

# **The Resurgent India**

**A Monthly National Review**

February 2018



***“Let us all work for the Greatness of India.”***

*- The Mother*

Year 8

Issue II

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# THE RESURGENT INDIA

A Monthly National Review

February 2018



## SUCCESSFUL FUTURE

(Full of Promise and Joyful Surprises)

*Botanical name: Gaillardia Pulchella*

*Common name: Indian blanket, Blanket flower, Fire-wheels*

Year 8

Issue II

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## **A Declaration**

We do not fight against any creed, any religion.

We do not fight against any form of government.

We do not fight against any social class.

We do not fight against any nation or civilisation.

We are fighting division, unconsciousness, ignorance, inertia and falsehood.

We are endeavouring to establish upon earth union, knowledge, consciousness, Truth, and we fight whatever opposes the advent of this new creation of Light, Peace, Truth and Love.

— The Mother

(Collected works of the Mother 13, p. 124-25)

## WHY IS AAP STILL THERE IN DELHI

The full-blown midnight drama played out at the residence of the Delhi Chief Minister comes as a sharp reality check in the face of the three-year anniversary celebrations by the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) in February this year. The self-congratulations – abetted by some sections of the media – of AAP’s controversial three-year track record, even as the population of Delhi faced deteriorating environmental, educational and health quality, shows that we have made the lowest common denominator our standard of judgement.

Simply because the AAP happened to achieve the infrastructural addition of some 8000 classrooms and Mr. Sisodia has been regularly giving sermons on education – a disguised form of aggressive assertion through media advertising – does not mean that the state of education has improved. Or, we don’t need a Lancet report lauding the AAP’s ‘mohalla clinics’ to tell us that they simply represent an increasing numbers game without any regard to actual health quality. If the latter were the real concern, AAP would not be facing graft charges for their ‘mohalla clinics’ overcharging the government lakhs of rupees per month, and, deploying unqualified staff to attend to patients at these clinics.

All these instances, coupled with the worsening of Delhi’s air quality to the point of an emergency situation, and the endless controversies that have been created by AAP since 2015, have come to a head with the latest incident involving the physical assault on Delhi Chief Secretary, Anshu Prakash. It is unlikely that AAP will be able to go scot-free from the repercussions of this incident. Except for denials, casteist and communal references about its MLAs being framed and further verbal abuse, AAP has no other evidence on its side. Two pieces of critical evidence already back the Chief Secretary, the medical report confirming that Mr. Prakash was indeed assaulted and the arbitrary midnight timing of the meeting by AAP.

The fact that Arvind Kejriwal had issued the autocratic ‘firmaan’ summoning Mr. Prakash at midnight – ostensibly to discuss approvals for AAP’s advertising campaigns – raises suspicions right from the beginning. Only an emergency meeting can be called at this time. Not only this, but AAP itself later gave contradictory statements that exposed it. Giving mixed accounts, some of its ministers stated that the meeting was actually called in relation to food and processing issues – a lie that was exposed when it turned out that the Food minister himself was not present at the meeting. In fact, according to Mr. Prakash, besides Kejriwal and Sisodia, 11 MLAs of AAP were seated by the time he reached. After this, they locked the door and made him sit between Amanatullah Khan and another MLA (both now in judicial custody) and then pointedly bullied him about advertising approvals hold-up. When Mr. Prakash refused to be bullied, they hit him and threatened to confine him and falsely implicate him in SC/ST Atrocities charges – not surprising since AAP is an expert at using caste and religious minorities discrimination as an excuse every time one of its MLAs is caught in a bind.

Whats more – one of the AAP members, after telling the police that he was not present when the midnight drama unfolded, later confessed that he had, indeed, seen Mr. Prakash being roughed up. From the sequence of events and despite conflicting accounts, it is clear that AAP is in the wrong and is now issuing useless denials. While Mr. Prakash did not contradict himself even once, various AAP ministers have said different things at different points of time.

So, even before the police investigation concludes, the outcome seems a foregone conclusion. Nothing better could be expected from this government and the latest mishap fits in well with this government’s pattern of numerous other controversies.

This incident is going to have far-reaching implications and lead to the final undoing of AAP, irrespective of whatever ‘popular mandate’ it received in 2015.

Outwardly, the entire bureaucracy – right across the country – is up in arms against AAP and Delhi bureaucrats refuse to work with it, unless the communication is written or recorded, most likely dealing a blow to the government. The attack on the Chief Secretary is an attack on the professional class, which even the people of Delhi value, and for which the AAP has, for a change, not been able to pin the blame on the central government. AAP has badly exposed its ingrained ways of hooliganism, even to the most skeptical and there is little or no room for maneuvering in this case. Inwardly, the latest incident and the furor it has generated show that the time of AAP is finally up, even in a politically cynical city like Delhi.

The irony of Delhi is that its political standard of judgement has fallen very low. The reason the Chief Minister has not resigned till now is only because of the luck of the circumstances of governing the national capital. Since the majority of the important administrative powers are with the Centre and any mishap in law and order will not be put on the Delhi government's head, the latter has been held accountable only on delivering on basic services and utilities. Given the large middle class and well-off status of most of the voting population AAP's policies have not pinched the people too hard. It has got by by making issues like corruption and air quality pivotal to people's expectations and misleading them into believing that the government is performing on delivery of other utilities.

***The entrenched public system of low expectations and wide tolerance for high-level corruption has allowed the AAP to survive in Delhi up until now. But in any other state – where elections are fought on important political and ideological issues, where a plethora of community, caste and tribe differences create a complex and unique polity – and where the state government is accountable on all counts, rather than limiting itself to working on a few areas like public utilities while the Centre, bureaucracy and municipal***



***corporations are obligated to take care of the rest, a formation like AAP could never survive.*** The results have been visible in all states where it contested by-polls – as it should not have under the CM himself – and lost. Its infantile and essentially perverse political sense became evident when it sympathized with the Khalistan cause in Punjab and proclaimed the Batla house encounters to be fake. ***Laughably, only Delhi can provide a new-born party the luxury to hop into other states leaving behind all the so-called ‘governance’ matters because, frankly, there is nothing to govern, as the real administration is carried by the LG-led bureaucracy, answerable to the Centre.***

Ironically, contrary to what most people think, thanks to the unique status of Delhi, AAP had the luxury of getting away with a lot of serious office-of-profit controversies, hooliganism, graft charges and much more in the last three years – and that too without doing any work and painting itself as a victim whenever it could – which is not possible anywhere else in the country, and where, by now, the government would have been forced to resign. Yet, that the AAP is still on a strong defensive trajectory and harbouring unmitigated pan-India ambitions – with zero knowledge of India’s diversity and complexity – shows that far from hounding the AAP, the Centre and the depoliticized ‘aam aadmi’ of Delhi have actually treated it with kid gloves. With such a mind-bogglingly poor track record and not a single credible achievement to boast of, no other party could have survived, outside of Delhi.

At a time when elections all over the country are signaling that people want to break the old order and embrace new, radical changes, Delhi and its ruling AAP, continue to be an odd exception. Unless a new political awakening replaces this governance by former technocrats and incompetent do-gooders, Delhi itself risks becoming irrelevant.

## THE SUICIDAL ECONOMY

With farm distress becoming a major political issue, farmer suicides and the agrarian crisis have come to haunt the government. As happens before every election, this time it is the specter of farmer suicides which has led to the perpetration of a lot of misinformation in the public discourse, with the tendency of politically vested interests to look only at the farmer distress instances during the term of the prevailing government so that they can pin blame on it. In fact, however, the present agrarian crisis is the result of a complete commercialization of agriculture and a sell-out of the farm to the so-called 'liberal' policies, because of which farmers are now compelled to take their own lives.

The farmer suicides that we witness at present are not a new phenomenon, but have been happening in increasing numbers since the 1990s, when the Indian government embarked on a policy of deliberate tweaking of government policy to reduce the share of agriculture in the Indian economy, in line with the prescriptions of institutions like the World Bank and its commercial-utilitarian economic policies designed to buy out developing countries. In fact, the highest number of 18,241 suicides were recorded in 2004, a drought year – when India's economic trajectory was on an upswing. The lowest, since 1996, were recorded in 2016. (Bera 2017).

Not just this, but the farmers kept taking their lives even when India's GDP numbers were at their peak during some other years between 1990 to 2013. From 2014 onwards, an erratic monsoon compounded the problem by playing havoc in the form of unseasonal floods and droughts, while the present government, listening too closely to the fixed coterie of 'liberal' bureaucrats, a legacy of past governments, did not change the agricultural system.

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The successive governments have completely misdiagnosed the

problem. They assumed that lower crop productivity, higher cost of production and inefficient irrigation practices were responsible for farmer distress, missing the fact that farmers were taking their lives even in states like Punjab which had more than 90% irrigation assured area and extremely high yields of wheat and rice. The simple reason for farmer suicides is poverty and the debt trap created by the deliberately hostile and commercial practices pursued by the government, in nexus with large corporations and West-funded bureaucrats.

The government deliberately forced farmers to move to the cultivation of cash crops and monocultures (especially Bt Cotton), which not only consumed more water and required more pesticides but also lowered crop productivity. In addition, price volatility (due to global factors and WTO politics) ensured that even after a bumper harvest, farmers were forced to sell their produce at throwaway prices.

The result of these dangerous forays of the government was a reduction in farmers' incomes, pushing them into the debt trap and poverty. In the wake of the liberalization reforms of 1991, India's agricultural sector suffered the most. It was opened up to the global markets and became exposed to global commodity price volatility, besides coming under the purview of WTO regulations. The WTO regulations – an unresolved issue since the last three decades – prevented developing countries like India from procuring farm produce at subsidized rates, while developed countries heavily subsidized their own farmers. This led to a lot of dumping of agricultural produce in developing countries and exposed their poor farmers to regular price crashes, irrespective of bumper harvests.

In parallel to this, the Indian government itself played havoc with the fortunes of the farmers for the sake of giving a fillip to commercial interests, both in the field of agriculture and at the cost of agriculture to other businesses. ***Successive governments have***

***been keen to deny a rightful income to the farmer and any talk of providing financial relief raises a hue and cry and is called ‘bad economics’ – this is despite the fact that an estimated total of 3 lakh crore farm loans that ought to be waived is still less than the 4 lakh crore bailout package that the telecom industry alone is seeking (D. Sharma 2017), forget about other sectors of corporate debt. It is clear that farmers have been deprived of their rightful income in order to benefit corporate and other vested interests.***

Not only this, but ***successive governments have also made fashionable the culture of providing credit and loan waivers to the farmers instead of income.*** The entire agrarian crisis which was of the making of the government and corporate interests was blamed on the farmers.

And ***even in this credit culture, things were not free from the pervasion of utilitarianism and corruption. After 1993, the government manipulated the scope of agricultural credit received from banks, including a lot more besides the traditional direct finance given to cultivators, including even corporate borrowings and infrastructure project funding under agrarian credit. How is it fair that power sector loans are classified as agrarian credit? Yet, this is precisely what the previous government had done for many sectors. The so-called do-gooder MNCs and other agri-business companies began to corner a major share of these loans, which should have been reserved only for the farmer.***

***Cultivators can hardly afford a loan of more than 2-10 lakh rupee in size. Yet, the loan bracket of up to 2 lakh rupees in agricultural credit has declined immensely – 82.3 per cent in 1990-91 to 44.7 per cent in 2010-11 – showing the small quantity of money that is actually going to the farmers. On the other hand, agricultural loans of 10 crore rupees and above have increased sharply during the same period, showing that commercial interests have been***

**cornering the farm loans** (B. P. Sharma 2015).

Despite the fact that farmers have not got their due share of agricultural credit, and, are stuck in a debt trap and poverty, the recent moves by the BJP state governments to waive farm loans was decried as credit indiscipline by corporate interests. Even though borrowings by companies constitute nearly half of the farm sector loans in several states, they are being counted as farm loans, instead of being relegated to the realm of corporate loans, where they belong, since these companies are out here only to do business and make profits, while the agrarian crisis in the country keeps getting worse.

While this is one aspect of the play of utilitarian spirit in destroying India's agriculture sector, a more recent phenomenon – and much worse than existing forms of commercialism – has been the opening given to Genetically Modified seeds in form of Bt Cotton and the heavy lobbying by profit racketeers.

Dr. Krishan Bir Chaudhary, president of Bharatiya Krishak Samaj explains how “international racketeers” operate. He explains, ***“It doesn't matter which government there is, a group of International racketeers funded by corporate money place themselves in keys positions... They have links from the smallest to the highest corridors of power, the PMO and Niti Aayog included”. These people have misled the Prime Minister because of pressure from corporations such as Monsanto/Bayer.*** He has also demanded a CBI inquiry to uncover which pro-GM scientists, bureaucrats and others are on the payroll of these corporations, so they can be exposed as traitors. ***As Monsanto illegally extracted Rs.7000 crore in royalties from India, its agents and lobbyists would have easily earned not less than a few hundred crores in kickbacks – for working against the interests of India*** (Singh 2017).

These racketeers sought to secure approvals for GM Mustard and other GM seeds as well, besides illegal mixing of GM seeds in

edible oils imported for our consumption. The latter – not the kind of information media would share – is particularly damning.

***While Bt Cotton was introduced as a non-food crop, it soon became a major edible oil crop in some states as its seeds were used to extract edible oil which was mixed with other edible oils, in the absence of strict food regulation laws. This is despite the fact that Bt Cotton is most poisonous to the health of living organisms. For instance, when Bt Cotton waste was burnt as fuel, the smoke was experienced as poisonous, and when it was fed to cattle, it resulted in abortions, still births, and reduced milk yields (Garg 2017).***

Despite this evidence and the fact that countries in Europe stood firm and stopped Monsanto from lobbying for GM products, in India, the government is being misled to introduce policies that will be fatal to both health and agriculture. ***In the present scenario, GM food has contributed greatly to farmer suicides. Since 1991, more than 3,00,000 farmers have committed suicide, while millions are living under conditions similar to those which propelled these farmers to suicide. According to environmentalist, Vandana Shiva, “Nearly 85% of the more than 300,000 farmers suicides are in the cotton areas where Monsanto established a 99% monopoly.” The suicide economy of Monsanto is especially visible in Vidharba region of Maharashtra, which sees the highest number of suicides at 4000 suicides per year, and is also the region with the highest acreage of Monsanto’s Bt Cotton.***

Things have come to such a pass because the commercial mentality and the utilitarian state-business nexus forced farmers to shift from diverse cropping practices to monoculture. Thus, instead of growing diverse pulses, millets, oilseeds etc., farmers were asked to shift to cotton monocultures (especially Bt Cotton), which increased the chances of crop failure.

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Declining farm incomes due to deliberate conditions created

by the nexus of politicians and business interests have resulted in an average farm household not earning more than 1700 to 3000 rupees per month from farming activities, while supplementing their income by working in MNREGA, adding up to a monthly income of just about 6000 rupees. Most of this income goes into buying seeds – in case of Bt Cotton, since the seeds are patented, the farmers have to buy new seeds before every harvest, pushing them further into poverty – and in other input costs of production. The farmer is left with barely 1700 rupees at the end of it all, and unable to make ends meet. As a result, more than half the farmers go to bed hungry, while more than 70% of them would preferably quit agriculture altogether.

Indeed, making them quit agriculture is what the present and previous sets of bureaucrats always wanted. The intentions of these bureaucrats have always been suspect. Like their predecessors during the 1990s, the present set also wants to walk the path laid down by the likes of the World Bank (whose prescription of moving 400 million people from rural to urban areas has been followed blindly by all governments), and want to kill India's agricultural sector, so that more people do not take to farming, while existing ones have no option but to urbanize. ***NITI Aayog's intellectuals and a former RBI Governor have even gone on record saying that "the biggest reform will be when population from agriculture is moved to the urban areas. The Confederation of India Industry (CII) on the other hand has been seeking cheaper labour for infrastructure which can come only if farmers are forced out."*** (D. Sharma 2016).

***In this worsening mire of the farm crisis where vested utilitarian interests deliberately won't allow a solution, even the good intentions of PM Modi are not helping, since he is being misled by the western-backed and funded intelligentsia and bureaucrats within his own team.***

The long-standing farm crisis and the resultant farmer suicides are one of the clearest instances of the extent to which the present commercial system has degenerated. The facts before us – and how the crisis came about – are indisputable and incriminate the role of blind profit-making and unwise space given to external interests that have sought to destroy the economy of the country, through the mismanagement of agriculture.

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## HISTORY OF INDIA – THE VEDIC AGE (33)

### XIII. THE PSYCHOLOGICAL AND THE HISTORICAL BASES FOR THE INTERPRETATION OF THE VEDA

#### D. SRI AUROBINDO'S VIEW OF HIS WORK ON THE VEDA AND SOME SELECTIONS FROM HIS FURTHER WORK AIMED AT MAKING HIS PRIMA FACIE CASE ENTIRELY FIRM

##### *(viii) Brahmanaspati, Vishnu and Rudra*

“It was a view long popularised by European scholars that the greatness of Vishnu and Shiva in the Puranic theogonies was a later development and that in the Veda these gods have a quite minor position and are inferior to Indra and Agni. It has even become a current opinion among many scholars that Shiva was a later conception borrowed from the Dravidians and represents a partial conquest of the Vedic religion by the indigenous culture it had invaded. These errors arise inevitably as part of the total misunderstanding of Vedic thought for which the old Brahmanic ritualism is responsible and to which European scholarship by the exaggeration of a minor and external element in the Vedic mythology has only given a new and yet more misleading form.

**The importance of the Vedic gods has not to be measured by the number of hymns devoted to them or by the extent to which they are invoked in the thoughts of the Rishis, but by the functions which they perform.** Agni and Indra to whom the majority of the Vedic hymns are addressed, are not greater than Vishnu and Rudra, but the functions which they fulfil in the internal and external world were the most active, dominant and directly effective for the psychological discipline of the ancient Mystics; this alone is the reason of their predominance. The Maruts, children of Rudra, are not divinities superior to their fierce and mighty Father; but they have many hymns addressed to them and are far more constantly

mentioned in connection with other gods, because the function they fulfilled was of a constant and immediate importance in the Vedic discipline. On the other hand, Vishnu, Rudra, Brahmanaspati, the Vedic originals of the later Puranic Triad, Vishnu-Shiva-Brahma, provide the conditions of the Vedic work and assist it from behind the more present and active gods, but are less close to it and in appearance less continually concerned in its daily movements.

Brahmanaspati is the creator by the Word; he calls light and visible cosmos out of the darkness of the inconscient ocean and speeds the formations of conscious being upward to their supreme goal. It is from this creative aspect of Brahmanaspati that the later conception of Brahma the Creator arose.

For the upward movement of Brahmanaspati's formations Rudra supplies the force. He is named in the Veda the Mighty One of Heaven, but he begins his work upon the earth and gives effect to the sacrifice on the five planes of our ascent. He is the Violent One who leads the upward evolution of the conscious being; his force battles against all evil, smites the sinner and the enemy; intolerant of defect and stumbling he is the most terrible of the gods, the one of whom alone the Vedic Rishis have any real fear. Agni, the Kumara, prototype of the Puranic Skanda, is on earth the child of this force of Rudra. The Maruts, vital powers which make light for themselves by violence, are Rudra's children. Agni and the Maruts are the leaders of the fierce struggle upward from Rudra's first earthly, obscure creation to the heavens of thought, the luminous worlds. But this violent and mighty Rudra who breaks down all defective formations and groupings of outward and inward life, has also a benigner aspect. He is the supreme healer. Opposed, he destroys; called on for aid and propitiated he heals all wounds and all evil and all sufferings. The force that battles is his gift, but also the final peace and joy. In these aspects of the Vedic god are all the primitive materials necessary for the evolution of the Puranic Shiva-Rudra, the destroyer and healer, the auspicious and terrible, the Master of the force that

acts in the worlds and the Yogin who enjoys the supreme liberty and peace.

For the formations of Brahmanaspati's word, for the actions of Rudra's force Vishnu supplies the necessary static elements, – Space, the ordered movements of the worlds, the ascending levels, the highest goal. He has taken three strides and in the space created by the three strides has established all the worlds. In these worlds he the all-pervading dwells and gives less or greater room to the action and movements of the gods. When Indra would slay Vritra, he first prays to Vishnu, his friend and comrade in the great struggle, 'O Vishnu, pace out in thy movement with an utter wideness,' and in that wideness he destroys Vritra who limits, Vritra who covers. The supreme step of Vishnu, his highest seat, is the triple world of bliss and light, *priya*  $\square$  *padam*, which the wise ones see extended in heaven like a shining eye of vision; it is this highest seat of Vishnu that is the goal of the Vedic journey. Here again the Vedic Vishnu is the natural precursor and sufficient origin of the Puranic Narayana, Preserver and Lord of Love.

In the Veda indeed its fundamental conception forbids the Puranic arrangement of the supreme Trinity and the lesser gods. To the Vedic Rishis there was only one universal Deva of whom Vishnu, Rudra, Brahmanaspati, Agni, Indra, Vayu, Mitra, Varuna are all alike forms and cosmic aspects. Each of them is in himself the whole Deva and contains all the other gods. It was the full emergence in the Upanishads of the idea of this supreme and only Deva, left in the Riks vague and undefined and sometimes even spoken of in the neuter as That or the one sole existence, the ritualistic limitation of the other gods and the progressive precision of their human or personal aspects under the stress of a growing mythology that led to their degradation and the enthronement of the less used and more general names and forms, Brahma, Vishnu and Rudra, in the final Puranic

formulation of the Hindu theogony.”<sup>1</sup>

“In this hymn<sup>a</sup> of Dirghatamas Auchathya to the all-pervading Vishnu it is his significant activity, it is the greatness of Vishnu’s three strides that is celebrated. We must dismiss from our minds the ideas proper to the later mythology. **We have nothing to do here with the dwarf Vishnu, the Titan Bali and the three divine strides which took possession of Earth, Heaven and the sunless subterrestrial worlds of Patala.** The three strides of Vishnu in the Veda are clearly defined by Dirghatamas as earth, heaven and the triple principle, *tridhātū*. It is this triple principle beyond Heaven or superimposed upon it as its highest level, *nīkasya pīthe*, which is the supreme stride or supreme seat of the all-pervading deity.

... In the second verse the seer speaks of it simply as ‘that’; ‘that’ Vishnu, moving yet forward in his third pace affirms or firmly establishes, *pra stavate*, by his divine might. Vishnu is then described in language which hints at his essential identity with the terrible Rudra, the fierce and dangerous Lion of the worlds who begins in the evolution as the Master of the animal, Pashupati, and moves upward on the mountain of being on which he dwells, ranging through more and more difficult and inaccessible places, till he stands upon the summits. Thus in these three wide movements of Vishnu all the five worlds and their creatures have their habitation. Earth, heaven and ‘that’ world of bliss are the three strides. Between earth and heaven is the Antariksha, the vital worlds, literally ‘the intervening habitation’. Between heaven and the world of bliss is another vast Antariksha or intervening habitation, Maharloka, the world of the superconscient Truth of things.

The force and the thought of man, the force that proceeds from Rudra the Mighty and the thought that proceeds from Brahmanaspati, the creative Master of the Word, have to go forward in the great journey for or towards this Vishnu who stands at the goal, on the

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<sup>a</sup> I.154

summit, on the peak of the mountain. His is this wide universal movement; he is the Bull of the world who enjoys and fertilises all the energies of force and all the trooping herds of the thought. This far-flung extended space which appears to us as the world of our self-fulfilment, as the triple altar of the great sacrifice has been so measured out, so formed by only three strides of that almighty Infinite.

All the three are full of the honey-wine of the delight of existence. All of them this Vishnu fills with his divine joy of being. By that they are eternally maintained and they do not waste or perish, but in the self-harmony of their natural movement have always the unending ecstasy, the imperishable intoxication of their wide and limitless existence. Vishnu maintains them unendingly, preserves them imperishably. He is the One, he alone is, the sole-existing Godhead, and he holds in his being the triple divine principle to which we attain in the world of bliss, earth where we have our foundation and heaven also which we touch by the mental person within us. All the five worlds he upholds. **The *tridhātū*, the triple principle or triple material of existence, is the Sachchidananda of the Vedānta;** in the ordinary language of the Veda it is *vasu*, substance, *ṛj*, abounding force of our being, *priyam* or *mayas*, delight and love in the very essence of our existence. Of these three things all that exists is constituted and we attain to their fullness when we arrive at the goal of our journey.

That goal is Delight, the last of Vishnu's three strides."<sup>2</sup>

### **(ix) The Vedantic Conception of the Brahman in the Veda**

"The Veda already contains in the seed the Vedantic conception of the Brahman. It recognises an Unknowable, a timeless Existence, the Supreme which is neither today nor tomorrow, moving in the movement of the Gods, but itself vanishing from the attempt of the mind to seize it (R.V. I.170.1). It is spoken of in the neuter as That and often identified with the Immortality, the supreme triple Principle, the vast Bliss to which the human being aspires. The Brahman is the

Unmoving, the Oneness of the Gods. 'The Unmoving is born as the Vast in the seat of the Cow (Aditi), . . . the vast, the mightiness of the Gods, the One' (III.55.1). It is the one Existent to whom the seers give different names, Indra, Matarishwan, Agni, (I.164.46).

This Brahman, the one Existence, thus spoken of impersonally in the neuter, is also conceived as the Deva, the supreme Godhead, the Father of things who appears here as the Son in the human soul. He is the Blissful One to whom the movement of the Gods ascends, manifest as at once the Male and the Female, *√[an, dhenu*. Each of the Gods is a manifestation, an aspect, a personality of the one Deva. He can be realised through any of his names and aspects, through Indra, through Agni, through Soma; for each of them being in himself all the Deva and only in his front or aspect to us different from the others contains all the gods in himself."<sup>3</sup>

### (x) *Soma – Lord of Delight and Immortality*

The whole ninth Mandala is devoted to the God Soma. In the 83rd hymn of this Mandala, "...the physical system of the human being is imaged as the jar of the Soma-wine and the strainer through which it is purified is said to be spread out in the seat of Heaven, *divas pade*.

The hymn begins with an imagery which closely follows the physical facts of the purifying of the wine and its pouring into the jar. **The strainer or purifying instrument spread out in the seat of Heaven seems to be the mind enlightened by knowledge (*cetas*); the human system is the jar.** *Pavitra* *te vitata* *brahma* *aspate*, the strainer is spread wide for thee, O Master of the soul; *prabhur g* *tr* *i parye* *vi* *vata*, becoming manifest thou pervadest or goest about the limbs everywhere. ...Soma, Lord of the Ananda, is the true creator who possesses the soul and brings out of it a divine creation. For him the mind and heart, enlightened, have been formed into a purifying instrument; freed from all narrowness and duality the consciousness in it has been extended widely to receive the full

flow of the sense-life and mind-life and turn it into pure delight of the true existence, the divine, the immortal Ananda.

So received, sifted, strained, the Soma-wine of life turned into Ananda comes pouring into all the members of the human system as into a wine-jar and flows through all of them completely in their every part. As the body of a man becomes full of the touch and exultation of strong wine, so all the physical system becomes full of the touch and exultation of this divine Ananda.”<sup>4</sup>

“..it is not every human system that can hold, sustain and enjoy the potent and often violent ecstasy of that divine delight. *Ataptatarā r na tad āmo dānute*, he who is raw and his body not heated does not taste or enjoy that; *āsa id vahantas tat samāta*, **only those who have been baked in the fire bear and entirely enjoy that. The wine of the divine Life poured into the system is a strong, overflowing and violent ecstasy; it cannot be held in the system unprepared for it by strong endurance of the utmost fires of life and suffering and experience.** The raw earthen vessel not baked to consistency in the fire of the kiln cannot hold the Soma-wine; it breaks and spills the precious liquid. So **the physical system of the man who drinks this strong wine of Ananda must by suffering and conquering all the torturing heats of life have been prepared** for the secret and fiery heats of the Soma; otherwise his conscious being will not be able to hold it; it will spill and lose it as soon as or even before it is tasted or it will break down mentally and physically under the touch.

This strong and fiery wine has to be purified and the strainer for its purifying has been spread out wide to receive it in the seat of heaven, *tapo pavitra vitata divas pade*; its threads or fibres are all of pure light and stand out like rays, *locanto asya tantavo vyasthiran*. Through these fibres the wine has to come streaming. The image evidently refers to the purified mental and emotional consciousness, the conscious heart, *cetas*, whose thoughts and emotions are the threads or fibres. Dyaus or Heaven is the pure mental principle not subjected to the reactions of the nerves and ~~the body. In the seat of Heaven, = the pure mental being as~~  
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distinguished from the vital and physical consciousness, – the thoughts and emotions become pure rays of true perception and happy psychical vibration instead of the troubled and obscured mental, emotional and sensational reactions that we now possess. Instead of being contracted and quivering things defending themselves from pain and excess of the shocks of experience they stand out free, strong and bright, happily extended to receive and turn into divine ecstasy all possible contacts of universal existence. Therefore it is *divas pade*, in the seat of Heaven, that the Soma-strainer is spread out to receive the Soma.

Thus received and purified these keen and violent juices, these swift and intoxicating powers of the Wine no longer disturb the mind or hurt the body, are no longer spilled and lost but foster and increase, *avanti*, mind and body of their purifier; *avantyasya pavāram āvo*. So increasing him in all delight of his mental, emotional, sensational and physical being they rise with him through the purified and blissful heart to the highest level or surface of heaven, that is, to the luminous world of Swar where the mind capable of intuition, inspiration, revelation is bathed in the splendours of the Truth (*īram*), liberated into the infinity of the Vast (*bḥat*). *Divas pāham adhi tīhanti cetas*.<sup>a</sup>

So far the Rishi has spoken of Soma in his impersonal manifestation, as the Ananda or delight of divine existence in the human being's conscious experience. He now turns, as is the habit of the Vedic Rishis, from the divine manifestation to the divine Person and at once Soma appears as the supreme Personality, the high and universal Deva. *Arūcad uśa pānir agriya*; the supreme dappled One, he makes the dawns to shine: *ukā bibharti bhuvanāni vājaya*; he, the Bull, bears the worlds, seeking the plenitude. The word *pāni*, dappled, is used both of the Bull, the supreme Male, and of the Cow, the female Energy; like all words of colour, *īveta*,

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<sup>a</sup> IX.83.2



Ukṛa, hari, harit, kṛa, hiraḥyaya, in the Veda it is symbolic; colour, varṇa, has always denoted quality, temperament, etc., in the language of the Mystics. The dappled Bull is the Deva in the variety of his manifestation, many-hued. Soma is that first supreme dappled Bull, generator of the worlds of the becoming, for from the Ananda, from the all-blissful One they all proceed; delight is the parent of the variety of existences. ...In other words it is the Lord of the Ananda who gives us the splendours of the Truth and the plenitudes of the Vast by which we attain to Immortality.”<sup>5</sup>

“Soma is the Gandharva, the Lord of the hosts of delight, and guards the true seat of the Deva, the level or plane of the Ananda; *gandharva itthi padam asya rakṣati*. He is the Supreme, standing out from all other beings and over them, other than they and wonderful, *adbhuta*, and as the supreme and transcendent, present in the worlds but exceeding them, he protects in those worlds the births of the gods, *pṛthi devāni janimāni adbhuta*. **The ‘births of the gods’ is a common phrase in the Veda by which is meant the manifestation of the divine principles in the cosmos and especially the formation of the godhead in its manifold forms in the human being.** ...Men..protected by the lord of the Ananda governing this inner nature are able to accord their thoughts and actions with the inner truth and light and are no longer made to stumble by the forces of the outer crookedness; they walk straight, they become entirely perfect in their works and by this truth of inner working and outer action are able to taste the entire sweetness of existence, the honey, the delight that is the food of the soul<sup>a</sup>. *Sukṛtam madhuno bhakṣam āta*.”<sup>6</sup>

#### References:

1. **Complete Works of Sri Aurobindo**, Vol.15, pp.345-47, Sri Aurobindo Ashram, Pondicherry
2. **Ibid**, pp.347-49
3. **Ibid**, p.353
4. **Ibid**, pp.354-55
5. **Ibid**, pp.356-58
6. **Ibid**, pp.358-59

# THE GREATNESS OF INDIA AND ITS CULTURE (33)

## 6. INDIAN POLITY

### I. THE LEGEND OF INDIA'S POLITICAL INCOMPETENCE

“..there are many who would admit the greatness of the achievement of India in the things of the mind and the spirit, but would still point out that she has failed in life, her culture has not resulted in a strong, successful or progressive organisation of life such as Europe shows to us, and that in the end at least the highest part of her mind turned away from life to asceticism and an inactive and world-shunning pursuit by the individual of his personal spiritual salvation. Or at most she has come only to a certain point and then there has been an arrest and decadence....

The ideals that governed the spirit and body of Indian society were of the highest kind, its social order secured an inexpugnable basic stability, the strong life force that worked in it was creative of an extraordinary energy, richness and interest, and the life organised remarkable in its opulence, variety in unity, beauty, productiveness, movement. All the records of Indian history, art and literature bear evidence to a cultural life of this character and even in decline and dissolution there survives some stamp of it to remind however faintly and distantly of the past greatness. To what then does the charge brought against Indian culture as an agent of the life power amount and what is its justification? In its exaggerated form it is founded upon the characteristics of the decline and dissolution, the features of the decadence read backward into the time of greatness, and it amounts to this that India has always shown an incompetence for any free or sound political organisation and has been constantly a divided and for the most part of her long history a subject nation, that her economic system whatever its bygone merits, if it had any,

remained an inelastic and static order that led in modern conditions to poverty and failure and her society an unprogressive hierarchy, caste-ridden, full of semi-barbaric abuses, only fit to be thrown on the scrap-heap among the broken rubbish of the past and replaced by the freedom, soundness and perfection or at least the progressive perfectibility of the European social order. It is necessary to reestablish the real facts and their meaning and afterwards it will be time to pass judgment on the political, the economic and the social aspects of Indian culture.

**The legend of Indian political incompetence has arisen from a false view of the historical development and an insufficient knowledge of the ancient past of the country.** It has long been currently supposed that she passed at once from the freer type of the primitive Aryan or Vedic social and political organisation to a system socially marked by the despotism of the Brahmin theocracy and politically by an absolute monarchy of the oriental, by which is meant the Western Asiatic, type and has remained fixed in these two things for ever after. That summary reading of Indian history has been destroyed by a more careful and enlightened scholarship and the facts are of a quite different nature. It is true that India never evolved either the scrambling and burdensome industrialism or the parliamentary organisation of freedom and self-styled democracy characteristic of the bourgeois or Vaishya period of the cycle of European progress. But the time is passing when the uncritical praise of these things as the ideal state and the last word of social and political progress was fashionable, their defects are now visible and the greatness of an oriental civilisation need not be judged by the standard of these Western developments. Indian scholars have attempted to read the modern ideas and types of democracy and even a parliamentary system into the past of India, but this seems to me an ill-judged endeavour. **There was a strong democratic**

element\*, if we must use the Western terms, in Indian polity and even institutions that present a certain analogy to the parliamentary form, but in reality these features were of India's own kind and not at all the same thing as modern parliaments and modern democracy. And so considered they are a much more remarkable evidence of the political capacity of the Indian people in their living adaptation to the ensemble of the social mind and body of the nation than when we judge them by the very different standard of Western society..."<sup>1</sup>

## II. THE EARLY POLITICAL SYSTEM AND THE FIGURE OF THE RISHI

"It was a clan or tribal system, Kula, founded upon the equality of all the freemen of the clan or race; this was not at first firmly founded upon the territorial basis, the migratory tendency was still in evidence or recurred under pressure and the land was known by the name of the people who occupied it, the Kuru country or simply the Kurus, the Malava country or the Malavas. After the fixed settlement within determined boundaries the system of the clan or tribe continued, but found a basic unit or constituent atom in the settled village community. The meeting of the people, *viśāṅ*, assembling for communal deliberation, for sacrifice and worship or as the host for war, remained for a long time the power-sign of the mass body and the agent of the active common life with the king as the head and representative, but long depending even after his

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\* "The principle of popular rule is the possession of the reins of government by the mass of the people, but by the possession is not intended necessarily the actual exercise of administration. When the people are able to approve or to disapprove of any action of the Government with the certainty that such approval or disapproval will be absolutely effective, the spirit of democracy is present even if the body is not evolved. India in her ancient polity possessed this spirit of democracy."<sup>2</sup>

position became hereditary on the assent of the people for his formal election or confirmation. The religious institution of the sacrifice developed in time a class of priests and inspired singers, men trained in the ritual or in possession of the mystic knowledge which lay behind the symbols of the sacrifice, the seed of the great Brahminic institution. These were not at first hereditary, but exercised other professions and belonged in their ordinary life to the general body of the people. This free and simple natural constitution of the society seems to have been general at first throughout Aryan India.

The later development out of this primitive form followed up to a certain point the ordinary line of evolution as we see it in other communities, but at the same time threw up certain very striking peculiarities that owing to the unique mentality of the race fixed themselves, became prominent characteristics and gave a different stamp to the political, economic and social factors of Indian civilisation. The hereditary principle emerged at an early stage and increased constantly its power and hold on the society until it became everywhere the basis of the whole organisation of its activities. A hereditary kingship was established, a powerful princely and warrior class appeared, the rest of the people were marked off as the caste of traders, artisans and agriculturalists and a subject or menial caste was added, perhaps sometimes as the result of conquest but more probably or more commonly from economic necessity, of servants and labourers. The predominance from early times of the religious and spiritual tendency in the mind of the Indian people brought about at the top of the social system the growth of the Brahmin order, priests, scholars, legists, repositories of the sacred lore of the Vedas, a development paralleled elsewhere but here given an unequalled permanence and definiteness and supreme importance. In other countries with a less complex mentality this predominance might have resulted in a theocracy: but the Brahmins in spite of their ever-

increasing and finally predominant authority did not and could not usurp in India the political power. As sacrosanct priests and legists and spiritual preceptors of the monarch and the people they exercised a very considerable influence, but the real or active political power remained with the king, the Kshatriya aristocracy and the commons.

A peculiar figure for some time was the Rishi, the man of a higher spiritual experience and knowledge, born in any of the classes, but exercising an authority by his spiritual personality over all, revered and consulted by the king of whom he was sometimes the religious preceptor and in the then fluid state of social evolution able alone to exercise an important role in evolving new basic ideas and effecting direct and immediate changes of the socio-religious ideas and customs of the people. It was a marked feature of the Indian mind that it sought to attach a spiritual meaning and a religious sanction to all, even to the most external social and political circumstances of its life, imposing on all classes and functions an ideal, not except incidentally of rights and powers, but of duties, a rule of their action and an ideal way and temperament, character, spirit in the action, a dharma with a spiritual significance. It was the work of the Rishi to put this stamp enduringly on the national mind, to prolong and perpetuate it, to discover and interpret the ideal law and its practical meaning, to cast the life of the people into the well-shaped ideals and significant forms of a civilisation founded on the spiritual and religious sense. And in later ages we find the Brahminic schools of legists attributing their codes, though in themselves only formulations of existing rule and custom, to the ancient Rishis. Whatever the developments of the Indian socio-political body in later days, this original character still exercised its influence, even when all tended at last to become traditionalised and conventionalised instead of moving forward constantly in the steps of a free and living practice.”<sup>3</sup>

### III. THE REPUBLICAN AND THE MONARCHICAL STATES

“The political evolution of this early system varied in different parts of India. The ordinary development, as in most other countries, was in the direction of an increasing emphasis on the control of the king as the centre, head and unifying factor of a more and more complex system of rule and administration and this prevailed eventually and became the universal type. But for a long time it was combated and held in check by a contrary tendency that resulted in the appearance and the strong and enduring vitality of city or regional or confederated republics. The king became either a hereditary or elected executive head of the republic or an archon administering for a brief and fixed period or else he altogether disappeared from the polity of the state. This turn must have come about in many cases by a natural evolution of the power of the assemblies, but in others it seems to have been secured by some kind of revolution and there appear to have been vicissitudes, alternations between periods of monarchical and periods of republican government. Among a certain number of the Indian peoples the republican form finally asserted its hold and proved itself capable of a strong and settled organisation and a long duration lasting over many centuries. In some cases they were governed by a democratic assembly, in more by an oligarchical senate. It is unfortunate that we know little of the details of the constitution and nothing of the inner history of these Indian republics, but the evidence is clear of the high reputation they enjoyed throughout India for the excellence of their civil and the formidable efficiency of their military organisation. There is an interesting dictum of Buddha that so long as the republican institutions were maintained in their purity and vigour, a small state of this kind would remain invincible even by the arms of the powerful and ambitious Magadhan monarchy...

These republican states were already long established and in vigorous functioning in the sixth century before Christ, contemporary therefore with the brilliant but ephemeral and troubled Greek city commonwealths, but this form of political liberty in India long outlasted the period of Greek republican freedom. The ancient Indian mind, not less fertile in political invention, must be considered superior to that of the mercurial and restless Mediterranean people in the capacity for a firm organisation and settled constitutional order. Some of these states appear to have enjoyed a longer and a more settled history of vigorous freedom than republican Rome, for they persisted even against the mighty empire of Chandragupta and Asoka and were still in existence in the early centuries of the Christian era. But none of them developed the aggressive spirit and the conquering and widely organising capacity of the Roman republic; they were content to preserve their own free inner life and their independence. India especially after the invasion of Alexander felt the need of a movement of unification and the republics were factors of division: strong for themselves, they could do nothing for the organisation of the peninsula, too vast indeed for any system of confederation of small states to be possible – and indeed in the ancient world that endeavour nowhere succeeded, always it broke down in the effort of expansion beyond certain narrow limits and could not endure against the movement towards a more centralised government. **In India as elsewhere it was the monarchical state that grew and finally held the field replacing all other forms of political organisation.** The republican organisation disappeared from her history and is known to us only by the evidence of coins, scattered references and the testimony of Greek observers and of the contemporary political writers and theorists who supported and helped to confirm and develop the monarchical state throughout India.”<sup>4</sup>



***References:***

- 1 CWSA 20: 384-87
- 2 CWSA 7: 943
- 3 CWSA 20: 387-89
- 4 CWSA 20: 389-91





## **The Three Victories That We Need to Achieve**

*“...an individual salvation in heavens beyond careless of the earth is not our highest objective; the liberation and self-fulfilment of others is as much our own concern, – we might almost say, our divine self-interest, – as our own liberation. Otherwise our unity with others would have no effective meaning. To conquer the lures of egoistic existence in this world is our first victory over ourselves; to conquer the lure of individual happiness in heavens beyond is our second victory; to conquer the highest lure of escape from life and a self-absorbed bliss in the impersonal infinity is the last and greatest victory. Then are we rid of all individual exclusiveness and possessed of our entire spiritual freedom.”*

*– Sri Aurobindo*

*(Complete works of Sri Aurobindo, 23: 444)*