Culture Policy

Some Reflections

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SINCE Independence in 1947, national integration, has been a long-standing concern of the Indian ruling classes and the common people. Several efforts at various levels have been made in this regard.

One of the them, which is less known but crucial, underlined the need for formulation and adoption of a national culture policy to prevent fissiparous tendencies and to promote the ideals of the Indian Constitution and to face new problems of an evolving modern polity.

Two major initiatives were taken. The first one was a seminar at the Institute of Advanced Study, Shimla, in 1972 and the second was public discussions on a draft policy document prepared by Union Ministry of Human Resource Development in 1992.

Big changes which have taken place in India and the world during the past quarter century call for a fresh initiative to formulate a culture policy in the light of the new challenges.

This paper which is in three parts, gives: (a) a brief account of the two culture policies formulated in 1972 and 1992, (b) a critique of the two policy documents, (c) a brief survey of some new facets of India during the past two decades* with special reference to the need for a debate on culture policy including 'core-values' which should inform the discussions aimed at enhancing or augmenting people's capabilities to respond creatively to a rapidly globalized milieu of the twenty-first century.

Introductory Remarks

IT is not uncommon in the history of even the most stable systems when, as Yeats, the Irish poet, graphically puts it, 'things fall apart, the centre can not hold...mere anarchy is loosed upon the world.' The reason for this kind of crisis situation is not only lack of adequate instrumentalities and institutional and other support structures but also a 'systemic' disability to respond to new challenges which give rise to antagonistic contradictions and dilemmas. It is in such a critical situation that people are compelled to think creatively and a larger frame of reference or a new perspective in the light of which the systemic logjam can be comprehended and resolved. For instance, the idea of cultural policy as such, came into vogue in the discourse which ensued during the post-World War II period. Specifically stated "the idea of cultural democracy emerged as the major innovation in cultural policy"... because of the alarm over social trends that were being-felt globally, viz., the proliferation of electronic mass media, urbanization, modernization along with individual alienation and de-recitation which accompany them. "These factors coalesced to give rise to a pervasive social passivity dangerous to democracy, eroding traditional cultural activities and replacing them...These challenges to democratic cultural development were global, but they manifested themselves in different ways... depending upon local social and political condition in developing countries and industrialized societies."

Originally* the term cultural policy in the West described it as "the aggregate of the values and principles, which guide any social entity in cultural affairs." UNESCO, interalia, played an important role in "defining effective cultural policies for application at most appropriate levels with creative partnership taking account of the wealth of experience in and progress accumulated in the course of lengthy process marked by the World Conference on Culture Policies (Mondiacult, Mexico, 1982) followed by several initiatives during 1988-2001.UNESCO lends assistance to member states "in updating their cultural policies in order to meet their new needs arising out of globalization; such revisions relate to the institutional aspects of cultural sector and its links with development policies involving education, science, communication, health and tourism." It is said, "some thirty states have taken steps in this regard over the last five years."
However, other non-state organizations are also active in this field. For instance, an organization called Culturelink, Zagreb (established: 1989) has prepared a compendium from countries throughout the world; another organization (Culture Policies in Europe, Liechtensteins) offers 32 cultural policy profiles; the Data Bank of Culturelink (set up in 1991-1992) offers a list of countries in all five continents.

In so far as India is concerned, in consonance with the perception of a national cultural policy in the west two major attempts were made to formulate a national culture policy during the past 34 years, viz., one in 1972 and the other in 1992.

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Culture Policy in India

Institute of Advanced Study, Shimla

In 1972, Indian Institute of Advanced Study, Shimla, held a seminar in order to appraise formally the cultural situation in India and to delineate "a broad outline of a culture policy in tune with Indian realities." The seminar was held in the context of a clash between two cultural trends at work in India. "One trend attempts to perpetuate the vestiges of feudalism, which were strengthened during colonial rule and found expression in various forms including revivalism, sectarianism, communalism, and continuing exploitation; today it is often aligned with neo-colonialism: The other trend flows from the struggle of the people for the realization of the democratic and secular aspirations whose foundations were laid during the national liberation struggle." It was argued that the absence of a well-defined national culture policy helped the forces of communalism and sectarianism to thwart the development of a secular culture. However, it was also felt that democratic and socialist forces at different levels were stronger than ever before, and that the earlier failures could now be remedied. In 1972 it was argued that absence of a well-defined culture policy had helped the forces of communalism and sectarianism to thwart the development of a secular culture.

The seminar discussed the need for a national culture policy. Some participants thought that a national culture policy "might pave the way for state-imposed regimentation." Others doubted the intention and the ability of the government to implement a coherent policy in a field as complex as culture, and some of them maintained that no culture policy adequate to our circumstances could be implemented without overthrowing the prevailing socio-economic system. But the majority of the participants recognised the sustained involvement of the state in matters cultural and agreed that a general formulation would provide perspectives for specific policies and action.

As regards the basic social objective of a culture policy, an inegalitarian, high consumption society model was ruled out. It was stated that ideas and beliefs, which encourage resignation, inequalities, and divisiveness, whether in the name of fate, or tradition, or of caste and communal obligations, must be exposed and rejected. The policy should aim at releasing the democratic initiative of the people. It should aim at promoting self-reliance, egalitarianism, national integration, and humanism based on a synthesis of the vital elements of our traditions and of modern science and technology.

The concept of national integration implied, among other things, the rejection of those approaches to history and culture that minimise the role of the people, and the contribution of different sections, regions, and religious groups towards the growth of an integrated culture. The need to nurture and utilise our rich cultural diversity also was underlined.

As regards the tools, it was stated that the educational structure should be geared not to the defence of the status quo, but to the radical transformation of the social system. The concept of elitist a education as a must was rejected. The realization of these objectives necessitated interalia, the eradication of illiteracy, the nationalization of educational institutions, the abolition of public schools and other educational institutions based on privileges, and the promotion of participatory management in education. The medium of instruction at all levels should be the languages of the states concerned, with effective safeguards for linguistic minorities. Adequate steps should be taken to promote all the scheduled and tribal languages. Greater emphasis should be given to science teaching in schools.
The seminar noted that the cultivation of science and technology was the dominant feature of the contemporary world. Apart from making it possible to bring to the common man greatly increased material and cultural amenities, it shaped new modes of thought, new values, and a new kind of world view. Those elements of Indian tradition that emphasise systematic observation, objective analysis, experimentation, and the line of inferences as a basis for action should be nurtured. The emergence of social consciousness among scientists requires a full explication of the social antecedents and consequences of science and technology.

While science itself is a product of a socio-economic base and can not be developed in isolation, socio-economic development can not take place without promoting science and technology. Self-reliant, science and technology freed from neo-colonialist domination and from the control of monopoly houses and vested interests within the country, are prerequisites for national development.

The present urban-biased orientations in regard to literature and the arts promote tendencies of imitativeness and social complacency. A modern dynamic culture can be achieved only through the interaction, fusion, and synthesis of the rich traditional forms with the vital values of contemporary society.

The survival of tribal and folk art forms would depend upon the encouragement they are given in their traditional setting, and their continuance will act as an inspiration to our contemporary artists. To sustain the folk and tribal traditions, craft schools should be established in tribal and rural areas; their arts and literatures documented and preserved; theatre and regional folk troupes formed; and ethnographic museums established.

Universities need to establish faculties of dance, drama, music, and the fine arts. The restructuring and decentralization of the academies is an urgent necessity. The basic facilities should spread far beyond the metropolitan centres; such diffusion of facilities is essential for involving talent from larger areas of the country.

The importance of the mass media for spreading the scientific outlook and for increasing the social and cultural awareness of the people is self-evident. While India has built up considerable facilities in this direction, the content, spread, and effectiveness of communications have to be improved substantially. A built in system to study and evaluate the impact of the mass media, as well as the development of outside agencies for this purpose, is a prime requisite. It was noted that the transistor revolution had made broadcasting a medium truly reaching the masses. But the lack of a clear social purpose had resulted in an imbalance in the programme policies, and the role of the radio in bringing about attitudinal changes had been minimal. As an instrument of education, it had also been utilized most inadequately. Television, although intended initially as a means for educating the masses, had failed to live up to its promise.

**Draft 'HRD' Document: 1992**

We do not know the response of the government to the formulations of the Shimla seminar. However, in 1989-90, the Union Ministry of Human Resource Development (HRD) initiated a process in regard to national cultural policy.

The seminar 11 August in 1972 noted that the absence of well defined national cultural policy had helped the forces of communalism and sectarianism which thwarted the development of secular culture. Similarly the draft policy of 1992 was interalia, formulated in the context of dissensions and growing in tolerance in the country.

The need for a national cultural policy has been justified on the ground that, "culture is being attacked from all directions. The major danger is due to alienation from our rural life; city culture is spoiling our rural culture. We will have to protect and preserve our culture. We should try to preserve and save our culture from westernization and adulteration. There is a crisis of character among our youths... we should try to inculcate basic values of sincerity, honesty".

It has been stated in the introduction: "The country has reached a stage in its economic and technical development when the cultural dimension needs to be brought into sharper focus and the importance of culture has to be clearly and candidly defined." The need to revive and
reintegrate a holistic vision of culture in India was emphasised. "Investment in... the cultural dimension during the past 35 years has not been commensurate with the broad social needs and its intrinsic value." It is argued, "cultural factors... are crucial to also sustainable development."

About ten regional seminars were held around the country during 1989-90. Their findings were collated in a paper, which was circulated among Members of Parliament and state culture ministers and more than 500 artists, writers, filmmakers, critics and media men. The response was sifted and the suggestions were included in an approach paper in 1992. It was discussed by the HRD ministry's Consultative and Standing Committees and tabled in the Lok Sabha in August 1992.

The Approach Paper on the National Culture Policy drawn up in 1992 represented the first serious attempt by the government at framing a "coherent, all-encompassing culture policy in a field that has borne the brunt of neglect, mismanagement and bureaucratic bungling." The approach paper at the outset says, "a stage has arrived when the importance of culture has to be clearly and candidly defined, the area of public interest in culture identified, and the role of the state in culture assessed and readjusted, importance of societal and voluntary effort in this area recognized and further encouraged.

In this context, the following salient points were made.

(i) The draft policy recognizes that it shall be dealing not with the total spread and complexity of culture, basically, but only with some aspects, viz., to outline conditions conducive to more satisfactory self-expression and participation in cultural life by the Indian people at large. There should be no attempt to give any single direction or ideological orientation or prescribe any standards of culture. Diversities must be allowed free play within an over-all context of harmony and consonance. The Indian culture can not be identified with any single tradition and consisting of an ever enriching multiplicity of many traditions. In the current context of dissensions and growing intolerance, it is imperative that the composite character of our culture made by various communities to it and to inclusive ethos is highlighted and widely brought home to all. The state has a very definite responsibility, although direct state intervention needs to be avoided. The state must not be involved in any direct grant but the state should provide funds and facilities for such activities. As far as possible, the state should play a catalytic role in the development and progress of culture its role being what may be called 'arms length intervention/

(ii) While resisting any colonization of mind the Indian people "should remain in constant dialogue with the world at large in the realm of ideas, perception, media and expression. Deculturisation, dehumanization and alienation must be avoided... there should be a fine synthesis between change oriented technologies in the country's community of cultural traditions."

(iii) Cultural education in schools, not as an additional but as an integrated component of curriculum teaching makes the child aware of the ancient tradition to familiarize the youth with philosophical concepts and images based on centuries of evolution of aesthetic values, creativity and through conservation of environment. Education in various forms of appreciation of all art forms of culture such as fine arts, music, dance, theatre and literature, etc. to enable children and youth to develop sensitivity to duty and harmony must arouse deeper interest in elements of composite culture. Guru-shishya paranipara should be strengthened, widened and strongly supported keeping in view the changed ethos.

(iv) Growth has frequently been conceived in quantitative terms without taking into account qualitative dimensions, namely, spiritual and cultural aspirations. The country has reached a stage in its economic and technical development when the cultural dimension needs to be brought into sharper forces and strengthening. The draft approvingly quotes UNESCO's inter-governmental committee of world decade for cultural development.

(v) To revive and re-integrate a holistic vision of culture in India in such a way that no segment, area or community feels excluded and each are encouraged to freely contribute towards identifying, promoting, fostering, and projecting cultural growth and enrichment in various fields care would have to be taken for promoting and projecting
cultural contributions of the weaker sections and minorities in all parts of India.

But it is noteworthy that the paper is primarily focussed on the 'material culture' and the infrastructure facilities required for it. For example, the central piece of the approach paper is setting up Bharatiya Sanskriti Parishad. It envisages the setting up of artist's hostels along the lines of sports hostels in states to select and train young talent from schools. It also speaks of cultural education at the school level and, accordingly, imparting cultural training to teachers. The approach paper also suggests that because of the large number of cultural agencies and organizations, a training programme in "cultural administration" be evolved to make specialised management available to them. Attempts will be made to attract investment from the private, corporate sector.

A major part of the proposed policy deals with the preservation and promotion of tribal and folk cultures and talks of setting up a National Documentation Centre for Tribal and Folk Traditions with branches at suitable places. It also makes a strong plea to progressively delegate more powers to the National Library in Kolkata and to redefine its goals and objectives.

The approach paper led to debates in both government and art circles and at times evoked responses verging on the negative, with many questioning the need for a culture policy in the first place. For instance, a national colloquium was organized in Delhi on 16 and 17 November 1992. The colloquium did not dwell upon the conceptual aspects of a cultural policy for India. It focussed attention on practical administrative and organizational issues as well as on resources for cultural activities. For example, it made forty-seven recommendations relating to music and dance, theatre, media and culture (which covered film, TV, video, radio and art criticism), visual arts, photography and architecture, education, culture and development. The colloquium also made seventeen recommendations on promotion and support of culture.

The Parliamentary Consultative Committee of the Ministry of Human Resource Development examined the draft of National Cultural Policy in two meetings: the first on 1 August and the second on 17th August 1992. The committee made twenty-three general observations on culture policy and made practical observations and comments on mass media/TV, (six) on literary art to the tribal/folk arts and culture, (three) music, dance and theatre, (one) museum and libraries.

The committee favoured the exclusive role of state in regard to culture policy. It felt that there is no codified culture in India, which is important for development of understanding and also national integration. "If planning is done from the villages at grass root level with a central control, it will be fruitful for raising cultural awareness among the masses. The state government has to play a very positive role in the development of culture and it can not be left to private individuals or corporate sector. It might be dangerous and destructive to invite private sector for sponsoring cultural events, as is the experience with films. Private sector will not help in promotion of culture, the government should discourage private sector in entering the field."

As regard the objectives of the cultural policy, the committee declared: "The country's integration can be maintained only by recognizing the Indian cultural values which could be achieved only through the Ministry of Human Resource Development..." For this purpose, culture should be brought on the central list of the Constitution.

We should have a Culture Policy, which can preserve national integration. Promotion of nationalism and patriotism as a part of cultural policy in the interest of the nation is needed. Culture should be used as a tool for communal harmony through cultural activities.

As regards the content of culture policy, it is said: "Culture is related with society, its life style, its perception and not with politics or economic policy." The culture policy should be based on Indian value system and Indian principles, which reflect our old traditional culture. The values enumerated the Vedas and those prevalent during Vedic times should be included. Research should be undertaken.

The committee rejected the suggestion regarding the establishment of a Bharatiya Sanskriti Parishad, saying a top-heavy body is not necessary; a body armed with such vast powers is likely to become an instrument of the government's
cultural domination. "The committee, however, shared the concern expressed over the awfully low budgetary allocations for the culture department. The committee suggested the setting up of a National Cultural Fund. Contributions could be made to it, not only from the budgetary sources but also from private and voluntary organizations.

In 1995, the Union Minister Madhav Rao Scindia was keen that the 1992 approach paper on National Culture Policy was passed by the Parliament. But the initiative taken in 1992 remains incomplete.

A Critique

It may be recalled that during the period 1885-1905 basic problems of society in India were discussed at the end of every annual session of the Indian National Congress. But after 1905 these debates, which were conditioned by the western perspective, were dropped because it was found that a free and frank debate on sensitive social issues proved politically divisive.

Mahatma Gandhi experimented with a comprehensive vision and perspective of national struggle as well as for a new polity. They included theory and practice of Satyagrah and civil disobedience together with some key items of constructive programme in their agenda of nation building. But his perspective was not accepted by the Congress leadership and others on the eve of Independence and later. In fact, after 1947 the Nehruvian approach primarily and Hindu secularism have to some extent influenced the thinking of the dominant political class especially in regard to policies regarding political and economic fields and science and technology aimed at achieving the ideals of the Indian Constitution.

In the pre-1947 period the problem of minorities was perceived as a primary obstacle to a united struggle against British rule and transfer of power leading to Independence. The problems of minorities were sought to be resolved in terms of quantum of share of power in legislative and administrative structures and reservation for minorities. This morphological approach led to partition.

Even the Constituent Assembly, in the first instance, adopted the morphological approach. But it backtracked in the light of the experience of partition in 1947. It adopted 'democratic secularism'. It was also assumed that economic progress and modernization would serve as solvents of the communal problem. It was not anticipated that the process of implementation of the idea could either have divisive side effects in our plural polity or initiate a process of 'differentiation' in the civil society.

For various reasons, the democratic secularism during 1950-72 did not yield adequate results. On the contrary, Hindu secularism of communal and non-secular forces again raised their head; e.g., the rise of Bharatiya Jan Sangh in mid-sixties and BJP in mid-eighties. It is in the light of these developments that the concept of culture policy as a means of promoting harmony and unity mooted in 1972 and 1992 can be viewed as a landmark.

The debates on national cultural policy initiated by the Central Human Resource Development Ministry in 1992 are also a landmark in the evolution of a national approach to the conflicts since 1972, particularly those rooted in religion and ethnicity in general.

It appears that in spite of dissimilarity of tone and tenor and approaches and idiom of expression, the discourses on national cultural policy in 1972 and 1992 were focussed on three facets of the tasks of nation-state building. First, to deal with the threats to values of democratic secularism and harmony as enshrined in the Constitution.

Secondly, on both the occasions, the need for a national culture was felt in the context of well-entrenched colonial cultural tradition and colonization of the mind of Indian power elite during unfreedom. Thirdly the need for national cultural policy aimed at building a swadeshi intellectual outlook and temper and for economic development, cultural education and empowerment of the marginalized sections. The objective of culture policy was to counter the onslaught of videshi influence through mass media and free trade etc, as a matter of policy.

The problems of unity, democracy and secular character of India were perceived in the context of nation building but not in the context of civilizational transition. Perhaps, culture was considered, by and large, as an "outhouse" of the main structures of polity. It was viewed as a conglomerate of fine arts and folk arts and other
concrete forms of cultural heritage and cultural organizations as reflected in the much publicized extravaganzas called, "cultural festivals" abroad. Culture has not been viewed as a dynamic factor, which in India is a result of interaction between the tradition and modernity (specially its scientific and technological component). India's traditional cultural values and political and economic modernization have worked at cross purposes as aggressively as modern science and technology have been operating antagonistically against traditional life styles, specially that of tribal India. India's concept of nationalism today is also devoid of civilization or cultural contents. The implementation of India's science and technology policy (namely, industrialization and urbanization) has given rise to such cultural values and has thrown up such social and economic forces which often not only undermine core-values or perennial values, but have the potential to create an artificial prototype of "Indian man." There was no attempt in the document (1992) to examine the relation between science and technology, culture and development; how these three elements will be dovetailed into an overall national policy.

In other words, the debates on national policy of culture ignored the cultural implications of the political culture, engendered during the last ten decades. These do not provide for any "clue", as how to reckon with it in day-to-day life and the long-term needs. Modern developments in India have thrown up their own effluents and pollutants. The draft documents do offer little to deal with this as well as other sources of cultural pollution. Further, it was not fully recognized that scientific technology is not culture-neutral. It creates its own cultural forms and societal forces. A national policy on culture will have to reckon with implications of scientific technology.

Further, political power managed through democratic processes and rapid economic prosperity of certain classes generates its own culture. The draft national policy and culture overlooked this aspect of pollution of culture. There is need for a debate or a fresh approach to a culture policy, which in turn should call for a review of national science policy, media policy and economic and political policies. Specifically stated, how TV programmes sponsored by private sector, how market processes like advertisement, how the composition and content of national product in the field of manufacturing industries, how consumerist values have to be related to national policy on culture.

No doubt, the formulations regarding media at the Shimla Seminar in 1972 are pertinent. Nevertheless, these need to be updated in the light of the communication revolution in India during eighties and nineties. And as regards the HRD Draft, the formulation on media are superficial because India's experience in 1992 with TV was rather scanty and with Internet was nil.

The media in India has expanded exponentially during 1985-2005 and its impact on culture has been substantially chaotic and confusing culturally and otherwise. In this connection, it is worth the while to recall that in the West when TV sets were produced first in 1920-30, it was not in response to any social and cultural requirement, at that time. The origin of TV and Internet lies in the military needs for a better and direct secret communication system. The hitech media had to discover or create programmes to justify its existence. And since by its very nature TV transmits something that has happened or was happening or was available readily at hand, hews, sports, or live events, entertainment, films and music became defining qualities or staple raw material of TV programmes.

In India also the communication revolution during the past 20-25 years did not take place in response to the needs of the people. In the absence of a well-considered national communication policy the rapid expansion of the hi-tech communication network has, inter-alia, created divisions in the social fabric as well as fractures in the collective mind. A culture policy is called for to harness the communication revolution in the service of harmony and equilibrium and development.

The plan of action for culture in the 1992 document does not flow from the policy perspectives enunciated in the first and second parts. Moreover, the plan of action in regard to management of plan does not appear to take into cognizance the experience of the last four decades in this field. The state sponsored programme for the preservation and promotion of cultural heritage has given rise to many distortions. It has created
a powerful vested interest which in collaboration with political and economic and bureaucratic forces has played havoc with culture, of which the phenomena of "cultural festival" abroad was one example. The management of the various national academies in the states and at the Centre has created a culture-bureaucratic-structure, has monopolized culture in the name of autonomy. These forces have refused to change their ways. No future policy on culture can be meaningful, if it is not based on a critical assessment of the historical experience of culture management.

In a country like India, the type of macro-national policy on culture as reflected in the draft can itself become a divisive factor. Indian culture is a mosaic of local of regional cultures; there are at least 52 socio-cultural zones with their own respective social histories (mind you, not political history which divides). The draft policy on culture does not fully take cognizance of this reality.

The people of India have experienced many upheavals since 1947. However, much blood has flown down many nullahs and gutters and streams and rivulets and rivers in various parts of India at an unprecedented scale and speed since 1992. Perhaps never have the people been exposed to such a rapid sequence of traumatic events and developments as during the past two and half decades. In short, the Indian polity is in a flux. What is required today is a culture policy which is in tune with the development in the past one and half decades and other factors in India and abroad. We should like specially to focus on some of the developments which have taken place during this period.

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India and the World:
Some Trends
in India

THERE has been considerable unwholesome interaction between "the sacred" and "the secular." The "sacred" has been secularised and the "secular" saffronised! The collective psyche of the Indian people has sustained multiple fractures. In the pre-1947 period-organised religion and fundamentalism damaged mainly the political. Even in the worst of times, it did not seep into India's collective mind. It did not create schism in the old fabric based on pluralism. For instance today, the Indian psyche is showing serious hairline cracks.

Social history and political history a history of art and literature are being reconstructor destructured in the light of either "dalit" consciousness or "hindutva" consciousness "secular" consciousness in a bid to capture the mind of Indian people.

After mid-eighties the caste factor in politics again began to acquire pre- eminence. No doubt the caste system and untouchability have been declining on account of struggle for independence and urbanisation and industrialisation. No the Constitution of India prohibited the practice of untouchability and the Government of India enacted a law making it a penal offence. No doubt a measure of liberalisation has taken place 3 respect of temple entry, drinking water and inter caste dining and marriages. The implementation of Mandal Report has no doubt led to a sort of empowerment of the OBC's. But in spite of these happy developments, interalia, the caste-schism has been attenuated. There is a trend to think in terms of "Dalit" consciousness and "Dwij" consciousness. The Dalit academicians, scholars and researchers are re-reading history and reconstructing it in terms of "Dalit" consciousness and "Dwij" consciousness. So much so that on the occasion of Johannesburg World Conference on Racial Discrimination attempts were made to put caste as an entity at par with racial entities. The continuance of the debate about "Dalit" consciousness has in the long-run the potential to create more cracks in the collective 'mind' at popular level.

This unhappy processes is further vitiated by unhealthy interaction between "power" and "culture" of which cultural nationalism is a product. It seems the cultural nationalists are determined to perpetuate the folly, which was committed by the Britishers in 1947, who vivisected a composite civilization into two artificial Nation-States. Similarly, Hindutva wants to unify Indian society and consolidate Indian State. But it is functioning as a basically psychologically divisive movement. It is paradoxical that Hindutva in reality divides, while its proclaimed long-term objective is to unite.

It has definite patterns. According to a noted

psychologist, (Dr. Sudhir Kacker):

Hindutva psychological construction-revival follows a storyline with certain clear turnings of the
To recapitulate, these are: marking afresh (the boundaries of the community, making the community conscious of a collective cultural loss, countering internal forces which seek to disrupt the unity of the freshly demarcated community, idealizing the community and maintaining its sense of grandiosity by comparing it to a bad 'other' which, at times, becomes an oppressive persecutor and, finally, dealing with the persecutory fantasies, which also bring up to the surface the community's particular sense of inferiority, by resort to some kind of forceful action.

Hindutva appeals to a group identity while creating it. It both mirrors the listeners' sentiments and gives them birth. The images, metaphors, and mythological allusions of Hindutva have a resonance for the audience because they also have a resonance for her.

Particularly, since early nineties Hindutva movement has begun to condition the thinking of larger and larger sections of people. It has generated an acrimonious debate about "secularism", "pseudo-secularism". India's middle ages, are presented as the period of slavery or unfreedom of which British rule was a continuation. There has emerged a "Hindutva" school of history of India.

Moreover, the terrorist attacks on World Trade Centre in New York on September 11, 2001 has been systematically used to prove that Islam is an intolerant religion. Fears of Islamization of societies have again begun to haunt the minds of Hindutva leadership and intellectuals. This is reflected in voluminous popular anti-Islamic literature produced by fundamentalist Hindu groups, including VHP. In these writings an attempt is made to highlight the intolerant character of Islam and to prove that the tolerant pluralistic character of Islam society is a myth. The fear of "the other" is being systematically inculcated among the people.

Further, separatist feelings or diagggregationist sentiments are also giving rise to thinking about what may be described as, 'regional autarky' of a type, which is qualitatively different from the commonly known regionalism.

A politically ambitious influential cross-section of the economic elite and administrative elite in the fast-developing geographically contiguous states in the south and in the West India seems to be in considerable anti-national haste to attain high levels of affluence even at the cost of national unity. They have begun to feel that the persistently slow pace of developmental process in some geographically contiguous economically and socially backward states in the North is a roadblock in the progress of economies in the south and the West. Hence questions are being asked as to why should the resources (such as revenue resources) in the southern and western regions be shared with the lagard backward states? Why should the endowments of the advanced states be not used within their geographical bounds?

There have occurred qualitative changes in (i) the equation between the civil society and the state; (11) in the equation between the various constituents of civil society; (iii) in the self-image or self-perception of the various constituents of civil society and (iv) in the equation between the global and the local. All this affects national harmony.

Indian polity is getting lumpenised rapidly with all its implications, especially for good governance and good society. There is also a breakdown of linguistic and conceptual terminology, which was in vogue during the national movement --e.g., ambivalence has crept in the definition of the popularly accepted national values - democracy, nationalism, secularism and federalism. There are calibrated efforts to re-define the individual and collective identities, in terms of sectarian and revivalist interpretations of liberal secularism and democracy.

In India (known for its catholicity and long-range tolerance) pursuit of Freedom, Equality, Fraternity and Social Justice (on the basis of which various constitutional, legal and political instrumentalities evolved during the past five decades) itself generates conflicts. There are indications of cracks in the political mind of India about the content of secularism and democracy. Inequalities, casteism, communalism, ethnicity, regionalism and sectarianism are spreading in the wake of democratic evolution and the democratic system as such does not seem to be able to cope.
While conflict along the Indo-Pakistan border in Kashmir and Punjab is five decades old in recent tunes the incidence of various forms of violence has been on the rise, especially violence in Bihar, Tripura, Assam, Orissa, West Bengal and Madhya Pradesh. India faces human emergencies, which cover massive displacement, disease and hunger and conflict. Terrorism also is a serious problem in scores of districts in nine states in India.

Besides economic factors, the state of affairs has been created by growing intolerance and a climate of impunity, which is not amenable to policing alone. The system is at the end of the tether, an alternative approach based on certain values is imperative.

It seems democratic institutions are no longer capable of self-regulation and self-correction. The instruments and processes and procedures of India's liberal democracy are no longer in a position to muster up the additional capacity to modulate the public discourses and behaviour.

No doubt, today India has a system of governance which is impressive. But some of the key institutions are not functional effectively. This structure is afflicted with internal haemorrhage in the form of wastefulness, redundancy and misappropriation and under utilization. It shows symptoms of a sort of institutional meltdown. In short, the various national policies regarding various facets of reconstruction or construction of Indian polity formulated during the past five decades, need another comprehensive paradigm within which various nation-building tasks can be coalesced.

Some General Trends

Communication revolution during the past two and a half decades has initiated, facilitated, and accelerated the pace of globalization, specially the sponsored globalization under WTO regime. Put in the words of poet Tagore, "suddenly the walls that separated different races seem to have given way and we find ourselves face to face". In fact, the earth itself has become more vulnerable not only to the planetary invasions, but also to the infection by bacteria embedded in the rocks brought for research from planets like the Mars.

Tsunami like waves of disturbance and upheavals in one part of the world travel sweepingly to other parts. No regulatory barriers and mechanisms evolved during the past century by the nation-state can withstand their onslaughters Consequently, ideology, religion, caste, tribe/ethnicity and nationalism to which people and their leaders still cling desperately for definition, security, identity, cohesion, etc are rendered inadequate.

To be concrete, the potentialities of benevolent forces unleashed by French Revolution, American Revolution and Soviet Revolution are fast approaching a point beyond which they will prove harmful. Freedom, Equality and Fraternity have been the basis of unity and cohesion within nation-states in the advanced countries of the, West and elsewhere in Asia and Africa. During the past two decades while more and more countries in Africa also are opting for the democratic model of governance, the dynamics of the operation of the institution in the liberal democratic regimes have also generated divisive trends and violence and authoritarianism. In fact, even in the West, (for instance, The Netherlands, France and the bastions of liberalism and tolerance in Europe) migrations have created multi-religious societies and there are strains. Democracy, socialism and nationalism, which are institutional expressions of freedom, equality, fraternity in modern times being space-specific and time-specific and society-specific are subject to interpretations.

Speed and acceleration have emerged as a determinant of culture in general and quality of life in particular. It is aggravating the in-built malevolent characteristics of modern culture, which can be described as "culture of expression." Access time, meaning how quickly end can be effected has today become the default criteria of all progress. Speed is like a new drug to which societies are fast getting addicted. What can regulate a high-speed and hence a high-risk society?

In this context, it must be pointed out that modern hi-tech science fuels this speed-sustained social structure. The rate of conversion of an expanding corpus of scientific knowledge into high technology is already, high. But the rate of application of high technology for mass production
of consumer goods as well as means of mass destruction and exploitation of Nature's resources is still higher. Consequently, high technology is speedily nib-picking the society - more and more "express modes" have begun to effect more and more spheres of social and individual life. But since the speed at which human collectivities can change and adapt wholesomely is much lower than the speed of penetration of new goods and services in the system, this involves a great strain on the process of cultural adaptation.

Epoch-making developments in the realm of 'big' science and technology (space research, cyber communication, biotechnology and higher physics) during the past two and half decades have raised not only ethical, philosophical and theological but social, political and economic challenges. For instance, take the space research. Dr. Yashpal when he was Secretary-General of UN Conference on Outer Space in 1981 argued for a number of new human rights, since new capabilities such as space technology for communication and earth observation imply new responsibilities. He said these human rights are that every human should be able to talk to everyone on the planet and every one should be able to know where he and she was at any moment of time. These human rights should be guaranteed independent of economic status, very much like fresh air and water.

Similarly, the nuclearization of states has raised new challenges. The process of acquiring nuclear weapons changes the state that undertakes it "creating new interests, bureaucratic actors, beliefs, perspective and expectations." Just as peaceful use of modern science and technology in the long run brings about qualitative changes the character of civilization and the states, 'nuclearism' also brings about change in the character of a state and nation. It has been confirmed, "the biggest fallout may well be the changed character of the Indian state itself and the outlook of the elite."

Since the time the sheep Dolly was cloned, worldwide debate among scientists and other leaders of public opinion has been going on in regard to ethical, philosophical and theological implications of cloning. The idea of making stem cells from human embryo has been an issue of passionate controversy on moral and ethical grounds.

"Cyberspace creates new problems for ethics, partly generated by the nature of technology and partly by the variety and flow of information...Cyberspace is a technological space and a symbolic medium of a world of fantasy where the question of self is reinvented or collaged in a, virtual space which demands different understandings of space, time and agency." (Shiv Vishwanathan).

In short, "whether it is a question of biotechnology or test tube babies or running of the life support system, whether the Vatican thinks of controlling the population or whether it is a question of violence, the connecting thing is ethics*'. Science is not enough, as it seems to be not connected with feeling, values, anxiety and other human weaknesses.

The foundations of the available classical political thought and sociology have been challenged. Globalization calls for a fresh look at social-science evolved in 18th and 19th and first half of 20th centuries. The theory of social contract is anachronistic. A new social contract is needed particularly in classical economic theory where in land, labour and capital are still considered main factors of production. Globalization (e-commerce, etc) has made knowledge, trust, and sound management of biodiversity and natural resources as factors of production. Faith is the marrow of globalized economy. Thus globalization of national economies is creating conditions for re-writing of the economic theory according to which "The business of business is in business in which moral standards have no relevance" (Bernard Mandelville). Globalized economy rejects the view that dishonesty, selfishness and devotion to vice lay at the root of prosperity (Brian Griffith). Particularly, more and more hitherto marginalized sections of society are entering the mainstream because of which the system of governance is increasingly tending to be people-driven (that is, democratic) and people-oriented (that it is not solely). Hence state-oriented "human factors" should take command or precedence over "power factors" and "technology factors."

This perception of the nature of economic activity, though not acknowledged in theory, has been adopted on many critical junctures of economic development in Europe in the second half
of the 20th century. For example, take Marshall Plan to reconstruct the war ravaged Europe. The success of Marshall Plan is a testament to the integrity of America and Europeans. But for these non-economic and non-political inputs the miraculous reconstruction of Europe would not have been possible. Today also globalization of national economies calls for formal inclusion of non-economic factors in the economic theory propounded by Adam Smith.

Take the Proletarian Cultural Revolution (1966-76) which was launched by the Chinese Communist Party Chairman, Mao Zedong, to stem, what he perceived as the country's drift away from socialism and towards "the restoration of capitalism." Though now it is being regarded as a terrible catastrophe for the Chinese nation, it was claimed that the Cultural Revolution "touch people to their very soul." The origin of the Cultural Revolution can be traced to mid-1950s in Mao Zedong's anxieties about the bureaucratization of the party, ideological degeneration in society as a whole, and the glaring socio-economic inequalities that had emerged in China through the early 1960s. Mao concluded that the source of China's political retrogression lay in the false and self-serving view of many of his party colleagues that class struggle ceased under socialism. The principal targets of Mao were, on one hand, party and government officials (new class) divorced from the masses and, on the other, intellectuals who in his view were repository of bourgeoisie and even feudal values.

One need not be a votary of Cultural Revolution in China as such to view it as a "phenomena" in the history of China at a particular juncture of its evolution. It represents an approach to the unhappy developments in China, the approach was "cultural" as opposed to the "political". It underlined the fact that if a nation fails on the political front, the answer does not lie in finding solutions within the political system but in the domain of "culture" also.

As per an assessment of the Club of Rome in the seventies the world had reached the "limits of growth." Similarly, the international community which is poised for being transformed into a global village is bursting at
and economic panaceas arc proving ineffective science has reached a point at which it overturns nature and human nature and thus creates serious philosophical and ethical dilemmas: organized religion has lost its traditional role as a guiding force, institutional structures based on Freedom and Equality and Fraternity create more problems than they solve. The collective can not cope with situation in which speed has been rendered as a cultural ingredient.

To use a mathematical analogy we need a constant "K" to balance the equations comprising several additional variables. This constant "K" informs the texture of the fabric of collective life ensures a stable equilibrium between the part and the part as well as the part and the whole. It serves as glue, as it were.

Several attempts have been made to describe the constant "K". We give a brief account of a few debates in some quarters on the need for 'core values'. It is argued, "especially since the world wide turmoil of the years 1989 to 1991 and the subsequent ending of the Cold War, the interest in discussion on core-value has increased considerably." (Helmut Reifield). Further, "every culture has values of its own, among these elements of prevention of war and of resolution of inter-state and ultra-state conflicts are not possible as per political and economic, social and cultural provisions of the UNO Charter. This hardware of the UN Charter can not enable the UNO to cope with not only the conventional type of wars and conflicts but also with the fresh challenges of a rapidly globalizing world; the software of non-political, non-economic strategies is crucial. For example, Katherine Marshall who oversees the World Bank urged a new partnership between religious groups and development specialists. She said, "religious organisations have long played a special role in both understanding and helping the poor. Yet their insights and their work are too little known in many development circles." It was stated, "it is our belief that what is needed is a new model of development that draws on both scientific methods and universal values inherent in all religions... mainly materialistic approach that has dominated the current development and paradigm is not enough". "It is our belief", say the preliminary findings of a UNO Colloquium "that what is needed is a new model of development which will be better able to stimulate human transformation and build individual and community capacity."

democratic rule can be found. Similarly, it should not be regarded as impossible to establish human right in every culture, being formulations a part of different approaches, different emphases and different formulations." (ibid).

The UNO Charter recognized the importance of tolerance. On account of tragic conflicts in post-a cold war years, it decided to proclaim 1995 the ‘Year for Tolerance’. For the first time it put account on personal virtue that is increasingly viewed as a political and legal requirement for peaceful co-existence to counter influences "that lead to fear and prejudice to develop the ability to judge independently, think critically and reason ethically." The UNESCO also adopted a declaration of ‘Principle of Tolerance’. Even in recent times the futility or inadequacy of exclusive reliance on economic and political perspectives has been recognised by the United Nations. The think-tank of the UNO under the guidance of the Secretary-General, have realized that the promotion and preservation of peace and

IV
Concluding Remarks
IT may be recalled that long before animal organisms grew bones minute creatures crawled or slithered between grains of mud or sand in primordial waters. These cryptic organisms which had neither skeletons nor even substance to leave detectable burrows and tracks slowly evolved for half a billion years unto the Cambrian period when there occurred, what is called, "Big Bang Animal Evolution/* due to a mighty explosions of biological creativity. It caused massive expansion in the size complexity and body architecture of animals. We are told that such sudden outbursts of cosmic energy also take place in the outer space when monumental black holes open up suddenly and gobble up scores of solar systems. Suddenness or abruptness also marks the incidence of the earthquake under the seas or elsewhere. Any small quake has the probability of cascading into a dangerous mega event. We can only tell where a quake will hit, but not when. For instance, Britain's last battering was 7000 years ago but
some scientists say that events are inexorably priming a Tsunami in the south coast of Britain. When it will strike is anyone's guess, could be right now, or 20 years or 200 years from now.

In short, a lay understanding of the "unseeable" working of the nature shows that even stirrings and small strains and stresses can cascade into disasters contortions and convulsions. What is true of nature is also true of man-made systems; a kind of Tsunami is priming invisibly in the "heart" of India.

There is limited evidence in India of a public debate on this aspect of national life. In fact, the debate initiated in Shimla in 1972 and by the Government in 1992 has been not only put in the cold storage but the developments in India and world since 1972 also have been ignored. On the contrary, the government, the national leaders, the media czars and the articulate academia and the spokesmen of the corporate sector complacently accept the validity of the existing framework of values and are convinced that the framework is sound enough and are dreaming that India will emerge as a "military power," "political power," "economic power" and "knowledge power" all rolled in one, in the first quarter of the 21st century or a little later.

No doubt there is a small cross-section of opinion leaders, who are unhappy about the situation for a different set of reasons. While they favour an overhaul or revamping of the structure, they do not recognise the fact that the new challenges during the past two decades have rendered the framework fragile, if not vulnerable. In our view both of them are unrealistic.

This paper should be perceived as an early timely warning. It is an attempt to initiate a public debate, firstly, on the urgent need for a major paradigm shift in the light of internal and external developments during the past few decades and, secondly, to explore and identify the new framework or paradigm which can enable our people to prevent an occurrence of Tsunami like disaster.

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