasantry in conditions of abject poverty. The growth of foodgrain production is just about keeping pace with the population growth. Coupled with the scuttling of the public distribution system, this implies a grave threat to food security for the most needy. The refusal to evolve a national water policy results in crores of rupees worth of property and precious lives being lost due to annual floods and drought. On top of this come the burdens of the new economic policy.

**Price Rise :** On the economic front the Congress(I) had promised in 1991 election manifesto that within the first 100 days the prices of essential commodities will be rolled back to levels of July 1990. Daily experience has shown all of us that the results have been to the contrary. Rice costs double of what it cost in 1991; the prices of pulses (dal) have risen nearly twice and in some cases three times; edible oil has become more expensive. So has wheat, sugar, tea and even salt. During these five years, the Central government resorted to unprecedented administrative price hikes. In fact every single item that constitutes the daily consumption basket of millions of Indians is today much more expensive, nearly double of what it was five years ago.

**Unemployment :** The Congress(I) had promised that it will create 10 million new jobs per year. Instead what is the situation today? In January 1995, 36,737,000 people were registered at the employment exchanges an increase of 444,000 from January 1994. Over four lakh industrial units that employed lakhs of people are today either closed or sick. In fact instead of increasing employment even those who were employed earlier are on the streets. Additionally the privatisation of the public sector is reducing the employment potential. The government's plans would result in some 646,000 people who were employed in the public sector being eventually retrenched. According to the government itself 1.4 lakh public sector employees had already had to face the axe. Many schemes have been announced by the government with much fanfare. But they have miserably failed to provide any relief to the people. Of the allocation made only 14.3 percent reaches the needy.

**Education :** The Congress(I) had promised expanding investment in primary and secondary education. Instead, in real terms there has been a contraction of central government's expenditure.

Privatisation and commercialisation of education have been highlights making both the access to and cost of education beyond the reach of the common man.

**Health:** The Congress(I) had promised an increase in allocation for public health to achieve Health for all by 2000. Instead there has been an actual decline in the per capita health expenditure from Rs. 120 to Rs. 116, on the public health system from Rs 103 to Rs 94 and on disease control programmes from Rs 103 to Rs. 89 (between 89-90 and 92-93). The withdrawal of the government from its obligations in this sector resulted in skyrocketing of cost of health facilities with privatisation which is keeping the health requirements of the people beyond their reach. At the same time the prices of medicines have shot up drastically, keeping them beyond the reach of those who need them most. This has resulted in a massive outbreak of diseases and the death of lakhs of people due to completely preventable and curable diseases like Malaria and TB.

**Poverty:** It had promised the reduction of poverty. According to the Planning Commission's own figures, the number of people below the poverty line increased from 35.6 percent in 1990-91 to 39.6 percent in 1994-95.

**Food security:** It had promised expansion of the public distribution system and its greater reach to feed the needy. Instead what we see during these five years has been a sharp decline in the quantity bought by the people through the public distribution system. This has been primarily due to the fact that the prices of rice have been doubled and that of wheat increased by 75 percent in the ration shops during this period. The threat to food security is bound to aggravate in the coming years with the shift from foodgrain production to commercial crops as a result of the new agricultural policies.

**Foreign Debt:** It had promised to prevent India falling into a debt trap. During these years India's foreign debt has risen to over Rs 600,000 crore. In 1993-94 the indebtedness of the country increased by Rs.244 crore every day or over 10 crore every hour. India today is the 3rd largest debtor in the world.

It had promised to curb conspicuous consumption and tackle the menace of black money. On the contrary these five years have seen the illegal and immoral enrichment of the ruling politicians-businessman-bureaucrat nexus and maximum growth in corruption and black money.

**Threats to secularism:** It is in this sphere that the Congress(I)'s betrayal to both India as a nation and people has been exposed.

It had promised that it will protect the Babri Masjid and firmly implement the status quo of all existing places of worship as of 15th August, 1947.

The despicable destruction of the Babri Masjid by the BJP/RSS/VHP combine and the continuously compromising positions taken by the Congress leadership has contributed to worsening of the communal situation in our country. The Congress(I) had promised in its manifesto last time that all parties must "respect the order and verdict of the court".

Yet it allowed the demolition to take place. Subsequently, instead of clubbing all pending cases and bringing them before the supreme court for speedy disposal as suggested by the CPI(M), it deliberately stalled the issue even after the demolition and adopted the wrong method of a presidential reference on whether the mosque was built on any Hindi religious structure. The Supreme Court refused to rightly entertain such a reference. The net result is that till date there has been no solution. Thus, its abject compromise with the communal forces led to the worsening of the situation where casualties in the communal riots during the last five years and the loss of property has been the highest in recent memory.

**Kashmir:** It had promised that a political solution to the problem. Despite the change in mood of the people in the valley who are getting increasingly alienated with the extremists, the last five years have seen the total absence of a political initiative to solve the problem.

**Women:** It had promised a better deal for women of India. Instead what we have seen during the last five years has been a sharp rise in all forms of atrocities perpetuated against women. The brunt of the negative impact of the economic policies is being borne by working women.

**Electoral Reforms:** It had promised electoral reforms to curb both the excessive use of money and muscle power. It has singularly failed to bring forward any proposal during these last five years.

**Foreign Policy:** It has promised the strengthening of the non-aligned foreign policy of our country. The last five years have seen unashamed succumbing to pressures of US imperialism in matters

of defence including the beginning of hitherto unknown military pacts with the USA. Its vacillation in the foreign policy have seen Indian troops acting under UN/US commands in various parts of the world violating the accepted Indian principles of non-interference in the internal affairs of other countries. Infact, at a time when US imperialism is attempting to impose its New World Order, India's traditional anti-imperialist voice in international fora was missing. As one of the leaders of the NAM, India during these five years, miserably failed to discharge its anti-imperialist duties.

In short, on each and every promise that the Congress had made to the people five years ago the results have been quite opposite. As a consequence the living conditions of the people have worsened, the country's unity and security further threatened and economic sovereignty and self-reliance further jeopardised.

#### Corruption — Order of the Day :

These five years have seen totally unprecedented levels of institutionalised corruption. The hallmark of the Narasimha Rao regime has been the exponential growth of both the number of scams and the amount looted through them. No area was left untouched, no stone unturned to loot public assets by the criminal ruling party politician-businessman-bureaucrat nexus.

The Rao government began its tenure by stalling the Bofors investigation that is not complete till date. Then came the bank scam, the disinvestment of public sector scam, the sugar scam, Bailadilla mine deal, Enron deal, Railway-ABB deal, telecom scam and finally the hawala scam. For the first time since independence, as many as 15 ministers of the Rao cabinet were forced to resign under a cloud. There are many other scams as well — Sf. Kitts, Goldstar etc. Chandraswami continues to be a free man due to political patronage. The very fact that the Rao government that assumed office as a minority government turned itself into a majority by organising defections using its money power speaks volumes. Moral and material corruption has become the order of the day.

The Congress party is now a political party with no internal democracy and plagued by internicine quarrels; it has turned itself into an organisation whose leadership is abandoning all commitment to the national cause.

## Defeat Congress — Defeat Hawala Government

The only answer to redeem the situation is to prevent the return of the Congress(I) to the helm of affairs. Defeat of the Congress signifies the safeguarding of the vision of modern independent India that we shaped during the freedom struggle.

### THE COMMUNAL DANGER

Never since the partition of the country, have the communal forces mounted such an offensive as has been witnessed during the last five years. Violating all assurances to the National Integration Council, Supreme Court and to the people the BJP went ahead and organised the dastardly demolition of the Babri Masjid. This was followed by a period of worst social instability—with large scale spread of communal riots, wanton killings and destruction of property. The BJP brazenly defended this action. In order to consolidate the communal forces it struck an alliance with the rabid communal and chauvanist Shiv Sena in Maharashtra.

During these five years, the BJP sought to project itself as a responsible opposition claiming to be a party with a difference. On each of the planks, it has been exposed before the people. With great fanfare it announced adherence to its policy of "Swadeshi" and even promised the electorate before the assembly elections in Maharashtra that it would cancel the dubious deal with Enron and in fact expel the MNC from the country. But as things have turned out it has not only renegotiated with Enron but has in fact facilitated greater penetration of the multinational corporation in our power sector. On every other matter of importance, policy prescription, it has gone along with the Congress(I) in introducing this policy of unbridled liberalisation that is undermining the economic sovereignty of our country. Its state governments pursue the same policies leading to the worsening of people's living conditions.

It had projected itself as a party with a different culture distinct from the self-seeking politicians and opportunistic elements that have gathered in the Congress. However, the whole exercise in Gujarat and the internal bickering in the Party in other states where it is in power have shown that its leadership is also

replete with people of the same culture as that of the Congress whose self seeking opportunism precedes the interests of the country.

Similarly, with its highest leadership involved in the hawala scandal it has shown itself as a party that is no different from the Congress as far as looting the country is concerned.

With this track record, the communal forces in the recent period once again seek to mount an offensive spreading deeper the poison of hatred against the minorities in order to garner more votes. The Vishwa Hindu Parishad has issued a blue print for Hindu Rashtra while whipping up the campaign for the destruction of the mosques in Kashi and Mathura. The other outfits of the RSS are also active in organising various activities towards this end. Its state government in Maharashtra has abolished the Minorities Commission. It also wound up the Srikrishna Commission enquiring into the Bombay riots, brazenly patronising criminal communal elements.

#### Defeat BJP —

#### Defeat Communal Forces

In the background of these developments and considering the fact that the BJP had emerged in the last elections as the major opposition in parliament and in power in four state legislatures, it still represents the most consolidated danger to the very unity and integrity of our country. It is out to destroy the very social fabric that composes India. It is therefore necessary that this communal challenge be squarely met with and that these forces be defeated in the coming elections.

#### ROLE OF THE CPI(M)

The consistent, principled and firm role of the CPI(M) and the Left in maintaining the unity of our country against all divisive and communal onslaughts is there before the people.

The CPI(M) has been in the forefront in the struggle against communalism. West Bengal and Kerala, are like oasis of harmony in the otherwise desert of communal strife. CPI(M) has been the staunchest defender of national unity. In Punjab alone more than



200 CPI(M) members, the best of patriots in contemporary India, were martyred in the struggle against terrorism. In Kashmir and elsewhere, the CPI(M) has been in the forefront championing the unity of India in countering the separatist forces. It has earnestly defended the concept of social justice and the rights of the backward castes, scheduled castes, scheduled tribes. During the last five years, the CPI(M) and the Left have been in the forefront in opposing the new economic policies that are bartering away the sovereignty of our country.

The CPI(M) initiated the strengthening of Left unity in the present situation. The Left alone with its consistency and firmness can meet the challenges before the people. During these years, this unity in people's struggles, whether on the question of the opposition to the GATT 1994, privatisation of public sector or the question of attacks on the rights of the working people, it is the left led mass organisations that have led the united resistance including four all India industrial strikes and big mass actions.

#### Role of CPI(M) Led Left Front Governments:

In stark contrast to the record of the Congress(I) and the BJP governments has been that of the Left Front government in West Bengal which for 19 long years has been in power with its mandate being renewed in every subsequent election. It has provided the most stable government independent India has ever seen and during this period working people of West Bengal have achieved unprecedented gains. It has been the outpost of communal harmony and staunchest protector of the rights of the minorities. Its record in the implementation of land reforms, protection of the rights of the working people, decentralisation of power to the panchayats, consolidation of the panchayati raj structure and taking democracy to the grass roots have all been achievements unparalleled elsewhere during the last five years.

Tripura, under the Left Front rule has emerged distinct from the rest of the North East because of the role of the CPI(M) in maintaining the unity of the tribal and non-tribal people in Tripura, protecting the interests of the tribal community and safeguarding their rights.

If Kerala today has some of the best social development indicators in India like literacy, health etc, it is because of

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foundations laid by the communist led governments in the past. Of particular significance are the land reforms initiated and implemented by the Left. Whenever the CPI(M) led governments were voted to office they have left their mark through their policies and practice.)

### Elect CPI(M) Candidates

Above all, in the existing morass of corruption, criminalisation and moral degeneration it is the CPI(M) and the Left that have emerged most credible. It is with the above record that the CPI(M) is appealing to the Indian people to rise to the occasion in these grave circumstances to defeat the Congress(I) and the BJP.

### Vote Left Secular Democratic Forces

The discontent amongst the people against Congress policies is growing rapidly. On the other hand this growing discontent is being sought to be exploited by the communal forces for their political gains.

The people of our country, however, have voted, as in the last round of assembly elections, against the Congress and BJP wherever the Left, democratic and secular forces presented an alternative.

In this background, it becomes imperative for every patriot to defeat the Congress and the BJP and in their place elect Left secular, democratic candidates to the 4th Lok Sabha so that India can be saved today in order to change it for the better tomorrow.

### ELECTION PROGRAMME

Taking into account the multi-dimensional crisis that is afflicting the country and the people, the CPI(M) places before the electorate the following programme of demands as a part of its election platform. (The electoral platform must be a part of the wider political struggle to achieve these demands which will strengthen democracy, secularism, national unity; strive for economic and social justice for the toiling people and to eradicate the curse of corruption.)

### Economy

1. Safeguard the country's economic sovereignty and strengthen its self-reliance; reverse the policies of unbridled liberalisation which undermine our sovereignty.

2. Stop privatisation of public sector; revise telecom, power policies, stop privatisation of financial sector; streamline public sector enterprises, provide them autonomy from bureaucratic controls and ensure workers participation in management.

3. Curb price rise and ensure food security by expanding the public distribution system bringing into its ambit 14 essential commodities and reduce prices by 50 percent; reduce issue price of foodgrains.

4. Reverse the present industrial policy; new policy to strengthen indigenous industry and domestic capacities; end to preferential treatment to foreign investors; entry of foreign capital to be decided on national priorities and technology needs.

5. No amendment of the Indian Patent Act of 1970 which will erode India's sovereign right to develop domestic R&D.

### Rights of the Working people

6. Ensuring need based minimum wages for workers, protective legislation for unorganized workers; protection of labour from severe exploitation; protection of employment and emoluments and inflation linked increase in wages; Report of the fifth pay commission for Government employees to be expedited and implemented.

7. Recognition of Trade Unions through secret ballot.

8. Granting of pension to working people as a third benefit; one-rank-one-pension for ex-servicemen; upgrading pensions of all categories of pensioners in consonance with the cost of living; protection of the rights of handicapped employees.

9. Handloom Weavers: Yarn to be provided at control rate for weavers and provide adequate infrastructure for the marketing of their goods.

### Improving Living Conditions

10. Guarantee right to work as a fundamental right; release ac-

cumulated food stocks to start food-for work programmes to generate employment.

11. Increase allocation for basic health and sanitation. Stop privatisation of health facilities; ensure provision of drinking water to all villages and for the control of preventable diseases.

12. Increase allocation on education and mass literacy. Stop privatisation and commercialisation of education; the allocation must be at least 10 percent of the national budget and 30 percent of the state budgets; free and compulsory education must be guaranteed by law for all children upto the age of 14 years; syllabus and curriculum to strengthen scientific temper, secularism, national unity and integrity.

13. Housing to be accorded the status of basic right; housing schemes for urban and rural poor to be implemented as an urgent priority.

14. A proper water resource policy to prevent the annual scourge of floods and droughts; immediate and adequate relief for those affected by these.

#### Agrarian Sector

15. Implementation of land reforms by plugging loopholes in the law and distribution of land; reversal of laws brought in due to the new economic policies diluting the land reform provisions; creation of authentic land reform records; security of tenure for tenants; provision of homestead land for rural poor.

16. Greater plan allocation for spread of irrigation; proper schemes for crop insurance.

17. Central legislation protecting the rights of agricultural workers, their wages, living conditions and social benefits.

18. Proper facilities for assistance to producers of traditional crops and protection of markets and sources of raw material.

19. Expansion of credit facilities for the poor peasantry and agricultural labour.

20. Fishermen: No licences for deep sea fishing to foreign companies and joint ventures. Protect rights of fishing people.

#### Social Justice

21. Prevention of atrocities against scheduled castes; end to discrimination and strict implementation of laws guaranteeing equality;

22. Prevention of atrocities against tribals; protection of land, culture and language of tribal people; granting of autonomy for compact contiguous tribal majority areas within the framework of the existing states.

23. Implementation of reservations for scheduled castes/ scheduled tribes and backward classes. Within reservation for OBCs implement creamy layer principle so that needy sections are benefited most. If vacancies exist after application of creamy layer criteria then they should be filled up by candidates from within the same communities. Reservation to be extended to Christians from converted scheduled castes.

#### Women

24. Protection of the rights of women, stringent measures against atrocities and crimes against women, implementation of legal and democratic rights guaranteed in the constitution; increasing opportunities for employment and ensuring no discrimination in the pay, recruitment and promotion; equal rights in property and land for women; issuing of joint pattas for ownership.

25. Equal legal rights for women of all communities; joint matrimonial property rights; registration of marriage to be made compulsory.

26. One-third of the seats in legislatures and parliament be reserved for women.

27. Children : Suitable legislation to prevent sexual abuse of children; abolition of child labour; adequate child-care facilities at work place.

#### Strengthen Secularism

28. Immediate legislation separating religion from politics.

29. Transfer of all cases connected with the Ayodhya dispute to the supreme court under article 138(2) for a speedy verdict which will be binding on all sides.

30. Strict implementation of the status quo of religious places as of 15th August, 1947.

31. Protection of just rights of the minorities; implement the provisions of the constitution to prevent discrimination; strengthening security of the life and property of the minorities; backwards amongst the minorities be given OBC reservations; protection of Urdu language.

### Strengthen parliamentary democracy

32. Immediately set in motion the process of bringing forward a legislation for comprehensive electoral reforms to ensure the elimination of money and muscle power from elections on the basis of the Dinesh Goswami Committee's report; amend Sec 77 of the Representation of People Act to plug loopholes in enforcing ceiling on election expenditure of candidates.

33. To check corruption, the immediate setting up of Lok Pal bringing in its purview the prime minister; to be appointed by an authority constituting representatives of the executive, legislature and judiciary; streamline functioning of investigation agencies, protect them from political interference; ensure speedy disposal and appropriate action.

34. Strict action against all manifestations of criminalisation of politics.

35. Proportional representation in the electoral system.

36. Reforms in judicial system to provide easy and speedy relief to the common people.

### Federalism and Decentralisation

37. Restructuring Centre-state relations with more powers to the states; legislative measures to ensure balanced economic development to overcome regional imbalances.

38. Devolution of finances to the states ending overcentralisation of resources at the Centre.

39. Protection of the Rajya Sabha as the "Council of States" to defend the federal structure of our constitution; its members must belong to the states they are elected from.

40. Decentralisation of democracy to the grassroots; proper devolution of power to the panchayats; strengthen panchayat raj institutions; financial assistance to panchayats to flow through state governments.

### Defend National Unity

41. Immediate announcement of political solution for the Kashmir problem which must include defence of article 370 and a review of the erosion which has taken place since 1953 by the elected state assembly; granting maximum autonomy within the framework of the Indian constitution; compensation and adequate measures for those displaced from the state and a comprehensive

economic package for development, generating employment opportunities.

### Foreign Policy

42. Defence of the non-aligned foreign policy; world peace and spirit of national independence; firm resistance against US imperialist attempts to impose its New World Order; strengthen international anti-imperialist solidarity; strengthen South-South cooperation; rebuff imperialist efforts to subvert our independent development and resistance to its attempts to impose its NPT and CTBT; Cancellation of the military cooperation pact with USA.

### Culture and Media

43. State support for expansion of cultural facilities, encouragement of activities aimed to take democratic culture to the mass of the people.

44. Implement autonomy for the official electronic media updating the Prashar Bharati Act provisions; Legislation to prevent growth of monopolies in print and electronic media which is inherently undemocratic; no foreign ownership of print media; ensure states have say in media policy and control on doordarshan and AIR

### Science

45. Science and technology policy which encourages creative work, scientific temper and strengthens the self-reliant basis of India's development.

### Environment

46. An environment policy which is integrated with the needs of rapid and sustainable economic development; stringent action against contractors illegally cutting down forests; strict pollution control against industries using hazardous technology which affect health of workers, the neighbourhood; provision of adequate rehabilitation package for persons displaced by development projects, particularly for advisasis who are most affected.

It is on the basis of such a programme that the CPI(M) appeals to the Indian people to defeat the Congress(I) and the BJP and vote for the Left, democratic and secular candidates in the coming elections.

The dangers being faced by the country today demand of every patriotic citizen a response that they owe both to the motherland and to themselves. The CPI(M) with its decades long record of consistent and selfless commitment to defend our country's unity and integrity and to advance people's welfare has, during these last five years, been in the forefront of people's struggles facing all the grave challenges. Its increased representation in the parliament, strengthening of the Left in parliament and the combination of the Left, democratic and secular forces alone can today further the struggle to face the challenge of safeguarding our country and championing the people's interests.

The Indian people have at all crucial moments shown a high degree of patriotism and strong sense of secular unity in rejecting those who betray the country's interests and the people's unity. The betrayers must be rejected in totality. This opportunity must be fully utilised and the CPI(M) calls upon the electorate to come forward in unprecedented numbers to ensure the defence of a democratic, secular, federal, modern India in order to take it on a path of prosperity, unity and integrity.

Left, Democratic and Secular Candidates

Phone No. 52

March 1986

For further information, contact the CPI(M) Secretariat, 100, Park Road, New Delhi-110001 or District Office, Bangalore. For details of the Party's programme and policies, contact the CPI(M) Secretariat, 100, Park Road, New Delhi-110001.



**Defeat Cong.(I)**

**Defeat BJP**



**Vote for CPI(M)**

**Vote for Left Parties**

**Elect Democratic &**

**Secular Candidates**

March 1996 Price: Rs. 2/-

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P 11A

# ELECTION MANIFESTO OF INDIAN NATIONAL CONGRESS

## GENERAL ELECTION (LOK SABHA)

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INDIAN NATIONAL  
**CONGRESS (I)**  
ELECTION  
MANIFESTO

GENERAL  
ELECTION  
1996

1007  
30/4/96  
Aparna

### PREAMBLE

Elections to the 11th Lok Sabha will be held shortly.

Election is the life-line of democracy.

An election presents a choice to the people. The choice to vote a party into government. The choice to vote a candidate to office.

What is the choice today ?

The Congress presents an India with a bright future. The Opposition presents an India that will be thrown back to the past.

The Congress presents an India which is growing, creating wealth, generating jobs and providing more incomes. The Opposition presents an India which will be stagnant, inward-looking, poor and likely to become bankrupt.

The Congress presents an India which rejoices in its unity and celebrates its diversity. The Opposition presents an India that will be inflamed by caste and religious passions.

The Congress presents an India that has earned new respect among the countries of the world. The Opposition presents an India that will be ignored, ridiculed and forgotten.

The Congress presents an India with a stable Government and a vibrant economy. The Opposition presents an India with a tottering government and a collapsing economy.

Never before has the choice been so clear. Never before has the choice been so stark and simple.

Pol-2-3

## THE 1991 ELECTIONS

The nation went to the polls in 1991 to elect the Tenth Lok Sabha.

It was after a period of 16 months of darkness, drift and economic disaster.

The Indian National Congress promised the people that it will get on with the task of rebuilding India.

As the Tenth Lok Sabha convened, there was a pall of gloom. Shri Rajiv Gandhi had been snatched away cruelly. He fell victim to the most despicable act of terrorism. As in life, so in his death, he upheld the causes of unity and sovereignty at home and peace and brotherhood in the world.

The Congress called upon Shri P.V. Narasimha Rao to shoulder the onerous responsibility of leading a Government which did not have a majority in the Lok Sabha. Shri P.V. Narasimha Rao, steeped in the Congress tradition of sacrifice and service, accepted the daunting task.

In his first major address to the nation, he pledged that the theme song of his government would be Continuity with Change.

Since 1991, the Congress has ushered in unprecedented change.

Never before in the history of India has so much change been wrought in so short a time. Never before in the history of the world has so much change been wrought with so little pain or suffering.

How did the Congress work this near-miracle ?

## THE CONGRESS - A PARTY AND A MOVEMENT

Let us go back to that historic day when the Indian National Congress was born. The founding fathers of the Congress recognised that what the people of India needed was not a mere political party. Because no political party could unite within its fold the plurality and diversity of India.

The Indian National Congress was, therefore, cast in a different mould, the mould of a national movement. Its purpose was to mobilise the Indian people into action and lead them to new frontiers.

During the freedom struggle, the goal was Independence.

During the early years of independent India, the goal was Unity and Sovereignty.

During the years of nation building, the goal was Growth with Social Justice.

After the wasted years of 1977 to 1979 and 1990 to 1991, the goal was restitution of a Government that Works.

During the period 1991 to 1995, the goal was to re-establish a Stable Government and resume the task of nation building.

### *It is because of the support of the people that*

- a minority government could add to its strength and command a majority in the Tenth Lok Sabha
- the nation could be pulled back from the brink of an economic catastrophe
- economic reforms of an unprecedented magnitude could be unfolded
- the pledge of ushering in Panchayati Raj could be redeemed and power given to the people
- the world could be compelled to take note of India and her stable polity and resurgent economy

## THE CONGRESS' RECORD

The Congress is a unique political party. It mirrors the basic ethos of a civilisation that is over 5000 years old.

It is the Congress that has created an India which is agriculturally prosperous, industrially advanced and scientifically developed. Above all, the Congress has maintained a commitment to democracy. Indeed, parliamentary democracy would not have taken root in India and nurtured, but for the Congress.

Many other political parties are one-issue parties. Some exploit caste. Some exploit religion. There are parties which encourage fanaticism. The Congress has always rejected these divisive issues.

The Congress reflects differing and divergent interests and recon-

ciles them into a single harmonious national mosaic.

## IV

**THE CONGRESS THEME:  
STABILITY, NATIONAL SECURITY,  
HARMONY AND DEVELOPMENT**

The Congress Party belongs to you.

It belongs to you regardless of your caste or religion, colour or race. It belongs specially to the poor, the neglected and the disadvantaged.

It belongs to the worker and the farmer. It belongs to the teacher. It belongs to the scientist.

It belongs to the soldier who defends the country.

It belongs to the millions of ordinary men and women who toil every day.

It belongs to the farmers and agricultural workers who produce record levels of paddy and wheat, pulses and oilseeds, cotton and sugarcane, tea, coffee and tobacco and a number of other crops.

That is why the Congress has remained true to certain unchanging values. These are :

- Unity and Integrity
- Democracy based on the Parliamentary system
- Secularism
- An independent Judiciary
- Freedom of Speech and Expression and Freedom of the Press
- Stability, social harmony and development

Neither victory nor defeat in an election has altered the Congress Party's allegiance to these values. Because these are the values inscribed in the soul of every Indian.

Because it is these values which can enfold the plurality and diversity of India.

It is not just unity in diversity; it is unity through diversity.

The Congress alone provides the link between all communities and sections of society. The Congress alone represents the composite

nature of our ancient civilisation.

It is the Congress, and the Congress alone, which mirrors this India. The Congress pledges that it will remain true and faithful to these fundamental values of the country.

## V

**CONGRESS PROMISES STABILITY**

Stability is the plank on which rests good governance. It is the foundation on which rests civil society.

There were only two periods of political instability in India. They were from 1977 to 1979 and from 1990 to 1991.

These were the years in which the Congress was not in office in the Central Government.

In 1977, the first non-Congress Government had the numbers on its side. Yet it failed miserably. Ultimately it fell.

In 1989, the second non-Congress Government obtained outside support and thus claimed a majority in Parliament. It was an opportunistic alliance. The bubble burst in 11 months. That Government also fell.

Neither their numbers nor their shifting affiliations could keep the non-Congress Governments going for a full period of five years.

Voted back to office in 1991, the Congress has redeemed its pledge of providing a Stable Government.

While the Congress remained united and strong, other political parties broke up. Several State Governments formed by other political parties crumbled.

Through this period, the Central Government has been remarkably stable.

It was not only a stability of numbers. It was the stability of policies and continuity of programmes. Indeed for some time it was stability in spite of the inadequacy of numbers.

***The stability envisaged by the Congress is a comprehensive one. It necessarily includes :-***

- i) National Security

cars, textiles, paper, cement, steel, fertilisers and medicines. For the first time, shortages have disappeared. Indians have the choice to buy what they want.

More jobs are being created every year. In the last five years, over three crore jobs have been created.

India's GDP has been growing at a satisfactory rate. From just 1% in 1990-91 to 6.2% in 1994-95 is, by all accounts, a remarkable achievement. 1995-96 will again witness growth of more than 6%.

India's exports have averaged over 20% growth in the last three years.

Inflation is down to below 5%, a record for 10 years.

We are today the sixth largest economy in the world. Soon we will be the 4th largest.

That is the real picture of our economy.

### VIII

#### **GREATER SELF-RELIANCE**

It is the Congress which first put before the people the goal of self-reliance.

That goal has been corrupted by some self-styled protagonists of national interest.

What is true self-reliance ?

**True self-reliance is measured by:**

- the capacity of the country to save more and invest more.
- the potential of the economy to create more jobs and generate more incomes.
- the capacity of industry and agriculture to absorb more investment and better technology.
- the capacity of the country to pay for the import of capital goods and raw materials.
- the capacity of the Government to pay for the import of essential articles like fertilisers, edible oils and petroleum products to meet the needs of the people.

- the capacity of the Government to repay the national debt and to pay the interest charges.

The poor countries of the world are not self-reliant. It is the affluent countries which are self-reliant.

Our goal is to make India affluent. Our goal is to make India truly self-reliant.

### IX

#### **PEACE IN PUNJAB**

As many as twenty seven candidates were killed by the terrorists when elections were ordered in Punjab during Shri Chandrashekar's regime as Prime Minister. Therefore, hours before the installation of the Congress Government, elections in Punjab were cancelled. Punjab was still torn and reeling under terrorism.

The Congress picked up the thread from where it had left it in November 1989.

Fencing on the border was resumed. The Punjab police was entrusted with the job of restoring law and order.

Within months, there was a gradual return to peace and law and order.

The Congress Government then took the courageous decision: to hold elections to the Punjab State Legislature and Lok Sabha.

Elections were held. The Congress was returned to power with an overwhelming majority.

That marked the beginning of a new era in Punjab. Elections to the Legislature were followed by elections to Nagarpalikas and Panchayats.

Today, the people of Punjab rule themselves through their elected representatives.

Today, there is peace in Punjab.

There has been a tremendous increase in economic activity.

Both industry and agriculture are thriving as never before. Indian and foreign companies are flocking to Punjab to make massive investments.

Punjab is a testimony to the statesmanship and wisdom shown by



Prime Minister Shri P.V.Narasimha Rao, in handling an explosive situation.

## X

### A NEW BEGINNING IN KASHMIR

The State of Jammu & Kashmir was relatively peaceful until November 1989.

The pitch was queered during the rule of Janata Dal. The Janata Dal was aided and abetted by the BJP.

Together they sacrificed the interests of the people of the State for political expediency. Together they destroyed the bond of trust and friendship between the people of Jammu and Kashmir and the rest of India.

The Congress has strained every nerve to rebuild this bond.

The Congress believed - and continues to believe - that the people of Jammu and Kashmir deserve a Government of their choice.

The Congress has, therefore, promised that Jammu and Kashmir can enjoy a large measure of autonomy within the framework of the Indian Constitution. Article 370 of the Constitution of India shall stand.

The Congress believes that elections - howsoever difficult - are the only way to break the gridlock in Jammu and Kashmir.

Elections have already been ordered for the Lok Sabha from J&K.

The Congress further pledges to hold elections to the State Legislature. The Congress pledges to restore democratic government in that State.

## XI

### PANCHAYATI RAJ RAJNITI TO LOKNITI

Shri Rajiv Gandhi's last great legislative initiative was the introduction of the Constitution Amendment Bills to provide for Panchayats and Nagarpalikas.

He dreamed of restoring power to the people.

He dreamed of a government close to the people.



He dreamed of a vibrant grassroots democracy with women, the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes sharing power and exercising authority.

But the Opposition Parties combined to defeat the Bills in Parliament in 1989.

Rajiv died in 1991, his dream unfulfilled.

Shri P.V. Narasimha Rao revived that dream.

The Constitution Amendment providing for Panchayats and Nagarpalikas came into force on 24th April 1993.

Seats at every level, including that of President or Chairman have been reserved for SCs/STs.

30% of the seats are reserved for women.

Elections have been held in all but three states of India to Panchayats and Nagarpalikas.

A silent revolution has taken place in the towns and villages of India. Its full impact will be felt in the next few years.

There are only 4000 MPs and MLAs representing the people in our political system. In a population of 95 crore, that was not enough. 30 lakh representatives at the grassroots -- one-third of whom are women - will now emerge as leaders of the people.

## XII

### MANDAL REPORT IMPLEMENTED PEACEFULLY

Reservations for the Backward Classes was an idea of the Congress. Jawaharlal Nehru made this into a Constitutional Principle in 1952. Reservations became a part of the Congress Party's social justice programme.

Since then, Congress Governments have successfully implemented reservations for the Backward Classes in several Congress ruled States.

In 1990, due to its ham-handed and opportunistic approach the Janata Dal Government triggered a virtual caste war in several parts of India.

The election of a Congress Government in 1991 brought peace to a

society that was threatened with disruption by caste strife.

Quietly, but firmly, Shri P.V. Narasimha Rao's Government implemented the recommendations of the Mandal Commission.

27% of the jobs were reserved for the Other Backward Classes (OBCs) in the Central Government and in Public Sector Undertakings.

Today, even in the IAS and IPS, OBCs have been appointed, thanks to the implementation of the Mandal Report by the Congress Government.

A National Commission for Backward Classes has been established.

A National Backward Classes Finance and Development Corporation has been established with an authorised capital of Rs.200 crore. Its object is to promote economic and other developmental activities for the Backward Classes.

### XIII

## ANTI POVERTY PROGRAMMES

The abolition of poverty remains the foremost objective of the Congress Government.

Since the days of Shrimati Indira Gandhi, Congress has declared its faith in programmes which attack poverty at the grassroots.

The very poor in India do not have property. They do not have jobs. Often they do not have work.

Needless to say they do not have houses, or sanitary latrines. Till recently the village artisans did not have efficient tool kits for improving their production.

These are some of the reasons of poverty.

These issues have been addressed by Congress Governments through a number of anti-poverty programmes.

The P.V. Narasimha Rao Government has enlarged and expanded these programmes. It has also introduced new programmes.

The investment in rural development and poverty alleviation during the period 1991-1996 has been Rs.34,000 crore. This is thrice the amount spent in the previous five years. It is proposed to increase this

outlay by three times more, to around Rs.90,000 crore, in the next five years during the Ninth Plan.

The record speaks for itself.

### *In the four year period - July 1991 to July 1995 :*

- 115 lakh families were assisted under the Integrated Rural Development Programme (IRDP).
- 8.12 lakh wells were constructed under the million wells scheme.
- 28 lakh houses were constructed free of cost for Scheduled Castes/Scheduled Tribes, freed bonded labourers and other people below the Poverty Line under the Indira Awas Yojana.
- 2.60 lakh villages/habitations were covered under the rural drinking water supply scheme.
- 21 lakh sanitary latrines were constructed under the rural sanitation programme.
- 4.21 lakh tool kits were distributed to 3,87,696 rural artisans all over the country.
- 1.2 lakh groups consisting of several lakh persons were benefitted under the Development of Women and Children in the Rural Areas Scheme (DWCRA).
- 13 lakh youth were trained under the scheme of Training of Rural Youth for Self-Employment (TRYSEM).
- 7,837 projects were approved and Rs.160.85 crore were released to 1,600 voluntary agencies for rural development.

The greatest success has been the creation of work - work which translates into incomes for the very poor and assets for the country.

Employment Assurance Scheme to provide wage employment for two persons in the household and agricultural labourers was introduced in 3198 Blocks in 391 Districts.

Wage employment under Jawahar Rozgar Yojana was intensified in works based upon local needs and priorities.

These Employment Schemes would be expanded to provide wage employment to all persons seeking and needing it. This is the way poverty is being attacked.



## XIV

### NATIONAL SOCIAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAMME

The Congress Government launched a National Social Assistance Programme on the 15th of August, 1995. This programme has three components and allocation of funds in the last two years has been over Rs.1500 crore.

A National Old Age Pension Scheme provides Rs.75 per month to destitute persons of 65 years and above. This will benefit 54 lakh people.

A National Family Benefit Scheme provides a lump sum benefit of Rs.5000 in case of natural death and Rs.10000 in case of accidental death of the primary bread earner of a family below the Poverty Line and aged between 18 and 64 years.

A National Maternity Benefit Scheme provides a lump sum assistance of Rs.300 to a pregnant woman above the age of 19 years below the poverty line. This is estimated to benefit 46 lakh women each year.

## XV

### AGRICULTURE

Farmers are the backbone of our country and the economy. The Indian National Congress has always given the highest priority to them.

The Eighth Plan outlay for the Ministry of Agriculture was enhanced to Rs.10,000 crore as against a little less than Rs.3,500 crore in the Seventh Plan, an increase of over 180%.

No Government ever gave farmers such high remunerative prices by way of Minimum Support Price as was done by the Congress during the last 5 years. Thus the Minimum Support Price of paddy which was Rs.230 per quintal in 1991-92 was increased to Rs.360 per quintal in 1995-96. Similarly the support price of wheat was increased from Rs.275 per quintal to Rs.380 per quintal over the same period.

As a result of policy initiatives and special programmes introduced, the agriculture sector has become more competitive and efficient. Indian agriculture has been freed from controls of domestic and international trade which have substantially enhanced the opportunities for our farmers to reap remunerative returns.



Our progressive policies have enabled farmers to reach new heights of production and productivity. Higher production and productivity has in turn led to higher wages, enhancing the purchasing power of the rural poor.

Foodgrain production has increased to a record level of 19.1 crore tonnes in 1994-95. A major thrust was given to horticulture - the Eighth Plan outlay on horticulture is Rs.1000 crore against an expenditure of only Rs.24 crore in the Seventh Plan. India is now the largest producer of fruits and second largest producer of vegetables and coconuts in the world. The production of milk has increased substantially from 5.39 crore tonnes in 1990-91 to above 6.3 crore tonnes in 1994-95. Total agricultural exports have increased from about Rs.5,000 crore in 1990-91 to over Rs.10,000 crore in 1994-95. For the first time the export of marine products crossed US \$ 1 billion in 1994-95.

From a position where we used to import agricultural products, the agricultural sector today has become a dynamic outward looking sector, helping the economy by producing enough to meet the country's needs and also by earning valuable foreign exchange.

Our agricultural production strategy has moved to encompass all soil and agro-climatic conditions specially in the rain-fed areas and drought-prone areas, in which the bulk of our rural poor reside. Watershed development projects for sustainable development of these areas have been launched under National Watershed Development Projects for Rain-fed Areas (NWDPPRA), Drought-prone Areas Programme (DPAP) and Integrated Watershed Development Projects (IWDP).

DPAP has now been extended to 946 Blocks in the country and its outlay has been more than doubled between 1991-92 and 1995-96. Its guidelines now provide for greater people's participation through Panchayats, Watershed Associations and self-help groups.

Another important step which has been in active consideration and which will be implemented forthwith, is de-licensing of the Sugar industry.

The time has come when in overall terms, Agriculture needs to be accorded the status of an Industry. This will be done now, since all the other steps required in this behalf have been completed.

To protect the interests of Traditional Fishermen in the Coastal areas and to ensure the growth of joint ventures to be established under the Deep Sea Fishing Policy, the recommendations of the Review Committee



under the Chairmanship of Shri P. Murari will be processed and implemented.

## XVI

### ESSENTIAL COMMODITIES

Essential commodities such as rice, wheat, sugar, palmolein and kerosene are distributed through the Public Distribution System (PDS) at prices generally lower than the market price through fair price shops.

In 1992, the Congress Government launched a scheme to revamp the PDS in 1752 backward blocks falling in drought-prone areas, desert areas and hill and tribal areas. Additional commodities like tea, soap and pulses are also distributed through the Revamped PDS shops. Additional allocations of foodgrains have been earmarked and foodgrains are distributed at prices lower than even in the PDS. The most vulnerable sections of our population are served through the Revamped PDS.

The PDS subsidy bill in 1995-96 was Rs.5,500 crore. The objective is to benefit the very poor and bring them relief.

The Congress promises to extend the Revamped PDS to 694 more blocks.

## XVII

### SCHEDULED CASTES

The National Commission for SCs and STs has been conferred constitutional status and has recently been reconstituted.

The National Commission for Safai Karmacharis has been constituted and has been in operation for the past two years. The Commission looks into the specific problems of Safai Karmacharis and recommends specific programmes for elimination of inequalities in status, facilities and opportunities for them.

A National Scheme was launched in March 1992 for liberation and rehabilitation of Safai Karmacharis so as to eliminate the inhuman practice of carrying night soil and filth on head by the end of the Eighth Five Year Plan.

A separate Finance and Development Corporation for extending concessional finance to Safai Karmacharis for starting self employment

projects is being set up with an authorised capital of Rs.200 crore.

Reservations for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, now made through an executive order under Articles 15 and 16 of the Constitution, will be provided for under suitable Acts to be made by Parliament and the State Legislatures.

The Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act and other applicable laws will be reviewed, amended and strengthened with the object of ensuring quick justice to the affected Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes.

Rules under SC & ST (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, 1989 have been modified with effect from 31.3.95 wherein payment of compensation to the victims has been increased manifold and the procedure for payment has also been simplified.

The Congress Government amended the Constitution in order to continue the reservations for SCs/STs in promotions.

In order to honour Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar and to disseminate his message of social justice and social emancipation, the Dr. Ambedkar Foundation has been set up as a registered society to manage and administer the long term schemes and programmes identified during his centenary celebrations.

Dr. Ambedkar University in Lucknow has been converted into a central university.

Dr. Ambedkar Chairs have been instituted in 9 Universities in India.

Dr. Ambedkar Overseas Scholarships are awarded to meritorious students for pursuing advanced studies.

Dr. Ambedkar National Award has been instituted for promoting outstanding contribution in the field of social understanding and work done for weaker sections.

## XVIII

### TRIBAL DEVELOPMENT

The Tribal Cooperative Marketing Development Federation (TRIFED) was established in 1987 with the primary aim of marketing Minor Forest Produce and surplus agricultural produce collected by the tribals so as to get them remunerative prices and to eliminate the middlemen who exploit the tribals.



The authorised share capital of TRIFED has been increased from Rs.50 crore to Rs.100 crore. The turnover of TRIFED has gone up 10 times from Rs.40 crore in 1990-91 to Rs.400 crore during 1995-96.

Tribal Commission under Article 339 (1) of the Constitution will be constituted soon to report on administration of Scheduled Areas and welfare of Scheduled Tribes in States.

## XIX

### BACKWARD CLASSES DEVELOPMENT

Congress Government took the historic decision to provide reservation of 27% to socially and educationally backward classes in civil posts and services under Government of India on 8th September, 1993.

The OBC candidates were given age relaxation of three years and 3 additional attempts in Civil Service Examinations.

A permanent statutory Commission for Backward Classes has been set up to make recommendations to the Government for inclusions/exclusions of castes in the Central List of OBCs.

The National Backward Classes Finance and Development Corporation has been set up with an authorised share capital of Rs.200 crore for providing concessional finance to the poorer sections of backward classes for setting up self employment ventures. During the last four years Rs.146.5 crore has been disbursed so far.

The Pre-Examination Coaching Scheme has been introduced with effect from 1992-93 to prepare candidates from Other Backward Classes and Minorities for competitive examinations. The number of candidates coached under the scheme during the past three years has been around 6,630.

A new scheme for welfare of street children has been started under which NGOs are given financial assistance for care, protection and development of street children. 81 centres have been set up under this scheme covering 37 important cities.

A new scheme for setting up homes for the aged was launched in 1992-93. Under this scheme 209 old age homes, 239 Day Care Centres, and 29 Mobile Units have been functioning.



## XX

### WOMEN

Women have been in the forefront of the Congress while championing the causes of the people and in the freedom struggle.

Apart from the legislative and other measures taken from time to time, the Congress Government has set up the Rashtriya Mahila Kosh to develop a network of credit services for women working in the informal sector and to support self-employment ventures.

The Mahila Samridhi Yojana has been launched for the welfare of women. A woman who deposits Rs.300 in the post office will get Rs.375 after one year. A sum of Rs.1,000 crore has been set aside for the scheme which will make our women self-confident, self-reliant and independent.

The Congress Government has established the National Commission on Women. Besides, there is a Commissioner for Women's Rights to promote the social well-being of women and check atrocities and violence directed at women.

The Congress Government has already provided reservations for women in Panchayats and Nagarpalikas. By a suitable amendment in the Constitution, Congress will provide reservations for women in State Legislatures and Parliament.

## XXI

### WELFARE OF MINORITIES

The Congress regards all Indian citizens as equal.

Yet we recognise Minorities of several kinds because we recognise the special disadvantages that they suffer and the special help that they need.

This is not appeasement. This is heeding the call of the Constitution of India.

Equal status to all people and protection of the Minorities are fundamental features of the Indian Constitution. They are also the fundamental features of any plural society.

The cornerstone of Secularism is the security of the Minorities. The cornerstone of a civil society is the security of all people. The Congress will leave no stone unturned to secure the life and liberty



of all the people including the Minorities.

The Congress regards the 15-point Programme for the welfare of Minorities as a charter of duties. The programme will be reviewed from time to time, revised and updated.

For instance, a Rapid Action Force, consisting of young men of all communities, has been established. They are stationed at sensitive places. Although new, it has already shown its mettle and earned public confidence.

The Congress Government has established the National Minority Finance and Development Corporation with a capital of Rs.500 crore. The Corporation will support projects and schemes that will promote the well-being of Minorities.

The Minorities Commission has been given statutory status.

The Congress Government has enacted the Protection of Places of Worship Act, 1991. The status of all places of worship as it existed on the day of Independence will be preserved. No one can now misuse any place of worship to divide Indian society.

After wide-ranging discussions and consultations with Muslim Members of Parliament, Members of Central Wakf Council and other leaders of the Muslim community, a comprehensive legislation to amend and consolidate the law relating to the administration of Wakfs has been enacted. The Wakf Act has come into force with effect from 1.1.96.

The Maulana Azad Education Foundation has been set up as an independent entity with a Corpus Fund of Rs.30 crore with a view to promoting education amongst educationally backward Minorities in particular and the weaker sections in general.

## XXII

### PERSONAL LAWS

The Congress has made its position very clear on the question of Personal Law. The Congress believes that there should be no imposition by Government of any change in the Personal Law of any community or any section of people. Such changes, against the wishes of the community concerned, would neither be favourable nor acceptable, if attempted in the name of uniformity.



## XXIII

### WORKERS

The Congress is proud of the role played by the Indian workers in accelerating the pace of industrial development. The interest of workers has always been uppermost in the minds of successive Congress Governments.

It was Shri Rajiv Gandhi who set up a high level National Commission on Rural Labour when he was Prime Minister. The Government of Shri P.V. Narasimha Rao has taken important steps to implement the recommendations of the Commission and in extending social security and insurance schemes to various sections of unorganised labour.

The Congress Government has raised the eligibility limit for payment of bonus from Rs. 2,500 to Rs.3,500 per month and the ceiling for calculation of bonus from Rs.1,600 to Rs.2,500 per month. Earlier it had increased the ceiling under the Payment of Gratuity Act to enable workers to get gratuity upto Rs.1 lakh.

## XXIV

### EX-SERVICEMEN

The Congress Government issued orders in March, 1992 sanctioning "one time increase" in pension with effect from 1st January, 1992 involving a recurring expenditure of about Rs.140 crores. About 8.3 lakh defence pensioners will benefit under this scheme. Till April, 1995 over 5 lakh pensioners have already been sanctioned one time increases under this scheme.

The Congress Government has also undertaken various steps for the welfare of ex-servicemen and their families. Amounts of financial assistance provided from Raksha Mantri's Discretionary Fund to ex-servicemen in penury for marriage of their daughters, repair of house, education of children and medical treatment have also been enhanced.

## XXV

### WELFARE OF DISABLED PERSONS

In the last four years, a number of initiatives have been taken for promoting the welfare of disabled persons.



A comprehensive legislation for safeguarding the rights of persons with disabilities and enabling them to enjoy equal opportunities and participate in national life will be introduced shortly.

A National Finance and Development Corporation with an authorised share capital of Rs.400 crore and a paid-up share capital of Rs.200 crore has been set up to extend concessional finance to the disabled for self employment projects and promoting technical skills.

A National Trust for welfare of persons with mental retardation and cerebral palsy will be set up for which a Bill was introduced in the Lok Sabha last year.

The Indian Spinal Injury Centre has been set up in collaboration with the Italian government to provide treatment to persons suffering from spinal injury.

## XXVI YOUTH

The Congress Government of Shri Rajiv Gandhi lowered the voting age from 21 to 18. Millions of young men and women have thus been given an opportunity to participate directly in the political process.

The population of India is getting younger. About 60% of the population is below the age of 40. That is 55 crore people. A Committee on National Youth Programmes has been set up under the Chairmanship of the Prime Minister.

## XXVII EDUCATION

The Congress Government of Shri P. V. Narasimha Rao has made a public and firm commitment to spend 6% of the country's GDP on education. This would mean a doubling of investments in education by the turn of the century.

The Congress Government launched a new mid-day meal programme to increase nutrition and improve school attendance of 11 crore children in classes I to IV in three years. In the very first year of the scheme, 3.4 crore children have been covered.

An innovative programme has been launched for overhauling prima-



ry education in 42 of the educationally backward districts of the country. This programme is focussed on the education of girls and disadvantaged groups such as girls, Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and children with disabilities. This programme, which is in operation in 42 educationally backward districts of the country would be extended to all districts soon.

In more than 300 districts of the country total literacy campaigns have been taken up. The National Literacy Mission has made big strides and its achievements have been acknowledged widely. These total literacy campaigns would be further strengthened with special emphasis upon marginalised groups like child workers, pavement dwellers, migrant labour, etc.

Despite tight fiscal constraints, the Central Plan budget allocation for education has gone up by over 90% in the last three years. The Congress Government's commitment to education can be seen from the fact that Plan investment in elementary education has gone up by 130% in the same period.

The Congress is committed to ensuring universal access to elementary education by the year 2001, laying particular emphasis on the Girl Child and imparting a strong vocational bias to secondary education.

Access to Technical education, Vocational education and Higher education would be expanded and improved through distance learning modes, open schools and open universities.

Emerging areas of technology and management would be encouraged, supported and nurtured through centres of excellence.

## XXVIII POWER

Power is essential infrastructure for agriculture and industry. There is also growing demand for electrification of households. Development and prosperity means increased consumption of power. The improvement in the quality of our lives depends to a large extent on the reliable supply of power.

With the best of efforts, the country is able to add about 4500 MW every year through public investment. A full 20% of the 8th Plan outlay

has gone to the power sector alone. The demand for power is about 14,000 MWs per year for the next 10 years.

Hence the Congress Government took a decision to encourage the entry of private and Indian companies in the power sector. More private investment would release Government resources to be used in social sector programmes. A 1000 MW power station, if implemented in the private sector, would release Rs. 3,000 crore which is the annual expenditure on the education sector. Thus investments in education could easily double.

The full effect of the Congress Government's policy of encouraging foreign and Indian private companies in the power sector will be felt in the years to come. The last four years have been a learning process for both the Government and companies involved.

In the last five years, between April 1991 and March 1996, power generation in the country has grown steadily despite considerable odds. While in 1990-91, 286.7 billion units (BU) of electricity was generated in the year 1995-96 the generation was 379.8 BU, i.e., an increase of 93.1 BU, which, in percentage terms, represents an increase of 32.5%.

During this period the annual per capita consumption of electricity in the country grew by almost 24% to approximately 330 units.

Even this level of growth is not adequate and efforts are being intensified to meet the growing demand for power which is annually increasing by about 8%.

The plant load factor, denoting efficiency of available capacity, rose substantially from 55.8% to 63%.

The Central Public Sector Undertakings in the power sector have shown a superb performance and made record profits of about Rs. 1800 crores in 1995-96 and are now paying dividends to the Government regularly.

Besides electrifying about 75,000 new villages, over 21 lakh agricultural pumpsets in the rural areas were energised in the last five years. To improve the general health of the electricity sector, special efforts are being made to reform and restructure the State Electricity Boards so that their functioning becomes more viable and responsive to consumer needs.

Overwhelming response has come from investors within India and

abroad and nearly 140 projects aggregating to about 66,000 MW of new capacity and involving an investment of Rs. 2,50,000 crore are at various stages of active processing. Given political stability, continued infusion of such massive investment into the power sector is sure to be achieved.

## XXIX FERTILIZERS

The production of nitrogenous and phosphatic fertilizers has reached an all time record level of 104.3 lakh tonnes.

Fertilizers are also imported liberally. Thus, the availability of fertilizers has been ensured to fully meet demand at all times. In fact, at times there has been a glut.

Seven expansion projects in the public and cooperative sectors involving an investment of Rs. 4200 crore are under implementation.

The price of Urea continues to be heavily subsidised. On every tonne of Urea sold to farmers, the Government of India bears a subsidy of Rs. 2500. The sale price of urea in India is the lowest among our neighbouring countries.

To ensure that there is no shortage in the supply of fertilizers to our farmers, the Congress Government has taken steps to initiate joint ventures abroad. Projects in Iran, Oman and Tanzania are being finalised.

Fertilizer factories owned and operated by organisations of farmers' cooperatives like KRIBHCO and IFFCO have turned in excellent performances. They have major plans to set up new fertilizer plants in the country.

## XXX TELECOMMUNICATIONS AND POSTS

The Congress Government has ushered in a revolution in telecommunications.

The National Telecom Policy of 1994 is a landmark development. The Opposition parties criticised this policy, but the Government's stand was vindicated by the judgement of the Supreme Court in January, 1996.

In the last four years, 1.38 lakh villages have been provided with telephone facilities. Out of 2,43,555 Gram Panchayats, 1,55,410 have been provided with telephone facilities. By 1997 all villages and gram panchayats will be on the National Telecom network.

STD Public Call Offices have doubled in the last four years, providing gainful employment to nearly 10 lakh unemployed educated people in the country. All the 500 District headquarters, 90% of Sub-division headquarters and 85% of Tehsil headquarters have been provided with STD facilities. In this way telecommunications is being used to bring the country closer together.

To ensure that more and more Indians have access to the latest telecommunication technology at affordable prices, the Congress Government has taken far reaching steps along with private sector participation. The private sector will mobilise resources and obtain the most cost-effective equipment. The Department of Telecommunications will continue to be a major provider of telephone services.

The postal system continues to play a vital role in our country. In order to speed up transmission of money orders, a Satellite Money Order service has been launched covering 75 locations. This will enable instantaneous transfer of money benefiting lakhs of users in villages and towns.

### XXXI

## SMALL SCALE INDUSTRY

The Congress is deeply conscious of the critical role that small scale industry plays in our economy. One of the very first steps taken by the P.V. Narasimha Rao Government was to announce a package of policy measures in July 1991 to strengthen the small scale industry.

A full-fledged Small Industry Development Bank of India (SIDBI) has started functioning. New legislation has been introduced to ensure timely payments to small scale entrepreneurs. Bank facilities have been strengthened in about 100 centres in the country where there is a cluster of small scale units.

The Khadi and Village Industries Commission has been revived. A Rs.1000 crore investment programme is under implementation to modernise these industries. This will create lakhs of jobs and open new

markets for rural and small scale production enterprises.

All the steps taken by the Congress Government in the field of industrial and trade policy will create a new environment for small scale businesses. Improved technology is already flowing into the small scale sectors and new markets both in India and abroad are being opened up.

### XXXII

## THE PUBLIC SECTOR

The Public Sector belongs to the people.

The savings of the people, tapped as borrowings and taxes, have gone into the Public Sector.

Our experience with Public Sector enterprises has been mixed.

Some enterprises have always done well. Some have been turned around recently. Others are chronically sick.

Some enterprises were put in the Public Sector because of security and strategic considerations. They will remain in the Public Sector.

Over Rs. 1,50,000 crore of the people's money has been invested in the Public Sector. The annual return is less than Rs.3,000 crore. This is grossly inadequate.

The restructuring of the Public Sector is therefore of the highest priority.

The Congress Government has set up a National Renewal Fund to fully protect the interests of labour and to provide adequate funds for re-training and skill development. Almost Rs 2,000 crore has been allocated to this Fund in the last two years.

The goal is to make these enterprises productive, efficient and profitable. The Congress is committed to achieve this goal.

### XXXIII

## SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Successive Congress Governments have been deeply committed to the development of Indian Science and Technology. It is because of this

sustained support given by Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, Shrimati Indira Gandhi, Shri Rajiv Gandhi and, since 1991, by Shri P.V. Narasimha Rao, that India has emerged as a leading nation in the development and application of Science and Technology.

Only five countries in the world have designed, built and launched satellites into space. India is one of them.

The INSAT satellite series are being used extensively for telecommunications, TV broadcasting, weather forecasting to our farmers and in giving early warning on disasters like floods.

The Council of Scientific and Industrial Research has developed many processes for several vital and essential drugs. This will help in timely production of these drugs. And at a cost which is one third to one fifth the price of the imported drugs. These include drugs for the treatment of Malaria, Gastro-enteritis, Cancer, T.B. and AIDS.

New technology programmes have been launched to modernise tanneries, improve recovery of sugar and improve productivity of fish farms.

The country's atomic energy programme has been consolidated in the last five years. About 700 MWs of additional power capacity has been added. Nuclear technology is being used in preservation and storage of food, introduction and extensive use of high yielding and insect and drought resistant varieties of ground-nut, moong and urad, high yielding varieties of bananas, cleaning of sewage, etc.

Impressive progress has also been made in fields like computers, robotics and lasers.

For the first time oral polio vaccine will be manufactured in the country. This will benefit 20 million children who are born every year.

Bio-technology applications to develop new varieties of cotton and rice and to improve the yield of our livestock population are now undergoing extensive transfer from laboratory to the field.

#### XXXIV

### ACCOUNTABILITY

The people elect their representatives. Election carries the obligation of accountability.

The Congress Government is committed to providing an open, accountable and responsive administration at all levels.

The Congress Government is committed to the principle that all executive action - administrative or quasi-judicial - shall be according to law.

The accountability of all to Parliament will remain supreme.

The Congress is committed to an independent judiciary. The accountability of all to the law and to the judiciary shall also remain supreme.

The revolutionary Panchayati Raj and Nagarpalika initiative will place power in the hands of people where it truly belongs. The strengthening of local governments will make the administration more accountable to the people.

The Congress will take steps to set up a Lok Pal. It will ensure that all those Congressmen and Congresswomen elected to public office will make a public declaration of their assets.

All elected representatives belonging to the Congress will declare their assets on the day they enter upon their offices. They shall also make a declaration of their assets on the day they vacate their offices.

#### XXXV

### STRONGER DEFENCE

The Congress Governments have a proud record in securing the defence of India.

Every Congress Government has added to the strength of India's defence.

The period from 1991-1996 has been another period of strengthening India's defence forces.

*The important achievements of this period are:*

- The commissioning of the main battle tank 'Arjun'.
- The successful launch of Prithvi, Nag and Akash missiles and the successful completion of the Agni project.
- The development of the light combat aircraft (LCA).

- Commissioning of INS Shankul and India joining the select club of countries possessing frontline technology for submarine construction.

By the turn of the century, India's defence forces will have the most versatile main battle tank and the most modern military aircraft of its kind.

The Indian defence forces have always been soldiers of peace.

Following the great traditions of the past, Indian defence personnel were deployed abroad in several countries including Kampuchia, Somalia and Rwanda as part of the UN peace keeping missions to these countries.

### XXXVI

## FOREIGN AFFAIRS

The world has changed dramatically in the last five years. Indian foreign policy has had to face new challenges arising out of fast moving global political and economic developments. The Congress Government under Shri P.V.Narasimha Rao has adopted a pragmatic and flexible approach to meet these challenges and has reoriented foreign policy to make it an effective instrument for furthering India's economic and political objectives.

India's prestige in the world has been restored by the Congress Government. The country is now respected and sought after. The Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) has made India a full dialogue partner - an honour that India now shares with the US, the European Union, Japan, Canada, Australia and New Zealand. By becoming a full dialogue partner India becomes a major player in the economic and security policy consultations involving some of world's most dynamic and fast growing countries.

A large number of developed and developing countries have supported the inclusion of India as a permanent member of the UN Security Council.

Prime Minister Shri P. V. Narasimha Rao's visit to China in 1993 resulted in the conclusion of the historic agreement on the maintenance of peace and tranquility along the line of actual control. It is an important step towards cordial relations and harmony between the two giant countries. Bilateral trade with China has registered a rapid expansion

and Consulates have been opened in Shanghai and Mumbai.

With Shri P. V. Narasimha Rao's highly successful visit to the United States in 1994, the relationship between the two countries is growing closer by the day and the United States continues to be India's largest trading partner and the single largest investor country.

A large number of bilateral agreements have been signed with Russia covering the entire spectrum of political, economic, technological and defence relations with Russia.

India's ties with countries like Japan, UK and Germany have greatly expanded following Shri Narasimha Rao's visits. These countries are taking greater interest in India's economic and social development.

India has always had close ties with developing countries. Traditional friendly relations with countries in the Gulf region, Iran and the Central Asian Republics have been further cemented and upgraded and given a tangible economic dimension.

New and close relationships have been forged with emerging economic powers like Israel, South Korea and South Africa.

A path-breaking development in India's foreign policy has been the launching of a regional economic cooperation initiative around the only ocean that takes its name from a country - the Indian Ocean. The Indian Ocean Rim Initiative launched in March 1995 will cover all areas of cooperation.

The SAARC nations took a significant step forward and launched the SAARC Preferential Trading Arrangement (SAPTA) with effect from 7th December, 1995. They have resolved to usher in a Free Trade Area (SAFTA) by the year 2005 and preferably by the year 2000. India's pioneering role in promoting SAPTA and SAFTA has been recognised in the South Asian region and elsewhere in the world.

The long-standing problem between India and Bangladesh relating to the Tin Bigha corridor was finally resolved by the Congress Government of Shri P. V. Narasimha Rao.

The voluntary return of Sri Lankan refugees to their homes commenced in January, 1992.

A landmark agreement for the development of the Mahakali river was finalised with Nepal. A large number of India-funded projects were





commissioned in Nepal and Maldives.

An important border trade agreement was finalised with Myanmar thereby promoting trade, including border trade, for the benefit of the local people on both sides.

The Congress Government has taken every step to establish cordial and good relations with Pakistan. It proposed a series of confidence building measures that were, unfortunately, rejected by Pakistan. Shri P.V.Narasimha Rao has repeatedly said that India is ready to discuss bilateral issues with Pakistan without any preconditions and to resolve all outstanding differences peacefully.

The Congress favours a nuclear weapons free world and will continue efforts for total and complete disarmament, particularly nuclear disarmament. Our nuclear policy is geared for peaceful purposes.

We are deeply concerned that Pakistan is developing nuclear weapons unabated. They have already inflicted four wars upon India. In case Pakistan persists in the development and deployment of nuclear weapons, India will be constrained to review her policy to meet the threat.

### A PLEDGE

The Congress Government at the centre has fulfilled almost all the promises made in the manifesto of 1991. It has amply demonstrated that the Congress is a doer and not just a talker. Its main concern has always been and will always be for the emancipation of the poor and their early entry into the middle and higher classes of the society.

In the foregoing pages the Indian National Congress has revealed a vital and important agenda. It is an agenda that will provide the nation with strength and stability and take us forward.

Internal peace and harmony, national security and political stability are the sine qua non of a strong India: An India that can hold its head high in the world. The Indian National Congress, as in the past, pledges to strive for these goals vigorously without any compromise or let up.

Within the framework of a large agenda contained in this Manifesto the Congress presents the following concrete programme which will be implemented straightaway upon securing the mandate of the people. This programme is necessarily composed of :

- a) consolidation of past achievements and



- b) a great advance in the future

Our vision for the next five years, containing the main items for better life, is as follows :

#### **Better Life**

- Houses for houseless poor
- Jobs for jobless ; Near full employment by 2002 A. D.
- Cheaper Rice and Wheat for the poor
- Drinking water for all habitations
- Mid-day meal for all primary school children
- Improved health and education facilities for all children
- Complete implementation of Operation Black Board all over the country by end of IX Plan
- Broad gauge Railway all over the country
- Rail or Road linkage to all villages
- Empowerment of women, including by Reservation in Legislative Bodies.
- Age of superannuation of 37 lakhs Central Government Employees to be raised as may be recommended by the Pay Commission.
- Remunerative prices for farmers

Detailed comments on these and other important items of the programme are given hereunder :

#### **1. Economic and Institutional Reform**

- (i) To carry forward the momentum of economic reform and restructuring of economic policies to achieve a higher trajectory of economic growth, efficiency and competitiveness in all production sectors and achieve 8 to 9% growth in GDP per annum.
- (ii) To initiate Rural Structural Transformation, consistent with and supportive of national reform. The main objective is to transform rural areas and backward regions to prosperity, with a diversified economic base, rural industrialisation and reduced rural-urban gap in transport, communications and services.
- (iii) To extend and enhance support to our scientists and technologists



and foster rapid utilisation of science and technology in all our national tasks, specially defence.

- (iv) Intensify promotion of agro-processing, tiny and household enterprises, ventures and activities through improved arrangements for infrastructure and credit facilities and freeing them from bureaucratic and procedural formalities.
- (v) Re-orient agricultural science and technology, extension and other support systems towards rainfed and drought-prone areas and extend Watershed Development Projects for conservation of water and protection of land with people's participation. The entire rainfed and dry areas in the country would be covered through these watershed development projects.
- (vi) Continue and strengthen the policy reforms, price incentives and input subsidies which have improved the relative profitability of agriculture and have enabled our farmers to reach new heights of production and productivity.
- (vii) Time bound implementation of the recommendations of the Committee on Revitalisation of Land Reform Administration and Computerisation of Land Records (P.S.Appu Committee), in consultation with the States.
- (viii) Usher in a new policy for cooperatives to restore their democratic structure and autonomy of management.
- (ix) Formulate the Ninth Five Year Plan in time with wide ranging consultations especially with the State Governments.
- (x) Enhance the functional and financial domain of self-government institutions established under Constitution (73rd and 74th Amendments) Acts and support measures for training and decentralised planning at the micro-level.
- (xi) Ensure that District Planning Boards as envisaged under Article 243 ZD of the Constitution, are established in every State at the district level to initiate, integrate and consolidate participatory local level plans.
- (xii) Implement the recommendations of the Committee of Members of Parliament and Experts on the law concerning extension of consti-



tutional provisions relating to Panchayats and Nagarpalikas to scheduled areas.

## 2. Removal of poverty and unemployment

- (i) *Extend the Employment Assurance Scheme (EAS)* to all 4997 blocks in the country and intensify the Jawahar Rozgar Yojana (JRY), to provide wage employment to all adults seeking and needing such employment.
- (ii) *Extend the Revamped Public Distribution System (RPDS)* to all the 3198 backward blocks in the country and to families residing in Urban slums. Reduce the issue price of rice and wheat distributed in RPDS blocks by Rs. 2.00 per kg.
- (iii) *Extend Integrated Child Development Scheme (ICDS)* to all 4997 blocks in the country and ensure arrangements for nutritional support equivalent to 150 gms of foodgrains per day to all the eligible pre-school children and expectant and nursing mothers.
- (iv) *Extend the National Mid-Day Meal Programme* to cover all elementary schools in the country and enhance the quantum of foodgrains supplied per child from 3 kg. per month to 5 kg per month, with the condition of 20 days' attendance of the child per month in the academic year.
- (v) Provide skill development and self-employment opportunities to all literate youth belonging to poor households through intensification of Integrated Rural Development Programme (IRDP) and the Prime Minister's Rozgar Yojana (PMRY).

The Congress promises near-full employment by 2002 AD on the following basis :

Estimates of additional employment generated in the first three years of the Eighth Five Year Plan have been made on the basis of Provisional Estimates of GDP for 1992-93, Quick Estimates of GDP for 1993-94 and Advance Estimates of GDP for 1994-95 released by the Central Statistical Organisation and estimates of employment elasticities made in the Planning Commission. According to these, additional employment opportunities of the order of 187.8 lakh are estimated to have been generated during the first three

years of the VIII Plan, implying an average rate of employment growth of 2.03 per cent per annum. During 1995-96 and 1996-97 employment is likely to grow by 150 lakh, making a total of 337.8 lakh during the Eighth Plan.

If these efforts are stepped up through intensive implementation of Special Employment Programmes as mentioned in Chapter XIII and growth of 7 to 8% is achieved during Ninth Plan Period, achievement of 100 to 110 lakh jobs in a year and a total of 660 lakh jobs during 1997-2002 is feasible. This would give near fulfillment of the objective of employment for all by 2002 AD.

- (vi) *Enhance the quantum of benefits* to persons from poor households under the *National Social Assistance Programme (NSAP)* being implemented with the active participation of Panchayats and Municipalities to :
  - (a) Rs. 100 per month for old persons above 65 years of age; and
  - (b) Rs. 500 for maternity assistance.
- (vii) *Extend Mahila Samridhi Yojana* to group savings and activities of rural women and provide facilities at their doorsteps for opening of accounts and receipt of interest income. Bring about a five - fold increase in the number of accounts opened.
- (viii) Take all measures for substantial reduction of Child Labour and total abolition of Child Labour from hazardous industries.

### 3. Basic needs and human development

- (i) Ensure that 6% of the country's GDP is spent on education and intensify all related activities for promotion of capability and involvement of teachers and provision of school buildings and educational aids on a mission mode to achieve universalisation of elementary education and foster excellence in higher education.
- (ii) Launch a national sanitation programme to intensify public health and immunisation activities; to secure a disease-free atmosphere in the country, with the involvement of Panchayats, Nagarpalikas and NGOs. Implement innovative school health programme to

provide health education as well as health services to all the school children through the help of primary school teachers and primary health-care providers.

- (iii) A comprehensive survey on the status of drinking water in rural habitations conducted during 1991-93 has revealed that even after almost completing all the main villages, there are still a large number of habitations without adequate source of drinking water or chemical contamination of water through excess of fluoride, iron, arsenic and salinity. All these habitations would be provided with safe drinking water sources through intensification of outlays and implementation of Accelerated Rural Water Supply Programme by the Rajiv Gandhi National Drinking Water Mission.
- (iv) The 1991 census has revealed the total rural housing shortage comprising of houseless rural families or those living in unserviceable rural kachcha houses as 1.3 crores. The Indira Awas Yojana will be expanded to provide a pukka house to all these households.
- (v) Launch a massive housing programme to provide savings-linked housing loan assistance at subsidised rate of interest, with life insurance cover to benefit all economically weaker sections households in rural and urban areas. This scheme will be administered through HUDCO and other housing corporations, boards, development authorities, cooperative societies and NGOs and with direct credit from LIC, GIC etc. and will be designed to benefit one crore households.
- (vi) Strengthen the post-harvest activities, cold storage, pre-cooling, refrigerated marketing and transport facilities in the country, thereby minimising post-harvest losses and enhancing the incomes of the cultivators in these districts.
- (vii) Protect our biological and environmental heritage through strict vigilance over pollution, denudation and displacement and promotion of sustainable development through participatory mechanisms such as Joint Forest Management Groups.
- (viii) Introduce a system of "proximity benefits" in favour of a specified number of villages adjacent to a large industry, to be funded out of the funds of the industry upto about one per cent of its outlay. Details



will be worked out at an early date after the new Congress Government takes over.

#### 4. Special measures for excluded sections of our society

- (i) Formulation and implementation of a national strategy to promote full participation and equality, of persons with disability in all programmes of rural development and other social sectors under the newly enacted legislation for disabled persons.
- (ii) Enhance the allocation of funds and intensification of the activities of the Commissions and the Corporations established for the welfare of Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, Backward Classes, Minorities, Women and disabled persons, to pull up their socio-economic development and to deal with gaps and missing links in their development process.
- (iii) Extend the reservations for certain excluded categories in deserving cases, such as Dalit Christians and for Women in Vidhan Sabhas and the Lok Sabha.
- (iv) Appoint a Commission on Tribal Areas under Article 339(1) of the Constitution to report on good administration of Scheduled Areas and welfare of Scheduled Tribes in States and implement its recommendations within one year.

#### 5. National Security and Integration

- (i) Relentless fight against terrorism and all other anti-national activities with special developmental efforts in States and regions which continue to be disturbed.
- (ii) Strengthen the steps taken by the Centre, with States' cooperation, to protect our borders on land and sea in dealing with infiltration of foreigners, smuggling and narco-trafficking.
- (iii) Elimination of criminal nexus with influential segments and control of organised crime, that has come to vitiate our social, political and administrative structures.
- (iv) Central support for modernisation and training of police service, aimed at improving their response, quality of investigations and accountability to crime and treatment of offenders.



- (v) Simplification of procedures and strengthening of judiciary for disposal of all pending cases in three years.
- (vi) The National Security Council formed in 1990 proved to be unwieldy. The Congress Government, after it came to power in 1991, has made a thorough reappraisal of the aspects of national security and a new blueprint, suited to the Parliamentary system of Government, has been evolved. At the apex is the Cabinet Committee on National Security (CCNS) with three Cabinet Sub-Committees on Internal Security, Defence and Foreign Policy. A strategic policy group will contribute to the CCNS, assisted by the Joint Intelligence Committee and a strategic technology sub-group. Experts from outside the Government could be associated with these groups, giving a wide scope for fresh ideas and papers to be produced for the decision of the CCNS. The new body will be set up as soon as the new Congress Government takes over at the Centre.

#### 6. Vigilance and anti corruption

- (i) Appoint a high powered Commission consisting of eminent jurists, parliamentarians and administrators to recommend legal, administrative and enforcement measures to control and contain corruption and implement these measures within 6 months.
- (ii) Establish LOKPAL with jurisdiction over all political offices, including that of the Prime Minister and the Chief Ministers.
- (iii) Reduce the amount of discretion obtaining in administrative decision-making, including at Minister's level, so as to render them public, transparent and accountable.
- (iv) All members of Parliament, Legislatures and local bodies to declare their assets, when assuming office and when leaving office.
- (v) Review the work of the enforcement agencies at the Centre and in the States with a view to accord adequate autonomy and insulation from interferences in discharging their duties.
- (vi) Involvement of the public in vigilance and control of corruption through public hearings, access to information and promotion of voluntary organisations in this area.

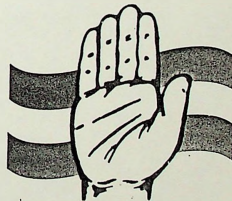
(vi) Strengthening of internal vigilance and anti-corruption mechanisms for preventive and punitive vigilance in all Government, Quasi-Government and Public agencies / organisations.

Our is a commitment to provide an effective Government for a stable polity, based on performance, a commitment to preserve and promote the Unity and Integrity of India in which every section of the Great Indian Nation can live in harmony and in pursuit of happiness.

Vote Congress for :

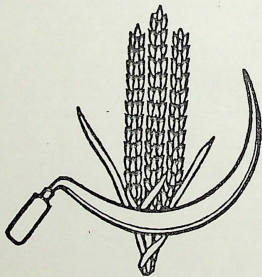
- Stability
- Progress
- National Unity
- Secularism

**GIVE CONGRESS (I)  
A MASSIVE MANDATE**



COMMUNIST PARTY  
OF INDIA

ELECTION  
MANIFESTO



ELECTION SYMBOL

ELECTIONS — 1996



Voters have been called upon to elect their representatives to the 11th Lok Sabha, and to several state assemblies. The coming poll is crucial for the future of the country, for its development, its unity and integrity, its secular-democratic set-up, its clean and healthy democratic life. Heavy responsibility rests on voters to elect those who are pledged to and capable of ensuring this.

**Congress No Longer Fit to Rule**

The Congress regime which started as a minority government, and later acquired a majority by engineering defections has thrown the country into a deep and allround crisis.

The Rao Government's economic policy has unfolded itself as 'pro-rich' and 'anti-poor', as aggressively pro-multinationals and monopolies and anti-public sector industries and local industries.

Despite the Government's tall claims of declining inflation, the common man finds the prices of foodstuff and other daily necessities soaring beyond his reach. The market remains within the clutches of profiteers and black-marketeers. Yet the Rao Government, when it came to power in 1991, had solemnly pledged to bring down prices to the level of the previous year. This has turned out to be nothing but a hoax to deceive the suffering people.

1007-2.4

Foodgrains production and stocks are at a record level, but per capita consumption is declining and offtake from public distribution system has fallen due to lack of purchasing power of the masses.

The value of the rupee is sliding sharply and trade deficit is growing.

Budget deficit continues to be high and unchecked, chiefly due to squandering of public funds and profligate spending by the powers that be.

Domestic savings stagnate at a low level.

The country's debts have reached astronomical figures.

The problems of poverty, unemployment, illiteracy and disease so far from being tackled, are getting aggravated as a result of structural adjustment programme dictated by the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank, and the new trade regime imposed by the World Trade Organisation. The worst victims of the new economic policies are the people below the poverty line.

The policy of liberalisation, globalisation and privatisation has struck a heavy blow at the self-reliant path of development for a big country like ours with abundant resources. Public enterprises built with the sweat and toil of our people are being privatised, and public assets are being given away to private parties, - both foreign and Indian. MNCs are acquiring grip over vital sectors of our economy and in consumer industries, depriving large sections of our people of their livelihood. In collaboration with local monopolies they are capturing large space in our markets, pushing aside local artisans, small scale industries, and even some medium and large scale ones.

The much tom-tomed figures of growth do not reflect a picture of development with social justice, but a distorted picture of affluence for the top 7 or 8 crores of our population, and misery and insecurity for the rest 85 crores.

Under the Rao regime heavy blows were struck at the secular foundations of our Republic. A sense of alienation and insecurity overtook the minorities, who do not

look upon this government as a protector of their life and property.

Corruption has reached new qualitative dimensions under the Rao gov't., with every passing day exposing a new scam, each bigger and more scandalous than the one earlier. Securities scam, sugar scam, disinvestment scam, Bailadilla deal, telecom scam, railway gauge scam, Purulia arms-drop scandal, the defence scam, and now the havala racket have polluted our democratic system and life. Even the country's security has been at stake in some of these scams.

There is today a growing nexus between money power breeding corruption and the latter breeding criminals and mafia elements who manoeuvre politics with the help of their benefactors. The growing criminalisation of politics, the politicisation of criminals and criminals rising to high positions represent a grave danger to democracy and social life.

A creeping paralysis has overtaken the executive pillar of our democracy during Rao's tenure allowing grave issues to remain unresolved and for unsolved problems to become festering sores. The legislative pillar has been rendered ineffective and blocked due to the insensitivity and total lack of accountability and transparency of government and its unabashed partisanship. Several times, it had to be the third, the judicial pillar which had to take decisions and issue directives because of the executive's failure to discharge its own duties and responsibilities.

**The Congress is clearly unable and unfit to rule the country any longer** according to constitutional imperatives, with 7 serving ministers having to resign and chargesheeted for corruption, with 2 more ministers who had resigned earlier being similarly indicted, and with the prime minister himself under a cloud. It is itself in a state of disarray, having suffered a split. **The country is no longer safe in Congress hands. Its chances of gaining a majority on its own, are non-existent.**

The slogan : "Give me stability, and I will give you progress" hides the truth that unless there is real progress in eliminating poverty, unemployment and other urgent problems of the poor in this country, there can be no stability.

#### **BJP Is No Alternative; It is Nowhere Near Power**

The BJP has been loudly claiming to be the 'party in waiting', the alternative to the Congress. But its claims have come a cropper. Much before the polls, it stands thoroughly exposed.

With an eye on power, it took recourse to out and out communal propaganda, distorting the humane essence of religion and is misusing religion for garnering votes. In an act of mediaeval frenzy it demolished a place of worship. Its action stirred up communal hate and poison on both sides that led to a spurt of riots and took hundreds of innocent lives.

It has attempted to put up a new face by talking of 'cultural nationalism'. But getting desperate after corruption and inner dissension caught up with it, the BJP has started openly espousing the so-called 'Hindu Agenda' of the Vishwa Hindu Parishad. Every single element of the BJP's cultural nationalism is aimed against the minorities, and is a denial of the pluralism and multifacetedness of Indian society and culture, which is the basis of our secularism.

Its so-called 'economic nationalism' is a crude mixture of swadeshi demagoguery and actual support to liberalisation policy of the Congress. After bravely denouncing Enron and threatening to throw it into the sea, it quickly struck a fresh deal with the self-same Enron.

Caught in the havalas net, the BJP has no face to talk of a crusade against corruption and of upholding high moral values and probity in public life. Its state governments notched up a record of scandals that match that of the Congress, - the tendu leaf scandal, the saal seeds and opium husk scandals in M.P. under the BJP governments, the dal scandal in Maharashtra, the tractor scandal in Rajasthan,

the land grab by BJP-RSS outfits in U.P., M.P. and Rajasthan, and others too numerous to be mentioned. **The Congress rulers sank into the mire of corruption through four and a half decades of power. The BJP governments did so in less than four and a half years. Its crusade against corruption has ended in fiasco.**

It is the same with dissidence and violent faction fights within each state outfit of the BJP. The Khajuria-Hajuria fight in Gujarat has caught the attention of the whole country. It has torn to shreds the BJP's boast that it is a 'party with a difference', a disciplined party. **With only a whiff of power, its power-hungry members are at each other's throat.**

A grave aspect of the havalas racket is the fact that it was a conduit for siphoning money to the Kashmiri militants, as also to BJP leaders and Congress ministers. This came out 4 years back, yet the patriotic conscience of these honourable gentlemen did not speak up. And now it is revealed that Dawood's criminal associates and hitmen found shelter both with a BJP MP and a Congress minister. **The Congress and the BJP are thus tarred with the same brush.**

In Maharashtra, the BJP-Shiv Sena government unceremoniously wound up the States Minorities Commission and the Srikrishna commission. It withdrew 1500 cases filed under the Prevention of Atrocities (Against Scheduled Castes) Act. **All these expose the BJP and its allies' ingrained hostility to minorities and dalits.** The reactionary ugly face of the ruling BJP was also seen in the shameful rally organised by it in Jaipur 'honouring' the five rapists of Bhanwari Devi.

**The BJP and its allies cannot therefore be an alternative to the Congress. The Indian people will not agree to jump from the frying pan into the fire. The BJP can hardly expect to better its earlier performance at the polls.**



### **Country Needs A Real Third Alternative**

What the country needs today is a functioning government at the centre - a broad coalition of left, secular and democratic parties and forces which will keep both the Congress and the BJP away from power, and which is sworn to carry out an alternative programme corresponding to the most urgent demands and aspirations of the common people for eliminating poverty, unemployment, illiteracy and disease.

The awakening of the hitherto oppressed and deprived masses, the dalits, backward classes and women, has raised the question of their empowerment in political and social life. **Only a coalition of the left, secular and democratic parties and forces can pave the way for this.**

**The left parties have a decisive role to play in forging such an alliance,** and in carrying through their programme. People have seen that it is only the left parties which are not tainted by any scams and scandals. The left has always stood up for the people; for their demands and grievances, - organising and leading struggles outside parliament and acting as 'people's tribune' inside parliament.

It is only the CPI and the left who have firmly opposed all attempts by imperialism, their agents and proxies to subvert our economic and political sovereignty or threaten our national security and integrity.

The CPI and the left has consistently fought against all brands of communalism and upheld our best traditions of humanism, tolerance and brotherhood. The CPI and the left have made tremendous sacrifices for defending national unity against all divisive and separatist forces.

Upholding accountability and transparency in public life, the CPI has been regularly submitting its audited accounts to the authorities for scrutiny and demanding that all registered parties do the same.

**The CPI will work for the victory of such a 'Third Alternative', which alone can meet the requirements of the situation and the aspirations of the common people.**

ple. Only this can prove to be the salvation of the country. The 'Third Alternative' has to become the first inside the 11th Lok Sabha.

The CPI puts forward the following programme and tasks in the present situation and will strive for its implementation.

### **Programme**

**For Economic Development on Self-reliant and Democratic Lines :** The Indian economy needs reforms for ending bureaucratic controls and cutting red tape, but not by introducing liberalisation, globalisation and privatisation which erode its economic sovereignty and weaken its self reliance. Such policies must be halted and reversed.

The public sector has to be defended from the wholesale attack of privatisation. Cure for the ills of the public sector enterprises should be sought within the public sector itself and not by automatically privatising them. In all cases care must be taken to protect the interests of the workers through adequate compensation, retraining and redeployment. Management of public sector enterprises shall be professionalised and democratised through workers' participation, and made efficient and accountable.

Vandalising of public assets by handing them over to private parties or disinvesting them invariably below par should be discontinued. Funds already obtained through disinvestment should be utilised for revival and modernising of the concerned units.

Indian industries and agriculture shall be given all encouragement and help to utilise scientific and technological know-how within the country and constantly upgrade it, geared towards areas of health, environment, food, shelter and energy.

The interests of small and medium scale industries shall be defended through easily available credit, greater market accessibility, and so forth.

Opportunities for smaller entrepreneurs and self-employed to develop shall be expanded.

There must be balanced development so as to prevent large-scale migration from one region to the other.

#### **Agricultural Development**

Fifty percent of the budget shall be set apart for development of agriculture, horticulture, pisciculture, animal husbandry and so forth, ensuring irrigation and supply of inputs at reasonable prices to the peasantry. Subsidised inputs, such as irrigation, power, credit and other help shall be extended specially to small and marginal farmers.

Remunerative prices shall be fixed for agricultural produce, and reasonable prices to the consumers.

A rational land and water management shall be undertaken through a national water policy, which safeguards agriculture from droughts and floods, and helps to solve inter-state disputes on water sharing.

Crop and cattle insurance shall be extended all over the country.

Land reforms have to be carried forward. There must be vigorous implementation of land ceiling laws and distribution of surplus land degraded forest land and cultivable waste lands to agricultural workers. All attempts to reverse land reforms shall be halted and opposed.

Need-based minimum wages to be fixed and implemented for agricultural workers and for other sections of unorganised workers; comprehensive central legislations which provide social security and labour protection, to agricultural workers and construction labour shall be adopted.

The livelihood of artisans, weavers, fishermen and self-employed who are threatened by inroads of Big Business and MNCs shall be protected. Natural resources for their livelihood shall be safeguarded.

Strong efforts should be made to unearth black money, check tax evasion and mobilise to the full domestic resources for productive investment and prevent their

misutilisation for speculative purposes. Rate of domestic savings has to be raised by curbing government extravagance and checking unbridled consumerism.

Planned efforts must be made to reduce our external and internal debts within a time-bound period.

Foreign investments to be sought and MNCs to be permitted only in specific areas of the economy where there is need for high technology and resources, and within an overall plan of national economic development. Foreign capital can be desirable for productive investment on a selective basis but not for speculative profits, or for grabbing shares and ultimate control of local industries.

Retrograde amendment of our Patent Laws, which obstruct our R & D and are harmful in national interests should be opposed. To promote R & D there must be a cess on industries.

**Environment :** Protection of our land, water, forests, air and public health from growing environmental hazards and predatory actions arising from greed for profits. Promote nature conservation through community efforts and people's participation. Afforestation through the help of village dwellers in and around degraded forests must be undertaken.

Provide safe drinking water to all villages and localities of urban poor. Evolve a national scheme for supply of domestic fuel.

**Jobs for all :** Expansion of educational and employment opportunities for the youth. Enshrine right to work as a fundamental right in the Constitution and provide unemployment dole. Evolve a comprehensive youth policy which takes into account the right to work and education.

Employment guarantee schemes should be for a minimum of 200 days in a year at national minimum wage.

**Education for all :** Free and compulsory education for all citizens upto the age of 14 with training in productive skills. While charitable institutions and private societies have an important part to play in the educational field. op-

pose privatisation and commercialisation of education. Six per cent of the GNP to be allocated for education.

Launch National Literacy Campaign for achieving total literacy within a time-bound period. Mobilise youth and students for the campaign.

**Child Labour and Bonded Labour** : The shame of child labour and bonded labour must be eliminated. Children must be in schools and not in jobs. To ensure this, network of schools easily accessible to children must be created.

To ensure presence of children in schools and guard against drop-outs 'Food for Education' Scheme must be implemented, providing 1 Kg of foodgrain for every child for every day of schooling.

Child abuse, especially sexual exploitation of the girl child must be severely punished.

Bonded labour must be rescued and rehabilitated, and a national minimum wage must be enforced. National Commission on Child Labour and Bonded Labour must be constituted with powers for implementing and enforcing suitable measures.

**Food Security for all** : With nearly 40 percent of our people below the poverty line, food security is the most important step. Food security is also a fundamental right. It means that all people must be ensured economic access to balanced diet, safe drinking water, and therefore access to resources for livelihood. The new economic policies and the WTO trade regime are today further jeopardising this food security. This must be prevented.

The public distribution system must be strengthened and must cover all items essential for life, of good quality and at prices pegged for a period of 4-5 years. Food security should not be jeopardised in the name of encouraging exports, which particularly hit the poor.

Vigorous price control measures must be undertaken, and all reliefs given in the budget shall be transferred to consumers.

**Health care for all** : Private hospitals and nursing homes are not substitutes for a chain of health centres in both urban and rural areas.

Government and ESI hospitals and dispensaries, must be set up with necessary equipments and all essential drugs, medical and paramedical staff.

Maternity and child welfare centres in every villages and urban ward to be run by panchayats and municipalities with special financial grants Provision of old age homes and medical care for the aged. Homes for abandoned women.

Drug prices must be controlled and monopoly grip on production of drugs must be countered by developing production of basic drugs in the public sector.

Anganwadi and village health visitors must be paid reasonable wages and allowances for discharging their vitally important task.

Campaign against the menace of liquor and drug abuse, against HIV/AIDS and all communicable diseases must be vigorously carried out.

**Social Security** : Social security and labour welfare measures to cover rural and urban workers in all sectors, providing for medical facilities, pensions and other benefits. Identity cards to be issued to members of the work-force in the unorganised sector, including rural labour so that they can claim social security benefits.

With growing longevity and increasing number of retirees from different services, industrial establishments etc., the number of pensioners in the country is growing fast. Pension is the most important element of any scheme of social security. Therefore a well thought out policy on pension has to be evolved and implemented, which includes the following aspects : i) adequate pension, the minimum not to be less than the minimum wages fixed in different employments, ii) parity in pension between employees of similar cadre and length of service, iii) same rank-same pension in the army and other services, iv) creation of a pension fund attracting reasonable interest on investment.

v) pension linked to cost of living index, vi) machinery to begin payment promptly on retirement.

Handicapped, disabled, blind persons constitute no less than 10 per cent of the population. They have to be given special facilities for education, and reservation of at least 3 per cent in jobs.

Ensure proper rehabilitation and pensionary benefits for ex-servicemen and their dependents.

**Defence of Rights of SC, ST, Women, Minorities and other :**

We stand for firm defence at the rights of the SC, ST, backward classes, minority communities, women, children and other weaker sections. The policy of reservation must be fully implemented. Efforts must be made to extend reservation to private sector which has become imperative in the context of liberalisation of our economy. The BJP-VHP stand that, "the rights and privileges accorded to SC and STs will be withdrawn on their conversion" will be firmly opposed.

Atrocities, against SC, ST, women shall be resisted and the guilty punished. A special court in each sensitive district shall be set up in keeping with the spirit and purpose of the SC ST (Prevention of Atrocities) act, 1989. People's resistance to growing atrocities on women shall be organised. There must be provision for free legal aid by government to women in all cases of dowry deaths, abduction, rape.

**Towards Gender Equality :** "Equality between women and men is a matter of human rights and a condition for social justice and is also necessary and fundamental prerequisite our equality, development and peace", says the Beijing Platform adopted at the World Conference on Women, 1995. Having made a beginning with panchayats and municipal committees, the next step should be to reserve one-third seats for women in state assemblies and parliament.

Ensure women's access to credit, diversified vocational training, information on legal rights, and other facilities to further the advancement of women and girls. Equal legal and social rights for women of all communities should be ensured.

Equal remuneration for women and men must be strictly enforced. Safety for women in public and private spheres of life should be ensured, by vigorously combating sexual harassment and creating a violence-free society.

Set up hostels for working women and creches for their children.

Ownership of land and houses should be registered in the names of both husband and wife.

**Special Provisions for Tribals :**

Tribal majority areas within states should be guaranteed autonomy under special provisions of the Constitution, and where it is viable separate statehood can be extended as in the case of Jharkhand. Scheduled Areas have been excluded from the operation of the panchayat acts. The present vacuum should be filled by implementing the Bhuria Committee recommendations so as to give them the right to village self-governance as per democratic customs of the tribal people. Tribal land must be protected from alienation by nontribals, and land already alienated shall be restored to the original tribal owners.

**Housing :** There should be a democratic housing policy and popular control over real estate transactions which generate black money. A vigorous programme of house construction both in rural and urban areas, by distributing house-sites and building material to the landless, by undertaking house construction for slum-dwellers and arranging all civic facilities to slums, by extending cheap housing loans to the middle classes and controlling prices of building material should be undertaken.

**Defence of Democratic Rights :** Repeal of all undemocratic and repressive laws. Defence of democratic rights and civil liberties. Reform and overhaul of the police forces.

**Defence of our Pluralist Culture :**

Democratic and secular cultural policies incorporating the humanist and tolerant teachings of the social reformers shall be pursued. The pluralist character of our great

culture shall be upheld.

Ideological and cultural invasion threatening our traditional cultural, moral and literacy values shall be resisted. The drive to spread feudal and unscientific ideas, obscurantism, mysticism, superstitions, obscenity, glorification of crimes and violence shall be rebuffed.

#### Languages :

All languages shall be encouraged to develop as modern languages, and due recognition given to the rights of Urdu and Sindhi under article 345 or 347 of the Constitution.

**Secularism :** Defence of secularism as the basic tenet of our Constitution, from attacks by all brands of communal forces.

Effective intervention of secular forces and administration in the fight against communalism, so that the people belonging to the minority communities can feel sense of security. At the same time, giving priority to the genuine grievances of the minority community regarding discrimination in the matter of jobs and other economic spheres, more avenues for education, end to the mismanagement of wakf properties etc. All cases related with Ram temple-Babri Masjid dispute shall be referred to supreme court under Article 138(2), and its decision shall be binding.

**Restructuring Centre-State Relations :** Centre-state relations should be restructured in the true spirit of federalism, giving greater powers and financial resources to states, as recommended by the Sarkaria Commission. Fate of any state government to be decided only on the floor of the House, and partisan and arbitrary use of Art. 356 for dismissing state govts. to be stopped.

Revive and function the Inter-state Council.

Real decentralisation to be carried out by conferring more power and financial resources to elected bodies at district, block and panchayat levels.

Defend Art. 370 of the Constitution in relation to J & K, and rectify the erosion that has taken place in it. Evolve

an economic and political package on the basis of consensus among all national and state parties.

**North-East Region :** The Govt. of India should take initiative for dialogue with the insurgents/militant movements in the North East without any pre-condition from any side, so as to find a lasting solution to the problem.

**Corruption must be fought at all levels :** Lok Pal Bill, which includes within its scope legislators and also the prime minister should be adopted. Lok Pal institutions should be set up at the centre and in the states to investigate corruption charges against ministers and bureaucrats.

Transfers and postings which are a fertile source of corruption should be done by a committee of senior officials.

Citizens' Committees composed of personalities of well-known integrity to be set up at different levels, for rousing public opinion and with right to initiate proceedings before Lok Pal institutions, and for resisting extortions of money and other mafia-type crimes.

Persons with known criminal records should not be put up, nor allowed to contest as candidates in elections.

There should be more transparency in government, in all deals of contract and supply, and the Right to Information must be established, so as to make administration more accountable to the people and their elected bodies.

**Electoral Reforms :** Electoral reforms must be carried out comprehensively and not piecemeal as suits the occasion. The Representation of Peoples Act should be amended to i) curb money and muscle power, ii) ensure state funding specially in the form of necessary election material, iii) enforce model code which bans communal propaganda and appeal for votes in the name of religion, and iv) ensure that everybody can exercise his or her right to vote.

**Foreign Relations :** Oppose defence link-up with the US and joint naval or other forms of military exercises. Armed intervention or economic blockade and blackmail by imperialist powers, mainly the U.S. against socialist and other developing countries must be firmly opposed. The Non-aligned Movement to be reinvigorated in the present world context.

India to remain firm in her principled refusal to sign the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty, which permits the legitimisation of weapons of mass destruction.

Positive and active role to be played for developing South Cooperation between all developing countries, and extending cooperation among the SAARC countries.

#### Our Appeal

The CPI believes that this is a programme for national revival, for development with social justice, for defence of the country's unity and integrity, for defence of our democratic values and institutions which require clean political parties and untainted leaders as prerequisites.

★ It is a programme for solving the problem of poverty, unemployment, illiteracy and disease that besets our country.

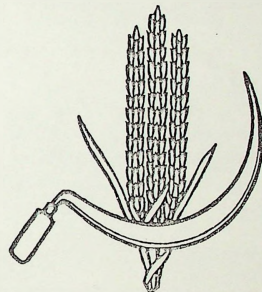
★ It is a programme that meets the most urgent demands and aspirations of the common people, of our dalits and soshits, of our children and youth who are our future.

★ It is a programme that can be implemented and fulfilled in the present circumstances.

The CPI appeals to all voters, to elect candidates of the CPI, of other left parties, of our secular and democratic allies. It appeals to all voters to defeat the Congress and the BJP and bring this alliance of left, democratic and secular forces to power.

The forthcoming elections have to lead to a radical change in the balance of forces in our country. The decadent and corrupt Congress regime must be thrown out of power if the road to progress is to open for the people. The voters must demonstrate their firm belief in those forces and parties which will stand unswervingly against Congress misrule and BJP's divisive threat to national unity and integrity.

Only the democratic, left and secular forces, acting together, can lead the people to a new order capable of defending our economic and political independence based on social justice for all.



## ELECTION SYMBOL

- ★ Elect CPI Candidates
- ★ Vote for Left Candidates
- ★ Vote for Secular Democratic Forces

# SAMATA PARTY

Committed to an Egalitarian Society



Flaming Torch  
Symbol

## MANIFESTO APRIL 1996

Equity and Justice

Grassroots Democracy

People's Nationalism and Secularism

Just Development Strategy

Democratic World Order

## Manifesto of the SAMATA PARTY April, 1996

India, the world's most populous democracy, is passing through trying times. We face confusion and helplessness on many counts. The implications of this are serious. At a moment when the Indian people have to choose representatives for the Eleventh *Lok Sabha*, there is a widespread fear of destabilisation and disintegration of the country. The task of nation-building would suffer the most if this psychology spreads. The Samata Party, while recognising these unfortunate trends, is of the firm belief that the Indian people have the vitality, strength and determination to face these challenges. The real task is that of the right type of mass mobilisation and political education.

India is one of the oldest civilisations of the world. We have inherited a glorious heritage and a vast pool of rich traditions. The age-old Indian tradition is to solve all problems through mutual discussion, cooperation, goodwill and understanding of each others view points. This is the essence of democratic functioning. The parliamentary system can survive only if the options for dialogue and discussion amongst the people of divergent approaches and points of view are not closed. The real strength of the democratic process lies in its capacity to resolve all issues by accommodating each others opinion and reaching consensus. It is unfortunate that this approach is being given the go by. We seem to have come to a situation wherein a meaningful dialogue on national issues is

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tending to become a near impossibility. As a consequence, problems get complicated and parliamentary institutions, instead of being places for finding solutions, get involved in acrimonious and meaningless debates with utter disregard for long-cherished and healthy parliamentary norms. The supremacy of the parliament is getting questioned. It is distressing that the present government has abdicated its responsibility to take timely decisions on issues that agitate the minds of a vast majority of the Indian people. The inaction on part of the government promotes a sense of despair amongst the people and introduces a variety of avoidable distortions in the functioning of the parliamentary system. The basic tenets of the parliamentary system of governance provide for separation of powers between different wings of the State. In a situation when any one of the three wings of the state, namely, the executive, legislature and judiciary, fails to discharge its duty or honour its obligations, there is bound to be a multiple of serious implications. When accepted norms are put aside, strains develop resulting into unhealthy consequences.

The threat of decay and distortions in our parliamentary system has to be met with determination. It is the demand of the times that we not only agree and identify the basic challenges before the nation but also unhesitatingly resolve to give due respect to divergent view points. Non-acceptance of this principle can only threaten the very existence of democratic institutions. The dignity and grace of parliamentary institutions has to be preserved for real national reconstruction.

In our long history we have faced many vicissitudes but we never lost confidence and faith in the vitality and strength of our people. This is how we could gain independence through sacrifice and cooperation by the masses

of this country. In the recent past one discovers that instead of relying upon the cooperation and strength of the Indian people, a tendency has developed among the policy makers to depend upon outside advice. There appears to be an utter lack of historical and world perspective. It has never happened in any part of the world that people from outside helped in solving their problems. India is not going to be an exception.

The plurality of Indian culture respects and protects the identity of religious, linguistic and ethnic groups. The rights of each entity to pursue its aspirations has been recognised and adhered to in our long history. This has been a virtuous tradition of India.

The world is today desperately needs to protect the environment. The teachings of the seers, saints, gurus and sufis for centuries have been to live in harmony with nature. We have always respected and protected nature. The religious beliefs and rituals have meant protection of nature in its various forms. While the world today is seized of the issue of sustainable development, our people had perceived such a thing thousands of years back. It is unfortunate that all these values have been ignored and relegated to the background. Now time has again come when we should reassert all that is morally and ethically correct. Indian thought and tradition has been for austere living. The Indian philosophy of simple living was not born out of any foreign influence. It was based on mature thought that we must lead life in full harmony with the nature. This is fundamental to our philosophy.

There is no denying the fact that in the long history while respect for a good many of the rich traditions continues one needs to also recognise the unfortunate deviations from the well accepted norms and philosophy for a civilised society.



Many distortions have crept in. We are facing critical challenges from religious fanaticism, caste acrimony and other such dogmas. Propagation of divisive philosophies has given impetus to social tensions and weaken us as a nation.

### State's Abdication of its Role

The last few years have witnessed fundamental changes in India's economic policies that sought to pursue national ideals of a just society. The vision of a new India which inspired millions to give un-hesitating support to the struggle for India's political independence has been pushed aside under questionable influences. The objective of self-reliance for the country has been given up. The process of planned development for social and economic change has been disrupted and shift in policies is from planning to dependence on market forces to resolve the country's problems. The role of the state is being reduced to the minimum. By doing this state mechanisms would lose all orientation and relevance to problems of poverty, health, education or concerns of rural-urban divide, inter-personal disparities or growing concentration of economic power in the hands of a few. The Directive Principles of State Policy would be reduced to mere rituals.

India suffers from continuance of extreme disparities in wealth, income and consumption. In this situation dependence on market oriented mechanisms for allocation of national and scarce resources can only mean denial of essentials for the vast poor majority and abundance for the rich. The free market system cannot but be unjust on the one hand and most unstable on the other. In the absence of any corrective measures, the market system only accentuates disparities further. Abolition of the planning process amounts to denial

to the people their expectation to meet the basic needs. The Indian state cannot run away from discharging its national obligations.

Dependence on a free market oriented system would free big business and powerful groups to exploit the system for promoting vested interests. The perils of corruption and free ground for operation of business lobbies for influencing government policies and programmes does not need fresh emphasis. The last four years have witnessed direct onslaught by national and international business on the country's parliamentary institutions. Businessmen have sought to gain control over national institutions.

A large part of the Indian press is owned, controlled and managed by big industrial houses. In spite of a large number of independent professional journalists the mass media in India is no way free and independent to play its due role in a developing country. Of late, a number of private television satellite channels have been established. The private channels gain wide viewership because they provide cheap and low quality entertainment. These channels pose a serious threat to the national value system. India cannot allow herself to be dominated by western thought, materialist culture and the lifestyles as projected and promoted by the satellite channels, controlled by non-Indian business interests. The same holds true of the serious threat that the easy commercial revenue from advertisements poses to introduce distortions in the country's own TV network. Mass media cannot be only a source of entertainment; it will have to be an instrument of healthy education and norms of public behaviour.

The new policies have defacto made all regulations infructuous. The abolition of regulations to protect the handicraft, rural, small and medium industries and the vulnerable sectors or which seek to promote new economic

activities in less developed regions would have to be reversed. The rescinding of restrictions on foreign investments through dilution of FERA and dropping out of even the apology of monopoly regulations that India had, will have to be reexamined in the light of recent experiences.

In spite of large scale propaganda and claims made by the government it remains a bitter reality that India has not been able to have even a single dollar of surplus on the foreign exchange account. Imports of non-essentials and by MNCs have grown fast whereas big business and MNCs have failed to promote India's export capabilities. The only source of comfort is from the rural and small scale sector who have contributed significantly in earning net foreign exchange. Internationally also, people have been opting for handmade goods. The onslaught of large corporations from within and outside on this sector will have to be stopped.

### **The Common Man Should not Lose Faith in the System**

Today, the common man and woman is fast losing faith in the ability of the state to provide a just system of governance. Where each effort towards seeking justice is forced to become a major struggle, the will of the citizen is easily sapped.

In simple terms, the suffering and growing apathy of the people can be traced to a combination of corruption, unemployment, and lack of respect for human dignity. At an intangible but very real level the loss of national self-respect and sovereignty can be added to the international face of India.

The Samata Party believes that the time has come to reassert the ideals that inspired our freedom movement and to provide the people of India with clear, radical and credible policies through which the dignity of each citizen and of the

nation can be restored. These principles and programmes shall be rooted in the ideology of Democratic Socialism, which is indeed the only relevant ideology of the future. It brings humanism through a decentralised polity and equity which is the *sine qua non* of democracy. Democratic Socialism incorporates 1) Equity and Social Justice, meaning social, political and economic justice, 2) Secularism, meaning respect for the plurality of religions while preventing the use of religion by the state or by parties and individuals for political purposes, 3) People's Nationalism, based on the equal participation of the plural identities and cultures of our country to fight hegemonism of every kind and build a rich civilization together in spirit of true federalism.

Based on these inalienable principles, the party will seek to ensure:

- a) The creation and continuous generation of employment and the establishment of the Right to Work as a fundamental right.
- b) To strengthen indigenous production particularly agro and rural based industries both in the small scale and village sector.
- c) To increase social and economic equality of the deprived classes, the toiling and disadvantaged poor of the upper castes, unorganised workers, dalits, tribals, minorities, and particularly women through preferential opportunities.
- d) To assist the farmer to produce more and to protect our agriculture from the evil effects of the new International Trade Regime.

- e) To establish industrial democracy and to have workers' participation in management of enterprises.
- f) To strengthen the concept of a genuine federal polity and decentralization by establishing the four-pillar model of the state both politically and through grass roots democracy.
- g) To remove the disparity between urban and rural sections of society.
- h) To reestablish morality in public life and create a corruption free society.
- i) To protect the heritage of the freedom movement and of the struggle for social justice.

### **Social Tensions**

Since 1990, there has been an accentuation of tensions on the issue of implementation of the Mandal Commission Report. It is unfortunate that such a controversy should have been allowed to create an atmosphere of mutual distrust among different sections of the society. The Mandal Commission itself has said that casteism should find no place in Indian society. While fulfilling the obligations enshrined in the Constitution with respect to backward classes, it is inevitable to give certain facilities to certain castes who have been traditionally backward for centuries. However, this should not preclude giving similar benefits to economically weaker sections of other castes. Creation of jobs should get the first priority. When the total job opportunities are actually shrinking, just continuing declarations on reservation bring no solace to the concerned people. A balanced practical

approach will be in the larger interest of the nation as a whole and the backward classes in particular.

The party will ensure that the concept of social justice is understood and implemented in all its facets so that no deprived section feels alienated from the process. The implementation of the Mandal Commission report cannot be piecemeal affair without focus on the provision of expanded educational facilities, employment and access to land and water resources. Reservations alone are not enough to struggle against the evil of feudal systems. The emergence of the consciousness of a new strength amongst traditionally deprived classes, which include the backwards, dalits, tribals and women will be channelised so that a just economic and political order provides the backdrop for their potential.

In the political realm, continuous expansion of democracy will be ensured. Democracy has proved more effective than any other single factor in the empowerment of the dalit and backward communities. For meeting the menace of social inequalities, reservation in government jobs is a concrete step. Government jobs are a way of participating in the functioning of the state. This measure demands continuous vigilance as well as constant enlargement of educational opportunity for young men and women of these communities. Otherwise, it may not create the necessary impact towards reduction of social inequalities.

### **Secularism and Protection of Minorities**

India is proud of its cultural heritage and of the rich contributions from various religions over the centuries. Therefore, India's identity is larger than any single religious or ethnic category. Only a secular state and respect for all

religions will secure and strengthen that identity. A point that should always be remembered is that in the geographic vastness that India is, and the religious, ethnic and linguistic diversities that abound in it, a minority in one part of the country is a majority in another.

Communalism which is another name for religious bigotry, is no stranger to Indian politics. It claimed the life of Mahatma Gandhi. And it has claimed countless other lives in the decades after freedom. The demolition of the Babri Masjid and the events that followed it have created conditions which threaten to strike at the very basis of our nationhood.

An issue which has threatened to divide the country is the disputed structure at Ayodhya. The unfortunate episode of 6th December, 1992 has saddened all who believe in the rule of law and peaceful co-existence of all sections of the people. That episode is a great tragedy in the history of this country with such a rich heritage where people of all faiths, religions, races, communities and castes have lived with amity and goodwill for centuries. Any suggestion that Ayodhya can be made a precedent at other places like Mathura and Kashi has to be unequivocally rejected and deplored. The political leadership must encourage the two communities involved to find an amicable solution to all outstanding issues in a manner acceptable to all and in keeping with the dignity and self-respect of each community.

The party will wage a relentless campaign to instil in every Indian irrespective of his religion, the spirit of tolerance and brotherhood which alone can provide the antidote to bigotry.

The creation of opportunities for employment and the sustenance of dignified livelihood will pave the way for smoother social transitions. In order to achieve the objectives of additional employment and improving the production apparatus alongside with the other objectives of equality in society, the Samata Party will ensure that the capital outlay for every added job raises efficiency and production while still enabling the increase in employment. This necessarily means the conditioning of technology to the level of what is appropriate for our needs. Economic technological decentralization will be coupled with the devolution of political power. This alone can infuse new life into the old limbs of India by providing maximum possible initiative to the people in their smallest units consistent with the integrity of the nation.

## Decentralisation and Federalism

Through a new concept of federalism the Samata Party will demonstrate the actual sharing of power at multiple levels and not be limited to the political game of state-centre accords which remain unfulfilled. Border states are the sentinels of our country and will be accorded the highest respect and priority in development.

We believe that democratic cooperative movement, owned and controlled by its members, is our people's best hope for economic and social justice. It shall be our endeavour to create the conditions for an autonomous, self-reliant and democratic cooperative movement in our country. Cooperatives alone could assure remunerative price to the producer and fair price to the consumer for essential articles or commodities. They could strengthen our democratic fibre and are the most effective instruments of socio economic transformation. Just as the 73rd and 74th Amendments have

liberated Panchayati Raj and Nagarpalika Institutions, we are committed to free cooperatives from the clutches of bureaucracy; restore them to their members; and strengthen cooperatives to genuinely serve all sections of our society.

### Towards Full Employment

Today the absolute number of the poor in the country exceeds the total population of India at the time of independence. The number of unemployed and underemployed is staggering and continues to rise from year to year. More than one-third of our rural population is unable to find work of a remunerative kind for most of the year. In the urban areas, over 40 million persons are unemployed - an eight-fold increase since 1960. And the government has officially announced on the eve of Independence Day, 1994 that the number of unemployed will reach a colossal figure of 94 million by the end of the Ninth Plan, which, of course, is an underestimate. This state of affairs will not be allowed to continue.

Unemployment and poverty are overlapping aspects of social misery which is not inevitable. The misery is aggravated by wrong economic policies, and a lasting and sustainable solution of this lies in creating a people oriented system of production that ensures and enlists the widest participation of the masses. The Samata Party will reverse the past trend of anti-employment and anti-people economic policies that had reduced the right to livelihood to only a privileged section of the population. The policy of reservation and social justice cannot benefit the vast mass of people if jobs do not increase.

### Poverty Alleviation

Creation of employment opportunities is the key to removal of poverty and therefore to the progress of the Nation as a whole. It is necessary to encourage every sector that provides employment. The traditional crafts, cottage and village industries and small-scale industries provide a big avenue for creation of jobs. The handloom sector has traditionally given jobs to a large number of persons when compared to the organised sector in terms of per capita investment. Indian crafts and the production of handloom sector has a large market abroad and if properly channelised, these sectors can not only provide employment but can be as economically viable and vibrant as the organised sector. Direct poverty - alleviation programmes have their own relevance and should be passed. However, the existing employment programmes need to be streamlined and made more efficient so that the benefits reach the targeted sections and leakages are reduced. A powerful efficient and dedicated cooperative movement can play a purposeful and effective role in this regard.

The party will not only recognize the right to livelihood as a fundamental right of every citizen but also discharge the inalienable responsibility associated with this right by creating jobs and other opportunities of employment for each person by developing economic activities in such a manner that along with the creating of socially desirable goods, necessary and sufficient conditions for full employment are created.

This is a task which will be addressed with all the determination and resources at its disposal. A development strategy which ensures maximum employment and social justice along with faster growth in all sectors of production,

be it agriculture, industry or services, will be formulated and effectively implemented.

## Agriculture and Rural Economy

The rural economy and the agriculture sector, in which three-fourths of our people are engaged and which have vast potential for employment, have been persistently neglected. The state of rural infrastructure roads, means of transport and communications and information systems - is so pathetic that many rural areas remain cut off from the mainstream. This deficiency makes them especially vulnerable to natural calamities such as floods and droughts. The provision of social services - education, health and sanitation - in rural areas is dismal.

Land and labour are our most precious assets and their prosperity is correlated. It will be our highest policy objective to ensure that the enormous potential of these resources are realised and the corresponding benefits are enjoyed by those who have so far been deprived. Policies which do not serve this purpose will have to be modified. Land reform policies must be effectively implemented and the discriminatory features in the price and marketing policies adversely affecting agriculture and rural labour must be removed.

Two-thirds of our cultivable land is still dependent on rain-fed agriculture and large areas which are potentially cultivable have been classified as waste lands. They are being starved of attention, investment, technology and organisation. Likewise, the segment of agricultural labourers comprising mainly scheduled caste/scheduled tribes have been denied adequate and just conditions of work and wages. The most

shocking part of it all is that a large number of such workers continue to be bonded, even after 47 years of independence.

Even in the irrigated areas which have benefited from new technology, subsidised inputs, special credit facilities and procurement at support prices, the small and marginal farmers as well as agricultural labourers have been neglected and compelled to turn to other sectors in search of employment.

The increase in the creation of irrigation potential from 3 million hectares to 5 million hectares every year, can raise the productivity of land and also provide massive employment. Big dams are costly and also compel large scale destruction of forests and submergence of large cultivable areas, besides massive displacement of people. Minor irrigation projects which cost only one-tenth of the major irrigation projects will be preferred to big dams.

Till now the agricultural sector received less than one-fifth of the Plan resources. The industrial sector and other non-agricultural sectors, which received the lion's share of developmental resources, generated employment opportunities at a much lower rate than the growth rate of work force. This neglect has become more conspicuous during the last decade. As a consequence, irrigation facilities, extension services, social overheads and infrastructure have deteriorated. This state of affairs will be changed. Fifty percent of the Plan resources will be invested in the agricultural sector every year until the deficiency of infrastructure and social services are adequately made up.

The plan for agriculture will consist of 1) improvement of existing cultivation, 2) protection of the Indian farmer from the provisions of GATT/WTO, 3) extension of areas under cultivation and farming. There will be emphasis on minor

irrigation, small dams, and earthworks. Redistribution of land will be regarded not merely as an act of social and economic justice but also as a measure to increase production through voluntary development. Land will belong to the tiller. Ejectments from lands and houses will stop. A family of five persons engaged in agriculture will be left with a maximum of three times the unit of land that a family can cultivate without employing hired labour or mechanization. All lands made available for distribution will be allotted to landless labourers or poor farmers so that no agricultural family lives without a sense of ownership in the village. Co-operative agriculture will be encouraged in consultation with those willing to participate in such an endeavour.

A policy of parity of agricultural and industrial prices to provide the necessary incentive to farmers to produce more, and to give them remunerative prices will be implemented. This alone will ensure adequate food, adequate remuneration and a balanced diet for the poorest, based on basic nutritional needs.

### Oppressive Price Rise

Contrary to the frequent and emphatic claims of the government for having controlled price rise, the real and most hurting problem for vast majority of consumers is the phenomenal rise in prices in general and essential consumer goods, in particular. The Whole-sale Price Index as constructed by the Government does in no way give a true picture. The same holds true of Consumer Price Indices. The truth is reflected in the price rise of rice, wheat, cloth, variety of industrial goods for consumers, medicines and other basic goods. With their approach to reduction in consumer subsidies, as dictated by international bodies, the present government

has withdrawn from its obligatory role of providing essential consumer goods at reasonable prices to the vulnerable sections.

The present rise has originated from many causes. One, the linking of Indian economy with the industrialised and advanced countries who have a high standard of incomes; two, lowering of investments in essential consumer goods; three, withdrawal of subsidies to agriculture; four, encouragement to wasteful competition through un-necessary and artificially inflated intermediary costs of sales, advertisements and higher trade margins. Price rise is undoubtedly caused by the imbalance in demand and supply of essential goods. There are a variety of luxury goods for which prices have indeed fallen. The overall production of basic necessities has not risen because of lower investments and absence of price policy and regulations.

The Samata Party believes that it is the responsibility of the state to regulate prices effectively and expand as well as build public distribution system for the vulnerable sections of the society. Providing subsidies to the poor and farmers in a developing country with vast income differentials is essential to reduce the disparities and improving the lot of the poor and weaker sections. In fact, on the contrary, there is a case for eliminating the direct and indirect subsidies to the rich and the corporate sector. The phenomenon of low or zero-tax companies is now a legend. States adopting highly subsidised PDS directed at the poorest should get the central support.

### Drinking Water & Fuel

Undoubtedly there are many public demands that need urgent attention of the state. The most critical task deserving the highest priority has to be the provision of clean and adequate drinking water especially in villages which suffer

chronically from water shortage. The same holds true of the fuel in rural areas.

Lack of access to clean and germ-free drinking water at a reasonable distance has been a bane of our villages and city slums. Rural masses particularly children often fall victim to a variety of debilitating diseases due to this problem. This not only saps their energy, but also robs them of income as they cannot engage themselves in productive work. Providing clean drinking water within the neighbourhood contributes to increased production and productivity, reduces pressure on health services and releases the burden on women folk who are more often engaged in fetching water for the household. Developmental schemes will be meaningless unless they address themselves to this basic issue.

Given the crucial importance of these two requirements it is obligatory that we now evolve a time bound programme for solving the problem of potable water and fuel. The Party pledges itself to finding an effective solution to these issues within the next four years.

### **Forests and Tribals**

Over the last thirty years deforestation has occurred at an alarming pace due to which the economic position of a large section of people living in forest areas has deteriorated. The resulting increase in wood prices has rendered the producers of toys, carts, mats, baskets etc. unemployed. The scarcity of fuel wood and fodder has caused unbearable hardships to women who have to travel long distances in search of these items. Deforestation has also reduced the availability of minor forest produce like edible seeds, roots and tubers and mahuwa flowers, which economically sustain the majority

of population living in forest areas. In fact, deforestation has resulted in low nutrition, lower employment and earnings and higher indebtedness, leading to dependence of forest population on contractors and bureaucrats.

A massive afforestation programme will be undertaken to ensure the right to livelihood to adivasis living in forest areas and also for improving the ecological balance, for preventing soil erosion, preserving sub-soil water, preventing silting of dams and rivers and even promoting forest-based industries.

### **Education and Health**

An obstacle in the betterment of our rural population is the virtual neglect of sufficient investment in education and health facilities. It is a national disgrace that after decades of independence, and in spite of the Constitutional injunction, more than two-thirds of our population in rural areas remain illiterate and in poor health. We cannot ever hope to occupy our rightful place amongst the nations of the world as long as these shameful conditions persist. Much more importantly, our ability to solve the basic problems of poverty, unemployment and social disparities depends vitally on improving the physical and mental capabilities of the vast labour resource available. The state has systematically starved education and health sectors, especially following the structural adjustment programme sponsored by the World Bank, of necessary resources and other support, while wasting enormous amounts on the creation of capital assets benefitting the rich and privileged classes of society. The Samata Party will reorder priorities so as to ensure that within the shortest possible period the realisation of the objectives of universal literacy and access to basic education and health facilities to all citizens are realized. The party will make compulsory and uniform primary education one of its major planks for action



and link it with the struggle to liberate child labour.

### **Self-Reliance to Overcome Debt and Dependence**

The policies pursued by the Congress government has resulted in retrogression by increasing foreign dependence through growing commercial borrowings and expansion to transnational corporations. This has resulted in a stupendous increase in foreign debt to more than \$90 billion. Under pressure from the World Bank the government has been inexorably surrendering one commanding height of the economy after another to transnationals. The Samata Party will take corrective action by increasing emphasis on self-reliant production systems to save the country from the fate of some of the highly indebted countries of the world. There is a strong need to shed dependence on foreign capital, restore autonomous decision making and implement people oriented development priorities. The Samata Party wholly commits itself to this.

At the national level, increasing recourse to public borrowing has resulted in increasing the burden of internal debt which has increased beyond Rs. 200,000 crore and as a consequence, interest payments have already become the most important component of non-plan expenditure. This is a burden on future generations. This unbearable burden on our children will be eliminated by raising taxes from those who have immensely benefitted by the anti-people policies of the government.

Reversing the trend from external dependence to self-reliance and employment and orientation of the system of production will clearly involve a radical change in priorities and methods of planning and development administration. To support such a transformation of the pattern and priority of development, suitable reordering will be done in investment

priorities. Investment decisions will be formed by careful choice of techniques which must accord with the social objective of employment maximization and utmost feasible dispersal of production system and the compulsions of conservation of environment, capital and energy

### **Panchayats and Devolution of Power**

Translation of socio-economic ideas requires suitable, autonomous and well-endowed representative institutions which allow for mobilisation and creative use of the knowledge and energies of the masses of the people throughout the land including the remotest villages. An effective decentralised system of administration and a rational distribution of financial resources among all the operating institutions from the village up to the centre are essential for generation of employment opportunities on a wide-spread basis in the shortest period possible. For this purpose, the party will ensure that a minimum of 50 per cent of the centre's aggregate revenue resources devolve to the states. Similarly, it will urge the states to devolve a minimum of 50 per cent of their aggregate revenue resources to panchayats/urban bodies. The tax system will provide for a rational phasing of public debt which is too high to be tolerated by future generations. The Rs. 1 crore presently channelled through MPs to each constituency will be transferred and equally distributed to panchayat bodies in each constituency. States refusing to hold panchayat elections will not have the benefit of these funds.

### **Foreign Technology, Investment and Appropriate Technology**

Foreign investment and technology will be allowed very selectively, based purely on national needs and interests. While the public sector should be allowed to retain its role at the commanding heights in important infrastructural and service

areas, its extension and haphazard growth into unnecessary areas will be checked. Public sector institutions will be allowed complete autonomy with no scope for political or bureaucratic misuse. Alongside, colonial patterns of administration which reinforce alienation between the ruler and the ruled will be revamped, in order to create a close relationship between the administrative officials and the people so that responsive bureaucracy is the norm.

We make a clear choice in favour of labour intensive technology against capital intensive technology in several fields. No consumer items which can be produced by the masses in the small sector should be allowed to be manufactured by large industries. Transnationals and large corporations operating in the production of such articles, as soap, biscuits, sweets, jams and pickles, matches, soft drinks, salt, masalas will be phased out and these items will be reserved for small units.

No one can be against the adoption of capital intensive technology in those fields where it is essential: in petrochemicals, some defence industries, steel making, machine manufacturing and so on. But in all such cases, the gains of technology will not be allowed to be appropriated by a few. Special emphasis will be laid on such fundamental and applied research as is necessary to acquire self-sufficiency and take the country forward in the areas of metallurgy, machinery, alloy, steel, power generation (industrial transformers), high speed locomotion and rolling stock and also in heavy chemicals and pharmaceuticals. A reasonable share of organised industrial profits must be diverted for research and development in these very areas.

## Welfare

Welfare programmes will be given priority particularly in the area of health, housing, education and social security for the aged, single women headed households, and where no able bodied adult of earning capacity exists. These will be phased in order to replace welfare with self sufficiency through a gradual supportive process.

## Women's Empowerment

Only a radical policy in relation to women's full and dignified participation in the development of society will set the country on a completely different path, putting it well ahead of others. The Samata Party believes that there can be no overall social, economic and political justice without giving primacy to the cause of women's uplift.

In order to ensure their fullest participation in public life incentives will be provided for education, along with legal and property rights, social security, minimum wages and job protection, in the organised and unorganised sector.

Educating women has a major impact on social change. Special efforts will be made and incentives provided for the education of the girl child. Of the one billion illiterates in the world, two thirds are women. The regional disparities in women's education will be urgently redressed.

To create an environment suitable for equal participation of women there will be provision of a appropriate social support facilities such as day care, making career patters flexible, revision of administrative rules and customary practices for decision making to adapt them to the needs of both male and female decision makers and managers, and to reconcile family and public responsibilities. The party will initiate legislation for the reservation of constituencies for

women candidates in rotation for one-third of the seats in both the Lok Sabha and State Assemblies.

To respect the widespread demand for control on the ready availability of liquor, a massive awareness campaign on its ill effects and a voluntary rejection motivated by people's power will be initiated. The spread of AIDS, drug abuse and liquor abuse is directly related to unemployment and poverty in post-colonial societies and will be tackled on a war footing with the active participation of women.

### Foreign Policy

India is a nation with a definite human mission and civilisational message. But it is unfortunate that we fail to pursue a foreign policy which reflects the urges of the nation. Our foreign policy establishment appears to be mesmerized by the imperatives of so-called globalisation at the cost of the vital interests of our country's workers, kisans, entrepreneurs, scientists and researchers and other working people. It has failed to adequately protect our national interests in terms of security, sovereignty and strength. The Samata Party will reorient its foreign policy so that we make our own contribution to the world community in its quest for peace, co-operation and development.

India gained freedom and identity due to the mobilization of millions of Indian people under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi against colonialism and slavery. The people of India were moved by the visions of a new world system on the basis of freedom, justice, equality and prosperity for all the people in all the nations.

It is unfortunate that we have not been able to develop friendly and cordial relations with our neighbours and it has resulted in our marginalisation in international economic and political affairs of this region. Thus our weakness in the global

arena is encouraging terrorist activities in our country. The most powerful western forces are pressurising us to succumb and sign unjust international treaties like NPT. While we stand for a nuclear armament free world, India will reject any treaty in this regard which is discriminatory. The country will keep her options open.

It is the national duty of the Samata party to review the foreign policy priorities in a manner so that - a) there is topmost priority to our national security, economic interests and political sovereignty, b) there is an atmosphere of mutual trust and active co-operation with all our neighbours as well as effective deterrence to terrorist and secessionist activities c) there is greater unity and understanding among all post-colonial nations for a joint endeavour to end the prevailing international caste system and to resist the forward march of MNCs at the cost of freedom and sovereignty of these nations; d) there is a global movement for people to people friendship across the national frontiers and a desire for the democratisation of the UN so that it becomes the stepping stone for the formation of a world government based upon equality of all the nations, and e) there is active involvement of India in international movements to ban research and development in the weapons industry, protection of environment, promotion of human rights along with preservation of national sovereignty, joint efforts against international terrorism and creation of new bodies and forums to put effective check upon increasing unaccountability of some of the more prosperous and better armed nations in the world.

Since the strength and effectiveness of a nation's foreign policy is directly related to its domestic situation and the will and determination of its people to seek a role in ordering the affairs of the world, India will have to first come to terms with the many social and political conflicts it faces at home and their deleterious effect on our economic progress.

before it can once again boldly assert its international role. In the meanwhile, it must continue to strengthen the existing formal and informal fora of the countries of the Third World so that in the inevitable confrontation between the weaker countries of the world and the rich nations and their MNCs, India is able to provide leadership to the weak. The emphasis of the party will be to work for democratisation of international political and economic relations to support democratic urges and aspirations of peoples in all nations and with other regional groupings to stimulate economic co-operation in South Asia and work for reducing areas of conflict with neighbours to ensure harmonious relationships conducive to tackling the common problem of underdevelopment in the region. The party firmly rejects the theory of dominance and deterrence, and respects the right of the weakest and smallest of nations to assert their right to political and economic sovereignty.

### **Defence of Human Rights**

Human rights are fundamentals of a civilised society. They are enshrined in the Constitution of our Republic. It is unfortunate that some of the most obnoxious and reprehensible laws such as TADA, NSA, ESMA, etc. negate the very spirit of our Constitution. The party will make human rights an essential plank of its policies and will repeal all anti-democratic laws.

### **Support to Indian Cultural Traditions**

The Samata Party will ensure the preservation of Indian culture through support systems for the sustenance growth and dissemination of cultural activity based on the vast variety of traditions in India. It will promote at various levels cultural events that will provide clean and wholesome entertainment.

Creating sense of patriotic fervour and pride in our glorious heritage from Gautam Buddha and Mahavir to Mahatma Gandhi will be a part of the strategy to make the people, particularly the youth, appreciate the glory that is India.

### **Electoral Reforms**

Free and fair elections are the very essence of democracy. By that token, India's democracy has been distorted to a caricature. Elections have come to mean a display of money and muscle power, with the people being reduced to passive spectators. The Samata Party will initiate urgent electoral reforms so that elections may once again become a contest between parties and ideologies with the people as active participants. Towards this end, the party will initiate legislation based on the recommendations of the Dinesh Goswami Committee with any justified modifications.

We believe that politics and governments in India will begin to relate to people and their problems only when the people begin to intervene decisively to chart their destiny. That is, when people's power - lok shakti begins to assert control over state power - raj shakti. We pledge the Samata Party as an effective instrument of people's power - to implement these policies and programmes. But it is only the people who can give strength to such an instrument. And we invite you to do it.

### **Creation of Smaller States**

Demands have often been raised to carve out smaller states in view of the inability of certain areas to draw attention of policy makers, thus remaining backward. Also, being part of a larger state, aspirations of people of specific identity often

fail to get due attention. Far from leading to disintegration of the nation, timely action on such demands will help create an environment of peace and progress. Administratively too, such a move will help address peoples' problems in an effective manner. The Samata Party stands for the setting up of a States Reorganisation Commission to make recommendations on all demands for smaller states.

## Our Commitment

The Samata Party seeks to transform the power structure for the realisation of the democratic rights of dalits, adivasis, backward classes, women, minorities, peasants and unorganised workers, working class and other exploited masses, unemployed youth and physically handicapped. It will strive to abolish the extreme disparities caused by the injustices of class and caste.

It stands for the decentralisation of political and economic power, autonomy and people's participation of state, region, district and village level.

It will be guided by the aspirations of a true People's Nationalism and Secularism so that the people of India can rightfully enjoy the plurality of Indian culture, respect and protect the identity and genius of all religious, linguistic and ethnic groups and unite them for common aspirations.

It believes in a Just Development Strategy which secures the right to work, puts education and health as top priorities, promotes social equity, reduce regional disparities, protects environment, promotes swadeshi, self-reliance and appropriate technology, supports domestic industry particularly

the small-scale and cottage sector, creates facilities and support systems for Indian industry to flourish in order to face the challenges of the domination and take-over by multinational companies, defends civil liberties and national sovereignty, and fights corruption, consumerism and criminalisation.

It believes in a Democratic World Order in which South Asian people's solidarity, cooperation among Third World Countries, a democratically structured United Nations, universal demilitarisation and banishing of nuclear weapons will be matched with the strengthening of its own polity, defending its border states and restoring India's image as a strong, non-violent country.

## Our Appeal

Elections for the Eleventh *Lok Sabha* provide an opportunity for the people of the country to give a new direction and orientation to our polity. The Party recognises the existence of widespread political confusion and frustration among the people. Samata Party, however, believes that the dialogue among all sections including those who hold differing view points on issues before the nation must be continued. It is only through free and frank exchange of views that the country can help evolve right solutions. The need of the time is to shun all purposeless and futile confrontations.

We are determined to work for the poor, downtrodden, exploited and neglected citizens of our land with their active cooperation and understanding. We specially call upon the youth of the country to extend their helping hand to this noble cause. It is our firm belief that how-so-ever over burdened with problems, the people of this country have the vitality and

courage to unitedly meet all challenges. ● was the united action of the poor masses that made it possible to overthrow the mighty British. As compared to those dark days of our history, we are now blessed with many points of strength. Therefore, we must look forward to a bright future. We must seek to get unanimity on basic issues and evolve appropriate mechanisms for effective solutions.

We assure the people of India that we will rise up to their expectations and create a new political culture to fulfil our promises.

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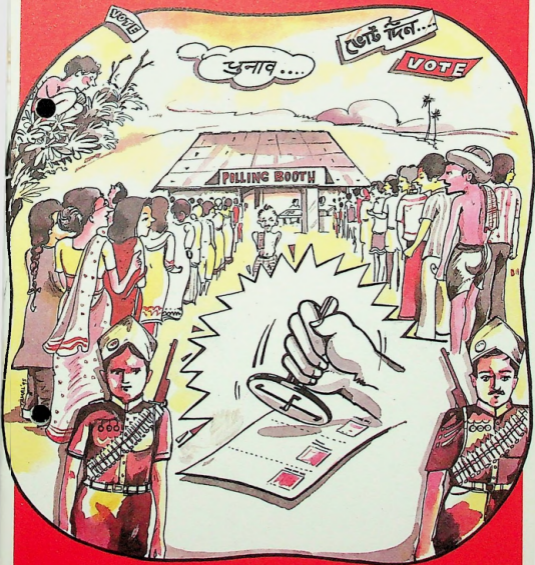
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## PREFACE

The Constitution of India provides an opportunity to all adult citizens of India to choose their representatives. This is a statutory right granted under the Representation of the Peoples Act. It encompasses a number of civil and political rights in order to help people to effectively exercise their right to vote. The role of a voter is of utmost significance in India. But due to number of maladies that exist in election management a sizable number of voters are not in a position to participate effectively in the electoral process. Recognising the voters rights and the need for making them aware of the election process, VHAI and VANI have decided to bring out a series of booklets and posters with a view to educate and sensitise voters about election laws and rules, code of conduct, etc., and mobilise them to play a positive role in the electoral reform process. This booklet is the first step towards it.

This booklet is based on the basic information provided by the Election Commission Publication titled — “Maladies in Election Management System” and other materials. We hope that through our efforts the voters would get an opportunity to know and exercise their basic rights.

We at VHAI and VANI are thankful to the Election Commission which has recognised weaknesses in the election

management, which in turn enabled us to take this step. We are also thankful to all those who have given their valuable suggestions and comments.

A combined effort by all those working at VHAI and VANI has made it possible to make it a reality. The text of this booklet has been prepared by Seema Gaikwad, Anil K. Singh of VANI and Dr. Yash Chauhan, a freelance journalist.

This booklet is published in public interest.

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## INTRODUCTION

The Independent India witnessed a vast change to the society. It adopted a constitution which elaborated upon the rules regarding choosing a leader. The Independence gave the people of India universal adult franchise. The right to vote covers many civil and political rights in order to help people to effectively exercise their right to vote. Thus, voters play a significant role in a democracy. A democracy is based upon their awareness, knowledge and understanding. The citizens of India select the office-holders for the organised community through an election. The Indian voters have played a significant role. In the history of India, the voters have proved that they cannot be won by any type of bribes. But sometimes the election system takes such turns that the voters become a playcard. The voters are debarred from casting their votes either because of the weaknesses in the system of election or they fall prey in wrong hands. The selfish politicians always look at the weakness in the election process so as to use it to achieve their self-interest. Realising the effects of a weak election system, there have been discussion on the improvement in the election process and there have been many suggestion as well. Successive election commissions have given their own suggestions and recommendations which strongly establishes that there are certainly some maladies in the election management in India. Withstanding

the need of a real change and the importance of a voter's knowledge this time the Election Commission has taken out a roll which outlines the boundaries of the election process. In this roll the maladies or weaknesses that are witnessed at different phases i.e. - Pre-election, during the election and Post-election are outlined. This roll gives us an opportunity to know and understand an election better.

## PREPARATION OF ELECTORAL ROLLS

The electoral rolls are prepared and revised with reference to a qualifying date. The electoral rolls are now being non-intensively revised every year so that the same are kept up-to-date and the latest rolls are available for any election. Thus, one copy of each such revised electoral roll for every constituency has to be kept as a permanent record. Though the preparation of electoral rolls is the first and most important aspect in an election process, it is sad to notice the lapses in the procedure. Let us discuss what leads to the existence of weaknesses in preparing an electoral roll.

### **01 Inadequate publicity of rolls revision programme**

It is often seen that common people are ignorant about the preparation and revision of an electoral roll. The temporarily employed officials such as government servants or school teachers for emuneration don't always visit each and every house and gather all necessary informations. They rather make some correction in the electoral rolls which are supposed to be revised. Thus, their insincerity put the names of common mass away from the roll. The voters sometimes do not register their names in the electoral rolls because of lack of information. They do not have the knowledge that they can otherwise

go and register their names in the election commission itself. Thus, the lack of information regarding election process and the importance of a vote make the common disinterested at the time of registration. It is the duty of the enumerator to enter the names of people of every household in the electoral rolls. The citizens must be told about the importance of an electoral roll. Thus adequate publicity must be made about the revision of rolls.

## **02 Exclusion of working voters not found at home**

In India, especially, in rural areas it is a very common thing that men go to work and women stay back doing the house-hold chores. Thus, it is usually seen that the house-wives and the children are available at homes when the enumerator comes for the registration of the names. The male members of the families are out at work. This puts an enumerator in a difficult position to obtain all the information such as age and also the names of such people are not included in the rolls. According to the rule an enumerator must obtain all the information in detail and must cover all the households. But the enumerator does not bother to visit these houses again some other time.

## **03 Apathy of political parties**

The political parties who are the centre of gravity in the election process do not show any interest in the preparation of the electoral roll. Rather they are more concerned about how to influence people through their own process of election campaigning. And if any party shows some interest in this, it is seen that they do it to include their supporters' names in the roll. Some selfish parties even try to delete the names of the people of their

opposition parties. Sometimes there are instances where a whole area of village is omitted from the list.

#### **04 Mushrooming of J.J. colonies before the enumeration**

Generally people from villages migrate to the towns in search of jobs and try to settle down in J.J. Colonies. Because of this there is an increasing rate of population and number in J.J. Colonies in these towns every year. So the problem arises when the time for registration of these areas comes as people are not traced because they tend to move from one place to another. The enumerators do not take pains to visit these areas and the people of that area do not show any interest in registering their names as they are ignorant of the importance of an election.

#### **05 Fictitious enumerations**

It is really a difficult task to prepare a roll with the correct names of the voters in a vast country like India. Normally self interest people try to enter the wrong names in the roll and sometimes names of the eligible voters remain unlisted from the roll. Sometimes the whole area is also left out from the list. The problems of foreign nationals, non-resident Indians also come into the limelight. Sometimes the names of minors and also the dead are included in the list. Some names are repeated in the list and the informations regarding the voters is wrongly put. It is important to avoid such things because this might cause inconvenience to a number of people.

#### **06 Non-availability of competent officers**

Normally school teachers and government officials are

employed temporarily to collect all kinds of informations and prepare the electoral rolls. Since this is a temporary occupation for them and there is no commitment from the higher office, they do not work sincerely. The officers superior to them also maintain a clever attitude towards the work. Thus, there is always a lack of efficient officers and workers with the Election Commission. This problem can be solved if they are given proper training and solid commitment. But there are no specific provisions available now towards this. The attitude of commitment towards the work has to be imbibed within these people.

#### **07 Non publication of draft rolls in polling stations**

Though there is a provision to publish the draft rolls in each polling stations, it is often seen missing. As a result of this the common people do not get to know whether his or her name is on the draft rolls. He/she does not try to register his/her name (as a result) because of ignorance and thus he/she loses his right to vote. This leads to impersonation as the various interest groups become active to capture a vote.

#### **08 Non availability of forms for claims and objections**

A voter can fill up a form (form no. 6) of objections or claims if his or her name is wrongly entered in the list. For this there is a provision but generally forms are not actually available at the time of need. It is baseless to raise objections verbally as verbal objections are not recorded by the officers. Even if the objections are recorded in the forms special attention is not given and a solution is brought half-heartedly. The hostile attitude



of officers responsible for registration makes it difficult for the voters to get anything solved. To avoid any sort of problems the proper forms should be made available easily.

#### **09 Unreliable citizenship documents**

Many voters do not have reliable documents to prove their citizenship. The inquiry in the absence of these documents takes a long time. Sometimes foreign nationals are included in the rolls and it is difficult to trace them. Some provisions are needed to be made either to inquire the document on citizenship of voters or to issue a citizenship (authentic) card to each voter.

#### **10 Non availability of appellate officers**

If there are any mistakes or confusions concerning the electoral rolls or if any body complains then he or she wants to appeal in the appellate office, this is not an easy job. As the appellate officer is not accessible easily the voters have to go through a lot of difficulties finding him. Sometimes the voters don't even have the information about the existence of an appellate officer. In the consequence he/she can't make an appeal and the election is conducted with the wrong electoral rolls.

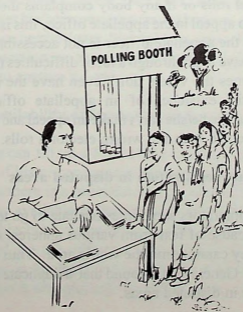
#### **11 Duplicate registration in disputed areas**

The enumerators sometimes hesitate to go to a disputed area because of fear from various spheres. At the same time they cannot omit the whole area. Thus duplication is done. Generally it is found that a duplicate registration is made in disputed areas.

## 12 Faulty updating of last part of rolls

The preparation of electoral rolls takes a long time. The roll is updated every time before election takes place in an area. This requires a lot of hard work as it involves visiting people regularly and collecting informations. The enumerator avoids to do such hard work and thus the last part of electoral rolls are not (corrected) updated. The enumerator updates it on his own rather than putting the fact.

Thus, a sincere commitment towards the work on part of the enumerator, proper training of these people may help in improving the situation. It is the duty of officials and citizens who are aware to make the common mass aware of the importance of an electoral roll. Since the electoral roll is the most basic thing which enables a person to cast a vote, it should be the concern of each individual..



## SETTING UP OF POLLING STATIONS

The polling stations are supposed to be set up keeping in view the convenience of voters, election officials and above all the safety of the place. There are many things which can affect the voting and one of them is the situation of the booth. Though India has witnessed elections for several times now, not a single election has passed off incident free. The badly situated polling booths can be a cause of disturbance. Let us look at the areas where there is a lack of proper placing of polling booths.

### **01 Polling stations for weaker sections**

Generally weaker sections are vulnerable and thus are liable to get motivated and pressurised by influential people of the area easily. The influential bit take advantage of this and as a result this affect the casting of votes. In this framework a number of problems arise when a separate polling station is not set up for the weaker sections. Thus, it is advisable to set up separate polling station for the weaker section in their own localities. This would not only help avoiding the disturbance but also would be favourable for people.

### **02 Location of polling station at a distance beyond prescription**

According to the rules of the commission a distance is

demarcated for setting up of a polling booth. But it is not practised. Generally the polling stations are set up in such a way that voters find it difficult in reaching the booth. As a result the voters stay away from exercising their franchise. Attention must be given towards the setting up of the booth. A polling station should be situated in such a place which is suitable for the election officers and voters also.

**03 A number of polling stations in the same building**

Large houses or big buildings take the look of a typical election office at the time of polling because a number of polling stations are set up at such buildings. In such places it is normal for the voters to face a lot of difficulty in identifying their polling booth and there is every possibility of overlapping of votes. It is wrong from the administrative point of view.

**04 Last minute change in polling station**

The change of polling station in the last minute leads to a thin percentage in polling. This creates a havoc among the voters. The last minute change confuses the voters. This confusion can be avoided if the polling stations are changed before-hand and the voters are informed well before the polls.

**05 Proximity of polling stations to political offices**

As a rule the office of any party or any candidate should be 200 meters away from the polling stations. But this is not maintained. If the political offices are near the polling stations, there is every chance of motivation coming from the political parties or candidates in the

fray. They can create problems for some voters and can go upto the extent of promoting forged voting. They can also try and motivate the election officers, engaged in the polling stations.

#### **06 Temporary structures leading to vitiation**

It is often seen that polling stations are set up in a tent or in a makeshift room. This is done when a concrete construction is not available. These types of polling stations are at danger all the time. There is every fear of stealing of ballot boxes, impersonation of votes in such places. Efforts must be made to set up permanent polling stations where there is safety and security rather than having make-shift arrangements.

Thus, setting up of polling booths play a significant role in an election. Since it affects the polling these must be set up wisely and must be convenient to everybody.

Once in a day introspect on factors that are threatening the rule of law in our democracy — co-relate them to the extent true, with the electoral system and the built in difficulties to elect responsive and honest representatives and sustain their responsiveness.

— *Election Commission*

## MALADIES BEFORE POLLING

The pre-election phase plays a crucial role in an election process. This is the time when most of the important work is done. The officials are given orientations. Various political parties become active and start working towards achieving their self-interest. Though this is the phase when a base/platform is built, many manipulative tactics are followed by different people at different places. Here we have discussed a few which are most commonly found.

### **01 Transfers of inconvenient officers and posting of pliable officers on key positions**

The practice of transfers and appointments of favorable officers is an old practice by the ruling party. The ruling party appoints the favorable officers before the election so as to get their work done effortlessly. In this situation there is a possibility of creating problems at the time of election. The Returning Officers and District Election Officer are also transferred to places suitable to the party in power so as to avail the unnecessary services easily. The officers who are rigid in their principles are transferred to difficult places as they do not fall into the hands of the leaders.

## **02 Inauguration of new schemes and projects just before the election**

The ruling party brings out new projects and schemes just before the election. The motive behind this is to motivate the voters. Even the opposition party starts new schemes to catch the attention of the voters. Apart from this the projects (which started earlier) are delayed and postponed till the election time so that it will be fresh in voters mind and they believe that it will be a beneficial factor in grabbing votes. Fresh schemes come to the limelight just before the election.

## **03 Dummy candidates**

Various parties put up dummy candidates to distribute the votes. Sometimes in the last minute the dummy candidate's candidature is canceled or withdrawn by the party itself. These withdrawals are made in exchange of money. Sometimes it also happens that the candidates withdraw their candidature in favour of their own party. Thus their votes get transferred to their own party candidates. This thing is seen in almost every election. At the same time the agents of dummy candidates play an important role in influencing the polling and counting stations.

## **04 Prevention of nomination of weak candidates**

The adult citizens of India who fulfill the requirements to contest election in an independent country like India. It is often seen that some people come to the election ground to contest election non-seriously but rather to get some profit or to achieve some self interest. A number of problems arise out of this practice. In India, where the

rate of illiteracy is high, this system creates a bad impact in the election process. It is difficult to stop such candidates and in this process there is a chance that the election process is affected. This is mainly done by the people who are not really confident and are weak.

#### **05 Bribery and horse trading**

Cases of bribery are often heard during an election. Parties bribe candidates to bring them to their side. These types of incidences before the election affects the performance of the opposition parties in the election. There are incidents that a person changes his party just before the nomination. This is practiced either to catch an influential person or where the party does not have a proper candidate to nominate.

#### **06 Hesitation of good persons to join the fray**

As we see there are many people who are famous for working among people for their upliftment and development. They are respected among common people. But they prefer to stay away from the politics. They stay away because of certain reasons such as use of muscle and money power in an election. Generally such people spend their lives working for people but do not prefer to represent people in the assembly or parliament. This may be because of the existing and increasing corruption in the election process that good people are not stepping into the politics. In the process we lose the opportunity of the service of good people.

#### **07 Caste/community based selection of candidates**

The caste and community have made such a drastic entry



into the politics now that the candidates are even selected by the political parties on the basis of caste and religion. Different parties fall into the competition of caste and community feelings. This is not only a danger to the process but also to the common people who are supposed to form the government.

**08 Nomination of party candidates on death bed with a view to have the election countermanded**

This is practiced as an instrument to cancel the election. The person who is seriously ill is nominated so that if he/she dies during the election process, it would create sympathy for his party. This can attract sympathy votes. Normally a person from the family of the dead is nominated for the election. This makes certain for that person to win the election. In this way the political parties do not hesitate to practice such methods to capture some votes.

**09 Nomination with forged signature of proposer**

Normally the forged signatures of the proposer are put in the nomination forms if the proposer is not located and thus the rules and regulations of the election process is violated. There is no provision available to punish this forgery case.

**10 Multiple nomination from more than one constituency**

There are incidents that a candidate files his/her nominations paper from more than one places. This is prevalent in our election process. But this makes an election more extravagant. Suppose a candidate has filed

his/her nominations from more than one place and wins in more than one place. After winning he/she is supposed to resign from the other constituencies and retain only one. Thus another election has to be held for the other place so as to choose a representative. This means extra expenses. Sometimes a person contests from a place he/she is not familiar with. In this case he/she has the possibility of winning if he/she has a name or his party is unknown in the area.

### 11 Staggering of elections due to shortage of police forces

The elections are scheduled keeping in view various things. The police play a vital role in maintaining law and order and security during election. They are deployed in a polling area to keep a vigil on the law and order situations of the areas. Many times the elections have to be staggered due to shortage of police forces. The election commission is unable to hold the election at all the places simultaneously because of the shortage in the police force.



Lodge complaints/prosecution against illegal acts as per relevant law.

## THE PERIOD OF ELECTIONEERING

The period of electioneering witnesses a lot of expenditures and use and misuse of government machineries is done. Even the help of musclemen is taken without any hesitance. We have made an attempt here to discuss some of the aspects which affect the election process and are hardly realised by those who claim to serve the people.

### **01 Wasteful election expenses**

In our country countless expenses are made during the elections. The use of vehicles, big cut-outs, posters, distribution of shawl, blankets, sarees, liquor are prevalent and largely seen during an election. This is done to motivate the common mass. The amount of money spent in this process is sometimes more than crores in one constituency. The parties fail to realise that this money can be used for better purposes. The general opinion among party people is that the larger amount one spends on election, the better it is. Unfortunately, this is true to some extent. It is morally and legally wrong to spend more than a specific amount at the time of election. Steps have been taken to strengthen the rules of the election commission regarding this but it needs to be more rigid.

## **02 Non accounting of expenditure of political parties**

Nobody really bothers to keep an account of the expenditure made during the election. Even if one wants to, it is difficult. Because a large amount of money used in the election is black money which is contributed by rich industrialists and other influential people who have some or the other self interest. This money is collected and spent in such ways that sometimes the candidate does not even get a track of its expenditure. The rule that each candidate has to give a detailed account of daily expenditure is a welcome feature from the election commission this time.

## **03 Misuse of personal security staff**

During the election the candidates misuse their personal security staff and threaten the other party or people or all rather than protecting themselves from any kind of evils. They use them in creating violence and disturbances. The 'goonda' element is encouraged by them. Hard rules must be made for these kind of people to curb all the misuse of the security staff.

## **04 Intimidation of voters and candidates**

In a country like India where money and muscle power are on the rise in election process it is difficult for the weaker section to cast their votes fearlessly. They have to face all sorts of threats and pressures which come from different parties. The parties can go up to the extent of putting an entire area in difficulty if they come to know that the particular area is against them. Sometimes pressure is applied on opposition candidates to withdraw

the nomination. In this way many candidates are debarred from contesting the election.

#### **05 Mobilisation of musclemen**

The local 'dadas' of an area become active during the election time. Most of the candidates desire that as many dasas as possible should be with them. They do not hesitate to spend money towards mobilising the musclemen towards them. It is seen that some candidates try hard to bring the musclemen out of jail (by owning any method) with the hope that they (the candidates) will be secured and these dasas capture booths. It is very common that an election witnesses disturbances/ violence like shoot outs, beatings and various other things. The musclemen are employed by different parties. These musclemen do not have a commitment towards any candidate. They only run after money. Thus they stick to the candidates who gives/offers more money.

#### **06 Creating disturbance in public meetings**

The election process includes holding of different public gatherings/meetings by different parties. The party people take to disturbance and try to create problems in public meetings if it is organised by an opposition party. They put their own people in the meeting so as to do the hooting. They do not hesitate to use all sorts of methods to spread disturbance and violence.

#### **07 Defacement of party poster, arches etc.**

Various party candidates find pleasure in tearing of the posters and banners of their opposition parties. This is

done mostly during the night. They even exchange the posters of the opposition and replacing with other posters. Defacement of the posters of the opposition is done. These posters do not give any clue as who has done that. Sometimes posters depicts the conflict between various parties.

#### **08 Communal and caste based electioneering**

Communalism and casteism have become an indispensable part of an election. A candidate is elected on the basis of caste and communalism. It is often seen that if a particular caste is dominating in a locality then a person of that particular caste is nominated to contest the election. Election campaigning is also made on the theme of caste and religion. They make it a point to use it in election matters. Rules must be made to keep these kinds of people out who advocate religion and caste during election and divide people on caste and religion line.

#### **09 VIP's visits on so called official business**

Different parties arrange official tours of VIPs for campaigning so as to influence and mobilise people towards them. Inauguration of some bridge, hospitals or roads by some minister just before the election is very common and a normal activity that is often seen. This behaves as a favour for party candidate. This is illegal and wrong but people take advantage of the maladies of the election management.

#### **10 Misuse of Government property in election**

The use of government guest houses in various states by the ruling party is very common. When election meetings

are held in parks and public places little attention is given towards its consequences. Apart from this the aircrafts and other government vehicles are used by the ruling party as if it is their right. All the expenses incurred due to this is paid by the government itself.

### **11 Indiscriminate use of loudspeakers and other instrument**

In India an election cannot be imagined without a loudspeaker. But it is used so badly that it affects the peace and harmony of the society. It is used even late in the night. Late night meetings are held where the loudspeakers are used, as a result it disturbs the public. As a rule a loudspeaker must not be used after 11 p.m. but the police or any other government officials do not take any step to stop this.

As we have seen from the above discussion there is a lot to be done to bring the election system and keep an election free from any kind of fear, violence and disturbances.



## DAY OF POLL

The election process reaches a crucial point on the day of poll. The excitement and enthusiasm among voters are easily noticed when they eagerly come to cast their votes. Sometimes there is a disgusting look as well. Since there are many untoward incidents that take place during the voting, let us look at few of them generally.

### **01 Forcible booth capturing**

Booth capturing has become a significant system in our election process. This happens in rural areas mostly where the people are not really aware of these things and the police is not active also. It is noticed that under-developed areas have a higher rate of booth capturing. The poor people who are ignorant of the tick mark are forced to on a particular symbol by the musclemen. The polling officers are helpless in this situation as they re-main as mute observes. It so happens that when people come to cast their votes they are told that they have already exercised their franchise. Their innocence and ignorance do not allow them to raise their voice. Sometimes booths are captured secretly by bribing or threatening the election officers. Sometimes people are collected so that possible voters of the opposition party are kept away from casting their votes.



## **02 Immobilisation of police forces and central observers**

The polling agents of the political party try and create various situations so as to attract the voters towards them. This makes the police inactive and the central observers can not do their work effectively. Sometimes tricks are played to dissuade the police forces from keeping a vigil on the polling station such as violence in other areas so that police and observers kept away for that partner policy booth.

## **03 Misuse of vehicles**

There is no such rule that the voters would be taken to the polling stations and dropped back at home on the day of the poll. Vehicles are not supposed to be used for this purposes. But the vehicles are seen to be used for this purpose during the poll. The different parties practice this so as to influence the voters.

## **04 Impersonation**

In our country impersonation is practiced widely but a few cases really come to the limelight. This is done generally in the early hours on the day of the polling so as to refuse the actual voters to cast their votes. Generally or normally the Indian voters are calm in nature. They do not prefer to set up an inquiry and thus do not give a written complaint. Sometimes the representatives of the candidates also do not say anything on impersonation. In the absence of local polling agent who can recognise voters this can be done easily.

## **05 Misuse of media for electioneering**

Different media, especially the government media are

misused during the election. The ruling party candidate try to transmit the news and message about the work they and the government have done. Various leaders can be seen very often on T.V. during the election. Newspapers also play a vital role. The candidates try and put negative remarks and news of their opposite group so as to create a bad impression of their opposition among the mass. This destroys the unbiased reputation of the media and makes the voters thoroughly confused. Thus the voters become indecisive as to whom to vote.

#### **06 Misuse of law and order machinery**

The ruling party candidates in different states and even in the center use the law and order machinery in favour of their candidate during the election. For example, drawing out the police from the area where there is possibility of disturbance by their candidates and by becoming rigid with the opposition candidate and in the areas where the disturbances will act as a favour towards the election. The law is violated by the party members themselves. The party people provoke the common man against their opposition.

#### **07 Misuse of illicit arms and ammunition**

One of the main reasons of violence during the election is procurement of illicit arms and ammunition. In some states the supporters of each candidate own arms illegally. These are collected very secretly before the election. The different political parties have such stronghold in the process of selling and buying of weapons that the administration cannot do anything. The news of raids by the police on the arms and ammunition is heard but this is just a little proportion to what actually is hidden.

## **08 Misuse of licensed weapons**

There are people who have acquired licensed weapons. These people are contacted by different political parties with a purpose of chancing upon the weapons. Sometimes they succeed in their process and thus licensed weapons are misused. Generally administration order for deposition of fire arms but due to political influence ruling party people ignored and administration kept close eyes.

## **09 Ministers as polling agents**

Polling agents are recruited at different polling stations. The representatives of the political parties are put on the desks. But sometimes the ministers are seen as polling agents. This can create a favorable wave for the party he/she belongs to - thus influencing the people.

Since the above incidents are illegal, strong action must be taken against those who try and create disturbances. The voters must be kept away from any kind of pressure.

**Boycott political meetings in which black money and official machinery is used.**

## DISTURBANCE DURING THE COUNTING

Counting being an important aspect, a slight negligence may lead to unprecedented events. Proper attention is most needed during the counting. Though there is a lot of care already taken there are still a lot to be done.

### **01 Wrongful/biased objection of votes**

The polling officers sometimes are biased and accept or reject the ballot papers arbitrarily. They do it because they have an intention behind this. The acceptance and rejection of votes/ballots sometimes affect the final result of the election. Besides this, wrong entry in the report is also noticed. Sometimes the last minute recruitment of counting agents also create problems. Sometimes ministers are recruited as counting agents also. In this situation the ministers influence the other officers as counting officers.

### **02 Manipulated entry in the result-sheet**

Sometimes it is found that election officials manipulate the entry on result sheet. The hearing of election disputes gets delayed in the court. This itself is a long process. A lot of time is wasted in this process and the effect of this

does not remain powerful. The election commission is kept away from this process. A thorough inquiry is not done in this and the lost candidates cases are not dealt properly. It is taken for granted that the opposition candidate has lost the elections and any allegation against him/her is not justifiable.

### **03 Improper storage and preservation of polled materials and records**

The polling records are not kept and maintained properly. Sometimes important papers are destroyed and thus no record is maintained regarding that. The materials and other things used in an election process are not maintained properly and scientifically. By this the problem of arranging the materials all over again come up and this costs a lot of money.

### **04 Crowding of counting centres**

The counting process puts people in excitement and thus it is seen that usually the counting centres are found to be crowded. Sometimes some of them make an entry to the counting hall itself. It creates a lot of problem for the counting agents and the other officers deployed for counting of votes and there to look after the law and order situation.

Discourage the frivolous and non-serious proxy candidates to protect the dignity of election.

## RE POLL AND ADJOURNED POLL

### **01 Biased recommendations for repoll**

Repolling is done when there is a problem with the polling and a case is filed. But sometimes polling officials recommendations are biased and made by different influential leaders to conduct another election in different areas. This is done when there is a fair chance of their winning the battle.

### **02 Reuse of missing ballot papers for repoll**

Instead of making fresh ballot papers for the repolling, the old ballot papers are used - thus violating the election rules as a whole. The missing ballot papers are put into use. This is done to favour some party candidates.

Mobilise honest citizens into organised groups — To exert systematic pressures on honest and forthright citizens only to come into the election arena — To thwart in an organised manner, injustice, corruption, and abuse of law and let rule of law prevail.

## POST ELECTION MALADIES

### **01 Victimization of forthright officers**

The maladies in election do not just confirm to the pre-election and election era, it rather continues after the election also. If any officer has been forthright during the election he/she faces a lot of problems after the election. The officers fall victims of the party who comes to power. They are transferred to problem areas or are given such posts which do not have any power.

### **02 Non-prosecution of cases of electoral offenses**

The disturbances and violences are not given due importance once the election is over and also the booth capturing incidents are not properly investigated once the election is over. The problem craters of the previous election are seen to be creating problems in the next election as well. But no step is taken to stop them. An election in a particular area is countermanded only when there is proper and solid reason. Sometimes the proofs and all kinds of facts are not needed to cancel polling. This happens if an influential party wants it.

### 03 Past election reprisals against voters and areas

If a candidate loses the election from a place but his or her party comes to power, he takes a revengful attitude towards the area where he was defeated. He/she neither looks at the developmental work in the area nor pays any attention to the complaints of the people of that area. Some candidates who win in the election show a cold attitude towards the people from whom they did not get the vote. This attitude is also maintained towards a particular community and caste sometimes.



Collect and Disseminate maximum possible information about successful and stable democracies in the world.



## MANIPULATIVE TACTICS OF THE RULING PARTY

### **01 Pre-election period**

The ruling party starts the preparation to gain in the election well before the election. First the workers working for preparing the electoral rolls are manipulated by the party and the names of the voters who are against them are omitted from the roll. The officers who do not agree with the returning officer are transferred and thus the path is cleared. The police is misused by the ruling party to achieve their self-interest. Parole is granted to favourite musclemen by the ruling party so that they can be used in the election process. The government officers are given benefit such as bonus, pay increase etc. before the election so as to motivate them towards the ruling party.

### **02 During the poll**

The ruling party uses the government machinery to the fullest during the election. Government vehicles are used to reach up to the voters, government officials are also used in the election process and favorable officers are recruited for the election work. By this the ruling party holds a upper hand in manipulating the other polling officers and also the common people.

### 03 Misuse of Presidential Rule

The ruling party prefers to use the presidential rule as an instrument to catch vote if a state is under it. The presidential rule is lingered till the condition is in favour of the ruling party. The ruling party has the authority to impose a presidential rule. The ruling party sometimes portray the opposition against the interest of the people of the area.



Organise non-violent collective action against corruption.

## MISCELLANEOUS

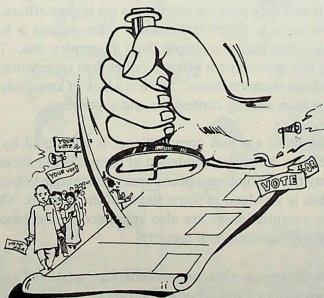
The election process is not followed properly due to the lack of adequate training of the polling staff. An election involves a lot of intricate proceedings - thus there is a need of a thorough knowledge of the process by the officers involved/engaged in the process. The common sense is not applied by the staff and they pass the problem to the higher official and each problem is taken technically. This creates a lot of confusion-this makes a simple thing a complex one. They behave like government officers rather than representatives of the election commission. There is a lack of knowledge of election rules among contestants and supporters.

The chief election commissioner is appointed by the President on the recommendation of the political executive. This way the appointment becomes a political one. Political affiliation is involved in some stages of the process. Other election commissioners are also appointed in the process, without any constitutional security.

The deputy election commissioners are appointed against cadre posts out of the securing bureaucrats. This way the ruling party appoints the favorable officers whenever and wherever the centre desires and also can transfer an officer, if he/she is unfavourable.

The election commission does not have a secretariat of its own and with independent service rules. The commissions officials are subjected to UPSC,CAT, Vigilance Commission and other institutions like this governing the servants of the union. The loyalty of the Chief Electoral Officer, Returning officer, Law and Order machinery is divided among the Election Commission and the government. This is why the election commission cannot exercise its power fully on them.

The election commission does not have any concrete right to stop the interference of the ruling party from time to time. Fragile law to control the role of money power and to punish the electoral offender also affects the work of the election commission.



Do not be misled by false propoganda — do not be swayed by populist programmes.

## CONCLUSION

Keeping in view the above discussed points, it must be everyone's concern to work towards having a free and fair and a proper election. Every citizen of the country wherever he/she may be, whichever field he/she is involved in must come forward and make the unaware citizen an agile one. Since the non-government organisations have a history of working for the people and with the people, let us make an appeal to all those engaged in the voluntary sector to raise awareness of over the gravity of the situation and work accordingly. We all deserve a good democracy, thus let us work towards achieving this.





Making of any false declaration in connection with the preparation or revision of an electoral roll or the inclusion of entry in or from an electoral roll is an offence under section 31 of the Representation of the People Act, 1950.

— *Election Commission*

## WHAT A VOTER MUST KNOW

- Anyone who is 18 years old on 1st January of the election year, is eligible to vote.
- If eligible, immediately register as a voter.
- Use of religious place or historical monuments for electioneering is prohibited.
- In the event of any irregularities immediately inform the polling officer.
- **ILLEGAL :**
  - Campaigning on the basis of caste and religion.
  - Campaigning within 48 hours of election.
  - Camps of candidates within 200 metres of the polling booth.
  - Candidate's vehicles carrying the voters to the polling station. Avoid such facilities, if offered.
- Every two kilometre a polling booth is set up.
- Generally voting takes place from 8 am to 5 pm.

**RIGHT TO VOTE IS A FUNDAMENTAL RIGHT  
USE IT WITH DIGNITY AND DILIGENCE**

***FOR FURTHER INFORMATION YOU MAY CONTACT  
THE ELECTION COMMISSION, VANI OR VHAI.***

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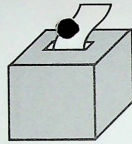
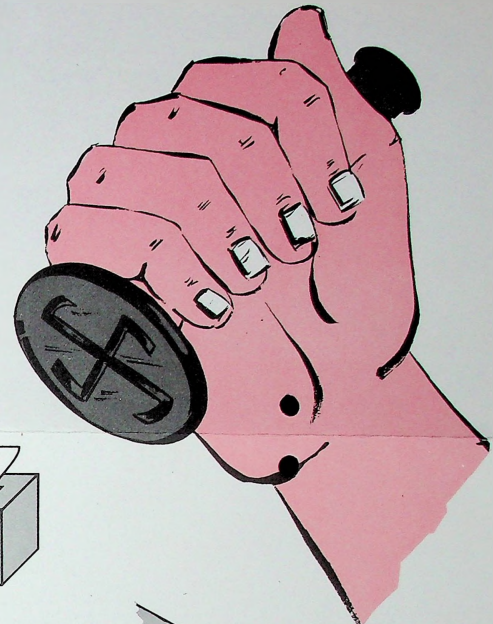


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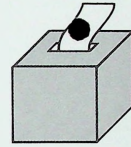


# Your Vote is not Only a Simple Mark **IT IS YOUR POWER**

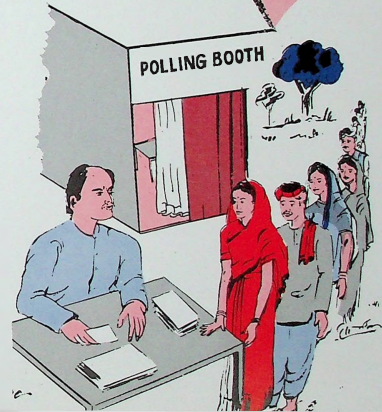
To Form Your Government



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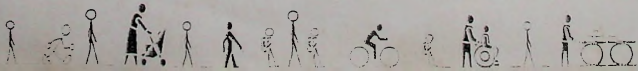
# Janara Pranalike **People's Manifesto**

for the consideration of voters and candidates  
participating in elections to the  
**Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike, March 2010**

evolved by  
**Bengaluru Janara Vedike / Bangalore People's Forum**

A Forum of various progressive organisations including:

Urban Research Centre, The Avenue Road Traders Associations, Slum Jagattu, Sangama,  
Samarthanam Trust for the Disabled, Parishkaran, Nightingales Medical Trust, Maraa, Kilikili,  
Janasahayog, Jana Arogya Andolana Karnataka, Hasiru Usiru  
, Garment and Textile Workers Union, Environment Support Group (Environment, Social Justice  
and Governance Initiatives), Concerned for Working Children, Community Health Cell.  
Centre for Education and Documentation  
, Bengaluru Slum Janara Kriya Vedike, Aneka, Alternate Law Forum, ActionAid



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## Introduction:

All efforts of the Karnataka Government to deny the people of Bangalore their fundamental right to choose their local government has been defeated by landmark decisions of the Hon'ble Supreme Court of India and the High Court of Karnataka in response to Public Interest Litigations. As a result elections to Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) will now be held on 28 March 2010.

Bengalureans have been denied their due right to shape their city for over 7 years due to the absence of an elected body. In this period a highly unaccountable and centralised bureaucratic raj took over, giving very little opportunity for citizens to be involved in local decisions. The impact was apparent everywhere: quality of basic services significantly declined, even as money and public resources were invested in projects and schemes in a wholly nontransparent manner.

The opportunity now exists to renew our trust with local democracy and begin shaping our city. Municipal elections are key drivers in shaping our city. Choose the wrong candidate, and vote on the wrong set of issues, the impact is likely to be irreversible. Contrarily, if candidates were to agree to People's real issues of concerns, and get voted, they are likely to follow up on election promises during their term in office.

With this in context, many not-for-profit voluntary and public interest organisations working with a variety of communities and on a range of issues met over the past several months to collate a People's Manifesto. Several meetings and discussions within and across sectors was the basis of preparing this Manifesto which is a distilled version of various progressive policies and measures that we feel people of Bengaluru deserve. The list of issues and concerns raised in the Manifesto are meant to be indicative and not all comprehensive.

We urge you as a Voter or Candidate or Public Spirited Campaigner to use this Manifesto as a basis to make a wise choice while participating in the BBMP elections.

## Governance

There must be meaningful and total implementation of the Nagarpalika Act. This can be achieved in the following ways:

### BBMP Administration:

- BBMP should be administered by a Mayor-in-council system, wherein the mayor will be elected from amongst the BBMP corporators for a non-recurring period of 2 ½ years.
- As a progressive initiative, the office of Mayor must alternate between different genders.
- BBMP Council should function in an inclusive manner that would ensure meaningful participation of all marginalised religious and non-religious minority groups.

### Ward Committee Functioning:

- Democratic participation must be deepened by constituting ward committees in every ward, as a basic unit of urban governance.
- Ward Committee members must be directly elected.
- A progressive and inclusive Bangalore can only be achieved by ensuring Ward Committees are allowed to function autonomously. This has to be done by ensuring that adequate administrative and financial resources are available for the healthy functioning of Ward Committees.
- Ward Committee meetings should mandatorily be held at least once every month and must be forums open to the wide public at all times.



#### Ward Committee Representation:

- Members elected to Ward Committees must be representative of the diversity in society and particularly ensure due representation for women, Dalits, minorities, urban poor and such other vulnerable sections of society. Representatives of children should be encouraged and facilitated to take part in the ward committee meetings.
- Special Children's Ward Committee meetings should be organised similar to Children's Grama Sabhas now mandated for all Panchayats.

#### Budget for BBMP:

- BBMP Budget should be evolved from the ward level up, and done in a transparent, accountable and participatory manner.
- All obligatory and delegated municipal functions of the BBMP should be adequately funded. Lack of resources should not be a reason for not implementing such functions.
- All investments in existing or new projects should only be undertaken as a component of the BBMP Budget. External financing and borrowings, therefore, can only be accepted if they are part of the BBMP Budget.
- Social equity considerations must be fundamental to allocation of resources in the BBMP Budget.
- There must be proportionate allocation and distribution of resources in projects, and this must be based on the actual populations of vulnerable groups, such as urban poor, women, children, elderly, disabled, transgenders, street and working children, etc.
- Revenue earnings from land and property transactions within BBMP jurisdiction must be allotted for sustenance of BBMP.

#### Urban and Regional Planning:

- Metropolitan Planning Committee (MPC) must immediately be constituted as the planning agency, as required per the Nagarpalika Act.
- BBMP shall implement projects, schemes and infrastructure based on plans developed by the MPC.
- Existing para-statal planning bodies such as BMRDA, BDA, etc., which are undemocratic and non-participatory, must be phased out. Their technical competence could be integrated into MPC.
- BBMP should become the preeminent agency for implementing projects and schemes relating to the items listed in the 12<sup>th</sup> Schedule of the Constitution. Consequently, funds, functions and functionaries that are distributed in various para-statal agencies dealing with issues such as food, water, shelter, primary health, education, etc. must be reallocated to work under BBMP.
- Extraconstitutional and illegal bodies, such as ABIDe, must be immediately abolished. All projects promoted and undertaken by ABIDe and such other bodies must be suspended forthwith, and subjected to a thorough review of a Joint Legislature Committee and also by the BBMP.

#### Representation:

- Reservation of seats in BBMP must be in conformance with applicable National and State Legislations and Policies.
- BBMP should become an example by ensuring that the Council and all Committees under its jurisdiction will reserve 50% of seats for women, and also ensure adequate representation for people with disabilities.



## Public Health

- The fundamental right of Health for All must be protected in all BBMP's programmes.
- All health facilities managed by BBMP must be transformed into comprehensive Primary Health Centres. Care must be taken to ensure that a Primary Health Centre is available for every unit population of 50,000, and a sub-centre for every 10,000 people.
- Ward Committee should play a fundamental role in monitoring and planning of health services, especially of Public Health Centres and sub-centres.
- Public health facilities should not be privatised.
- Adequate financing should be provided to run public health facilities to meet evolving standards.
- No user fees should be charged in any BBMP health centres.
- Essential medical supplies must be provided in adequate quantities and at no cost to the patients.
- Patients' Grievance Cell should be established in all health centres/Public Health Centres and a toll-free telephone number should be instituted to ensure quality services free from corruption.
- Communities with special needs should be provided health services through specialised interventions of Community Health Experts.
- BBMP should play a leading role in regulating against extortive practices of private healthcare providers.

## Accessibility

- All urban infrastructure and public use buildings must be fully accessible.
- Public commons and institutions such as roads, stations, airports, bus stands, banks, hospitals, schools, public offices, parks, etc. must be made fully accessible.
- BBMP must conduct regular audits of all such facilities to ensure full accessibility.
- BBMP must set up a special cell to protect and implement the rights of people with disabilities.
- The needs of the disabled and children must be fully met in designing and developing pedestrian infrastructure.
- Disabled Information Systems must be integrated into all plans and schemes developed from the Ward level up.

## Mobility and Public Transport

- All spaces of mobility must protect and preserve the right of way of pedestrians and cyclists.
- All roads and neighbourhoods of Bangalore must be pedestrian and cyclist friendly.
- Cycling lanes must be secure and interconnected to ensure one can cycle anywhere in the city as a major means of travel. All streets must necessarily be shaded with closed canopy trees to encourage cycling and walking as carbon-neutral modes of transport.
- BBMP must set up a cell to support carbon-neutral practices like cycling and walking



- Pedestrian-crossings should be mandatorily be at grade, that is, at surface level.
- Prioritized right of way and protection must be assured for pedestrians, cyclists, people with disability, children and senior citizens.
- Signal-free corridors must be scrapped forthwith, as they threaten the lives of the disabled, children and the elderly, and cause needless displacement of livelihoods and properties.
- Popular public places, business and city centres should be pedestrian and bicycle only zones on weekends.
- BBMP must institute a comprehensive accident support and rehabilitation package for victims of road accidents.
- Public transport vehicles must be given priority on all roads.
- Plans evolved by MPC should be the basis for developing all public transport and mobility areas.
- Public transport facilities must be economically accessible to all economic classes
- Urban poor, migrant workers and climate refugees should benefit from subsidized daily and monthly public transport passes.
- Strong disincentives, such as high parking fees, should be introduced to discourage the use of private vehicles in densely crowded areas and city centres.
- Arterial roads must be decongested by disallowing parking.
- Investments made in public transport must be economically viable and equitable. Bus Rapid Transit systems, which are cheap, accessible and functional, should be preferred over expensive and unviable projects like the Bangalore Metro, High Speed Rail Link, Monorail and elevated roads.
- BBMP should make optimal and intelligent use of streets and other transport infrastructure. A good way forward is avoid investments in wasteful and disruptive projects, such as road-widening, flyovers, underpasses, etc.
- Ward Committees must integrate various departmental inputs in instituting Traffic Calming measures and thus build safety on roads.

## Culture

- BBMP must actively encourage the arts and cultural practice in Bangalore.
- Ward committees and the wide public must be involved in organising cultural events, art projects and such other activities.
- Artistes must be involved in regularly organising urban arts and culture festivals.
- BBMP must constitute a Standing Committee to encourage and finance cultural events and also address grievances.
- Art and aesthetics in the public realm should not neglect the representation of local and regional cultural diversity.
- Moral policing should be actively discouraged, and thus protect artistic license.
- Ward Committees should support community media spaces, such as public art projects, film and documentary festivals, street theatre, etc.





## Parks and Open Spaces

- Park, playgrounds and open spaces are public commons and should be protected from any and all encroachments.
- Access to all public commons must be free of cost.
- BBMP must create and protect dedicated play spaces for younger children and play grounds for older children in each ward.
- All parks and playgrounds must be fully accessible. Play equipment must be sensitively designed to accommodate the needs of disabled children.
- Park furniture and play equipment must be maintained in excellent condition.
- Parks must be made useful for all users, and not just for walkers.
- Children must have unrestricted access to parks at all waking hours, and the design should allow unstructured and free play.
- Parks must be open from early hours of the morning to late hours of the night, and should be well lit, safe, sanitary and provided with toilet and drinking water facilities.
- Ward Committees, parents, children and the elderly should be fundamentally involved in decisions relating to the creation and maintenance of parks and open spaces.
- Parks should not replace playgrounds and vice versa.
- Every ward should have the right mix of parks and open spaces, including play space for younger children and playgrounds for teenagers and younger adults.
- Parks and open spaces should be a safe walking distance from the neighbourhoods.
- Historical parks such as Lalbagh, Cubbon Park, etc. should be fully and freely accessible and must be evolved into spaces of environmental and cultural education.
- BBMP should actively resist any effort or attempt to restrict entry to parks and open spaces based on ID cards or such other retrograde and unconstitutional methods.
- There should not be any restriction to enter parks and open spaces on grounds of class, caste, creed, religion, gender, etc.

## Heritage

- BBMP should evolve a comprehensive policy to protect the city's heritage.
- BBMP should set up a Standing Committee on Heritage Conservation which should be backed by an interdisciplinary panel including architects, artists, urban planners, sociologists, anthropologists, ecologists, environmentalists, archaeologists, foresters, etc.
- BBMP must initiate active steps to declare old neighbourhoods, canopied streets, old markets, and the like as living heritages in conformance with UNESCO Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage.
- Heritage conservation should focus on the need to protect living heritage, natural heritage, streetscapes, crafts, craft skills, vernacular heritage, and other intangible heritage in addition to monuments and structures.
- All heritage sites should be maintained well and be accessible to all.
- BBMP should encourage schools and colleges to be involved in heritage conservation.
- Heritage zones should be labelled with uniquely identifiable signages to build awareness amongst the wide public of the heritage that surrounds them.
- Projects documenting Bangalore's heritage (both tangible and intangible) via video,



writings, audio and any other media should be encouraged.

- BBMP should actively encourage heritage conservation by building a network of cultural ambassadors and sponsors.

## Natural Resource Management

BBMP must constitute a Standing Committee on Environment, Tree Protection, Urban Forestry, Watershed Management and Biodiversity Conservation to aid in the conservation of the city's biodiversity, greenery, lakes, watersheds, etc. The task of this Committee should also involve building public awareness on various ecological and environmental issues of the city. An interdisciplinary committee of advisors including landscape ecologists, urban forestry professionals, limnologists, ecologists, environmentalists, etc. may be set up to assist the Committee in discharging its functions.

### Trees and Urban Forestry:

- BBMP must work with the Forest Department in immediately developing a database of all trees in its jurisdiction in conformance with the Karnataka Preservation of Trees act, 1976.
- Old canopied streets, tree and park lined avenues, gunduthopus and devarakaadus must be declared as Heritage Zones and also protected as wildlife corridors for birds and other tree dwelling animals.
- Tree planting and green roofing must be actively encouraged as a means of controlling noise and air pollution and also to create cool micro-climatic zones.
- The utility of tree shaded areas in conserving energy of buildings must be actively highlighted, and unnecessary tree felling must be actively discouraged in public and private areas.
- Tree Patta schemes (providing the patta holder recovery of usufructs) must be introduced to encourage planting and protection of endemic trees in all neighbourhoods.
- All roads must be shaded with trees to encourage carbon neutral and healthy practices such as walking and cycling, and also as protective measures for street vendors.
- Large scale plantation of endemic and locally useful trees must be undertaken to bring back lost greenery to Bangalore. The target must be to plant 1 crore trees in the next five years.

### Lakes:

- BBMP must actively support socially and ecologically sensitive methods of protection, restoration and maintenance of lakes and lake systems.
- Ward Committees and local communities should be actively involved in all efforts relating to management and protection of lakes.
- All decisions relating to lake rehabilitation or development must only be taken through statutory Public Consultations particularly involving those whose livelihoods depend on the waterbodies.
- All lakes within BBMP jurisdiction must be protected and maintained as public commons and ecologically viable spaces accessible to all and no privatisation must be encouraged or allowed.
- BBMP must recommend to the State Government to declare all lakes within its



jurisdictional limits as reserved forests so as to provide them heightened protection against pollution, encroachment and destruction.

- All Raja Kaluves must be rehabilitated as water conservation zones by developing appropriate vegetation, tree cover and tackling water pollution.
- Encroachments must be dealt with strictly with a humanistic approach that does not violate the Right to Housing of the urban poor.
- In peri urban areas of Bangalore city, where wetlands still exist, land owners must be provided incentives to practice agriculture, horticulture, tree farming, etc.

#### Forests:

- BBMP must play an active collaborative role to protect urban forests from encroachment, waste dumping and other such destructive activities.
- BBMP must assist the Forest Department in protecting biodiversity rich areas and encourage activities of Ward Committees and local communities in conservation of these forests as spaces for environmental education and ecological appreciation.
- Wildlife Corridors in urban areas must be protected from urbanisation, encroachment and all forms of pollution.
- Degraded and encroached forest lands must be recovered and developed into tree parks with endemic species.

### Public Education

- BBMP must set up a Standing Committee on Education to review quality of education, provision of safe and secure infrastructure (including from fire hazards), space for play and cultural activity, nutrition of children and provision of wholesome education.
- An extensive network of aganwadis and ICDS centres must be provided, and near schools, work areas and in all neighbourhoods.
- Mid-day meal schemes must be provided without any prejudice to cultural norms. Mid-day meals should be provided to children in need during school holidays.
- BBMP must not shut down schools or privatise educational facilities in its jurisdiction.
- BBMP must build its capacity to undertake maintenance of all State run schools in its jurisdiction.
- Living facilities in BBMP run hostels for students must be maintained at the highest standards, particularly ensuring safety of girl students.

### Social Justice

- BBMP must set up a Standing Committee on Worker Protection, Employment Generation and Social Security with an intention of promoting self-employment, provision of social security to those employed, social assistance to the destitute and ensure labour and occupational rights are protected.
- BBMP should be an equal opportunity employer and ensure due representation is provided to women, disabled persons (3%), transgenders, minorities, etc.
- BBMP must fully implement fully labour and occupational safety laws in all its projects and schemes and have zero tolerance for violators.



- BBMP should be guided by the National Policy on Street Vendors and ensure livelihood spaces of the poor on the streets and other public spaces are not compromised in any of its schemes and projects.
- BBMP must ensure that day and night crèches are available offering complete childcare and must be accessible to all.
- BBMP must strengthen and fully implement Swarna Jayanti Shahari Rozgar Yojana (SJSRY) as a means to provide gainful employment to urban unemployed and under-employed poor. SJSRY staff should be placed in each ward and the finances allocated in the budget must be spent on creating jobs and not allowed to lapse.
- BBMP must have least tolerance for violation of the law on equal wages for equal work.
- BBMP must organise regular health camps for all workers.

## Protection of Unorganized Workers

- BBMP must prohibit engagement of contract labour in its works as a step towards preventing exploitation of workers.
- BBMP must ensure strict compliance of the Contract Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Act in any work involving contract labour including construction work, factories, and other private enterprises.
- BBMP must evolve specific welfare scheme and policies for workers in the unorganized sector and build awareness on the various schemes made under the Unorganized Workers Social Security Act, 2009.
- BBMP must evolve awareness and practices to ensure that workers in the unorganized sector who belong to the *SC/ST communities become beneficiaries in various scheme under the 18% budget.*
- BBMP should permit any construction project only when the applicant has demonstrated total compliance with Inter-State Migrant Workers Act, the Building and other Construction Workers Act, the Minimum Wages Act, Equal Remuneration Act and Contract Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Act. Further, the permit must be based on demonstration of provision of a detailed 'Construction Workers Residential Quarters and Living Conditions Plan' that includes details relating to the living conditions in terms of quality of housing, latrines, water supply, electricity, creches, etc.

## Welfare of Elders

- BBMP must set up Day Care Centres for the elderly with provision of multiple services like recreation, physical fitness regimes, integrating assistive technologies and should be fully accessible.
- Focussed Healthcare for the Elderly must be a component of all public healthcare delivery systems.
- Elderly must be provided free access to public transport systems within BBMP jurisdiction.
- BBMP must ensure decentralised and comprehensive distribution of nutritive food programmes for elders in poor families.
- BBMP must introduce a Pension scheme for the elders in need.



## Child Labour

- BBMP must immediately implement a comprehensive, multi-pronged, bottom-up, decentralised and participatory approach to addressing the problem of child labour in Bangalore.
- BBMP should adopt an enabling and empowering strategy in dealing with child labour, and ensure that its policies and programmes do not criminalise or harm working children.
- Consultations with working children must form the basis for developing and implementing schemes and programmes that respond to child labour.
- BBMP plans and schemes must be child rights friendly based on micro and the macro effects that cause child labour.

## Children's Rights

- BBMP must implement the Convention on the Rights of the Child.
- All city plans, schemes and projects must be based on consultations with children on lines of "bala gramasabhas" held in Panchayats.
- BBMP must set up systems of social/community monitoring within each Ward Committee to assist children in times of crises and to prevent violations of their rights.
- BBMP must allocate adequate resources to tackle issues that affect children directly or indirectly.

## Urban Poverty

- BBMP must provide sale deeds to all residents of the 225 slums within its jurisdiction.
- No slum eviction should be undertaken without providing comprehensive and humane rehabilitation as per the due process of law.
- BBMP must suitably act to ensure that no one in the city is left homeless.
- Day and Night Shelters must be adequately provided to support the needs of street and working children and other destitute people.

## Animal Welfare

- BBMP must ensure that animal rights are fully protected.
- The Animal Birth Control (ABC) programme for street dog management must be strengthened by involving Ward Committees.
- Progressive waste management practices and strict regulation of abattoirs must be undertaken to prevent explosion of street dog and rodent populations.
- Humane catching practices of stray animals must be introduced.
- BBMP must develop a strong team of Animal Welfare Inspectors.
- Pet trade must be strictly regulated by enforcing registration.



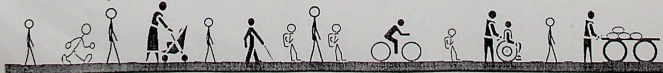
- Conditions in which animals are housed must meet applicable standards.
- BBMP must work with Forest Department and Karnataka Biodiversity Board to enforce ban on import and trade in exotic species.
- A crematorium for pets and other animals must be established.

## Planning for Disasters

- BBMP must establish a Disaster Management Cell to prepare, avert and respond to all natural and unnatural disasters.
- Disaster preparedness must be heightened in the general population through systematic and comprehensive education programmes through Ward Committees.
- BBMP must flood proof low lying areas on a priority basis.
- Wards must be the repositories of maps and designs of infrastructure such as water supply and distribution systems, storm water drains, land use, building plans, electricity supply and distribution and such other information in order to assist quick responses in the event of a disaster.
- Hazardous processes and industries manufacturing explosive and volatile products, must be phased out from densely populated areas.

## Waste Management

- BBMP must be comprehensively in-charge and totally responsible for managing the city's solid waste.
- Privatisation of solid waste management should be phased out as it breeds corruption and has resulted in a public health crisis.
- Pourakarmikas should be provided all aids and comforts required for their occupational needs. They must be provided free comprehensive health care and any casualty should be dealt with under the Workmen's Compensation Act of 1923.
- BBMP must adopt progressive, low-cost, environmentally friendly solid waste management programmes based on segregation of waste at source.
- BBMP must ensure that there should not be any mixing of the municipal waste stream with biomedical and hazardous wastes.
- All neighbourhoods should develop composting and recycling units. Only non-compostible, non-recyclable, hazardous and biomedical wastes must be removed in their segregated forms to appropriate landfills.
- Only hazardous wastes that cannot be recycled or composted should be sent for safe treatment and sanitary landfills.
- BBMP must take initiative to punish violators of laws relating to Municipal Solid Waste, Hazardous wastes and Biomedical Wastes.
- Landfills must be developed only in full conformance with applicable laws, in particular the Environment Impact Assessment Notification and should not be located near human settlements and ecologically sensitive areas.
- BBMP must ensure that waste is not dumped on road-sides, in lakes, in forests, in surrounding farm lands, etc.



## Contact details for various sections:

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