

Economic Prowess of India – Reality or Hype?

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Introduction

India as an emerging economy is being considered as one of the most important events of the new millennium. Average growth of the Indian Economy had been less than 4% per year after independence to the late 1970s. It started crossing this barrier in 1984, when some steps were taken to reduce the government's role in regulating the economy. More meaningful developments occurred in 1991, when the Indian government started liberalizing its economy. During the past five years, the Indian Economy has consistently grown at an average annual rate of 8%. Per capita Gross Domestic Income (GDI) stands at US\$ 1,021 in year 2007-08. Rate of growth in manufacturing has achieved an average of 9.14% during the last five years. Construction has surpassed even manufacturing sector with its average annual growth rate of 13.24%. Business in nearly all sectors of the economy has been flourishing, though agriculture and the related sectors are still lagging behind. Economic performance of India is being celebrated by over-enthusiastic media and the general public, both within the country and abroad. Some economic pundits are forecasting Indian economy to surpass even of United States in terms of purchasing power by 2025. All these positive developments on the economic front have given new confidence to political leadership to lobby for allotment of a permanent seat in UN Security Council. Midst all this hype, many sober and thoughtful people are sending cautionary signals to the over-confident political and

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business leadership and to the hyper-excited common man and asking them not to forget the elementary sour realities of the Indian society.

Aim

Aim of this paper is to study the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats to the Indian Society in the light of the fundamentals of sustainable success and make some viable recommendations at the end.

Seven Fundamentals of Sustainable Success

History is full of stories of the great powers, which were considered invincible in their prime time, but when the crunch came, each one fell apart like an unstable house of cards. Most of us are aware of the fate of the great Roman Empire, the Ottoman Empire, Muscovy, the Mogul Empire, the British Empire and more recently the Soviet Union. Historians have listed different causes of downfall of these and other civilisations, some of which include weakened or slackened military might, worsened economy, internal insurgencies, technological backwardness in relation to the adversaries, prolonged engagement of armies in external and extended battles, and so on. However, a more profound analysis and understanding of the causes of downfall of various powers reveal that they ignored essential fundamentals, which are pre-requisites for achieving sustainable success. These fundamentals include trust of citizens in their rulers, upholding of justice, impregnable defence, integration of different sections of the society into one nation, due process of law and role of media, protection of life, property and honour of citizens, and the principle of non-violence. In the following paragraphs, we shall briefly describe the relevance of these fundamentals vis-à-vis functioning of states and nations:-

- a). *Trust of Citizens in their Rulers*: One of the cardinal principles of the relationship between the ruler and the ruled is that citizens must have faith in the ability as well as integrity of their rulers. It is due to their trust that the people would stand behind their leaders and be willing to sacrifice their comforts, even their lives in order to save their motherland. Following passage from “Analects of the Chinese Philosopher, Confucius” must be an eye-opener for all of us:-

Tsze-kung asked about government. The Master said, "The requisites of government are that there be sufficiency of food, sufficiency of military equipment, and the confidence of the people in their ruler." Tsze-kung said, "If it cannot be helped, and one of these must be dispensed with, which of the three should be foregone first?" "The military equipment," said the Master. Tsze-kung again asked, "If it cannot be helped, and one of the remaining two must be dispensed with, which of them should be foregone?" The Master answered, "Part with the food. From of old, death has been the lot of men; but if the people have no faith in their rulers, there is no standing for the state."
[classics.mit.edu/Confucius/analects.mb.txt.]

- b). *Upholding of Justice*: Justice means alternatively the quality or fact of being just, (the principle of) just dealing or conduct, integrity, impartiality, fairness, etc. Upholding of justice in a society implies that the state makes and executes various decisions on the basis of just dealing and impartiality. Comprehensive meaning of justice is not confined merely to a just legal framework; rather it includes just social, economic, and political order in the society.

- c). *Impregnable Defence*: After faith and justice, the next fundamental for securing sustainable success is presence of impregnable defence against foreign aggression as well as against internal rebellion. It must be noted that defending one's country is quite different from establishing a military setup to conquer the weaker nations.
- d). *Integration of Different Sections of the Society into One Nation*: Ideal conditions for a nation to be an integrated one may include common heritage, belonging of a vast majority of citizens to a single race, shared belief system, assurance from the state for a minimum standard of quality life for all, etc. Such a scenario is hard to find in most of the nation states. Therefore, the nation states would have to ensure promotion of such policies and laws, which must ensure integration of different sections of people (of different belief systems, races, castes, colour, regions and classes) into one nation; where each citizen considers oneself to be part of the prevailing system, and where one feels confident that the system of the state works also for him.
- e). *Due Process of Law and Role of Media*: In state matters, authority and responsibility go together. This is a basic requirement of good governance that all state functionaries, whether in positions of political leadership, bureaucracy, judiciary or common citizens, are held accountable for the aptness or otherwise of their actions or inactions under the aegis of a due process. Here, a vibrant and responsible media plays a crucial role by highlighting the weaknesses of the system in addition to educating the masses.

- f). *Protection of Life, Property and Honour of Citizens*: One of the leading yardsticks of determining whether economic, political and military power of a country would continue for a long time to come or would just fade away like a fascinating rainbow is how much importance is being given to protect the basic human rights of the citizens, especially those of weaker sections of the society. Typically, the weak would include the poor, physically or mentally challenged people (the special people), the old, children and the displaced people (who might have lost their homes, jobs, farms, or businesses due to natural calamities, internal unrest or war.
- g). *The Principle of Non-violence*: Stability in a country, especially during emergencies or crises, depends a lot on the behaviour of its rulers in particular and common citizens in general. The societies, which have devised workable mechanisms to handle crises in a rational and mature manner, emerge even more powerful and resolute after each crisis. Such societies are usually the ones, which consciously promote non-violent methods for conflict resolution. On the other hand, the communities, which are mostly driven by emotions, often resort to irrational, violent and ultimately self-destructive behaviour at individual as well at collective level.

Strengths of the Indian Economy

After independence, India inherited a moderate industrial setup, a well-functioning railway and postal services system, a relatively efficient bureaucracy, an energetic entrepreneurial class, a well-trained military and a nationalistic political leadership. All these pluses provided the new

country a solid economic base. During the first four decades, Indian economy functioned mostly under the state patronage and it was almost impossible for a foreign investor to start a business there. The situation started changing in mid-80s, when some steps were taken to decrease the role of the state in business and trade. Since early 90s, India has been consistently following a model of mixed economy, with more emphasis on deregulation, tax reforms, financial liberalisation, opening of various sectors of the economy to private investors (both local and foreign), and on internationalisation strategies. We can identify the following strengths of the Indian economy:-

- a). *Continuance of the Civil Rule*: Many historians, strategists and common observers hold that one of the most important strengths of Indian economy has been uninterrupted civil rule to run the business of the state. This single factor has contributed immensely to provide much needed stability on political front and continuation of economic.
- b). *Vibrant Middle Class*: An important strength of the Indian society is its considerable large, vibrant middle class, which has contributed immensely towards nation building. According to one estimate, Indian middle class is one of the largest in the world. Apart from providing impetus to investment and productivity, this segment of the society also provides a substantial domestic market with its high purchasing power.
- c). *Scientific and Technological Base*: Prioritisation of Indian middle class to higher education has resulted in a sound scientific and technological base. This has resulted in notable advancements in manufacturing, textile and garments,

information technology, aeronautics and space missions, integrated electronic systems and in sectors of strategic importance. However, in most of the cases, the scientific knowledge, technological know-how and know-why have been used in military-related projects, with little benefit to the common man in the street.

- d). *Higher Saving and Investment Rates*: One of the important factors to attain and sustain a high economic growth is Gross Domestic Saving to GDP ratio, which has always been higher than 20%. During the first decade of 21st century, it has remained between 27-29%, which has contributed to bolster the Indian economy after 2002. At present, Indian economy is getting further boosts from increasing levels of foreign exchange remittances of expatriate Indians and Foreign Direct Investments.
- e). *Robust Entrepreneurial Class*. Indian economy has been fortunate enough to be adorned with a mature and energetic entrepreneurial class ever since the country secured independence from the British rule. Though services of Indian entrepreneurs can be felt and seen in every sector, their contributions in the sectors of manufacturing, steel and banking have been epoch making.

Weaknesses of Indian Union

Despite possessing above-named strengths, there seems to be several disconnects between the fundamentals of sustainable success and the

Indian Union. Following weaknesses of the Indian society give credence to this assertion:-

- a). *Corruption in the Ruling Classes*: One of the fundamental weaknesses of the Indian state is the large-scale corruption in the power corridors. Indian members of the parliament and ministers are notorious all over the world for accepting bribes and kickbacks. Commenting on corruption in political circles in India, Brig (Retd) Arun Bajpai mentions in his article, “Indian Politics – Corrupt Fighting Corruption”:-

“Transparency International in its Corruption Study 2005 has listed India as one of the most corrupt countries in the world. In their estimates Indian public pays Rs 21, 068 crores annually in corruption.” [Bajpai, June 2008]

The question arises, “Why the politicians of a so-called democratic nation are so corrupt?” The answer is provided in the same write-up quoted above:-

“Article 105 of the Indian Constitution provides immunity to MPs from any legal action for any act done in discharge of their duties even if it is wrong. In the famous JMM bribery case of 1993, when it came to light that several MPs were bribed to save the Government in power, these MPs took shelter under this Article to save their hide. In 2002 The Constitution Review Committee recommended this provision to be amended but our political leaders stood as one to negate this.”

- b). *Lethargic and Corrupt Bureaucracy*: According to a famous management maxim, “Type A people hire type A people; type B hire type C.” Behaviour of a considerable section of Indian

politicians and bureaucrats provides credence to this adage. The US-based “Centre of Public Integrity” places India in the weak category on a “public integrity index”. Highlighting the characteristics of typical Indian bureaucrats, Sudhansu Mohanty says in his book, “Babulog – Vignettes of Indian Bureaucrats”:-
“They are not quite the persona they pretend to the genteel outer world: shameless, corrupt, mean and pettifogging, yet believing in blatant self-promotion to climb up the greasy bureaucratic totem pole through acoustics and cosmetics-all with precious tax payers’ money.” [Mohanty, 2005]

Lethargy of Indian bureaucracy not only lowers its own output; it also adversely affects the business performance of corporate sector. Lamenting on the could-not-care-less attitude of Indian bureaucrats, Abe De Ramos has the following remarks of two Indian businessmen to quote in CFO Asia.com:-

“It's a perfect example of India's cost advantages being eroded by hidden costs owing to government inefficiency and apparent apathy to private sector concerns. Apart from lack of port infrastructure, there's also the government's legendary red tape: it takes Indian customs ten to 14 days to clear exports, versus two days in China,” says Dasgupta.... “The biggest problem is that most of our bureaucrats, both at the central-government and state-government levels, do not understand the repercussions of any minor red-tape delays to the country's entire export revenues,” says Muttreja of Tecnova.[Ramos, Nov 2004]

Every day, millions of Indians have to bear the apathy, sheer neglect, even high-handed excesses of the entrenched mindset of the government officials. Usha Rashmi Bhaskara

Sastry has posted the following comments on the website, theinder.net:-

“Apart from corruption and bureaucracy, our government officials carry an aura of apathy and rudeness. Those in authority always want to drive the point home that you are at their mercy. Instead of rules being made for the convenience, rules are used to make your life difficult. From the TC in the railways, to the Traffic cop, there’s no questioning them. There are some government officials when they see you, they don’t see a money making opportunity but rather an ego boosting occasion.”[Sastry, 2005]

- c). *Population Explosion and Unemployment:* At present, India is the second largest country of the world and according to some estimates; it is going to surpass China by 2050. Although some enthusiasts term large populations as a vast inventory of human resources; it is really hard to understand how a sea of underfed, malnourished and impoverished people could qualify as human resource. Over-population and unemployment have always been the major socioeconomic problems of India since long. Commenting on inability of the Indian economy to match job opportunities with mounting population, Randeep Ramesh writes in the special August issue of the weekly New Statesman:-

“In India, growth has been largely jobless. Historically, dynamic economies have relied on industry to fuel growth. In China, this led to millions of people leaving the land to work in factories. But during the 1990s, industry actually shrank as a proportion of the Indian economy. There is rural migration, too, where the

sons of tillers leave to eke out a precarious existence as security guards and drivers in the big cities.

The problem is assuming crisis point. Each year another ten million people enter the job market. To soak up the labour, India will have to build up its manufacturing sector quickly. This might sound like a return to the past - India's first prime minister, Jawaharlal Nehru, wanted his country to rush towards industrialisation.” [Ramesh, Aug 2007]

For most of the people of this world, “real business” is about doing things and earning profits as fast and heartlessly as possible. Therefore, one must not be surprised at all, when one finds out that thousands of jobs taken by Indian entrepreneurs from the west are being re-exported, as wages shoot up in India. The Guardian's Randeep Ramesh reports:-

“From his tree-top-high office, Kris Gopalakrishnan, the head of India's giant software company Infosys, explains the rise of an economic phenomenon about to engulf the world: outsourcers are outsourcing themselves. Once known for sucking jobs out of call centres and IT departments in the west, Indian technology firms are re-exporting them to wealthier nations as wage inflation and skills shortages at home reverse the process.”
[Ramesh, Oct 2007]

Rob Gifford makes some interesting comparisons between India and China in his article, “Hefei: China’s Silicon Valley” in the following manner:-

“China is a brutal place to live if you are on the bottom rung, but there is an exit. And, just as important, there is a real possibility of a job at the other end. India's 1.1bn population is

rapidly catching up with China's 1.3bn. But India has only about ten million manufacturing jobs, compared with about 150 million in China. So there are simply more opportunities in China to improve your life. (And I haven't even mentioned India's restrictive caste system.) The growing service sector in India — in software development, in call centres and service centres — is great if you are already middle class and speak English. But what about possibilities for the hundreds of millions of illiterate peasants? It seems to me that India is trying to reach modernism without passing through the industrial revolution.” [Gifford, Dec 2007]

- d). *Indifference of the Middle Class:* India, being the second largest country by population, boasts off the largest middle class. Upstart Indians might have contributed immensely for integration of different sections of people into one nation and towards improvements in several social sectors, but unfortunately most of them have not been able to see and feel beyond their own noses. Commenting on the apathy of the ruling classes towards genuine needs of the wretched sections of the Indian society, Financial Times journalist, Jo Johnson warns:-

“It is a fair bet that when the ruling elite of a poor developing country ignores a non-violent protest by 25,000 desperate citizens, it will soon face a violent one. When a 25,000-strong army of landless workers, indigenous tribe people and “untouchables” from the bottom of Indian society marched 320km to Delhi to highlight the growing divide between haves

and have-nots, they were met with crushing indifference.”
[Johnson, 2 Nov 2007]

In September 2007 issue of Prospect magazine, while explaining India's middle class failure on social and political fronts, Tom Nuttall asks an uncomfortable question of India's new middle class: “Why is it so uninterested in politics and social justice?” [Nuttall, Sep 2007] In the same issue, Chakravarthi Ram-Prasad argues that aspects of India's history and culture have helped shape a middle class, which though being the biggest in the world, is largely apathetic about politics and the 300 million Indians living in extreme poverty. He goes on to suggest that although there are now effective movements of marginalised groups and opportunistic social coalitions in many states, until the middle class begins to engage politically, India will suffer from a lop-sided modernisation. [Ram-Prasad, Sep 2007]

We can find a parallel between the apathy of the middle class of today's India and of Pakistan. While in 60s and early 70s, exuberant youth of the middle, even upper classes were seen joining hands and identifying themselves with the poor peasants, marginalised urban workers and millions of voiceless womenfolk for their human rights; such integration is hard to find these days. Question arises: What went wrong? Reasons for this change of heart are numerous; however, the more pronounced of these include gradual disillusionment of the youth of 60s and 70s with the subsequent developments at national and international level like transformation of the Soviet Union from a natural ally of the poor third world countries to an aggressor due

to invasion of Afghanistan, glossy appeal of the capitalist economies / policies in 1980s, emphasis on individualism rather than on collectivism, lessened participation of the middle class in political and social activities, increased inclination towards religious rituals instead of attempting to convert the religious commitment into mass social movements and lack of interest in general elections.

- e). *Complacent Media*: In any civilised society, media play vital roles by providing information, educating masses and by being an effective watchdog to highlight and condemn the excesses of the powerful segments of the society. In case of India, the newspapers and magazines, which are contributing meaningfully in these areas, are few and many of these have only selected readership. Further, in a country, where male literacy rate is 76%, while among women, it is 54 %, effectiveness of print media becomes even weaker. In such a scenario, electronic media (i.e., film, radio and television) could have taken up these tasks, but unfortunately, electronic media, despite relatively free and decentralised, has mostly been complacent in maintenance of the status quo. Ghazi Salahuddin of The News International, who visited India last year, was shocked to note that most of Indian print media preferred to give a wide coverage to mundane activities of stars of film, television and fashion industries against genuine socioeconomic issues and problems of the poor. Complaints and agonies of the victims of a vicious system are usually put under the carpet and common Indians are constantly brainwashed to repeat the mantra of “India as the Great Nuclear and Economic Giant.” While nothing better is expected from

myriad radio stations except playing popular songs of Indian movies; most of television channels merely telecast Indian movies (mostly on meaningless, violent or vulgar topics), mindless soap operas and endless gossips on private and professional lives of Indian film and television stars. Thanks to screening of mindless fairytale stories by film and television industry, millions of Indians live in a dream world, where they spend their entire lives in hope of becoming a millionaire, marry a partner of their choice, and climb the socioeconomic ladder just as it happens on the screen.

- f). *Poverty and Economic Disparities*: Despite maintaining a remarkable average economic growth of 8 % for the last five years, India remains largely a poor third world country, with armies of beggars and destitute in its bazaars and streets and with millions of malnourished, under-weight children. On India's growing pains, Randeep Ramesh writes in the special August issue of the weekly New Statesman:-

"...There is little doubt that India is experiencing a rapid and sustained rise in living standards for the first time in centuries. Growth has averaged 8 per cent since 2003, second only to China. For many Indians this is exhilarating stuff...Yet it will remain a poor country. Last month, government figures showed that malnutrition is endemic, with about 46 per cent of children aged three or younger underweight and almost 80 per cent anaemic. Less than 50 per cent of women can read or write their name. Only a third of homes have a toilet. The country is probably the world's largest Dickensian paradox – having both the best and the worst of times". [Ramesh, Aug 2007]

Recent successes on the economic front have not benefited all sections of the society; rather these have led to widen the gap between the rich and the poor. Asim Chawdhury invites our attention to this aspect in his article, “Recession in India – Carried or Created?” in the following manner:-

“The anomaly in the remuneration in India is noticeable. In Europe, for example, the difference between the salary of the lowest employee and the highest paid employee is about 10 to 15 times, while in India the difference is about 400 to 500 times. Let’s seriously think on this if at all we want to sustain the Indian economy.” [Chawdhury, Nov 2008]

- g). *Caste System*: The caste system in India is nearly 3000 years old and is still a dominant factor in socio-economic and political relations, especially in rural India. One can just wonder how such a destructive institution could survive so long. We get a rather bizarre answer from an article, “The Indian Caste System as a Means of Contract Enforcement” written by Kripa Freitas of Northwestern University. Giving economic reasons for continuation of the caste system, Freitas says that it provided a tool for contract enforcement and facilitated trade in the past. On reading such arguments in favour of the caste system, one can only say, “What a justification”! Doesn’t this argument sound so familiar like those once given by the Whites in favour of slave trade?
- h). *Violence and Terrorism*: It is really disturbing to see the instances of uncontrollable violent behaviour of Indian mobs on even petty matters. In recent years, violence and terrorism,

especially the state-sponsored, has emerged as the main threat to integration and continuation of Indian Union. According to one estimate, different separatist movements are active in twenty out of 28 states of India. Indian rulers have been using brute state force to subdue these movements. With continuous use of violent state force, engineered elections and outright purchase of politicians through hefty bribes, most of these once-peaceful protests for more autonomy or right for self-determination, have become violent and uncontrollable.

Protesting against the continued occupation of Kashmir against the will of its people, Arundhati Roy says in 22 August 2008 issue of The Guardian:-

“The Indian military occupation of Kashmir makes monsters of us all. It allows Hindu chauvinists to target and victimise Muslims in India by holding them hostage to the freedom struggle being waged by Muslims in Kashmir. India needs azadi from Kashmir just as much as – if not more than – Kashmir needs azadi from India.” [Roy, Aug 2008]

- i). *Treatment of Minorities*: One of the prominent weaknesses of Indian rulers in particular and of society in general is their hostile attitude towards minorities. Although, they are seen never tired of pledging their total commitment towards secularism and non-violence; continual incidents of religious intolerance and gruesome violence against minorities belie these claims. In a special August 2007 issue of the British weekly, New Statesman, Mahmood Farooqui says:-

“India's 150 million Muslims face poverty, illiteracy and attacks from the Hindu right, but their identity and traditions are inseparable from the rest of the country.” [Farooqui, Aug 2007]

Commenting on the treatment meted out to Christians in secular India, Doug Bandow writes in his article, “India and Religious Persecution”:-

“No one, least of all the Indian authorities, should be surprised by the violence in Orissa. Last year Hindu mobs destroyed some 20 churches and four people were killed in the sectarian violence. Around Easter earlier this year Hindu mobs destroyed scores of churches and hundreds of Christian homes. Yet the Orissa government blocked charities and churches from aiding the victims. Human Rights Watch last year reported: "For several years, extremist Hindu groups in Orissa have been conducting an anti-Christian campaign that has grown violent at times, while government officials have looked the other way." In fact, the attacks go back years: In 1999 Hindu radicals burned an Australian missionary, Graham Staines, and his eight- and ten-year-old sons to death in their car after they participated in a Bible study. (Staines ran a hospital and leprosy clinics. His widow, Gladys, forgave the killers and continued to minister in Orissa until 2004.)” [Bandow, Sep 2008]

- j). *Low Priority to Education, Health and Other Social Sectors:* Despite tall claims by successive rulers, education, health and other social sectors of the economy have never been the top priority of any government since independence. This is the main reason that even after 61 years, highly militarised, nuclear India remains largely poor, impoverished and backward. Commenting

on the challenges before Indian economy, Professor J D Agarwal says:-

“On the domestic front it is engulfed with enormous issues, problems and challenges: Unemployment, poverty, illiteracy, outdated technology, inefficiency and low productivity both in agriculture and industry, wide ranging corruption, fast growth of black money and money laundering and inadequate infrastructure. India is also affected by both natural disasters like floods, drought & earthquakes and manmade disasters like militancy and terrorist activities.” [Agarwal, 2003]

Speaking at the Indo-US Economic Dialogue on 26 October 2006, Shri Montek Singh Ahluwalia, Deputy Chairman of India’s Planning Commission said:-

“India’s economic challenges include extreme economic disparity, the lack of availability of reasonable health services and education, labour laws, and bureaucracy... India is producing a large number of college graduates today. However, far too many of them are trained in arts and humanities, instead of science and technology. Another prevalent problem with college education is low-quality training offered by several institutes.” [Ahluwalia, 2006]

Commenting on India’s rural-urban disparities, Randeep Ramesh writes in the special August issue of the weekly New Statesman:-

“...This is because most Indians live in a vast rural, feudal darkness and only a lucky few are part of the shining new future. Services, essentially white-collar work, make up more than half of national income. But this does not mean that tens of millions

of Indians sit behind terminals talking to someone in New York or London. Information technology, the poster-boy industry of India's economy, employs just 1.5 million people – a mere drop in the labour pool of 470 million. [Ramesh, Aug 2007]

- k). *Military Build-up:* It is said that greatness of a nation does not depend on its economic prowess or military setup; rather, it depends on prevalence of peace, prosperity and equity in its boundaries. It would not be unfair to mention that UNDP places India at 135 out of 175 nations in respect of human development. However, despite being a third world country, ambitions of India resemble those of a first world imperial state. This is one of the reasons that apart from fighting wars with neighbouring Pakistan over the Kashmir dispute, India has interfered with its military muscle in domestic conflicts of almost all the neighbouring countries, including China. Since early 1990s, it has successfully extended its domain to Afghanistan, Tajikistan and other Central Asian states. As early as May 2002, India set up its first ever military base at Farkhor, Tajikistan, close to Afghanistan's border. At present, India is spending US\$ 26.5 billion on defence, which it intends to raise to US\$ 40 billion within a few years.

Disconnect between the Fundamentals and the Indian Union

In a nutshell, we see that there are several disconnects between the seven fundamentals of sustainable success and prevalent conditions in India. For instance, corruption and apathy of ruling classes, including the elected representatives and bureaucracy towards problems of the common man is continuously creating a deficit of faith of Indian public.

(Violation of the 1st fundamental). Weaknesses of the Indian polity in the sectors like media, poverty, caste system, violence / terrorism, education, health and other social sectors are serious hazards to sustainable success. (Violation of the fundamental of justice). There is no denying the fact that India has a strong defence to repulse any foreign aggression; however, huge spending on military build-up has resulted in dried-up resources for the crucial social sectors. (Partial validation of the 3rd fundamental). Apathy of the middle class, widespread poverty and disparities, caste system and violent tendencies in the Indian society are obstructing different sections of the people to integrate into one nation. (Violation of the fundamental of Integration). Corrupt, indifferent as well as inefficient rulers, complacent media, caste system and inhuman treatment of minorities does not augur well for rule of law and equity in the Indian society. (Violation of the 5th and 6th fundamentals). It is a sad spectre to watch the horrendous acts of violence and terrorism being committed by unruly mobs or the security forces of India and hardly anyone is brought to the book, especially, if the crime is committed against some feeble minority of the country. (Violation of the fundamental of Non-violence).

Conclusion

While it is good to celebrate India's economic resurgence, not all its citizens have benefited from this growth; many are landless tillers living in abject poverty, millions are still unemployed or underemployed and millions are abandoned by the heartless socioeconomic system to spend their entire lives on the footpaths of cosmopolitan cities like Mumbai and Kolkata. Therefore, it is high time for Indian rulers and general public to wake up to face the basic problems of their society instead of singing the songs of shining India. If India is able to establish a just society, where

the small man in the street is looked after by the state and its system, where fruit of development and prosperity are shared equitably and where no one has to sleep on the footpaths, then the Indian people would have every reason to celebrate and enjoy. In the end, I leave you with a thought-provoking saying of the Chinese philosopher, Confucius:-

"When a country is well governed, poverty and a mean condition are things to be ashamed of. When a country is ill governed, riches and honour are things to be ashamed of."

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