



Employment News

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An Economist Called Gandhi

Dr. Pramod Pathak

If after two and a half decades of adopting the so called reforms as the growth mantra India needs a food security bill to provide immunity against hunger to 80 percent of its population, it is time to think anew. Interestingly, such thinking has already started in the US, the land from where these so called reforms originated. As a broad coalition of organizations and individuals plan New Economy Week during October 12 to 18, 2013, to answer what their economy should look like, we must sit up, listen and contemplate. With imperfections of both capitalism and communism becoming painfully evident, there is reason to look elsewhere for solutions. Can Gandhism be considered? Many would fret and most would doubt having already dismissed it as an unworkable proposition. Moreover, the big question is finding out what this Gandhism is all about when Gandhi himself had proclaimed that there is nothing like Gandhism. The Mahatma had said 'I have nothing new to teach the world. Truth and non-violence are as old as hills'. But the answer perhaps lies here - in truth and non-violence. Problems of economies arise less due to economics and more due to psychology. Gandhi was not trained in economics and that was his strength. He could think out of the box, that is, pragmatically. Fixation to ideas have perhaps done the greatest disservice to economic thought. It is against this backdrop that we need to understand Gandhism, the Gandhian way of life. The anecdote that follows may offer some valuable insights into Gandhian economics. Just after independence a school

was planned at Wardha by K.T. Shah. Gandhiji was invited to the place with many other eminent people. K.T. Shah asked Gandhiji what kind of education should be imparted to children so that country can progress in the right direction. Initially, Gandhi was reluctant but when asked persistently he said that his view of education was different. Thus, if he asks the students that suppose he buys an apple for 25 paise and sells it for one rupee what will he get and if in answer to this he is told that he will get jail, this is the kind of education that should be imparted. And rightly so. There is no justification for seeking an unreasonable profit of 75 percent. But that is the problem - Unbridled Profiteering. Greed to the extent of lust. This is the reason behind the economic crises we have been facing post reforms. When value of goods rise abnormally, economy sinks. Gandhian economics doesn't draw a distinction between economics and ethics. Economics that hurts the moral well being of a nation is immoral and subsequently unviable. According to Gandhi consumer appetite is animal appetite and feeds on meaningless consumption. It is this basic reality that has to be understood. We need to realize that economic woes are less policy driven and more character driven. Gandhi advocated spiritual development and harmony with a reflection of materialism. According to him, the value of an industry should be gauged not by the dividends it pays to shareholders but its effect on the bodies, soul and the spirit of the people employed in it. Supreme consideration needs to be given to men rather than money. The Gandhian idea of trusteeship

was advocated much before the so called western intellectuals coined expressions like Inclusive Growth and Corporate Social Responsibility. And Gandhi had followers among industrialists, too. People like Ghanshyam Das Birla, Jamnalal Bajaj, and JRD Tata were all practitioners of Gandhi's Trusteeship concept. Gandhi's view of harmony with nature and absence of class conflict is manifested in the modern day idea of the triple P (Planet, People, Profit) bottom line. As we grapple with Current Account Deficit And Forex Crisis let us look back at the Swadeshi Movement initiated by Gandhi at the turn of 20th century. Though the idea was political, the objective was primarily economic. It holds the answer to present day economic crisis also, particularly the falling rupee. We must understand that economics, politics and psychology are all interrelated and must be seen in totality.

We had enough of trial and error with the so called reforms. It is time to ask whether they are actually reforms. It was not without reason that Michel Camdessus, the then IMF chief and an applied economist himself had advocated Gandhian economics as an alternative model for poverty alleviation. A refocusing of priorities is in order as the market determined theories worked out from luxurious offices of Washington are faltering on the ground.

A reappraisal of Gandhian philosophy is what we need today. Gandhi was never doggedly opposed to industrialization. For him the problem was chronic unemployment in the villages and he suggested revitalizing the vast country side as an

engine of change. He was not opposed to machines and technology but wanted that they should generate employment. He was against technological determinism that would sharpen distortions in the society. As his foreboding are proving right one after another, be it unemployment, environment degradation or growing poverty, we need to revisit Gandhism. The direction for policy makers lie in Gandhi's now forgotten injunction - "Whenever you are in doubt, or when the self becomes too much with you, apply the following test. Recall the face of the poorest and the weakest man [woman] whom you may have seen, and ask yourself, if the step you contemplate is going to be of any use to him [her]. Will he [she] gain anything by it? Will it restore him [her] to a control over his [her] own life and destiny? In other words, will it lead to Swaraj [freedom] for the hungry and spiritually starving millions? Then you will find your doubts and yourself melt away."

The swelling numbers of the underclass do not need the hollow promises of bright future through substitution of one generation of reforms by another. They need to see that a liberal economy generates jobs too. The statistics of growth rate or per capita income or even rising numbers of billionaires are hardly reassuring when food, shelter, education and healthcare are getting out of reach of the common man. Experiments with reforms had their share of trials, it is time for the experiments with truth. (The author is Professor, Department of Management Studies, Indian School of Mines, Dhanbad. E-mail : ppathak.ism@gmail.com)

JOB HIGHLIGHTS

UPSC

● Union Public Service Commission invites applications for various posts
Last Date : 17.10.2013

SSC

● Staff Selection Commission notifies Stenographers (Grade 'C' & 'D') Examination, 2013
Last Date : 26.10.2013

RAILWAY

● South Western Railway requires 1299 Trackman, Helper, Safaiwala, Porter/Hamal/Sweeper-cum-porter optg
Last Date : 28.10.2013

BRBNMPL

● Bharatiya Reserve Bank Note Mudran Private Limited requires 300 Industrial Workman Grade-I (T)
Last Date : 14.10.2013

WEB EXCLUSIVES

Following items are available in the Web Exclusives section on www.employmentnews.gov.in :

1. Central financial assistance for boosting tourism in the states of Arunachal Pradesh, Sikkim and Nagaland.

● Career in Rural Management ●

Proggya Ghatak

In India more than sixty per cent of the population resides in rural regions. The developmental process without inclusion of rural India is, thus, lop-sided and unsustainable. To take care of the development of such backward and unattended areas, professional Rural Managers are hired to assist the villagers in the process of improvement, growth, and expansion, so that the entire nation can accomplish progress and prosperity. Rural regions, in the recent times, across the world have been drawing more attention than ever before, which, in turn, has led to the rise of numerous developmental schemes for rural people through national, international, and local agencies, along with several non-governmental bodies. This, itself, suffices the need and importance of rural management to contribute towards the development of villages and small towns. Furthermore, rural management has become one of the most sought-

after subjects to study and research at post graduate level to pursue a bright and booming career. Besides, it can be taken up by individuals who are deeply concerned about the nation's progress and development. Rural Management involves the study of controlling, directing, organizing and even planning of agribusiness, co-operative and related fields. The field involves merging of management studies knowledge into rural context. Courses in Rural management are designed in such a way that concepts taught in the course are applied in real life scenarios through training in rural areas by way of interaction with rural people and through case studies. The government of India as well as the state governments are now stressing on rural development and launching new schemes for the same. The central government is granting outlays in the consecutive budgets and running several schemes. Increasing emphasis on

rural development has created many new job opportunities in rural management which is in turn creating demand for rural managers.

Career

India is a country with many rural areas, there will be very good job scope for jobs in rural management in India. This is going to be a booming field in the nation with good number of employment opportunities. Rural Managers work in non-government organizations, government organizations, financial institutions, rural banks, co-operatives, rural industries and private enterprises. There are also developing opportunities for rural managers in multinational companies that are trying to enter into the untapped rural markets, more specifically in electrical & electronics, automobile, telecommunication,

Continued on page 55

Incredible North East

A Paradigm Shift in Approach to Development

The Integrated Basin Development and Livelihood Promotion Programme (IBDLP) of Meghalaya

Ram Mohan Mishra

Meghalaya is blessed with abundant natural resources, both renewable and non-renewable and at the same time the State has been facing formidable challenges on account of poverty, malnutrition and problems associated with environmental sustainability. The State has set for itself a growth target of 11 per cent in the XII Plan (2012-17) with thrust on reducing poverty; ensuring better livelihood opportunities for its citizens and creating necessary infrastructure for long term sustainable development. In the year 2012, the Government of Meghalaya launched a flagship programme titled "Integrated Basin Development and Livelihood Promotion Programme" (IBDLP). The programme aims at promoting optimal and effective development and utilization of the State's natural resources for ensuring livelihood security and inclusive growth within the broad framework of sustainable development. The programme has been designed around four pillars – Knowledge Management, Natural Resource Management, Entrepreneurship Development and Good Governance. A significant feature of this Programme is specific mission mode interventions in Agriculture, Horticulture, Forest and Plantation crops, Aquaculture, Livestock, Sericulture & Weaving, Apiculture, Energy, Water, Tourism, Skills, and Knowledge Management etc. The core objective of each of these missions is to facilitate the promotion of sustainable livelihoods for the people of the State leveraging upon the opportunities and strengths of the State's natu-

ral resources. The Programme seeks to provide an enabling framework for uplifting the socio-economic conditions of the people, especially the less developed ones by way of promoting capacity building and entrepreneurship of the individuals as also of the communities along with other necessary measures. The programme is not a 'scheme' in the traditional sense but an enabling framework in which all stakeholders - government, civil society, private sector and citizens are supposed to collaborate and work together to achieve the shared goals and common objectives. The programme is people-centric and seeks to bring about a paradigm shift in the development strategy as it moves away from the beneficiary-oriented approach to an enterprise promotion model. A framework of governance has been created to ensure coordinated implementation of the programme. While the Citizens are at the centre of the initiative and are supposed to be the key drivers, the facilitative action on the government side is being managed with the help of new institutional mechanism that has been put in place with the Meghalaya Basin Development Council (MBDC) headed by the Chief Minister for overall policy formulation and oversight; the Meghalaya Basin Development Authority (MBDA) headed by the State Chief Secretary for steering implementation and the District Basin Units headed by the District Collectors to ensure delivery of services at the grassroots level. The district collectors also function as the Executive Directors of the Meghalaya

Basin Development Authority. Water is another thrust area of the programme. Under the programme, various steps have been taken to ensure comprehensive water security and water use efficiency and the institutional mechanism has been re-engineered to meet the challenges in the sector. A Water Resource Council headed by the State Chief Minister, a State Water Resource Development Agency headed by the State Chief Secretary and the District Water Resource Councils headed by District Collectors have been constituted in order to ensure coordinated action on the part of various government agencies and community organizations. Multi-purpose Reservoirs and small ponds called Jalkunds are being developed across the State to ensure appropriate harvesting and optimum utilization of available water resources. Knowledge is a cross-cutting theme and forms one of the core pillars of the IBDLP. With this in mind, the State government has created knowledge based institutions - Meghalaya Institute of Entrepreneurship (MIE), Meghalaya Institute of Governance (MIG) and Meghalaya Institute of Natural Resources (MINR).These institutions are not only involved in the generation of knowledge but also in creation of actionable knowledge in partnership with the stakeholders. The knowledge accumulated is then used to help the entrepreneurs. Existing institutions have been re-engineered and new institutions promoted wherever necessary to take up challenges in different related domains.

Meghalaya State Skills Development Society, State Council on Climate Change and Sustainable Development, Bio-Resource Development Centre, Centre for Adaptation to Climate Change etc., have been developed to support implementation of the programme. The Entrepreneurship Facilitation Centres set up at grassroot level in every district of the State are designed as a one-stop-shop for providing various services to potential entrepreneurs. These services include awareness, training and capacity building, credit linkage with banks, providing technology and market access. Enterprise Resource Persons (ERP) manning the EFC is a cadre of dedicated young professionals, who are trained to interact and understand the entrepreneurial requirements of the partners and to arrange various support services needed by them.The entrepreneurs looking at market access opportunities are encouraged to produce not merely what they can but to produce what they can sell for profit. The IBDLP has generated much interest and enthusiasm among the people of the State who perceive themselves as development partners under the aegis of the programme and not merely as beneficiaries. It has also received overwhelming support from various government and non-government organizations as well as multi-lateral institutions. (The author is CEO, Meghalaya Basin Development Authority. Email id: ceombda@gmail.com)

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NEWS DIGEST

- India's long-range ballistic missile program achieves another milestone with repeat launch of Agni 5 from DRDO's Launch Complex at Wheeler's Island, off the coast of Odisha. The Intercontinental surface-to-surface ballistic missile Agni 5, capable of delivering nuclear warhead with high precision was test-fired for its full range of 5,000 km. This is the second successful launch of Agni 5.
- Supreme Court has ruled that Nomination paper of candidates seeking to contest election without full details would be rejected. The Court has authorised Returning Officers (RO) to demand relevant details making a full and honest disclosure about assets, educational and criminal antecedents in nomination paper and reject nomination papers if details are not provided or particulars are left blank, despite reminder.
- Dr. Poonam Khetrpal Singh has been elected as Regional Director for WHO South-East Asia Region Organisation (SEARO). This was announced in a recently concluded meeting of Ministers of Health of countries of the WHO South-East Asia Region Organisation in New Delhi. The conference also adopted Delhi Declaration which accords high priority to the prevention and control of high blood pressure and strives towards achieving the global voluntary targets and indicators for prevention and control of non-communicable diseases, included in the global monitoring framework and endorsed by the Sixty-sixth World Health Assembly, including 25% relative reduction in the prevalence of hypertension by 2025.
- NASA's Voyager 1 spacecraft has become the first man-made object to breach interstellar space and leave the solar system. The 36-year-old probe is about 12 billion miles (19 billion kilometers) from our sun. New data indicate Voyager 1 has been travelling for about one year through plasma, or ionized gas, present in the space between stars. Voyager 1 is now the most distant human made object.
- Japan switches off its last operating nuclear reactor for an inspection, with no date scheduled for a restart amid strong public hostility towards atomic power. The move will leave the world's third largest economy without atomic energy for the second time since the Fukushima nuclear crises that erupted in March 2011.
- Dehradun based Ms. Nungshi Malik and her twin sister Ms. Tashi Malik, became the first set of twins to scale the Mount Everest.
- Pakistani education rights campaigner Malala Yousufzai and American singer and social justice activist Harry Belafonte were named as joint recipients of Amnesty International's Ambassador of Conscience Award for 2013. The award is the human rights group's highest honour, recognizing individuals who have promoted and enhanced the cause of human rights through their life and by example.
- Ray Dolby, an American sound wizard died in San Francisco. He has pioneered noise reducing and surround sound audio technologies which are vital to the music and film industry.
- Booker Prize is now open for all authors writing in English. The prize will from 2014 include writers in English from any part of the world provided their books have been published in the United Kingdom. Till now the Booker Prize was awarded only for literary fiction by authors from the Commonwealth, the Republic of Ireland and Zimbabwe.