

## **TO BUILD A PROSPEROUS, POWERFUL NATION, RECALL INDIA'S PAST**

Indian civilisation is perhaps the most ancient and continuing civilisation of the world. India has a long history and has been recognised by others as a land of great wealth and even greater wisdom. But India has also experienced continued foreign attacks and alien rule for centuries and this has resulted in a loss of pride in India and its remarkable achievements. Indians, particularly educated under the system of education imposed by the Britishers, have lost sight of not only the cultural and civilisational greatness of India, but also of its technological achievements and abounding natural resources.

History tells us that India was a land of abundance. The country has been blessed with great natural fertility, abundant water and unlimited sunshine. According to foreigners visiting this country, Indians were regarded as the best agriculturists in the world. Records of these travels from the 4<sup>th</sup> Century BC till early-19<sup>th</sup> Century speak volumes about our agricultural abundance which dazzled the world. The Thanjaur (900-1200 AD) inscriptions and Ramnathapuram (1325 AD) inscriptions record 15 to 20 tonnes per hectare production of paddy. Now, even after the first green revolution, according to Government statistics, Ludhiana in the late-20<sup>th</sup> Century recorded a production of 5.5 tonnes of paddy per hectare. It is, therefore, imperative that India rediscovers an agricultural technology which incorporates all the inputs from our own wisdom and agricultural skills that made us a land of abundance in food.

Indian economy was as flourishing as its agriculture. Foreigners from Magasthenes to Fa-Hian and Hiuen-Tsiang have described and praised Indian material prosperity. Indian villages around 1780 in Bihar have been cited as an example of cleanliness and hospitality. The streets were swept and watered and the people had a remarkable sense of hospitality and attention to accommodate the needs of the travellers.

Old British documents established that India was far advanced in the technical and educational fields than Britain of 18<sup>th</sup> and early-19<sup>th</sup> Century. Its agriculture technically and productively was far superior; it produced a much higher grade of iron and steel. The Iron Pillar at Mehrauli in Delhi has withstood the ravages of time for 1,500 years or more without any sign of rusting or decay. Metallurgists of the world have marvelled at this high degree of sophistication in technology. Textiles formed the great industrial enterprise of pre-British India. Up to the late-18<sup>th</sup> Century, India was the leading producer and exporter of textiles; China was then a close second.

Indian advancements in astronomy, mathematics, chemistry, physics and biological sciences have been documented and recognised all over the world. Contributions in the field of medicine and surgery are also well known. Ayurveda and Yoga are the best gifts from India to the world in creating a healthy civilisation. India knew plastic surgery, practised it for centuries and, in fact, it has become the basis of modern plastic surgery. India also practised the system of inoculation against small pox centuries before the vaccination was discovered by Dr Edward Jenner.

Fa-Hian, writing about Magadha in 400 AD, has mentioned that a well organised health care system existed in India. According to him, the nobles and householders of this country had founded hospitals within the city to which the poor of all countries, the destitute, the crippled and the diseased may repair. "They receive every kind of requisite help. Physicians inspect their diseases, and according to their cases, order them food and drink, medicines or decoctions, everything in fact that contributes to their ease. When cured they depart at their ease."

It has been established beyond doubt by the several reports on education at the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> Century and the writings of Indian scholars that not only did India have a functioning indigenous educational system but that it actually compared more than favourably with the system obtaining in England at the time in respect of the number of schools and colleges proportionate to the population, the number of students in schools and colleges, the diligence as well as the intelligence of the students, the quality of the teachers and the financial support provided from private and public sources. Contrary to the then prevailing opinion, those attending school and college included an impressive percentage of lower caste students, Muslims and girls. Mahatma Gandhi was absolutely right in saying that India was more illiterate in 1931 compared to its state of literacy 50-60 years ago, i.e. in 1870. India had also an expertise in ship building, as also in extensive manufacturing and uses of dyes, and also in manufacturing paper.

India had a share of about 22.5 per cent of world GDP in 1600 AD which during British domination suffered a steep decline to 12.25 per cent in 1870, while the British share in the same period rose sharply from 1.8 per cent to 9.1 per cent. When Britishers left India, the economy was completely shattered and India's share in world manufacture, trade and GDP declined further. Even after 62 years of Independence, India's share in world market remains less than one per cent.

India's prosperity, its talents and the state of its high moral society can be best understood by what Thomas Babington Macaulay stated in his speech of February 02, 1835, in the British Parliament. "I have travelled across the length and breadth of India and I have not seen one person who is a beggar, who is a thief, such wealth I have seen in this country, such high moral values, people of such high caliber, that I do not think we would ever conquer this country, unless we break the very back bone of this nation, which is her spiritual and cultural heritage, and therefore, I propose that we replace her

old and ancient education system, her culture, for if the Indians think that all that is foreign and English is good and greater than their own, they will lose their self esteem, their native culture and they will become what we want them, a truly dominated nation." This policy was implemented very meticulously by Britishers and the education system was created to make Indian's ignorant about themselves.

No nation can chart out its domestic or foreign policies unless it has a clear understanding about itself, its history, its strength and failings. It becomes all the more important for any nation to know its roots which sustain its people in a highly mobile and globalised world. Leaders like Bal Gangadhar Tilak, Gopal Krishna Gokhale, Sri Aurobindo, Mahatma Gandhi and others who spearheaded the freedom movement had built the struggle around a clear vision of India's civilisational consciousness. Indian ways of thought and action were in the centre of their political action. These leaders had a vision to reconstruct the political and economic institutions of India as a continuum of the civilisational consciousness which made India one country, one people and one nation. It is unfortunate that the leaders of independent India quickly discarded this vision and continued to work with the institutional structures created by the British which had nothing to do with India's world view and its vitality which were responsible for its survival despite continued outside attacks and alien rule.

During the six decades of our independence, governance of our country, except for a short period, was with the Congress and its associates. It was most unfortunate that they never thought of creating a socio-economic and political paradigm of governance drawing from the civilisational consciousness of India. They, instead, tried to emulate whatever was being practised in this or that Western country. The disastrous results are before us.

What was required after independence was to reorient India's polity to bring it in consonance with the seekings and sensibilities of the Indian people. Failure to do so has resulted in a fractured society, vast economic disparities, terrorism and communal conflict, insecurity, moral, psychological and spiritual degradation, and a state apparatus unable to handle any of these problems. Attempts are sometimes made to apply palliatives to manage the affairs but nothing succeeds. What is needed is to arrive at a consensus about the 'Idea' of India and also about the seekings and preferences of the people and how they find expression in various socio-economic, political organisations and cultural, aesthetic and ethical sensibilities of the people of India.

The civilisational consciousness of India has been well defined by the sages and philosophers and has its roots in Bharatiya or Hindu world view. This world view is holistic and spiritual. It accepts that diversity is inherent in the scheme of creation; it is the manifestation of the same cosmic entity in different forms. Hence it not only accepts diversity but respects it and even more celebrates it. Hindu or Bharatiya view of life seeks unity in diversity. It is an inclusive approach and one can say that Hinduism is the

most ennobling experience in spiritual co-existence. The Bharatiya mind has contemplated beyond national boundaries and the Vedic Rishi declared in the hoary past '*Vasudhaiva Kutumbukam*' - that the world is a family. The horizons of India's worldview are known to have extended from Bamiyan / Kandahar to Borobudur / Indonesia on the one hand, and Sri Lanka to Japan on the other. Imprints of Indian culture are found in some other parts of the world as well. In ancient times India was isolated in geography but not in cultural relationship, trade and commerce.

The belief in essential unity of mankind is a unique feature of Hindu thought. The Vedic Rishi had also declared that '*Ekam Sad Viprah Bahudha Vadanti*' (truth or reality is one but wise men describe it in different ways). This is essentially a secular thought in the real sense of the term because it accepts that one can follow his own path to reach the ultimate. Hindus are well known for their belief in harmony of religions. And because of this world view almost all religions practised in different parts of the world have existed peacefully in India and will continue to do so.

But it appears that even after six decades of independence India has not been able to discover its innate vitality and its sense of time and consequently has lost its direction and will to act. The drift is acute and has encompassed all aspects of national life. The situation needs a change and a new paradigm is called for, for creating a prosperous, progressive and powerful India whose voice is heard in international fora.

India can achieve this goal provided the people seriously set to this task. We are endowed with vast human and material resources. Indian youth have demonstrated their capabilities in various walks of life and proved their competence. In science and technology, space and atomic energy, despite handicaps and lack of world class facilities, they have done remarkably well. In industry, business and management and information communication technology, they have successfully taken challenging risks. With this energetic and vibrant youth power and by prudently harnessing natural resources, Indians can perform miracles provided they work with self-confidence and pride in India. We have to assure a prominent role and full opportunities to our youth in the decision-making process. They are the future and the propellers of our prosperity.

India need not blindly copy this or that model of development; it should evolve a model suited to its genius and resources. The Integral Humanism suggested by Pt. Deen Dayal Upadhyay provides such a model. India should be original, India should innovate, and India should move upwards on the ladder of global leadership. The global scenario demands a solution, a radical solution to save the world from the impending disaster of the Great Economic Recession and terrorism looming large all over the world. India is destined to play its historic role at this crucial juncture and for this the BJP is committed to work for creating a modern, powerful, prosperous, progressive and secure India.

**Dr Murli Manohar Joshi**  
**Chairman**  
Manifesto Committee

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## FOR STABILITY & SECURITY INDIA NEEDS A DECISIVE LEADER

**A** quirk of fate brought the Congress to power at the Centre in the summer of 2004.

The United Progressive Alliance that it put together, which was able to secure parliamentary majority with the help of the Left parties, has shown remarkable lack of cohesiveness with individual Ministers representing the Congress' allies running their allotted Ministries like their personal fiefdom. This was a Government totally divorced from the twin principles of collective responsibility and accountability.

The nation was thus burdened with a Prime Minister who was in office but not in power; and, a Government that was in power but not in authority. This was supposed to be a Government that would work for the welfare of the '*aam admi*' - the common man. As it prepares to exit office after five years, the Government has nothing to show by way of extending a 'hand' to the '*aam admi*'.

This Government will be remembered for four things. It was headed by the weakest Prime Minister the country has ever had. Its reversal of NDA's policies has led to a mounting sense of insecurity fuelled by repeated terrorist attacks, Maoist insurgency and separatist violence which together have claimed hundreds of innocent lives. Its gross mismanagement of the economy has caused inflation, job losses and lockouts. And, it has shielded corruption at high places by misusing agencies of the state, namely the CBI.

The Congress has tried to whitewash its terrible record on the national security front, especially its abysmal failure to protect citizens from terrorism, by making cosmetic changes in antiquated laws. This is clearly not enough. It has sought to gloss over the increasing cost of food, which is eight per cent higher than in 2008, and many times more than in 2004, by projecting misleading statistics.

Lakhs of people in the unorganised sector have lost their jobs over the past year. Skilled workers are losing their jobs in the organised sector. This is far worse than unemployment because it impoverishes families dependent on assured income and dampens the national spirit.

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The worst hit are India's youth, especially those who are looking forward to enter the job market. The Congress-led UPA Government has gifted them with a bleak future.

As for the poor, they feel abandoned by the Congress-led regime. The much-publicised National Rural Employment Guarantee Programme has turned out to be as much a flop as all other schemes of the Government. It is a telling comment on the UPA's performance that a whopping 55 million people have been pushed below the poverty line over the past five years. This is according to a study by the Indian Statistical Institute, based on data collated by the National Sample Survey Organisation; the real figure could be much higher.

In rural India, thousands of farmers have committed suicide to escape the burden of mounting debt and grinding poverty. They are victims of Government apathy.

An equally damning indictment of the Congress-led UPA regime is galloping urban poverty. An estimated 23.7 per cent of the population in cities and towns lives in slums, according to 'India: Urban Poverty Report, 2009', amid squalor, crime, disease and tension.

Such glaring deprivation and denial, such rising numbers of people below the poverty line, contradict this nation's aspirations. They are obstacles to India's emergence as a great power and need to be removed through remedial Government intervention.

The stability of the NDA years helped India to prosper. The drift of the UPA years has put India in reverse gear. The BJP will restore the stability which India desperately needs.

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The BJP, immediately upon coming to power, will address the key issues of security and economy. It will resume the employment-generating, prosperity-creating policies of the NDA Government headed by Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee, through massive investments in infrastructure projects, by nursing agriculture back to health, and by making credit easily accessible to industry, while ensuring the safety and security of all people from the depredations of terrorists.

India today faces a severe crisis of leadership. The nation needs a determined and decisive leader who has the capacity, commitment and conviction to take command of the situation and lead from the front. The country needs a leader who can restore Government's credibility and the people's confidence in themselves. The polity needs a leader who values consensus over conflict, consultation over confrontation. Then alone can good governance replace the all-round failure of the Congress.

That leader is Shri L.K. Advani.

Shri Advani has an exemplary record of service to the nation covering over six decades. A leader of impeccable integrity, he was one of the chief crusaders for democracy during the Emergency (1975-77) and spent 19 months in jail. He led the Ayodhya movement, the biggest mass movement in India since Independence, and

initiated a powerful debate on cultural nationalism and the true meaning of secularism. Along with Shri Vajpayee, he was the principal architect of the BJP's triumph, as the head of the National Democratic Alliance, in forming a stable and successful non-Congress coalition Government at the Centre (1998-2004). As India's Deputy Prime Minister and Home Minister, he ably assisted Shri Vajpayee in steering the ship of the nation through difficult waters.

The BJP is proud that it is seeking the people's mandate in the 2009 general election, along with its allies in the NDA, under the leadership of Shri Advani.

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The BJP is contesting the 2009 15<sup>th</sup> Lok Sabha election on a Manifesto that commits the party to an agenda for change guided by three goals: **GOOD GOVERNANCE, DEVELOPMENT** and **SECURITY**. Our focus will be on the nation's youth, on addressing their concerns and helping them achieve their aspirations. We will lay emphasis on empowerment through excellence by providing quality education. We will ensure the security of life and property. Reviving the economy, re-orienting it towards agriculture, rural development, and unorganised and informal sectors; creating adequate employment opportunities for the youth; pushing back the price line; and, investing heavily in infrastructure projects are at the top of our agenda.

The BJP believes that after five years of drift and missed opportunities, the time has come for a Government that works, a Government that cares. Our primary concern will be India's rapid, inclusive, equitable and all-embracing development and stable growth that benefits the largest number of people. We will invest in rural development; we will ensure higher agricultural productivity and guarantee an assured income to farmers; and, we will protect the livelihood of the masses while creating myriad opportunities of gainful employment.

## NATIONAL SECURITY FEAR SHALL NO LONGER STALK THIS LAND

The last five years have been a nightmare for the people of this country as terrorists, separatists and insurgents have led the effete UPA Government on a macabre dance of death and destruction. From the daring attack on Delhi on the eve of Diwali in 2005 to the fidayeen raid on the Ram Mandir in Ayodhya, from the horrendous bombings in Hyderabad (including at Mecca Masjid), Bangalore, Jaipur, Ahmedabad and Guwahati to the slaughter of worshippers at Sankat Mochan Temple in Banaras, the terrorists have struck repeatedly with impunity as the Prime Minister spent sleepless nights agonising over the plight of terror suspects and eagerly offered to reward the kith and kin of terrorists killed in action.

The UPA began its tenure by dismantling the anti-terror regime put together by the BJP-led NDA Government: The Prevention of Terrorism Act was scrapped; investigations were halted; and, prosecution was slowed down. The mastermind behind the daring attack on Parliament House, Mohammed Afzal Guru, was sentenced to death by the Supreme Court after being prosecuted under POTA. But a dissolute Government headed by an irresolute Prime Minister has failed to carry out the execution, sending out a clear message to India's enemies: They shall not be punished till such time the Congress is in power.

It is, therefore, not surprising that terrorists should have repeatedly attacked our cities, leaving behind a bloody trail of death and destruction. Delhi, the nation's capital, and Mumbai, the country's financial capital, have been hit twice, as has been Bangalore, India's technology capital. As if the bombings of the commuter trains were not enough, the ISI despatched fidayeen for a multiple strike on Mumbai which began on November 26, 2008, and lasted for more than 60 hours. Never before has India been seen to be so helpless in the face of terror.

Terrorism sponsored by Pakistani agencies is only one of the reasons behind the fear that grips the people in cities, towns and villages. The life and limb of the 'aam admi' is equally in danger on account of Maoists who have expanded their theatre of violence to 156 districts across 13 States. The inter-State coordination mechanism put in place by the NDA Government has been dismantled and State Governments have been virtually left to fend for themselves in the face of mounting Maoist hostility. In Jammu & Kashmir, separatists continue to use the services of Pakistani terrorists to promote their agenda of relentless violence. In the North-East, insurgents have remorselessly killed and maimed innocent people. The situation in Assam is particularly of concern as the ULFA, which had been all but smashed during the NDA years, has regrouped and rearmed its cadres, and unleashed a relentless wave of terror. The Congress State

Government has done nothing to either prevent this violence or punish ULFA; instead, unconditional talks have been offered to the killers!

Internal security is also imperilled by unchecked illegal immigration across our eastern border. The vulnerability of these illegal immigrants has been time and again exploited by the ISI and its jihadi front organisations as well as local terror cells to carry out bombings and provide logistical support to foreign terrorists. The Supreme Court has described illegal immigration as an act of 'external aggression' while striking down the IMDT Act. But the Congress, both at the Centre and in Assam, has tried to circumvent the Supreme Court's judgement through executive orders. The Gauhati High Court last year lashed out at the State Government for doing nothing to stop the illegal immigration. The High Court highlighted how a Pakistani, who had entered Assam via Bangladesh, contested Assembly elections unchallenged. Vote-bank politics has not only changed the demography of vast stretches of eastern and North-East India but also eroded the authority of the state. India is sitting on a tinderbox. The consequences of this unabated illegal immigration are bound to be disastrous.

In its dying days, the UPA Government has tried to fool the people by tampering with outdated laws and setting up a National Investigating Agency to fight terror. But such half-hearted efforts to calm anger and disquiet following the 26/11 outrage are neither enough nor the right approach to tackling the menace of terrorism.

The BJP will initiate the following measures within 100 days of coming to power:

1. Revive the anti-terror mechanism that has been dismantled by the Congress; improve upon POTA to ensure it is more effective as an instrument of deterrence and a tool to prosecute offenders without innocent people being harassed; and, strengthen the operational role of the National Investigating Agency.
2. Give assent to laws drafted by State Governments for dealing with organised crime and terrorism; encourage other State Governments to adopt similar laws.
3. Launch a massive programme to detect, detain and deport illegal immigrants.
4. Completely revamp the internal and external intelligence agencies and review the existing system of coordination, convergence and dissemination of intelligence inputs. A massive exercise will be undertaken to modernise intelligence agencies so that they are better equipped to use technology and cope with the rapidly changing trends and patterns of terrorism at home and abroad. The National Security Council will be made the hub of all sector-related assessments. It will be accountable for real-time intelligence dissemination; intelligence agencies will be held responsible for lapses. Appointments to intelligence agencies will be on merit and not because of political patronage as has been the system during the Congress years.
5. A Digital Security Agency will be set up to deal with cyber warfare, cyber counter-terrorism, and cyber security of national digital assets.

6. State Governments will be provided with all assistance to modernise their respective police forces and equip them with the latest weaponry and communications technology. This will be done on a mission mode approach. The police are the first responders to any crisis situation. Drawing lessons from experience, police forces will be trained and fully equipped to deal with situations similar to that of Mumbai and in meeting the challenge posed by Maoists and insurgents.
7. Border management will be reviewed and improved. Punitive measures will be introduced to block illegal immigration.
8. India's vast coastline is virtually unprotected. Coastal security will be strengthened for better patrolling of Indian waters and preventing terrorists from taking the sea route to enter India. A National Maritime Authority will be set up to coordinate coastal security.
9. Special courts will be set up for speedy prosecution of those involved with acts of terrorism. Their trial shall be fair and justice will be done to the victims swiftly.
10. Coercive measures, including diplomacy, will be used to deal with countries which promote cross-border terrorism. India will engage with the world in the global war on terror while not compromising on its domestic interests, primarily protecting citizens from the ravages of terrorism.
11. The Centre will facilitate better inter-State coordination and real-time intelligence-sharing, apart from helping States to raise anti-insurgency forces, to face the threat posed by Maoists. The 'Chhattisgarh Model' will be used for counter-Maoist operations. At the same time, every effort will be made to address the social and economic issues that make the ground fertile for Left-wing extremism.
12. Any talks with insurgent groups will be conditional and within the framework of the Constitution.

The BJP will send out a simple message, loud and clear, to terrorists and their sponsors: They will have to pay a heavy price for each innocent life lost. Retribution will be swift and exemplary. The authority of the state, which has been diminished by the Congress in pursuit of vote-bank politics, shall be restored.

#### National Identity Cards for All

The BJP will launch an innovative programme to establish a countrywide system of multipurpose national identity cards so as to ensure national security, correct welfare delivery, accurate tax collection, financial inclusion and voter registration. Voter identity cards, PAN cards, passports, ration cards and BPL cards are already in use though not all with photo identity. The NDA proposes to make it incumbent for every Indian to have a National Identity Card. The programme will be completed in three years.

The National Identity Card will contain enough memory and processing capabilities to run multiple applications. Through it the NDA will ensure efficient welfare delivery and tax collection. The card will also be linked to a bank account. All welfare payments, including widow and old age pensions, through the wide range of schemes such as Mother and Child support/ Kisan Credit, Students Assistance and Micro-Credit will be channelised through the National Identity Card. The card will make it possible for individuals to save and borrow money; for farmers to get bank credit, also establish accurate land titles data.

The National Identity Card will also strengthen national security by ensuring accurate citizen identity, thus tracking illegal immigration. All financial transactions, purchase of property and access to public services will be possible only on the basis of the National Identity Card which will be made forgery and hacking resistant.

## ENGAGING THE WORLD INDIA'S VOICE SHALL BE HEARD

**T**he BJP believes a resurgent India must get its rightful place in the comity of nations and international institutions. The BJP also believes in a multi-polar world with no nation having overriding powers over others. Towards this end, the BJP in power will engage in meaningful diplomacy with nations across the world on equal terms. The BJP's foreign policy will be based on the principle of enlightened self-interest.

The BJP desires good relations between India and the USA and will strengthen the India-US strategic partnership on the principle of equality. But we will not compromise on either India's national interest or relations with another friendly country. The BJP will restore the balance that has been disturbed by the UPA Government.

India's traditional relations with Russia and the Central Asian Republics will be refashioned to keep pace with current realities and derive maximum mutual advantage.

We will pursue friendly relations with the European Union, West Asian countries and South-East Asian nations. It will further strengthen relations with Arab countries and pursue enhanced cooperation with Israel - the two are not inter-linked and both are beneficial for India.

The dialogue process of solving the outstanding border dispute with China, which was initiated by the NDA Government under Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee's

leadership, will be revived. We believe that both India and China can prosper and rise together; increased economic cooperation can contribute to this.

India has a special role to play in the Indian Ocean region and we will pursue this vigorously.

The BJP believes in forging enduring friendly and cooperative relations with India's neighbours. We also believe that political stability, progress and peace in India's neighbourhood are essential for South Asia's growth and development: SAARC is a good platform to promote these goals.

But the BJP will be guided solely by national interest while dealing with India's neighbours. Towards this end, its decisions and actions in power will be determined by the following:

**Pakistan:** There can be no 'comprehensive dialogue' for peace unless Pakistan a) dismantles the terrorist infrastructure on territory under its control; b) actively engages in prosecuting terror elements and organisations; c) puts a permanent, verifiable end to its practice of using cross-border terrorism as an instrument of state policy; d) stops using the territory of third countries to launch terror attacks on India; and, e) hands over to India individuals wanted for committing crimes on Indian soil.

**Nepal:** The BJP will re-craft India's Nepal policy to rid it of the UPA's biases that have influenced India's response to events in Nepal with which our country shares a common civilisational and cultural history. India-Nepal relations must be based on friendship, mutual cooperation and harmony of interests. Towards this end, existing arrangements will be reviewed and revised bearing in mind mutual interests and benefits on the basis of dialogue. The BJP would like to see Nepal emerge as a stable, prosperous country, and will strive to strengthen age-old fraternal ties.

**Bhutan:** Existing close relations with Bhutan will be strengthened.

**Bangladesh:** The BJP will pro-actively engage the Government of Bangladesh on issues of mutual assistance and benefit. A friendly Government in Dhaka is in India's interest.

**Sri Lanka:** The BJP believes that Sri Lanka has the right to deal with terrorism on its soil. At the same time, the political, economic and human rights of Sri Lanka's Tamil minority community must be protected by the Government in Colombo. The BJP will pursue a robust relationship with Sri Lanka and regain the initiative that has been lost during the last five years.

**Afghanistan:** The BJP believes that India has an important role in helping the people of Afghanistan to rebuild their country and stabilise their society, as well as secure their lives from the depredations of the Taliban operating from Pakistani sanctuaries. The BJP will further build upon India-Afghanistan relations and work in

close association with the international community to ensure a stable, secure and prosperous Afghanistan.

#### Mother India's Children Abroad

The BJP will maintain close contacts with people of Indian origin who have settled on foreign shores. It has been the consistent policy of the BJP to promote the interests of people of Indian origin living abroad. During the NDA years, special efforts were made to revive and revitalise the ties between Pravasi Bharatiyas and their ancestral land by institutionalising the Pravasi Bharatiya Divas, honouring achievers and introducing the PIO card. Those efforts will be given a further boost.

### DEFENDING INDIA NO COMPROMISE, NO CONCESSION

The Indian Army, Air Force and Navy need to be strengthened in view of rapidly changing regional and global realities. Tragically, the services have been ignored by the Congress and failure to address the concerns of the Army, Air Force and Navy has bred undesirable discontent. The BJP will address all pending issues immediately. It will be guided by the following solemn commitments while dealing with the defence of India:

1. The long-pending acquisition of military hardware will be expedited through absolutely transparent means in a time-bound manner.
2. Budget allocations for defence forces will be spent without being allowed to lapse. The criminal negligence of the defence forces by the UPA Government has resulted in nearly Rs 24,000 crore by way of budgetary allocations being allowed to lapse over five years. This not only endangers the lives of our soldiers but also the security of the nation.
3. Our forces are performing a service to the nation and deserve better pay and privileges. Towards this end, the BJP is committed to the following measures:
  - a. The pending issues of pay and privileges will be revisited and resolved to the satisfaction of the defence forces. The modalities for setting up a separate Pay Commission for the forces will be expedited;
  - b. All personnel of the Army, Air Force and Navy, as also paramilitary forces, will be exempt from paying income tax on their salaries and perquisites;

- c. The honorarium for winners of gallantry awards like Pram Vir Chakra, which is abysmally low at Rs 500 to Rs 3,000, will be increased ten-fold to Rs 5,000 to Rs 30,000. This will be done with retrospective effect; the honorarium will be taxfree.
  - d. The principle of one rank, one pension will be implemented;
  - e. Incentive-based steps will be taken to make joining the defence services an exciting proposition for young men and women to overcome the shortage of officers; and,
  - f. Incentives will be offered to State Governments for ensuring honourable settlement of retired personnel of the defence services.
4. The present shortage of defence personnel at all levels will be met by making the Services an attractive career option. This would include competitive pay and privileges, and pension benefits. This task will be completed in a time-bound manner.
  5. The capacities of Defence Research and Development Organisation will be enhanced. The PPP route will be explored for conventional defence production bearing in mind the nation's needs and to make India a competitive player in the global market by 2020.

## INDEPENDENT STRATEGIC NUCLEAR PROGRAMME WE WILL ASSERT INDIA'S SOVEREIGNTY

**T**he BJP believes that India's strategic nuclear programme has been deeply compromised by the Congress. The gains of Pokhran-II and subsequent development have been frittered away for gains that have accrued to those who wish to see India's nuclear programme to be contained, rolled back and eventually dismantled.

The BJP will reverse this drift. India's indigenous thorium technology programme will be expedited and given all financial assistance, correcting the grievous wrong done by the UPA Government. India needs nuclear energy, but not at the cost of our national strategic interests. The Congress has fooled the people of India by selling the over-hyped India-US Civil Nuclear Cooperation Agreement as an absolute necessity and how it will help light up people's homes. It has done so by suppressing two crucial facts. First, as the CAG has pointed out, the UPA Government did not make the smallest effort to tap India's own nuclear fuel supplies. Had it done so, our reactors would have produced many times more power than at present. Second, nuclear power is

tremendously expensive and not affordable for the 'aam admi'. The India-US nuclear deal, in the final analysis, is not about empowering India but disempowering India by making us dependent on American supplies and tying us to discriminatory regimes from which Pakistan is free.

The BJP will honour India's commitments to prevent proliferation. But it will pursue an independent nuclear policy based on the following:

1. All options will be kept open and all steps will be taken that are necessary for the technological advancement of India's civil and military nuclear programmes.
2. Maintain a credible minimum deterrent that is in tune with changing realities.
3. Seek cross-party consensus before agreeing to any control regime, including CTBT, FMCR and MTCR.

In view of the uncalled for and regrettable secrecy with which the Congress and the Prime Minister dealt with the India-US nuclear deal, the BJP proposes to introduce an amendment to the Constitution to make it mandatory for Government to seek Parliament's approval/ratification by two-thirds majority before signing any bilateral or multilateral agreement that impinges on India's strategic programmes, territorial integrity and economic interest.

## FOOD SECURITY WE WILL MAKE INDIA HUNGER-FREE

**T**he BJP views food security as integral to national security. The spectre of a looming food crisis haunts the developing world as never before. With the agriculture sector suffering on account of the Congress' gross negligence, India faces a real threat of food scarcity.

With India becoming a net importer of food under Congress rule, there is genuine concern about food security. Three factors have contributed to increasing food scarcity and the resultant sense of growing insecurity among the masses. First, the real income of workers and farmers has not kept pace with the rising cost of food, thus reducing their purchasing power. Second, the public distribution system has been severely crippled by the Congress-led Government which has been more interested in importing food grains and selling them at a high price than in securing the needs of the people. Third, with an additional 55 million people pushed below the poverty line over the last five years, there is widespread malnourishment. The economic recession has

only worsened the situation and made it grimmer, especially for workers in the unorganised sector.

The BJP believes people have the right to food. To ensure food security for all and eliminate hunger, we will:

1. Provide 35 kg of rice or wheat every month to BPL families at Rs 2 per kg under an improved and expanded Antyodaya Anna Yojana. This will be available against 'Food Coupons' redeemable at both PDS and private outlets.
2. Allocate more funds for expanding, universalising and improving the functioning of the Public Distribution System.
3. Preventing families from slipping below the poverty line.
4. Setting up community kitchens in extremely impoverished areas with the help of NGOs through shared funding.
5. Aggressively addressing the problem of widespread malnutrition, especially by expanding the scope of the existing mid-day meal scheme.
6. Encouraging the production of cereals and discouraging the conversion of fertile farm land for dubious industrial projects.
7. Ensuring a sufficient level of food stocks are maintained to meet any exigencies due to possible global food crisis which could be severely debilitating and make imports prohibitively expensive, if not impossible.

## ENERGY SECURITY

### WE WILL PROTECT INDIA FROM FUTURE CRISES

**I**ndia cannot afford to lose any more time on securing its energy requirements. The

Congress's response to this issue has been episodic at best, often resulting in India failing to secure its energy interests even as other countries in the neighbourhood, most notably China, have spared no effort to single-mindedly pursue the goal of securing their energy needs for the present and future.

At present India is largely dependent on imported oil and gas to meet its energy demands, especially demand for power although our per capita power consumption is only a sixth of the world average. Sixty-seven per cent of our power supply comes from fossil fuels, of which 70 per cent is imported. With market fluctuation and manipulation, as it happened in 2008, this makes us vulnerable to external factors.

The BJP proposes to invest heavily in developing non-fossil fuel-based clean energy sources, especially for electricity production. Our goal will be to add at least 120,000 MW of power over the next five years, with 20 per cent of it coming from renewable sources. Similar emphasis will be placed on developing alternatives to petrol and diesel to lessen the burden of imported oil and gas as well as meet the challenges of climate change.

Adequate support will be extended for developing hybrid technologies and their applications. There will be special emphasis on developing renewal energy sources, especially solar energy, wind energy and run-on-the-river technology, and bio-fuel. Innovation will be rewarded.

Impetus will be provided for the production of non-conventional energy by enabling people and firms to bank it in the power grid and draw it at the time of their need.

## REVIVING THE NATIONAL ECONOMY FROM RECESSION TO JOB-GENERATING GROWTH

The UPA Government's mismanagement of the national economy and fiscal indiscipline has resulted in frittering away the tremendous gains of the NDA years. The slowing down of India's growth has had an adverse impact on people across the country. To control inflation, the UPA Government drained liquidity out of the system, which, in turn, hobbled both the organised and unorganised sectors. It is now desperately trying to reverse that flawed policy, but clearly such half-hearted measures are not sufficient. The situation calls for determined, direct and visible Government intervention. The BJP plans to do so through robust policies aimed at revitalising the economy and placing India on the path of employment-generating growth coupled with rapid development.

Towards this end, the BJP will take the following measures:

1. Put in place a low tax, low interest regime so that people have more money and their purchasing power increases, which in turn will serve as an impetus for the economy.
2. Exempt income up to Rs 3 lakh from Income Tax. Women and senior citizens will receive an additional exemption benefit of Rs 50,000.
3. Income of all senior citizens by way of pension will be exempt from Income Tax.
4. To incentivise savings, all interest earned on bank deposits other than by corporates and those who have business income shall be exempt from tax.

5. Dispense with clubbing of agricultural income with other sources of income for determining tax liability on other income.
6. CST will be abolished and GST will be rationalised between 12 and 14 per; FBT will go. ESOPS and MAT tax regime will be rationalised and made equitable.
7. Firm action will be initiated to minimise the presence of black money in the national economy. We will take determined steps to bring back the money (estimated at Rs 25,00,000 crore and Rs 75,00,000 crore) illegally stashed in Swiss bank accounts and tax havens, and use it for infrastructure development, housing, health and social welfare schemes.
8. Arrest the loss of jobs and reverse the trend of joblessness which is far worse than unemployment by making massive public sector investments in job-generating infrastructure programmes, especially building of roads and highways, and linking of rivers.
5. Hindustan Diamond Corporation will be provided full support to help the diamond industry tide over the crisis caused by the global economic slump. It will provide raw diamonds to the cutting and polishing units and bank them for future trade.
6. Highways construction, which got a boost during the NDA years, will once again feature high on Government's agenda. We will build between 15 and 20 km of highways every day.
7. The Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana, the largest rural connectivity programme initiated by the NDA Government, will be fully implemented in the first three years.
8. Bring down interest rates for housing loans so that housing becomes affordable, accessible and revives the stalled real estate sector which has witnessed huge job losses.
9. Enhance the capabilities of the manufacturing sector by easing credit availability.
10. Promote SMEs and the retail sector which can generate a large number of jobs and make a meaningful contribution to the national economy. The criteria for classifying SMEs will be reviewed.
11. Introduce reforms to improve productivity and greater capital formation.
12. Give a boost to tourism by selecting 50 tourist destinations and investing heavily in their infrastructure and communications. Tourist arrivals will be doubled.
13. Impose countervailing restrictions on foreign companies operating in India, especially in the services sector, which, on account of domestic laws of their respective countries, have introduced restrictions on hiring Indian employees with valid work visas.

14. Regulatory bodies which are supposed to monitor the performance and balance sheets of companies will be strengthened to prevent corporate fraud that dents India's image as well as has a direct impact on the market and investors.
15. Make India proud of Indian products, and make Indian brands globally competitive.
16. Ensure a decent level of consumption for all without encouraging consumerism.

## URBAN INDIA LOOKING AHEAD TO THE FUTURE

**A**s the national economy grows and jobs are generated, there will be a matching increase in the pressures on urban centres. Apart from assisting State Governments to renew and revive existing cities and replace festering slums with hygienic, affordable living quarters, the BJP will review and recast the Urban Development Policy. We will specifically do the following, bearing in mind the challenges of the future:

1. In pursuit of the principle of 'Shelter for All', 10 lakh dwelling units for the poor will be constructed every year.
2. Fifteen new cities, with world class infrastructure facilities and amenities, will be built in five years.
3. For existing urban centres, basic infrastructure facilities and amenities of water, drainage, roads, electricity, environment and solid waste management will be enhanced for a clean and healthy city life.
4. Peripheral areas of cities will be developed on the basis of 'rurban' concept to minimise migration: The physical infrastructure facilities will be that of urban areas but the heart and soul will be of rural areas.
5. GIS-based mapping of urban properties and title certification will be concluded.

6. Practical, pragmatic measures will be adopted to deal with emerging urban problems like vehicular traffic overload.

## AGRICULTURE DEBT-FREE FARMER, PROSPEROUS INDIA

The pitiful state of our farm sector is best exemplified by debt-ridden farmers committing suicide. The UPA Government, while actively promoting the import of food grains, has callously ignored the plight of India's farmers. There are three immediate concerns which will be addressed by the BJP in a time-bound manner: Ensuring assured income for farmers; freeing farmers from the burden of mounting debts; and, increasing public investment in agriculture. Everything can wait, but not agriculture.

To make India's farmer debt-free, the BJP will:

1. Waive agricultural loans.
2. Set up a commission to study the entire gamut of farmers' loans and come up with an actionable solution to the deepening crisis within six months.
3. Set a maximum ceiling of 4 per cent interest for agricultural loans to farmers from banks.
4. Introduce a pension scheme for aged and helpless farmers.
5. Make agriculture profitable by reducing the cost of inputs, enhancing yields and reviewing the present method of determining prices.

6. Implement a Farm Income Insurance Scheme through which both price and produce will be insured. In the event of loss of crops, farmers will be compensated under this scheme so that they do not suffer any loss of income.
7. Promote nature-friendly cultivation and incentivise organic farming to arrest soil quality depletion. Special marketing assistance for organic produce.
8. Introduce value addition schemes to reduce wastage and invest in food-processing units which will generate jobs for rural youth.
9. Create irrigation facilities for an additional 35 million hectares of land in five years: This will generate rural jobs as well as benefit farmers. Drip irrigation will be promoted along with better water management and use of check dams.
10. Ensure quality power, seeds and other inputs.
11. Heavily invest funds in agriculture to reverse the trend set by the Congress-led UPA and make the farm sector an equal engine of growth along with industry and the services sector.
12. Strengthen National Rural Bank and allied services.
13. Promote horticulture, floriculture, pisciculture and poultry for generating additional jobs and supplementing incomes.
14. Create additional grazing land and encourage the maintenance of ponds and water bodies.

#### GM Seeds

No genetically modified seed will be allowed for cultivation without full scientific data on long-term effects on soil, production and biological impact on consumers. All food and food products produced with genetically modified seeds will be branded as 'GM Food'.

## LAND ACQUISITION FOR INFRASTRUCTURE FARMERS INTERESTS WILL BE PROTECTED

The Central and State Governments, for long, have acquired land, through an opaque process, to hand it over to private parties under the umbrella of 'public purpose'. The UPA Government has approved 572 Special Economic Zones that cover 50,000 acres, three times the size of Singapore. This is clearly absurd and spells disaster for the farm sector.

The BJP will adopt a National Land Use Policy which will protect the interests of farmers. Its implementation will be monitored by a National Land Use Authority which will work with State Land Use Authorities to regulate and facilitate land management. The powers and functions of the National Land Use Authority will be similar to those of other regulatory bodies.

The BJP will bring about amendments to existing laws to rectify anomalies pertaining to land acquisition. Farmers will be compensated at market rates for any land acquired for infrastructure purposes. The BJP will not allow the conversion of fertile farmland for industrial/commercial projects or Special Economic Zones.

The entire issue of Special Economic Zones and acquisition of land for industrial use will be addressed after a careful scrutiny of the Parliamentary Standing Committee's report and factoring in the need to protect the farm sector and enhance food production.

#### International Trade Agreements

The BJP shall fight against the protectionist trend which is emerging in some developed countries. We will safeguard the country's interests in all bilateral and multilateral trade agreements by avoiding to accept any new unilateral or less than reciprocal commitments. Our Government will renegotiate all such past commitments that are inconsistent with national interests, especially to ensure food security and affordable health care. We will not hesitate to roll back any concessions and facilities not reciprocated by the counterparts. The BJP will safeguard the interests of our vast technical manpower and ensure maximum market access in future agreements depending upon the offers made by the trade partners.

#### Retail Trade

The BJP understands the critical importance of retail trade in the context of employment and services provided by them, and thus favours a dominant role for the unincorporated sector in retail trade. Towards this end, it will not allow foreign investment in the retail sector. After agriculture, the retail sector is the largest employer of nearly four crore people.

We will:

1. Adopt all necessary measures to safeguard the interests of small and tiny retail vendors.

2. Ensure availability of working capital needs for such vendors through credit at not more than four per cent interest.
3. Study the feasibility of a slab-based 'Compound Tax' for traders to free them from needless harassment and end corruption.
4. Set up an empowered committee to recommend welfare measures, including a pension scheme, for small traders.

#### Labour

The BJP will holistically address the long-pending issue of labour reforms, bearing in mind the long-term interests of the working class. It will do so through close consultation with representative bodies of labour and employers. We are committed to ensure the following:

1. Making secret ballot compulsory for trade union elections, by suitably amending the Industrial Disputes Act.
2. Launching a training programme for trade unions to play an effective and positive role.
3. Setting up a 'Workers Bank' to deal with the banking requirements of labour in the organised and unorganised sectors.
4. Ensuring adequate compensation for any labour that may be retrenched, with the first option being redeployment.
5. Setting up a National Child Labour Commission.
6. For labour in the unorganised sector, revise minimum wages; expand safety net.

#### Cooperative Sector

Every effort will be made to encourage the cooperative sector. Towards this end, the BJP will do the following:

1. Exempt cooperative banks from paying income tax.
2. Frame a model law for cooperative societies for nationwide implementation.
3. Amend the Multi-State Cooperative Act to remove current lacunae and anomalies.
4. Set up a Central regulatory authority for cooperative bodies.

#### CONSUMER RIGHTS

The rights of consumers will be further strengthened. The BJP will set up an experts committee to deal with the following issues:

1. Setting up of services specific arbitration courts to settle consumer disputes.

2. Creating a mechanism for whereby consumers can participate in a structured consultative process with Government.
3. Making consumer product labelling more content information specific.

## YOUTH POWER EMPOWERING YOUNG INDIA

**I**ndia's population, unlike that of Western nations, is getting younger by the day. More than half of our citizens are aged 25 and below; nearly two-thirds are aged 35 and below. The aspirations and ambitions of the youth are fuelled by rising literacy and awareness levels.

It is the Government's duty to help them achieve these aspirations and ambitions, and make them capable of taking on all challenges and converting them into opportunities. The BJP will fulfil this duty by framing policies in consonance with the concerns of 'Young India' and aimed at unleashing the abilities of the youth, who will be the driving force of this nation's emergence as an awesome knowledge power. The BJP's Manifesto has been drafted keeping the aspirations and ambitions of the youth in mind.

We propose to review, revive and re-launch the National Service Scheme and National Cadet Corps as effective vehicles to involve the youth in nation-building and reinforcing their national spirit. Their participation in the decision-making process and decision-making bodies will be actively encouraged.

The BJP also proposes to launch a unique 'National Knowledge Incubation Programme'. This will involve the setting up of 'Incubation Centres' for meritorious students from all strata of society. To begin with, at least one per cent of the best brains will be deployed for mentoring at the 'Incubation Centres'. Adequate resources will be provided for the programme.

A National Student Bank will be set up to meet the banking requirements, including study loans, of students, at 4% rate of interest.

## EDUCATION FOR ALL LITERATE INDIA, POWERFUL INDIA

The BJP will give education its due place in governance to achieve social, economic, cultural and technical advancement. Education will be the Government's instrument to reduce poverty, promote health, protect the environment and advance gender equality. Central allocation to education shall be raised to six per cent of the GDP. Our goal is to spend nine per cent of GDP on education by involving the private sector.

A National Education Commission will be constituted to propose a comprehensive policy for the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The content and process of education shall be made responsive to the needs of the times and the aspirations of the young. The existing digital divide will be removed by extending the outreach of information technology to every child.

Particular emphasis shall be laid on value education, inclusive education, education of the migratory tribes and other deprived groups and all those who need additional support. The examination system will be reviewed for extensive reform.

The following are the highlights of the BJP's agenda to ensure education for all:

### School Education

1. The success story of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan, launched by the NDA in 2002, shall be strengthened, extended and concretised further in quality, content and support systems.
2. Implementation of the mid-day meal scheme shall be revitalised on modern management lines. Akshaya Patra Scheme will serve as a model for this purpose.
3. Effective steps shall be put in place to provide skills acquisition.
4. Primary school timings and vacations shall be flexible and decided upon by the local community and the Parents-Teachers Associations.
5. Universalisation of secondary education shall be speedily implemented. Special emphasis will be given to girls' education at the secondary level.
6. All assistance will be provided for a national madarsa modernisation programme.
7. Close linkages between school education and higher education shall be built into the system.

### Vocational education

1. Widespread network of providing skill orientation and vocational training shall be established. Provisions for certification of skills acquired traditionally or through private initiatives shall be made.
2. Additional structures and facilities shall be created at secondary stage to provide generic vocational skills to every child who is willing to do so.
3. A fresh countrywide initiative shall be launched to bring about an attitudinal transformation among parents and communities towards skill development and vocational education.
4. Industry shall be persuaded to play a greater role than at present to prepare skilled manpower, which will be of mutual benefit.

#### Higher Education

1. Institutions of higher learning shall be given full autonomy, coupled with accountability, in real practice.
2. Access to higher education shall be expanded without any compromise on quality and content. Private initiatives shall be encouraged within the broad educational priority parameters and provisions for focus groups.
3. Manpower planning shall be put in place and made active and effective. Higher education prepares top-level manpower for every sector. Hence, its quality and relevance have a multiplier effect.

#### New National Policy on Education

Immediate steps will be initiated to appoint a National Commission on Education, the report of which shall lead to the formulation of a new National Policy on Education that will replace the NPE-1986/92. This Commission shall undertake continuous envisioning of educational plans, strategies methods, material and research to make India a knowledge power and develop several institutions of higher learning and research as centres of international pursuit of knowledge and learning.

#### Ragging to be Made a Criminal Offence with Stiff Punishment

The BJP will frame a law to deal with the menace of ragging. All cases of ragging will be tried in fast-track courts. School/college/university authorities will be held culpable for failing to implement the law.

## SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY OVER THE MOON AND BEYOND

The BJP in power will aggressively promote science and technology for the well-being of all citizens and India's progress as well as its emergence as force on the global scene. We believe our science and technology system has to be infused with new vitality if it is to play a decisive and beneficial role in advancing the well-being of all sections of our society.

Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee had promised Chandrayan - India's mission to the Moon - and it has been fulfilled by our scientists. We now propose to take the mission a step forward: Chandrayan - II will see Indians stepping on the Moon in the next five years.

We will take India into the 'Super Computer' era to enhance the nation's defence capabilities and scientific research and development.

The BJP recognises the central role of science and technology in raising the quality of life of the people of the country, particularly of the disadvantaged sections of society, in creating wealth for all, in making India globally competitive, in utilising natural resources in a sustainable manner, in protecting the environment and ensuring national security. Our objectives will be aimed at:

1. Ensuring food, agricultural, nutritional, environmental, water, health and energy security of the people on a sustainable basis.
2. Mounting a direct and sustained effort on the alleviation of poverty, enhancing livelihood security, removal of hunger and malnutrition, reduction of drudgery and regional imbalances, both rural and urban, and generation of employment, by using scientific and technological capabilities along with our traditional knowledge pool.
3. Building and maintaining centres of excellence, which will raise the level of work in selected areas to the highest international standards along with creating suitable employment opportunities.
4. Promoting the empowerment of women in all science and technology activities and ensuring their full and equal participation.
5. Providing necessary autonomy and freedom of functioning for all academic and R&D institutions, while ensuring that science and technology enterprises are fully committed to their social responsibilities and commitments.

6. Accomplishing national strategic and security-related objectives by using the latest advances in science and technology.
7. Encouraging research and innovation in areas of relevance for the economy and society, particularly by promoting close and productive interaction between private and public institutions. Sectors such as agriculture (particularly soil and water management, human and animal nutrition, fisheries), water, health, education, industry, energy including renewable energy, communication and transportation would be accorded highest priority. Key leverage technologies such as information technology, biotechnology and materials science and technology would be given special importance.
8. Establishing an Intellectual Property Rights regime which maximises the incentives for the generation and protection of intellectual property by all types of inventors.
9. Ensuring, in an era in which information is key to the development of science and technology, that all efforts are made to have high-speed access to information, both in quality and quantity, at affordable costs; and also create digitised, valid and usable content of Indian origin.
10. Encouraging research and application to meet the challenges of climate change and for forecasting, prevention and mitigation of natural hazards, particularly, floods, cyclones, earthquakes, drought and landslides.
11. Promoting international science and technology cooperation towards achieving the goals of national development and security, and make it a key element of our international relations.

The BJP will also focus on the following:

1. New funding mechanism for promotion of basic research in science, medical, agricultural and engineering institutions.
2. Promotion of innovation by creating a comprehensive national system of innovation.
3. Achieving synergy between industry and scientific research. Autonomous technology transfer organisations will be created as associate organisations of universities and national laboratories to transfer the know-how generated by them to industry. Industry will be encouraged to adopt or support educational and research institutions to help direct science and technology endeavours towards tangible industrial goals.
4. Indigenous knowledge, based on our long and rich tradition will be further developed and harnessed for the purpose of wealth and employment generation.

5. Intellectual Property Rights have to be viewed not as a self-contained and distinct domain, but rather as an effective policy instrument relevant to wide-ranging socio-economic, technological and political concepts. The generation and fullest protection of competitive intellectual property from Indian R&D programmes will be encouraged and promoted.

Science and technology, we believe, should be used to build a new and resurgent India that continues to maintain its strong democratic and spiritual traditions, that remains secure not only militarily but also socially and economically. Our science and technology policy will be framed and implemented so as to be in harmony with our worldview of the larger human family. We will ensure that science and technology truly uplifts the Indian people and indeed all of humanity.

## INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY INDIA@e-SUPERPOWER

The NDA Government had made ICT one of the major areas of policy thrust. This was one of our achievements and we propose to pursue ICT with same vigour and purpose. A separate IT Vision Document has been issued, containing specific details of the policies the BJP proposes to pursue.

The following are the main highlights of our IT Vision Document:

1. Generate 1.2 crore new IT-enabled jobs in rural areas.
2. Make computers affordable for students.
3. All schools and colleges to have Internet-enabled education.
4. Launch a National Digital Highway Development Project to bring affordable broadband Internet connectivity to every village.
5. Every Indian citizen to have a bank account; welfare funds to be deposited directly into end beneficiary's bank account to eliminate corruption.
6. Video-conferencing to be made affordable.
7. Internet users to equal mobile subscribers.
8. Primary Health Centres to be linked to the National Telemedicine Service Network.
9. Massive expansion in the use of IT in agriculture, rural development, SMEs, retail trade, and informal and unorganised sectors of the economy.

10. National e-Governance Plan to cover every Government office from the Centre to the Panchayats. The 'E Gram, Vishwa Gram' scheme in Gujarat to be implemented nationwide.
11. All post offices to be converted into IT-enabled Multi-Service Outlets. All telephone booths to be upgraded to Internet kiosks.
12. e-Bhasha: National Mission for Promotion of IT in Indian Languages.
13. Special focus to bring women, SC/STs, OBCs and other weaker sections of society within the ambit of IT-enabled development.
14. Use of IT for the protection of India's priceless cultural and artistic heritage.
15. Government to promote 'open standard' and 'open source' software.
16. Domestic IT hardware industry to be aggressively promoted to minimise dependence on imports.
17. Domestic hosting industry to be promoted to minimise international bandwidth charges.

## PROMOTION OF SPORTS MAKING YOUTH HEALTHY, COMPETITIVE

**T**o make the nation a strong player in diverse international sports, the BJP will invest in every sporting activity. This is an essential element of achieving our goal of making India a developed nation in the sports world within five years. Towards this end, we will:

1. Introduce sports as a compulsory part of school curriculum. Towards this end, sports infrastructure and facilities in schools, colleges and universities will be expanded with adequate provision of resources by the Ministry of Human Resource Development and State Governments. Rs 5,000 crore will be allocated for the purpose to be released through the UGC, Central Educational Boards / Sangathans and State Governments for speedy implementation of sports and youth development activities.
2. Create an effective National Sports Talent Search System so that extraordinary sporting talent is identified at a very young age. Such promising boys and girls will be selected for special training. The existing rural sports programme and

National Women Sports Festival will be broadened to reach every village and to identify talent for nurturing and excellence development.

3. Ensure sports training is world class by appointing excellent coaches, training of sports persons abroad and upgrading the skills of existing coaches. International training and competition exposure programme will be prepared for which an amount of Rs 1,000 crore will be allocated per year.
4. Offer a secure and attractive career plan both in public and private sector for medal winners in National Games, Commonwealth Games, Asian Games and Olympic Games. The present reservation of jobs only in Groups C and D categories under Central Government Rule will be suitably revised to provide employment to meritorious sportspersons in Groups A and B categories also. Similarly, all public sector undertakings will be advised to employ international medal winners in Groups A and B categories.
5. Encourage business houses to set aside some resources for the development of sports. They will be offered tax incentives for creating sports infrastructure and sponsoring sports events at district, State, national and international level.
6. Make the management of various agencies involved in sports promotion more efficient and accountable. All these institutions will be made to recognise that our sportspersons are the most important entity in our strategy to achieve excellence in sports. Hence, transparency will be ensured in their functioning.
7. Amend guidelines for the MPLAD scheme so that MPs can make their funds available for promotion of sports and adventure activities.
8. Mandate all new housing colonies to include sports facilities.
9. Enhance Plan allocation for sports development and encourage State Governments to fully discharge their responsibility in the promotion of sports.

## WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT NARI SHAKTI KEY TO INCLUSIVE DEVELOPMENT

The BJP's political adversaries talk of women's empowerment but have done nothing to truly empower them. The Congress had promised to introduce the law for women's reservation in State Assemblies and Parliament. But it had neither the conviction to introduce the legislation nor the courage to stand up to its allies who are opposed to the political empowerment of women. The BJP remains committed to 33 per cent political representation for women, and shall act on this after coming to power.

There are other key areas where the BJP will focus its attention to empower women:

1. Introduce the Ladli Lakshmi Scheme, which has been a big success in Madhya Pradesh, at the national level to encourage girls to attend school up to at least pre-college level. Under this scheme, each girl child from disadvantaged families will receive Rs 2,000 on reaching Class 6; Rs 4,000 in Class 9; Rs 7,500 in Class 11; and, Rs 1,10,000 on completing 21 years of age. From Class 6 onwards, she will get a stipend of Rs 2,400 per year till such time she remains in school.
2. Adopt the Bhamashah Vitteeya Sashaktikaran Evam Naari Samriddhi Yojana, conceived by the erstwhile BJP Government in Rajasthan, to financially empower women from Below Poverty Line, Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes families and those of small and marginal farmers. Under this scheme, bank accounts will be opened for the beneficiary women and they alone will be able to operate the accounts through specially designed smart cards. An initial deposit of Rs 1,500 will be made in the bank accounts. The scheme also envisages job creation through opening of banks in remote areas and counsellors to help the beneficiaries to manage their accounts.
3. A national programme will be launched, in cooperation with State Governments, to provide bicycles to girls from Below Poverty Line Families who attend school.
4. Review and revamp women's participation in local self-governance, especially panchayati raj bodies.
5. Adopt a National Policy on Women's Economic Empowerment to ensure every woman has access to livelihood and enhance the income of all categories of working women. Gender discrimination in wages, whether in organised or unorganised sector, will be eliminated.
6. Remove all remaining gender disparities in property rights, marital rights and cohabitation rights.
7. Support for programmes like 'Swavalamban' and 'STEP' (Support to Training and Employment Programme), which promote self-employment and

entrepreneurship for women through self-help groups, will be greatly enhanced. Technical and management services for those engaged in handicrafts, food-processing, handloom, garments, etc, will be strengthened. Added focus will be provided for implementing these programmes in the North-East, Jammu & Kashmir, and areas affected by Maoism.

8. Enterprises promoted by women, or employing a large number of women, will be given 'fast track' facilitation. They will get loans at preferential rates of interest.
9. Laws to check female foeticide, dowry, child marriage, trafficking, rape and family violence will be reviewed, strengthened and strictly enforced. The CrPC will be amended to ensure the rights of victims of rape are not diminished and the guilty are not able to tamper with evidence or escape the law of the land. A special programme will be launched, in cooperation with State Governments, to ensure full security for women.
10. Programmes aimed at helping indigent women and women in distress will be strengthened with the cooperation of State Governments.
11. Every effort will be made to expand and improve upon the existing network of working women's hostels.
12. The current extremely low salaries of Anganwadi workers and helpers, who are the backbone of the Integrated Child Development Scheme, will be doubled.

#### Protecting Women's Rights

Article 44 of the Constitution of India lists Uniform Civil Code as one of the Directive Principles of State Policy. There cannot be real gender equality till such time India adopts a Uniform Civil Code which protects the rights of all women. The BJP, as a first step towards this constitutionally mandated direction, will set up a Commission to draft a Uniform Civil Code, drawing upon the best traditions and harmonising them with the modern times. The Commission will also study reforms towards gender equality in other countries, including Islamic countries.

DALITS, OBCs & ECONOMICALLY WEAKER SECTIONS OF  
SOCIETY  
WE WILL ENSURE SOCIAL JUSTICE AND HARMONY

The BJP is committed to the principle of Social Justice (*Samajik Nyay*) and *Samajik Samarasata* (Social Harmony). Instead of pursuing identity politics which do not fetch benefits to Dalits, OBCs and other deprived sections of our society, the BJP will focus on tangible development and empowerment.

The BJP will boost opportunities for entrepreneurship and commerce among Dalits, OBCs and other deprived sections of our society so that India's social diversity is fairly reflected in its economic diversity.

Atrocities against Dalits, Tribals and weaker sections of society will be firmly dealt with.

The extremely backward communities need urgent Government assistance. Special efforts will be made to reach out to them. In contrast to the UPA years when an additional 55 million people were pushed below the poverty line, the BJP will strive to bring families above the poverty line through aggressive policies and targeted programmes.

A mission-mode approach will be adopted for providing the following to deprived communities:

1. Special educational facilities through Sarva Shiksha Abhiyaan.
2. Water, health, sanitation and hygiene for all families/habitations.

A special component will be created in all development schemes to benefit the deprived sections of society. An 'Extremely Backward Communities Development Bank' will be set up for promoting skill enhancement through learn-and-earn schemes for their uplift.

The BJP will introduce education and job quotas on the basis of economic criteria for all economically weaker sections of society other than Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and OBCs, who will continue to enjoy quota benefits.

## TRIBAL DEVELOPMENT LONG-TERM STRATEGY FOR LASTING WELFARE

**I**t is a proven fact that incremental and piecemeal attempts for the development of tribals have not helped. Hence, the BJP will adopt a comprehensive, all-encompassing long-term strategy to empower tribals and ensure their welfare. We will draw upon the experience of our Governments in Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh which have successfully implemented tribal welfare and development schemes.

We will initiate a 'Van Bandhu Kalyan Yojana' at the national level, to be overseen by a 'Tribal Development Authority'. This scheme will focus on:

1. Setting up new schools and colleges, as also engineering colleges, polytechnics, agri-engineering colleges, nursing schools, veterinary schools.
2. Upgrading housing, water and health facilities.
3. Electrification of tribal hamlets and provision of all-weather roads.
4. Initiating new economic activities related to agriculture and agri-processing, horticulture, etc.
5. Promoting dairy-based activities.
6. Creating employment opportunities by promoting bamboo-processing units and small-scale units.
7. Preventing tribal land from being alienated.
8. Facilitating access to minor forest produce and creating a network of rural markets.
9. Establishing a National Research Centre for the preservation of tribal culture and languages.
10. Providing adequate funds for tribal welfare and development.

## SENIOR CITIZENS CARE AND RESPECT FOR THE ELDERLY

The elderly deserve full support of both Government and society. The BJP is committed to the welfare of senior citizens. A separate department will be created in the Social Welfare Ministry to deal with senior citizens' issues. We will:

1. Review pensions and pension policies to ensure benefits keep pace with the actual cost of living.
2. Study the feasibility of introducing higher interest rates on savings for all citizens above 60 years of age.
3. Rationalise travel concessions.
4. Introduce a health insurance policy that does not discriminate against the elderly.
5. Income tax benefits for senior citizens will be made available at 60 years, instead of 65 years as is the practice at present.
6. Review existing provisions of old age pension scheme and expand its application.

## CARE OF THE DISABLED INTEGRATING THE DIFFERENTLY ABLED

Disabled people constitute five per cent of India's population. Years of neglect has delayed their integration into the social mainstream. Their welfare and rehabilitation is integral to NDA's vision of a caring society and a responsive government. The BJP will:

1. Ensure and implement the right for education and vocational training for the disabled.
2. Ensure disabled-friendly access to public utilities, public buildings, and transport.
3. Ensure maximum economic independence of the disabled by creating more income generation models for the disabled.

4. Facilitate establishment of an Institute of Vocational Training for the Disabled in every district with public-private partnership.
5. Provide special incentive for the adoption of a disabled child.
6. Support voluntary organizations working for the care of the disabled.

## MINORITY COMMUNITIES HEALTHY DIET OF DEVELOPMENT

The BJP repudiates the division of Indian society along communal lines which has been fostered by the Congress and the Left in pursuit of their vote-bank politics. Categorisation of communities as 'minorities' perpetuates notions of imagined discrimination and victimhood; it reinforces the perception of the 'minority' identity as separate from the national identity. The BJP remains committed to a common Indian identity that transcends community, caste and gender, with every Indian an equal participant in the building of a prosperous nation and an equal beneficiary of that prosperity. Pluralism is a *sine qua non* for any democracy and the BJP cherishes the diversity that is also the strength of Indian society and lends vibrancy to our national fabric. But pluralism should strengthen, not weaken our national resolve.

It is an unfortunate fact that Muslims form a substantial part of the underprivileged. The principal reason for this is the fact that the Congress, a dominant presence in power for six decades, has secured minority support through the politics of fear rather than a healthy diet of development.

The BJP will implement a set of policies committed to a massive expansion of modern education among Muslims, particularly for the girl child, through a new nationwide network of schools, in a public-private partnership programme. This will include, but not be limited to:

1. Capital assistance in new educational projects, both for basic and technical education, in low-income minority areas. Each project will be vetted for viability by a team of professionals within a maximum of six months.
2. Cash incentives for the education of the girl child, based on attendance and performance. Incentives will rise for those girls who get admission into recognised colleges for higher education.
3. Computer centres will be set up in low income urban areas and the most backward districts of the country.
4. The Ministry of Minority Affairs, today a stagnant source of toxic politics, will be revitalised into a hub for economic projects specifically targeted

towards employment creation. There will be special emphasis on crafts and small-scale industries that have been traditional employers of minorities. The neglect of the Congress-led UPA Government was evident in the fact that even monies allotted for minority welfare programmes in States like Maharashtra were largely, if not wholly, unspent.

5. Youth are the owners of the future, and it is our duty to make them a dynamic social and economic engine for upliftment. The young do not live only in cities. In districts like Murshidabad in Bengal, young girls are being forced by poverty into making bidis on pathetic wages. Dynamic intervention is needed to improve income levels where such jobs exist and to create fresh avenues of employment where they do not. The unfortunate phase of confused loyalties in some minority sections is over. Generations have been born in free India who are as committed to the nation as the nation is committed to them. The success stories of Muslims in sports, cinema, industry and a host of other fields, as individuals and team players, makes every Indian proud.
6. Terrorism does not have a religion. Those who espouse terrorism have stepped outside the moral code of their religion into barbarism. We must lift community-relations from the morass of misunderstanding.

A vibrant, modern India can have no place for either the perpetrators or the exploiters of fear.

#### Religious Conversions

The BJP will facilitate, under the auspices of noted religious leaders, the setting up of a permanent inter-faith consultative mechanism to promote harmony and trust between communities. This mechanism will also be used for a sustained and sincere Inter-Faith Dialogue between leaders of the Hindu and Christian communities on all aspects of life, including the issue of religious conversions. The dialogue should be held in the spirit of the unanimous report of the Inter-Faith Dialogue on Conversions, which was organised at the Vatican in May 2006 by the Pontifical Council for Inter-Faith Dialogue and the World Council of Churches, Geneva.

## HEALTH FOR ALL INDIA'S WEALTH, PEOPLE'S HEALTH

**A**ccess to quality and affordable healthcare remains a dream for a vast majority of our people. This is truly ironical because India is rapidly emerging as a global destination for medical care for foreigners.

The BJP will launch a massive programme, through public-private participation, to introduce a 'Health for All' scheme based on an innovative insurance policy. Under this scheme, the premium of BPL families will be paid by Government. Beneficiaries will have access to Government and private hospitals for cashless treatment.

We will make the '108' telephone service - for medical emergencies - universally accessible throughout India in 12 months.

One of our main targets will be to eradicate the curse of malnutrition. We will do so by revamping existing programmes and launching a multi-pronged war against malnutrition across the nation, especially in the under-developed areas, with the help of State Governments. All resources will be provided to achieve this goal.

The BJP will also initiate action on the following:

1. Set up a National Regulatory Authority for private hospitals, nursing homes and special care facilities to ensure quality services, affordable fees and prevent/punish malpractice. While private sector participation in health care is welcome, it cannot become a source of unrestricted and unrestrained profit-making at the expense of the people.
2. Ongoing work on setting up six additional All-India Institutes of Medical Sciences in various parts of the country, which were proposed by the NDA Government but not acted upon by the UPA, will be expedited. Similar institutions will be set up in other places to broad-base access to specialised medical care.
3. Incentives and disincentives will be introduced for State Governments to improve the quality of primary health care, maternal health care, and child health care.
4. Targets will be set for achieving significant reduction in maternal and infant mortality by improving the Janani Suraksha Yojana. The successful initiative of the BJP Government in Gujarat in this regard will be used as a model.
5. Preventive health care by way of inoculation against diseases and dissemination of information will receive focussed attention.

6. A national programme will be launched to vaccinate adults and children against all forms of hepatitis.
7. Substantial investment will be made in promoting Ayurved as an alternative therapy. Full support will be extended to the promotion of Unani system of medicine and homoeopathy. The promotion of Yoga will receive all Government assistance.
8. Clean drinking water is one of the best barriers against common but often fatal diseases. The BJP proposes to make access to clean drinking water a fundamental right for all citizens.

### Population Stabilisation

The BJP views the people of India as productive assets of society. To maximise their productivity, they have to be provided with access to health, education, technology and skills, which, in turn, require additional resources. This will be possible if we are able to stabilise India's population. Towards this end, the BJP will address three priority issues:

1. Recognition of close linkages between sustainable development and population stabilisation.
2. Link population programmes with other development initiatives like health, education, nutrition and poverty eradication programmes.
3. Follow a non-coercive and gender sensitive approach for population stabilisation.

## ONE EARTH, GREEN EARTH CREATING THE RIGHT ENVIRONMENT

The BJP will pursue national growth objectives through an ecologically sustainable pathway that leads to mitigation of greenhouse gas emissions. We recognise that containing global warming is essential to protecting life and security of people and environment. Mitigating the threat by building a low carbon economy is the biggest economic opportunity of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

The BJP endorses the principle of "common but differentiated responsibilities", as enshrined in the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change. We look at 'Climate Change' in the context of the promises made by the international community for technology transfer and additional financing since Rio, which have remained unfulfilled.

The BJP will actively pursue the transfer of critical technologies that can have a significant impact on reducing carbon emissions.

Bearing in mind concerns on environment and related climate change issues, the BJP will:

1. Give appropriate importance to containing climate change.
2. Lay importance on energy security and sustainable energy pathways by setting clear targets for energy efficiency and renewable energy.
3. Bring about a complete shift in subsidy from chemical fertilisers to rewarding farmers for pursuing conservation and enhancement of local crop varieties, thereby enhancing the conservation of local agro-biodiversity.
4. Offer attractive support prices and incentives for traditional rain-fed crops and promote markets for them. This will be coupled with a decentralised Public Distribution System that will mop up excess production of local food and distribute it among those households that are food deficit locally. A decentralised PDS will be more climate smart since it will eliminate excessive costs of transportation and storage.
5. Revisit laws for protecting forests and reserve parks to make them more effective in preventing encroachment and man-animal conflict. All resources will be provided for protecting forestland and animal reserves; wilful destruction of forests and killing of wildlife for profit or pleasure will fetch stringent punishment.
6. A permanent Task Force will be set up for the protection and preservation of tigers, lions and other wild cats. A separate Task Force will look after the protection and preservation of elephants. A third Task Force will look after bird sanctuaries. They will be duly empowered to take whatever steps are necessary to achieve their goals.
7. Provide incentives to encourage institutions and individuals to switch over to energy-saving devices and eco-friendly designs for housing and workplace. Full support will be given for developing low-energy, low-cost technology by both public and private sectors. A Group of Experts will be set up to formulate target-driven objectives towards this end.
8. Encourage citizens' participation in protecting the environment and curbing pollution. Schools will be involved in promoting environment and ecology-related issues among children.
9. Adopt a mission-mode approach to clean all rivers.
10. Launch a national programme for citizens' participation in reforestation, agro-forestry and social forestry by planting a billion trees every year.

11. Importance given to programmes to arrest the melting of Himalayan glaciers from which most major rivers in North India originate.

## ADMINISTRATIVE ISSUES & CENTRE-STATE RELATIONS WE ARE COMMITTED TO GOOD GOVERNANCE

The BJP will set up a Group of Ministers to study the report of the Administrative Reforms Commission and submit its recommendations within six months. Given the importance of these reforms to our pursuit of the goal of Good Governance, the BJP proposes to implement them through an appropriate body under the Prime Minister's Office. We will strive to bring about absolute transparency in Government's decision-making process. Corruption at any level of Government will be dealt with swiftly.

We will place Centre-State relations on an even keel through the process of consultation. The genuine grievances of States will be addressed in a comprehensive manner. The moribund National Development Council will be revived and made into an active body.

While every effort will be made to meet the development aspirations of the people and make authority accountable to the citizens, no concessions will be made to separatist and insurgent groups.

### Jammu & Kashmir

Jammu & Kashmir was, is and shall remain an integral part of the Union of India. Its status is non-negotiable and, as successive elections have comprehensively demonstrated, the people of Jammu & Kashmir see themselves as part of the Indian national mainstream.

The BJP will be guided by the following principles while dealing with issues related to Jammu & Kashmir:

1. The territorial integrity of India is inviolable. The unanimous Parliamentary Resolution of 1994 reiterates this point and shall remain the cornerstone of future decisions and actions of our Government.
2. To meet the aspirations of the people of Jammu & Kashmir and ensure rapid progress of this State, the BJP will promote an agenda of equal development of

its three regions – Jammu, Kashmir and Ladakh. All support, including financial, will be provided to the State Government for this purpose.

3. The Pandits who had to leave their home and hearth in the Kashmir Valley on account of separatist violence and terrorism are fully deserving of all support and assistance, which will be provided to them in full measure. Their return to the land of their ancestors with full dignity, security and assured livelihood will figure high on the BJP's agenda.
4. The long-pending problems and demands of refugees from Pakistan-occupied Kashmir will be addressed.
5. Article 370 poses a psychological barrier for the full integration of the people of Jammu & Kashmir with the national mainstream. The BJP remains committed to the abrogation of this Article.

### Small States

The BJP has always been in favour of formation of smaller states. It was during the NDA's rule that the three small states of Uttarakhand, Jharkhand and Chhattisgarh were created. Keeping in mind its commitment to good governance and all-round development, the BJP in future, too, would encourage the cause of establishment of smaller States.

In consonance with its policy, the BJP supports the creation of Telangana as a separate State of the Union of India.

We will sympathetically examine and appropriately consider the long pending demands of the Gorkhas, the Adivasis and other people of Darjeeling district and Dooars region.

### North-East

Poor governance, corruption and insurgency have resulted in the resources-rich north-eastern States lagging behind. The physical distance between the North-East and New Delhi has contributed to the widening of psychological distance. The NDA years saw the Union Government actively pushing a development agenda for the north-eastern States. A similar but more robust agenda will be crafted by the BJP in power for the welfare of every north-eastern State and the region's rapid development. In doing so, the BJP will be guided by the following:

1. Immediate steps will be taken to stem the tide of illegal immigration from Bangladesh to Assam and other North-Eastern States. The construction of the India-Bangladesh border fence will be completed without any further delay. A special cell will be set up to monitor the detection, detention and deportation of illegal immigrants.
2. Insurgent groups will be dealt with firmly. Simultaneously, the grievances of a section of the youth will be identified and addressed.

3. The land and culture of indigenous ethnic groups will be protected.
4. Flood control in Assam and river water management will receive special attention.
5. Appropriate resources will be allocated for land development, agriculture and allied activities, housing, nutrition, health, education, rural connectivity and irrigation.
6. New institutions of higher education in engineering and medical sciences will be set up.
7. Job-generating schemes will be initiated, especially in the services sector, to address the problem of unemployment in the region. Tourism and traditional skills-based industries will be given a big boost.
8. Special emphasis will be given to connectivity with and within North-Eastern States.

#### Hill States & Desert States

The BJP recognises the special needs and unique problems of the hill and desert States. In consultation with the Governments of these States, a development-based, State-specific model will be evolved so that the aspirations of the people can be met.

#### Union Territories

Given their unique status, Union Territories will receive special attention. We will focus on developing and strengthening the economy of Union Territories. Tourism will be promoted; tribal welfare and rights will receive full attention; and, infrastructure and coastal area development will be given top priority.

#### Andaman & Nicobar Islands and Lakshdweep Islands

The BJP is committed to the protection and integrated development of our island territories.

#### Judicial Reforms

The BJP will initiate a set of judicial reforms to deal with the issue of appointment of judges, tackling the backlog of cases and other problems that exist at various levels of the judiciary.

Towards this end, the BJP will:

1. Streamline the appointment procedure of judges in the higher judiciary through the National Judicial Commission and introduce guidelines on objective criteria to determine merit.
2. Double the number of courts and the judicial strength of the sub-ordinate judiciary in five years.

3. Create a Fund for Modernisation of Courts to improve the physical and operational infrastructure of courts.
4. Set up a separate class of courts for cases involving specified commercial laws such as the Contract Act, Negotiable Instruments Act, and other business laws. These would deliver quicker justice and be partly funded by charging both litigants a 'Fast Track' fee.
5. Reform the criminal justice system to make dispensation of justice simpler, quicker and more effective on the basis of the Malimath Committee Report.
6. Computerise and network courts all over the country for improving their efficiency.
7. Extend fast track courts to all layers of the judiciary.
8. Expand alternative disputes redressal mechanisms through Lok Adalats and Tribunals.
9. Appoint a Judicial Procedural Reforms Committee which will suggest, in six months, how to halve the time taken to conduct every trial, civil or criminal. The aim would be to ensure that three-fourths of all cases are completed within 12 months.
10. Halve the number of cases in which the Government is a litigant in the next three years.

#### Electoral Reforms

The BJP will seek, through consultation with other parties, to evolve a method of holding Assembly and Lok Sabha elections simultaneously. Apart from reducing election expenses for both political parties and Government, this will ensure a certain stability for State Governments.

#### Panchayati Raj Institutions

To empower self-governance at the grassroots level, the BJP will strengthen Panchayati Raj institutions. Towards this end, it will:

1. Work for the effective financial and administrative empowerment of Panchayati Raj institutions and Urban Local Bodies in respect of funds, functions and functionaries. There will be further devolution of powers by amending the Constitution.
2. The institution of the Gram Sabha will be strengthened to enable a full discussion on development projects, scrutinise the allocation and spending of funds, and evaluating the performance of elected and Government functionaries.

## PRESERVING OUR CULTURAL HERITAGE

### Ram Setu

Ram Setu is our national heritage. Millions want to visit it and it can be developed as a centre of cultural tourism. For millions it is a place of pilgrimage.

Saving Rama Setu is to save the vast thorium deposits which are the future source of our energy. Thorium technology will ensure India's energy security. BJP will, therefore, look for an alternative alignment for the proposed Sethu-Samudram Channel Project (SSCP).

### Ram Temple

There is an overwhelming desire of the people in India and abroad to have a grand temple at the birth place of Sri Ram in Ayodhya. The BJP will explore all possibilities, including negotiations and judicial proceedings, to facilitate the construction of the Ram Temple in Ayodhya.

### Ganga

Ganga occupies a special place in the Indian psyche. It is most unfortunate that it has been thoroughly neglected even after India attained freedom. It is a pity that even after six decades of independence Ganga continues to be thoroughly polluted and is drying. The BJP will ensure the cleanliness, purity and uninterrupted flow of Ganga, and will take all measures, legal and administrative, in this regard. Necessary financial and technical assistance will be provided on priority.

In addition, a massive 'Clean Rivers Programme' will be launched across the country with the participation of voluntary organisations.

#### Cow and its Progeny

In view of the recent judgement by the constitutional bench of the Supreme Court, and in keeping with the Directive Principles of State Policy as contained in the Constitution, necessary legal framework will be created to protect and promote cow and its progeny.

In view of the contribution of cow and its progeny to agriculture, socio-economic and cultural life of our country, the Department of Animal Husbandry will be suitably strengthened and empowered for the protection and promotion of cow and its progeny. A National Cattle Development Board will be set up to implement a programme for the improvement of indigenous livestock breeds.

#### Monasteries and Temples

The BJP shall ensure autonomous administration of Maths and Mandirs.

These institutions have been the heart and hub of *dharmic* and cultural life and traditions of Indian society. Huge properties were offered to *Maths* and *Mandirs* by society for running their religio-cultural activities and service projects for the benefit of all. The management of such institutions should be freed from Government control and handed over to autonomous bodies constituted by the followers and devotees of those seats. Necessary legal framework will be provided for this purpose.

All *dharmic* activities will be considered as 'charity' with appropriate tax incentives. A special cell will be created to make *dharmic* organisations' interface with government agencies hassle-free.

A National Mission for beautifying and improving the infrastructure and amenities at pilgrimage centres of all faiths will be launched.

#### Waqf Properties

The BJP will examine the recommendations of the Joint Parliamentary Committee regarding Waqf properties headed by Shri K Rahman Khan, Deputy Chairman, Rajya Sabha, and would, in consultation with Muslim religious leaders, take steps to remove encroachments from and unauthorised occupation of *waqf* properties.

#### Heritage Sites

The ASI will be provided with appropriate resources for the maintenance of all national heritage sites and prevent their vandalism in any form.

#### Languages

Indian languages are repositories of our rich literature, history, culture, art and scientific achievements. Many of our dialects are important source for knowing our heritage. Sanskrit and Tamil have made remarkable contributions in this regard. B.J.P.

would promote Indian languages and measures for the development of all Indian languages including Urdu will be taken by providing adequate resources so that they become a powerful vehicle for creating a knowledge society.

**Bharatiya Janata Party**

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