



**A thought for today**

*You must be the change you wish to see in the world*

MAHATMA GANDHI

# Call For Change

*PM's I-Day speech certainly had a sense of the occasion but was short on specifics*

Prime Minister Narendra Modi can meld a sense of history with a sense of language to deliver evocative and inspiring speeches, and those qualities were on full display when he spoke from Red Fort's ramparts yesterday. Thus, according to him, the 1942 slogan of "Bharat Chhodo" (Quit India) should now be amended to "Bharat Jodo" (Join India). If currently we have a "chalta hai" (everything goes) attitude that should be replaced by "badal sakta hai" (everything can change). Kashmir's problems cannot be solved by "gaali" (abuse) or "goli" (bullets) but by "gale lagaana" (embracing).

The latter is a significant overtone as it suggests that while bullets or stones will not change anything, should there be a mindset shift or the emergence of new leadership in Kashmir, the Centre is listening and willing to reciprocate. Only after good will has been established can specific initiatives come to fruition, a point missed by those who fault the government for not coming up with specific initiatives in this regard. Whatever the dispute is – whether in Kashmir or anywhere else – it can be settled in a spirit of non-violence and within the framework of India's democratic institutions, and Modi's speech did well to emphasise this. Couched in sobriety and a sense of the occasion as it was, however, it fell short of specificity on other issues.

Most prominent among these is the critical issue of jobs for India's burgeoning youth population where the best the PM could suggest is that youth should be trained to become their own employers. But India ranks poorly in terms of ease of doing business, which means big businesses can still survive but small entrepreneurs find it tough to cope. Modi emphasised project implementation, but this in itself won't suffice if the business environment doesn't improve.

Modi also promised to double farm income by 2022, but didn't offer much by way of a roadmap to get there. He mentioned the Gorakhpur tragedy in connection with natural disasters. But Gorakhpur is one area where his dictum of "badal sakta hai" can be applied – child deaths in India are shockingly high and most other countries, including neighbouring Bangladesh, do much better. Speaking of project implementation, while physical infrastructure such as roads and ports are certainly needed if "new India" is to dawn, perhaps even more necessary are public health projects which save the lives of children.



# Going On Record

*CCTV in courts will significantly enhance judicial transparency*

In a welcome move, the Supreme Court has favoured the installation of CCTV cameras in all courts to facilitate audio-video recordings of court proceedings. This is certain to boost transparency within our courts which are anyway saddled with a huge backlog of cases. It's an unfortunate reality that judicial proceedings in this country, especially in lower courts, suffer inordinate delays due to non-adherence to prescribed procedures. Repeated adjournments make getting justice a laborious and expensive endeavour. Such delays and backlog only undermine people's faith in the judiciary. True, we need more courts and judges. But this by itself won't make the wheels of justice turn faster.



Adequate attention needs to be given to procedural propriety and reforms. And it's here that installing CCTV cameras in courts makes sense. In fact, the apex court in March had directed all high courts to ensure video recording of lower court proceedings in two districts of every state and Union territory. Scaling this up to facilitate audio-video recordings in all courts across the country will be natural progression. This will keep a check on everyone within courtroom including judges, advocates and police, and encourage responsible behaviour on all sides. Additionally, it will reduce unequal treatment meted out to different parties, threats by any person to witnesses and absence of lawyers at important stages of the proceedings.

The issue of privacy of judges doesn't cut ice here. It's the law of the land that all court proceedings are to be held in open court. Besides, as the top court itself has observed, constitutional courts in other countries have audio-video recordings and US Supreme Court proceedings are even available on YouTube. The apex court isn't going there, it has stipulated that such recordings won't be made available under RTI. Nonetheless, the recordings will mark a significant jump in judicial transparency.

# Recruitment drive

*What the government needs to do to create millions of jobs*

Jug Suraiya



Two scholarly-looking people in serious conversation. **1st scholar:** The minister for road transport and highways, Nitin Gadkariji, has very rightly said that driverless automobiles, like the Tesla, will not be allowed in India. As Nitinji pointed out, driverless cars would make millions of drivers lose their jobs.

**2nd scholar:** Too true, bro. All us PhDs and research scientists who drive taxis, and trucks, and buses, and private cars, and sarkari cars would be jobless and out on the street.

**1st scholar:** Yeah. Because the country's job market being what it is, driving taxis and trucks, and buses, etc are the *only* jobs we can get. And the competition is getting fiercer and fiercer.

**2nd scholar:** You're telling me. Why, just the other day there was this guy, a chit of a double MA from JNU or someplace, asking if he could get a job as a driver. I told him that at this rate mere *graduates*, BScs, and BComs, and BAs would start lining up too, bringing our standards down.

## second opinion

**1st scholar:** Well said. But banning driverless cars to give people employment isn't good enough. We should ban *all* wheels.

**2nd scholar:** You mean disinvent the wheel?

**1st scholar:** Exactly. The wheel has been the single biggest invention to create joblessness. Before the wheel, people had to go in palkis, or palanquins, in which four people were needed to carry one person. Eight people, if the person was very large, as some of these mantrijis and sethjis can be.

**2nd scholar:** I see what you mean. With the invention of the wheel, one person driving a bullock cart, or car, or taxi, or bus, could carry lots of people. So if we scrapped all wheels and brought back palkis we'd create millions more jobs for guys like us. Great idea! Shall we go tell Nitinji about it? I'll go get my malik's car.

**1st scholar:** Car, shar. We must start as we mean to go on. Go get a palki and three other chaps to carry me as the passenger.

**2nd scholar:** Uh, oh. I knew there had to be a catch somewhere...

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# Forgo The Hindu Rashtra

*Why the Sangh Parivar must work for Indian Rashtra instead*

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Dear Sangh Parivar, On the 75th anniversary of the Quit India movement you drew attention to RSS involvement in the Gandhi-led national movement. Yet there is a great deal of historical evidence to show that even if individual members of the Sangh participated, RSS and Hindu Mahasabha stayed away from the freedom struggle, in fact Hindu Mahasabha boycotted it. Gandhi, with his political vision of India centred squarely on Hindu-Muslim unity has been a problematic figure for you in the past.

Today however you would like to be part of the 'nationalist' mainstream. And why not? No political party can claim to own the freedom struggle which belongs to every democrat. It is heartening that you are now adopting a history from which you had chosen to distance yourself.

But if you want to claim an inclusive history, why not aim for an inclusive future, to work towards creating an Indian Rashtra instead of your avowed aim of Hindu Rashtra which smacks of a harsh exclusivism? After all, the last thing you want to be is another Pakistan, a nation constituted on religion which needs the armed forces to define its nationalism. India's ruling principle is not god and gun. In fact, Indian nationhood can be traced to the truest concept of Hindu dharma, not meaningless regimentation, empty rituals and rigid beliefs, but instead the principle of individual freedom.

Hinduism's about freedom for the mind and democracy's about freedom for the citizen. Thought control, re-writing textbooks, insisting only on a single truth, are all imitations of Stalinism or extremist forms of Islam and go against that basic Upanishadic principle of freedom. It's time for the Sangh to comprehensively reassess its definition of individual freedom, and realise its centrality to Hindu thought.

Since you seek ownership of the pre-1947 nationalist vision will you disown MS Golwalkar's vision of cultural nationalism being played out so regularly today? Campaigning for the Ram mandir,



beef ban slogans, new cattle slaughter rules, attempting to make Vande Mataram mandatory in UP's madrasas, imposing Sanskrit and veneration of the cow: don't these show that you are opposing the spirit of Gandhian nationalism?

Trying to make India an exclusivist state where minorities must give up their identity is the very antithesis of the spirit of 1942. Is not PM Modi, himself a former RSS pracharak who speaks so inspiringly of 'sabka saath sabka vikas' in Delhi doing a disservice to inclusive nationalism when he brings up the shamsan-kabristan analogy in UP polls? If former VP Hamid Ansari expresses his concern over growing Muslim insecurity, instead of attacking him as a 'golf-playing Macaulayputra', a Gandhian nationalist would attempt to create a wider dialogue. After all, today the representation of Muslims in assemblies and Parliament is at its lowest ever. As Alexis de Tocqueville it noted: the very definition of democracy is that the majority will not abuse its power to violate the basic rights of the minority. Democracies

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are defined by how safe minorities - of gender, food habits, religion, language and sexual orientation - feel.

What was the spirit of 1942? It embraced all. Gandhi was not an opponent of British people, he didn't call for the British to leave India on racist, ethnic or religious grounds. Instead he called only for the end of imperialist rule. Perhaps that's why even during the height of the freedom struggle, there were so few instances of violence against Britons. Gandhi fought injustice, not other human beings. No wonder, even Britishers like Madeleine Slade (Mirabehn) and CF Andrews made common cause with Gandhi.

You hark to Hindu victimhood and depredations of Muslim invaders. You feel

it is necessary to avenge those historical wrongs. But acts of historical vengeance have brought untold misery. Fratricidal wars between Islamic sects, driven by vengeance, are tearing apart the ideals of Pan-Islamism. Hitler's supremacist ideas and desire for revenge destroyed Germany and almost all of Europe. Sectarian conflict has resulted in loss of thousands of lives in Pakistan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and Maldives. The urge to build a Ram Temple at a particular spot may satisfy the thirst to get even but will it lead to greater well-being of Hindus? Vengeance only leads to spiritual decay and those wreaking it suffer the most. Historical revenge is another concept that the Sangh needs to rethink.

The idea of the Indian Rashtra is truer to the spirit of the Indian subcontinent's ancient inheritance than a Hindu Rashtra. That's because religious divisions in the subcontinent have never stopped constant intermingling of sects. Hindu, Jain, Sikh and Muslim pilgrims have throughout our history had access to each other's shrines, just as the movement of people, goods and ideas has never been restricted across South Asia. It's really with the coming of less-than-friendly nation states in the last 70 years that subcontinental ties have become so weakened.

Inclusivity is in the subcontinental DNA. That's why when PM Modi refuses to even mention the name of Jawaharlal Nehru in Parliament - the PM who invited Shyama Prasad Mookerjee who later founded the Jana Sangh into his cabinet - the principles of dharma, which the RSS claims to safeguard, are hardly well served.

So why not reinvent your aim of the Hindu Rashtra? Why not change your goal to Indian Rashtra and bring it in tune with the true principles of Hindu dharma, instead of basing it on an imitative version of Leftism or orthodox Islamism. Why not recognise Hinduism's unobtrusive 'soft power', one that's created the mystic Sufi, the mangalsutra and sari wearing Goan Catholic? It's time to change the goal of 'Hindu Rashtra' to the more inclusive 'Indian Rashtra'. The latter reflects not only the spirit of Gandhi and 1942, but also of true Hindu dharma.

# 'SK Abbasi is to Sharif what Manmohan Singh was to Sonia ... Pakistan's SC has poor record of defending democracy'

With Pakistan also celebrating 70 years of its independence **Farahnaz Ispahani, Global Fellow at Washington's Wilson Centre, former member of Pakistan parliament (from Pakistan People's Party) and former media advisor to the Pakistan president, spoke to Rohit E David on the political flux in Islamabad after the ouster of Nawaz Sharif as prime minister, its impact on Kashmir and the nefarious role of Pakistan's deep state.**

**■ What is your view on the political prospects of Shahid Khaqan Abbasi who has been PM of Pakistan after Nawaz Sharif stepped down?**

PM Abbasi has been nominated by Nawaz Sharif from his own party and is seen by all as a loyal placeholder until the next elections, in which Sharif's nominated prime ministerial candidate will run. Sharif remains the head of the Pakistan Muslim League (N) and, as is the subcontinent's tradition, control of the party is more important than who is offic-



ally PM. Abbasi is to Sharif what Manmohan Singh was to Sonia Gandhi.

**■ What is your view on Pakistan Supreme Court barring Nawaz Sharif as PM?**

The verdict came as no surprise. Pakistan's Supreme Court has a long history of political decisions and acts directly instead of waiting for due process through lower courts. Now it has disqualified a three times elected prime minister from holding public office for life, in a corruption inquiry linked to the Panama Papers.

However, Sharif was not named in the Panama leaks, there was no trial, and it has yet to be proved that he abused public office for private gain. The judges disqualified him on what many unbiased observers consider a mere technicality. It is indeed sad that no Pakistani PM is allowed to be voted out by the people and SC judges or generals decide when a PM should be ousted.

**■ Why has no Pakistani PM completed a full five-year term?**

It is because of what many call the permanent establishment in Pakistan. This is led by the Pakistani military and intelligence

agencies; closely emulated by the Supreme Court and, in many instances, the bureaucracy. This is Pakistan's constant and consistent power base. They do not accept the right of elected leaders to change the nation's course. The Supreme Court of Pakistan and the five high courts have an extremely poor record of defending democracy against authoritarian interventions. The Supreme Court has legalised each one of Pakistan's three successful military coups in 1958, 1977 and 1999.

**■ What impact will this have on Pakistan's Kashmir policy?**

Kashmir policy, all regional policy and non-regional foreign policy has been directed by the establishment since Pakistan's founding. Several civilian prime ministers - most recently Sharif - have tried to improve ties with India but the powerful 'Kashmir first' lobbies in Islamabad and Rawalpindi have destroyed all these efforts by the elected representatives of the people of Pakistan. India and Pakistan can normalise relations without resolving all disputes first, as many countries have done, but that is not acceptable to the Pakistani establishment. Kashmir policy, anti-India policy and the policy of strategic depth have caused Pakistan to be increasingly isolated in our neighbourhood and around the world. Proponents of that policy do not want to accept that.

**■ Will this make the civilian government weaker forever?**

Nothing has to be forever. But Pakis-

tan's permanent establishment and its stranglehold on Pakistan's media have made it very difficult to stand up to it even as we see today for a hugely popular and elected leader like Nawaz Sharif. Judiciary has become an instrument of the establishment. It responds to media noise rather than sticking to law and legal process.

**■ How do you assess Imran Khan's role leading up to this court case? Do you foresee Pervez Musharraf and Imran Khan coming out with a third front?**

Imran Khan has been in politics for decades but, until now, he has always been a bridesmaid who never made it to being the actual bride. He is thought to be growing more personally unstable and that is making some in the permanent establishment concerned about supporting him in the next elections against Sharif's powerful PML-N party in the all-important Punjab province. That said, he has some following in urban areas among angry, hyper-nationalist youth and retired military personnel. And he remains a favourite of pro-establishment media.

**■ Do you feel that judicial accountability and judicial independence have become tools of a deep state?**

I will only say that judicial accountability must be across the board and not selective to be credible. There is a reason why no general, judge or senior bureaucrat faces the kind of accountability inflicted on politicians. When the process is not transparent, it leads to suspicions about the deep state being at work.

## dilbert



# Be Adept In Handling Problems Of Life

Satsang: Swami Sukhabodhananda

## How to handle problems with bosses, employees, family and life in general?

Human beings' biggest problem is not "outer space" but "inner space". People fail to count blessings; instead, they count problems. If you look into people's lives, you will not get surprised at what they suffer from, but certainly, you will be surprised at what they miss. You have to learn the art of seeing an opportunity in a difficulty and not difficulty in an opportunity. This seeing creates inner space.

Encountering problems is inevitable, but suffering is optional. So long as you are living, you will have problems. But you need to understand: Do we have problems or problems have us? Are we master of the problem or victim to the problem? What is more significant is, how do we approach a problem?

Most of the time be it at work or home, we approach a problem with a complaint and not with commitment. It is like a circle; the centre should be commitment, and complaint should be on the circumference, but most of the time, commitment is on the circumference and complaint at the centre. If you are alert, then you will operate with commitment rather than from complaint. This alertness should have the quality of openness and in that space, you have to face a problem. Then you will not be victim to a problem. Ineffective people approach a problem with worry, anxiety, fear, and that adds to the problem. But if you are alert and open to the problem, then in that alertness, there is stillness, and in that stillness your deeper intelligence will flow. If your boss is upset with you, see it

with openness. If he is wrong, you will be compassionate. If he is right, you will be open to change. So where is the problem? Walt Disney was an unsuccessful cartoonist, and once in the garage of a church he saw a rat going up and down.

With alertness, when he looked at it, he got the idea of Mickey Mouse, and the rest is history.

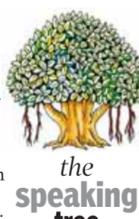
During the fourteenth century, in South West Asia, King Tamerlane's army suffered defeat. His army ran away and was in retreat. As he hid himself, he noticed an ant trying to carry a grain of corn over the wall. It failed many times and finally succeeded. He got inspired that the ant, despite so many failures, succeeded. He thus inspired his army and won the battle.

You can approach a problem wisely or foolishly. To approach a problem wisely,

you have to be open, alert and have fun with the problem. Learn to enjoy the problem, date with the problem. Feel thrilled with the problem. If you enjoy the problem, then you will be bigger than the problem or else the problem will be bigger.

"My husband nags me. What should I do, but suffer?" complained a woman. I said, "Be open and enjoy his nagging. Then you will see how beautifully he is nagging you. Not only that, in his nagging there are so many communication skills, like pace, pause, pitch, open and close statement, multiple closes, disarming technique and also pre-emptive strike."

Follow Swami Sukhabodhananda of Prasanna Trust at [speakingtree.in](http://speakingtree.in) and post your comments there. (Two days' workshop on Managing Life Creatively by Swami ji Sept 9 & 10, Nirguna Mandir, Koramangala. Contact: 990177003.)



## Sacredspace

Let It Go

*To live in this world, you must be able to do three things: to love what is mortal; to hold it against your bones knowing your own life depends on it; and, when the time comes to let it go, to let it go.*

Mary Oliver