

Vote BJP

**Vote for a Stable Government
Vote for an Able Prime Minister**

**Election Manifesto
1998**

Our Vision, Our Will, Our Way

Sarve bhavantu sukhinah
Sarve santu niramayah
Sarve bhadrani pasyantu
Ma kaschit dukha bhag bhavet!
Om Shanti! Shanti! Shanti!

**May all live happily. May all enjoy good health.
May all see auspiciousness. May none experience distress.
May peace prevail everywhere!**

THIS timeless motto of universal happiness and peace is the heritage of this ancient Indian civilization, which assumed the character of Bharatvarsha in Bharat Khand. Here, a nation, which Megasthenes noted 'never invaded others and was never invaded,' existed long before the ideas of civilization evolved elsewhere.

This ageless nation is the embodiment of the eternal values enshrined in the concept of 'Sanatana Dharma' which, according to Maharishi Aurobindo, is synonymous with Indian nationalism. The idea of *Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam* – world as a family – is integral to the concept of Sanatana Dharma. This gigantic idea is an exclusively Indian contribution to world peace. This ancient nation evolved a world-view based on the motto *Loka samasta sukhina bhavantu* (Let the entire world be happy) thousands of years before any League of Nations or United Nations was thought of to avoid global strife. The Indian nation evolved this grand vision not by marching its armies and conquering the rest and offering peace; but by the inner-directed pursuit of universal values by the Rishis living in the forests and mountains of India.

The well-being of all, in short, is the Indian mission. It is not

limited to the residents of Bharat or the adherents of any particular faith or creed. That is why Bharat received with open arms all faiths and people fleeing persecution – whether it was the Jews, Parsis, Muslims or Christians – and preserved and protected them long before any other civilization could think short of exterminating those who differed from the ruling faiths and people. Israeli society has openly acknowledged that out of over a hundred nations in which Jews sought refuge, only in Bharat they were received and treated well. It is because religion in ancient India meant faith in general and not any particular faith. It is this ancient Indian mind that formulated the Constitution of India, guaranteeing equal treatment to all faiths and their adherents and it is not the Constitution that shaped the Indian mind.

Diversity is an inseparable part of India's past and present national tradition. The BJP not only respects but celebrates India's regional, caste, credal, linguistic and ethnic diversity, which finds its true existence and expression only in our national unity. This rich tradition comprises not only the Vedas and Upanishads, Jainagamas and Tripitaka, Puranas and Guru Granth Sahib, the Dohas of Kabir, the various social reform movements, saints and seers, warriors and writers, sculptors and artists, but also the Indian traditions of the Muslims, Christians and Parsis.

The Bharatiya Janata Party is a proud inheritor of this tradition while all other political parties have branded everything associated with this great tradition as sectarian, unworthy of being followed. The post-Independence tendency to reject all ancient Indian wisdom in political life led to all pre-Independence values and symbols – be it the idea of spiritual nationalism expounded by Swami Vivekananda, or the concept of Ram Rajya articulated by Mahatma Gandhi, or the soul-stirring 'Vande Mataram' song composed by Bankim Chandra being discarded as unsecular and unacceptable. The BJP rejects this attitude and idea of disconnecting from the past. The past is inseparable from the present and the future. That is why Swami Vivekananda said, 'It is out of the past that the future is moulded. It is the past that becomes the future'.

BJP's Vision: An Inheritance From India's Freedom Movement

THE BJP shares, embodies and energizes the vision of every patriotic Indian to see our beloved country emerge as a strong, prosperous and confident nation, occupying her rightful place in the international community. It is a vision to see our sacred Motherland freed from the scourge of *bhookh* (hunger), *berozgari* (unemployment), *bhay* (fear) and *bhrashtachar* (corruption). Lastly, it is a vision to see India, the world's oldest cradle of civilization, transform itself yet again into a benign global power, contributing her material, intellectual, cultural and spiritual energies to change the paradigm at the global level to save the world from the gathering civilizational crisis. As Arnold Toynbee said, 'The Western beginning must have an Indian ending if the world is to be saved from destruction.'

It was this very same vision which inspired millions upon millions of freedom-loving Indians of all castes, communities and regions to give their all for the liberation of Mother India from the yoke of British colonial rule. It was a vision which all the stalwarts of our freedom movement, belonging to different ideological and political backgrounds, said in their own separate yet complementary ways. Mahatma Gandhi coined a uniquely Indian idiom—'Ram Rajya'—for this common national vision, emphasizing, as a cautionary direction to future rulers of India that, 'There can be no Ram Rajya in the present state of inequalities in which a few roll in riches and the masses do not get even enough to eat.'

The Context and the Issue in the 12th Lok Sabha Poll

THE general elections to the 12th Lok Sabha is the inevitable result of the instability forced on the country by the Congress and the United Front. The two formed a negative and opportunist combination to thwart the mandate of the people in the 11th Lok Sabha poll and allowed the rejected Congress Party to do back-seat driving. The negative combination was a symbol of instability from day one and was, for most part of its existence, in intensive care. It collapsed, as it had to and demonstrated how the mischief played on the people of India after the 11th Lok Sabha poll recoiled on the mischief-makers themselves. This has made stability the principal issue in the coming election in a manner it has never

been in our history.

Also, the election to the 12th Lok Sabha is not only a vote on the despicable record of malgovernance of the two United Front regimes spawned by the hung 11th Lok Sabha. Rather, as the last parliamentary poll in this century and as one taking place in the Swarna Jayanti year of India's Freedom, it is a vote on nearly five decades of misrule by the Congress and its clones.

The BJP and its allies have entered the electoral fray with the supreme confidence of winning a clear mandate from the people of India to rule for the next five years. This mandate will be a vote not only against the rank instability of the two United Front Governments, but also against the static, anti-people, anti-development 'stability' of the previous Congress Governments. At the same time, it will be a positive vote for the BJP's solemn pledge to provide a dynamic, pro-people, pro-development, anti-status quoist stability under the able Prime Ministership of Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee.

Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee: Ability, Integrity and Universal Acceptability

THE positive vote for the BJP is grounded in our philosophy, our policies, our programmatic commitments, the performance of our State Governments and, of course, the unimpeachable personal qualities of our top leadership. In Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee, the people see a leader who combines ability with integrity, charisma with character and experience with universal acceptability. He is not a person who claims leadership by birth in, or relationship with, any dynasty. He is a leader by virtue of his long and dedicated service of the nation and its people in and out of Parliament.

Under Shri Vajpayee's leadership, the BJP and its allies, if elected to power, will marshal the requisite will to chart the way towards the fulfillment of the unfinished agenda of transition from Swaraj to Su-raj.

This Election Manifesto outlines how the BJP will effect change with continuity. It asserts the principles and beliefs that will serve as the beacon and an internal watchdog for the BJP in governance. The five-fold concept of *Shuchita* (probity in public life), *Suraksha* (security), *Swadeshi* (economic nationalism), *Samajik Samarasata*

(social harmony) and *Hindutva* (cultural nationalism) will constitute the core content and ideological pillars of the BJP. These principles will be manifest in our commitment to national security, good governance, national unity and integration, democracy, genuine secularism, eradication of mass poverty, opportunity for economic advancement for all, social justice, gender justice, harmonious Centre-State relations, probity in public life, revival of institutions, politics of consensus and cooperation as against confrontation and, last but not the least, raising India's prestige, profile and power in the international arena.

These commitments will guide the BJP in its endeavor to provide a Stable Government under an Able Prime Minister.

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Our National Identity

Cultural Nationalism

THE BJP is committed to the concept of 'One Nation, One People and One Culture'. The unique cultural and social diversity in India is woven into a larger civilizational fabric by thousands of years of common living and common and shared values, beliefs, customs, struggles, joy and sorrow, as well as symbols of high degree of unity without uniformity. Our nationalist vision is not merely bound by the geographical or political identity of Bharat but it is referred by our timeless cultural heritage. This cultural heritage which is central to all regions, religions and languages, is a civilizational identity and constitutes the cultural nationalism of India which is the core of Hindutva. This we believe is the identity of our ancient nation 'Bharatvarsha'.

Every effort to characterize Hindutva as a sectarian or exclusive idea has failed as the people of India have repeatedly rejected such a view and the Supreme Court, too, finally endorsed the true meaning and content of Hindutva as being consistent with the true meaning and definition of secularism. In fact, Hindutva accepts as sacred all forms of belief and worship. The evolution of Hindutva in politics is the antidote to the creation of vote banks and appeasement of sectional interests. Hindutva means justice for all.

The BJP is convinced that Hindutva has immense potentiality to re-energize this nation and strengthen and discipline it to undertake the arduous task of nation-building. This can and does trigger a higher level of patriotism that can transform the country to greater levels of efficiency and performance. It is with such integrative ideas in mind, the BJP joined the Ram Janmabhoomi movement for the construction of Shri Ram Mandir at Ayodhya. This greatest mass movement in post-Independence history reoriented

the disoriented polity in India and strengthened the foundation of cultural nationalism.

The BJP is committed to facilitate the construction of a magnificent Shri Ram Mandir at Ram Janmasthan in Ayodhya where a makeshift temple already exists. Shri Ram lies at the core of Indian consciousness. The BJP will explore all consensual, legal and constitutional means to facilitate the construction of Shri Ram Mandir at Ayodhya.



Agenda for Institutional Rejuvenation

Strengthening Democracy's Pillars

THE strength of a democracy is directly proportionate to the strength of the three pillars on which it rests – the Executive, the Legislature and the Judiciary. Five decades of misrule and misuse of these institutions has eroded their strength. Corruption at the highest levels of the Executive has corroded people's faith in Government. The Congress and UF Governments' inability to take firm decisions and make tough choices, apart from their failure to confront disruptive forces, has weakened the authority of the Indian State. Over-centralization of power at the Centre and unbalanced models of development have led to Centre-State friction. Abuse of constitutional provisions like Article 356 and the misuse of Raj Bhavans as extension counters of the ruling party at the Centre have defiled the sanctity of the country's Constitution.

The BJP will earnestly set itself to the task of strengthening these institutions of the Republic through an agenda of reform and rejuvenation. The primary task is to restore to the State – and thus to Government – its honour and prestige. The BJP will thus restore to Government its moral authority to rule. We propose to undertake the following agenda for rejuvenation:

Constitutional Reforms

1. The BJP will appoint a Commission to comprehensively review the Constitution of India, in the light of the experience of the past 50 years and make suitable recommendations. The Commission will comprise constitutional experts and eminent parliamentarians.
2. The BJP is committed to take necessary steps to prevent

misuse of Article 356 of the Constitution.

3. The BJP will carve out Uttaranchal, Jharkhand, Vidarbha and Chhattisgarh as separate States. Delhi will be given full Statehood.
4. The BJP will provide all three regions of Jammu and Kashmir – Jammu, Kashmir and Ladakh – with regional development councils.
5. The BJP will abrogate Article 370 of the Constitution.

Electoral Reforms

THE BJP, which has been singularly championing the cause of electoral reforms since the days of the Jana Sangh, believes that one of the principal causes of corruption and corrosion of our polity is our faulty election process. The BJP will, immediately on assuming office, introduce a comprehensive Electoral Reforms Bill, much of the groundwork for which has already been done but not acted upon. To ensure free, fair and fearless elections and to prevent the use of money power and muscle power, the BJP will:

1. Update and adopt the Goswami Committee Report;
2. Consider introducing a scheme for State-funding of election expenses incurred by all recognized parties;
3. Undertake immediate delimitation of Lok Sabha and Assembly constituencies;
4. Make it mandatory for parties to submit audited accounts for public scrutiny;
5. Examine the feasibility of introducing the list system or a mixed system of elections; and;
6. Undertake the process of issuing multi-purpose identity cards to all citizens and make it a mandatory requirement for voting.

Judicial Reforms

THE Judiciary is one of the watchdogs in a democracy and in recent times has played an important role in pursuing cases of corruption and abuse of public office. But the Judiciary faces problems that need to be addressed and solved in consultation with the Chief Justice of India. For speedy, fair and inexpensive justice, the BJP will:

1. Fill vacancies in high courts and the Supreme Court without any delay;
2. Appoint special judges to clear the huge arrears at all levels of the judiciary;
3. Legislate to the effect that cases are heard on a day-to-day basis and not held up by inordinate adjournments;
4. Expand and strengthen the existing legal aid facilities for weaker sections of society; and,
5. Set up a National Judicial Commission which will recommend judicial appointments in the High Courts and the Supreme Court and draw up a code of ethics for judges.

Reforms in the Law and Order Machinery

THE security of each citizen is of utmost concern for the BJP, which is committed to a riot-free and terrorism-free India. Whether on the streets or at home, every Indian must feel safe and protected from violence in any form. The BJP will squarely and purposefully address the deteriorating law and order scenario in various parts of the country. The BJP will:

1. Forthrightly meet all challenges to the State and its citizens by terrorists and extremists. Our approach will be firm but always fair;
2. Enact a suitable law to tackle terrorism while ensuring that there are no loopholes for its misuse;
3. Provide timely assistance to State Governments to maintain law and order by supplementing local police forces with adequate central forces;
4. Equip police with modern arms and communication facilities;
5. Seek immediate reports from State Governments on incidents of police firing and monitor follow-up action, especially in fixing of responsibility if the firing was unprovoked or uncalled for;
6. Hold district officers squarely accountable for mismanagement of public order and take prompt action in light of findings of time-bound inquiries;
7. Ensure that complaints by citizens do not go unattended;

8. Improve the intelligence-gathering mechanism at all levels to tackle mischief-makers before they can act and keep State Governments posted about all intelligence gathered on a day-to-day basis;
9. Launch a nationwide drive to identify the influx of illicit arms and their possession. Proliferation of small arms directly affects law and order and the nation's security;
10. Crack down on narcotics smuggling which is linked to narco-terrorism and drug-usage. Existing law in this regard will be made more effective and implemented;
11. Rationalize the number, structure, composition and role of paramilitary and special forces like the National Security, the Special Protection Group and the Rapid Action Force; and,
12. Review VIP security arrangements so that they are neither exaggerated nor intrusive. We will ensure that VIP security arrangements do not affect the collective convenience of the citizens.

Administrative Reforms

THE BJP believes that despite reduction in the traditional regulatory role of the bureaucracy, it will remain vital to the provision of a just and progressive administration; efficient delivery of services to the people; and, implementation of socio-economic development programmes. We will strive to re-inculcate in the public service the spirit of service to the common people. Public servants at all levels will be given due support and trust. In turn, they will be held fully accountable for efficiency, probity and integrity. To usher in a responsive and responsible administration, the BJP will:

1. Ensure objectivity and fairness in recruitment, promotions and transfers.
2. Introduce suitable minimum tenures for officers manning such posts as secretaries to the Government, chief secretaries, DGPs and district officers;
3. Deny extension to officers after superannuation or upon completing their fixed tenures;
4. Give protection to public servants in the discharge of their duties and disallow interference from extraneous quarters;

5. Undertake reforms in district administration, police and other organizations interfacing with the people, with emphasis on responsiveness and accountability;
6. Avoid proliferation of bureaucracy by meeting new requirements, to the extent possible, through redeployment and training of existing staff;
7. Give wide publicity to rights of citizens and the services and facilities to which they are entitled;
8. Provide speedy redressal of individual and community grievances;
9. Withdraw Government from areas of unnecessary intervention;
10. Enhance skills and efficiency of public servants through special training programmes;
11. Infuse talent through lateral entry of personnel;
12. Ensure speedy resolution of anomalies in implementing the recommendations of the Fifth Pay Commission and strengthen arrangements for employees' welfare and housing;
13. Raise the retirement age of Government employees from 58 to 60 as per the recommendations of the Fifth Pay Commission; and,
14. Increase skills and efficiency of public servants by training programmes; infusion of talent will also be secured by lateral entry of people from the private sector, NGOs and educational and research institutions.

Restructuring of Centre-State Relations

THE present iniquitous Centre-State relations not only tend to erode the autonomy of the States and jeopardize their rightful and legitimate role in our federal polity, but also impinge on their financial capabilities and operational flexibility. To make Centre-State relations more harmonious and in keeping with the spirit of a federal polity, the BJP will:

1. Immediately implement the recommendations of the Sarkaria Commission;
2. Consult State Governments before appointing Governors and consider ways and means of preventing misuse of Raj

- Bhavans for political purposes;
3. Increase allocation of resources to the States in real terms. This, coupled with greater functional autonomy, can go a long way in making States stable, strong and prosperous. To achieve this end, we will:
 - (a) Increase the States' share of gross proceeds of Central Tax revenues to 33 per cent;
 - (b) Give adequate assistance to the States to lessen the burden imposed by the recommendations of the Fifth Pay Commission;
 - (c) Allow States the freedom to raise funds by issuing tax-free bonds;
 - (d) Transfer external assistance to States on the same terms and conditions on which it is received from external donors;
 - (e) Treat loans against small savings as loans in perpetuity;
 - (f) Increase Plan assistance to States in real terms;
 4. Swiftly clear infrastructure projects in power, water and mineral sector. The Central Electricity Authority and Central Water Commission will function as consultancy organizations and not have any regulatory role in project clearance. The present policy of environmental clearance will be reviewed.

Panchayati Raj

FOR better local self-governance at the village level, the BJP will:

1. Introduce suitable changes in the 73rd and 74th amendments to the Constitution with a view to further strengthening Panchayati Raj institutions and giving them greater autonomy;
2. Endeavor to make the Panchayati Raj institutions financially self-reliant.

Systemic Cure for Corruption

THE BJP believes that morality and ethics together form the underpinning of good governance. In the past 50 years, the Congress has systematically dismantled all norms of honesty and integrity

in Government, indulging in corruption at all levels and resisting all attempts to bring the guilty to book. The UF had declared its intention to expose the corrupt, but ended up protecting them from the arms of justice. The BJP will seek to undo this grievous wrong committed against the nation by the Congress and later by the UF and set an example of unimpeachable accountability and impeccable probity in public life. For a clean public life, the BJP will:

1. Make it obligatory for every elected representative to make public within 90 days his income and assets, as well as those of his/her spouse and dependent children and parents. These declarations will be open to public scrutiny and have to be made every year;
2. Appoint a Lok Pal to inquire into allegations of corruption against anybody holding public office, including the Prime Minister;
3. Introduce extensive regulations to ensure that conflict of interest does not influence decisions taken by those holding public office;
4. Modify and reform the methodology of Government approval of contracts, schemes and large value agreements to make them more transparent;
5. The powers of patronage, the discretion to say 'Yes' or 'No' to simple daily requirements of the citizens will be done away with;
6. Expeditiously deal with unresolved cases of corruption and in which no action has been taken in the last 12 years; and,
7. Give greater autonomy to the CBI, in keeping with the recent Supreme Court order, so as to prevent investigating agencies from being used to subserve the political designs of the ruling party.

Right to Information

THE BJP believes in taking concrete steps to promote transparency in the functioning of Government as a confidence-building measure. The working of a Government should not only be transparent but should be perceived to be so. We, therefore, subscribe to the principle of sharing information about the Government's

work. The BJP will:

1. Enhance public access to information to the maximum extent feasible;
2. Review laws and regulations concerning confidentiality; and,
3. Introduce social audit of development programmes, especially in rural areas.

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Our Swadeshi Approach

Making India a Global Economic Power

THE economic policy-making in the last five decades has been shaped more by dogma than by a rational debate on what suits the country's interests best. In 1950, Congress discarded the Gandhian approach and adopted the socialist pattern without any debate. Now, after the collapse of the socialist paradigm, our entire establishment has defected to the type of free-market system that prevails in the Western countries, once again without any debate as to whether such a system can be wholly transplanted to India. The policies of liberalization, particularly globalization, pursued by the Congress and later by the UF Government have resulted in economic stagnation. What this nation needs now is a practical approach that is devoid of dogma and is guided wholly by considerations of national interest and what is appropriate for us.

Fifty Years of Wasted Opportunities

IN fact, the five decades of Congress and quasi-Congress rule have been a virtually wasted opportunity. In these fifty years the absolute numbers of people living below the poverty line almost doubled; the Indian economy grew at a mere 3.5 per cent while most of Asia raced ahead towards prosperity. At the same time, Indian industry, services and agriculture were largely rendered internationally non-competitive and disadvantaged. During most of this period the BJP and its forerunner, the Bharatiya Jana Sangh, had been urging a liberal economic regime in which the full creative genius of the Indian people could flower. We opposed the license-permit Raj. We opposed the command economy. We opposed senseless central planning. We opposed the inefficient State

capitalism that was promoted at the cost of our entrepreneurial class. We opposed the crony capitalism that came about as a result of the collusion between the politicians, bureaucrats and businessmen. We opposed the nationalization of vast areas of the economy. We opposed the corruption that inevitably became a part of the system that was created. We continuously opposed the Congress party that was both the creator and then the creature of this corrupt system.

Phony Liberalization: A More Impoverished Economy

AFTER four-and-a-half grossly wasted decades, the Congress Government of the day woke up to the bankrupt reality, but, under the guise of correcting the past wrongs, actually surrendered to IMF conditionalities. With a gun at its head it began to do what it does best – double talk. It said it was liberalizing the economy and actually gave itself more opportunities for corruption. This phony liberalization turned out to be a period of record loot under which foreign companies flourished and the Indian ones floundered. Within the first year, as the Finance Minister crowed that the surge in the share market was a sign of confidence in his policies, the bubble burst to uncover a scam of record proportions. Foreign companies were allowed to increase their equity at par instead of paying the market price for additional shares. Over 2,100 companies were allowed to raise over Rs. 35,800 crore from the market, mostly at unreasonable premia. The markets have since come down to abysmal levels; as a result millions were financially devastated. More than 600 of these companies, which cumulatively raised over Rs. 10,000 crore, have simply disappeared, walking off with the money. The Congress Party has no answer for this. Many in the Cabinet were directly involved in the scams. The then Prime Minister's office, too, was not exempt from this taint.

The last six years, when the much-touted reform has been under way, have been years of extreme difficulty for the common man. The wholesale price index of food grains has gone up by over 70 per cent, which is an effective inflation rate of over 20 per cent. Instead of creating prosperity for all, this so-called liberalization further impoverished the majority with a result that, according to the NCAER, 59 per cent of all households now have a monthly income of less than Rs. 1,000 or about Rs. 200 per person which is

much less than the poverty level monthly per capita income of Rs. 263! By contrast, only 4.1 per cent of all families have an income of over Rs. 40,000 per year. A study by Oxfam, while somewhat more charitable as far as the overall figures are concerned, categorically states that rural poverty during the Manmohan Singh years grew from 35.5 per cent to 48.6 per cent. After this period of so-called liberalization and growth, so much hyped by the Congress and later by the quasi-Congress UF Governments, we have become a more impoverished society than before. According to the World Development Report, the highest 20 per cent of Indians accounted for 41.3 per cent of the national income, while the bottom 20 per cent accounted for a mere 8.8 per cent! The hollowness of the economic policies of the past fifty years and, in particular, of the past seven years stands totally exposed by the glaring inequity and the high incidence of poverty.

From 1981-82 to 1990-91 industrial production grew at an average of 7.8 per cent a year. After five years of so-called liberalization it grew at an average of 5.7 per cent. During the period 1990-96, in a reversal of the previous decade's performance, the compound growth rate of foodgrain production was 1.7 per cent while the population grew at 1.9 per cent. Consequently, the per capita availability of cereals, which was 511 grams in 1991, has come down to 464 grams now. It is small wonder that prices of cereals alone have gone up by almost 20 per cent in 1996 while those of vegetables have risen by a huge 63.3 per cent. The prices of wheat and onions have spiraled while those of luxury cars, mobile phones and color TVs have come down. This is indicative of the warped sense of economic and social justice that has been prevailing in our country in the past few years. Instead of waking up to the deteriorating foodgrain scenario, successive Governments have been neglecting agriculture. In 1996-97, the proposed outlay for agriculture was Rs. 1,969 crore or Rs. 349 crore over the previous year's revised estimate. This did not even cover the official inflation and the impact of the Pay Commission's recommendations.

The Swadeshi Approach: Reforming the Reforms Process

IN 1991, the BJP cautioned the Government to embark upon internal liberalization first and defer globalization. We advocated

the reinstatement of the Swadeshi idea particularly because of the heavily one-sided pro-West WTO in the offing. However, in a matter of five years, the BJP stand on Swadeshi has been vindicated.

Swadeshi simply means 'India First'. This is the governing principle of all nations. Now the idea of Swadeshi is being accepted in most quarters, also by the Indian industry. Nevertheless, the economy of India has come under tremendous pressure because of misguided tariff reductions and an uneven playing field for the Indian industry. The BJP is fully aware that, when it comes to power, it will be inheriting a badly managed economy and a badly directed reform process. The broad agenda of the BJP will be guided by Swadeshi or economic nationalism.

The fundamental approach of the BJP is that it is imperative to develop a collective national will and confidence that 'India shall be built by Indians'. National development will largely depend upon national effort and national capital and savings. Even after the so-called reforms, the share of FDI in national investment is less than 2 per cent, that is, out of the total national investment of over Rs. 12,30,000 crore, FDI amounted to only Rs. 18,500 crore during the years 1991 to 1996. It is clear that foreign capital will be only of little value to the national economy, though crucial to some sectors like infrastructure.

Every nation advocates free trade in all global fora, but, in practice, they compulsively resort to quotas, tariffs and anti-dumping measures to protect their national interests. Whether it is the USA which resorts to Super 301, anti-dumping and high tariff, or it is Japan whose market is very difficult to access even now, the story is the same. While the declared agenda is free trade, the undeclared, but actual, agenda is economic nationalism. India, too, must follow its own national agenda. This spirit is Swadeshi.

Role of Government in a Liberalized Regime

THERE is a great misconception about the role of the Government in a liberalized regime. There is an impression that the Government retreats leaving the hidden hand of the market to manage the economy. Governments all over continue to actively manage and protect their economies, national industry and employment. The paradox is that, the greater the liberalization, the

more demanding is the involvement of the Government to protect national industry and employment.

Full Liberalization and Calibrated Globalization

THE Government and Indian industry need to evolve a consensus on the time span required to enable our industries to adjust to the exacting demands of international competition. It means rapid, large-scale internal liberalization, but calibrated globalization so that the Indian industry gets a period of seven to ten years for substantial integration with the global economy. On the basis of this consensus, the Government and the industry should work out a strategy to create an atmosphere of international acceptability and manage external relations, particularly with the WTO.

India must move carefully and gradually towards integration with the global economy and even as it so does, it must act in a manner that suits its national interest. This strategy recognizes that Indian industry needs a period of transition before it can compete with global players. All policies of tariff reduction and lifting of quantitative restrictions will be formulated taking the above facts into accounts, but the objective will be to protect the national economy and national interest like all nations do and not to indulge in economic isolationism.

Study and Appraise the Impact of Reforms on the Economy

THE process of liberalization and economic reforms needs to be properly strategized from the standpoint of broader national interest and rationally phased in. In doing so, the experience of the Asian nations presently under pressure will also have to be taken into account. As we approach the 21st century, we need to institute studies and appraise and review the reforms process and also the proposed reforms and redefine the broad contours of the national strategy for the next ten years. Based on the appraisal, the BJP Government will clearly define the contours and schedule of the liberalization and reforms. The procedural reforms like rectification of corporate law, tax law and other commercial laws will be separated from policy formulation like the policy on insurance and pension funds.

Our Medium-Term Agenda

THE broad national agenda of the BJP, containing an illustrative list of important and priority items for preparing the nation for future challenges, is set out below:

1. India must adopt policies that will enable a sustained 8 to 9 per cent annual rate of growth of GDP. This would mean an agricultural growth of at least 5 per cent a year and industrial growth of at least 12 per cent a year. Without powering agriculture in a big way, Indian growth rate cannot be sustained at higher levels. China, endowed with much less cultivable land and resources, could achieve an average agricultural growth of 8 to 10 per cent a year between 1983 to 1993 and doubled its agricultural production. India can and should achieve this and more. The agricultural agenda should be designed accordingly. A separate agenda for the non-corporate sector, which accounts for 40 per cent of the GDP, should also be pursued to achieve this target of sustained high growth. Recognizing the gross neglect of proper strategy in the past, our Government will focus on a judicious combination of infrastructure and agriculture to achieve a high trajectory of growth.
2. In the next five years, we must become a credible partner in Asia's development process and forge a relationship on equal terms with the major economic powers of the world—USA, EU and Japan.
3. In the next three years, our Government will strive to achieve strong macro-economic fundamentals; fiscal rectitude where, more than fiscal deficit, the revenue deficit is controlled; strong and viable balance of payments; monetary policy designed to resist unrealistic fall in rupee value; moderate inflation; and credit availability to industry.

Some Important and Priority Items for the National Agenda

1. The Government will formulate a system of voluntary compliance with all direct and indirect tax obligations with test-check assessments of select cases and expedite

conviction of the defaulters.

2. The Government will ensure a day-to-day working relationship with Indian industry through a structured forum like the MITI in Japan.
3. Even as the private sector will be encouraged to invest in infrastructure, the Government will also invest in infrastructure. The private sector has not been a major contributor in this area. Even in the developed world, the share of the private sector in such development does not exceed 30 to 40 per cent. For this purpose, the Government will:
 - Access the long-term debt market in Insurance and Pension Funds.
 - Set up national-level regulatory bodies for different areas of infrastructure.
 - Bring about more transparency, institute contracts which are easily enforceable and formulate laws that simplify the procedures.

It will also:

- Cut non-productive expenditure;
 - Disinvest in non-strategic PSUs;
 - Control and rationalize subsidies and trim all except those that benefit the weaker sections;
 - Reduce the size of the Government; and,
 - Simplify tax laws and widen the tax net.
4. The Government will institute an effective anti-dumping machinery to prevent dumping from abroad and to prevent unfair anti-dumping action against the country.
 5. The Government will ensure that a climate of competition is created in the insurance sector – if need be, by involving Indian private sector in the insurance business.
 6. The Government will rationalize the banking sector by creating specialization in unit banking, retail banking and commercial banking. This will be done by consolidation and mergers to create global-size banks and promote efficiency and profitability to strengthen the Indian banking system.

Resource Generation: Fiscal Policy and the Promotion of Savings

All the above tasks will need large-scale resource mobilization. This will not only call for the widening of the tax base but also supplementing it with non-tax revenues. The BJP Government shall innovate such resource augmentation through motivated savings. The fiscal policy will aim to prevent the generation of black money. Tax on services will be reviewed.

We will structure a fiscal policy that will help generate a higher level of savings. We will aim to increase the savings rate to 30 per cent in the next five years. Acceleration of savings will require the elimination of dissavings, which, in its wake, will prune the size of Government and the public sector and generate the much-needed resources for attending to the highly neglected areas of social infrastructure like education and public health. Like physical infrastructure, social infrastructure will be a priority on the agenda of the BJP Government. In their abortive zeal for containing the fiscal deficit, previous Governments have cut plan expenditure drastically and, instead, increased revenue expenditure in unpruned regulatory arms of Government which have outlived their utility in the era of liberalization. This trend will be reversed and it is expected that the reactivation of public expenditure will pull the economy out of demand stagnation and recession. It should be recognized that the halt in public investment in infrastructure, both physical and social, in the fond hope that did not materialize, of the private sector making good the gap, has caused undue harm to the economy.

Eradication of Poverty Through Generation of Jobs

THE above strategy is also firmly rooted in the recognition that growth cannot be sustained in the backdrop of accentuation in poverty and human misery. Poverty cannot also be wished away through an abstract definition built on calorific value. A meaningful estimation of poverty will now be structured on the matrix of factors that dilute the quality of life such as illiteracy, lack of sustained employment, malnutrition, lack of shelter, safe drinking water, sanitation and health care. The lot of the poor, thus defined, will be improved through a multi-pronged approach, with the focus on increased employment opportunities. The BJP Government will

make the Ninth Plan itself an employment-focused Plan.

The development strategy followed in the last fifty years separates development from employment, treating human beings as fodder in the process of development. Employment has only received lip service in the economic plans; in effect it has received a very low priority. Employment has been treated as a by-product and not the main goal of development. It has been more so since 1991 under the half-baked reform philosophy. The all-West model of the reforms generates only jobless growth. The BJP believes that it is only through full employment – not just any kind of employment, but gainful and productive employment – that rapid and sustainable development is possible. It is through employment that the real purpose of development, namely, the raising of the living standards and dignity of the people, can be realized.

It is distressing to note that unemployment and underemployment and, consequently, poverty-prevails in our country on such a massive scale. Even when the GDP growth rates have increased, employment growth rates have declined in agriculture as well as in industry. The prevailing employment growth rate is less than half of the rate at which addition to the labour force takes place. The BJP will review the Ninth Plan in all its aspects, with the objective of installing employment as its centrepiece. In the next ten years, over 10 crore people will be provided jobs, besides ameliorating the extensive underemployment and concealed unemployment. Our strategy will consist of the following:

1. A substantially higher growth rate of GDP of 8 to 9 per cent;
2. Emphasis on sectors which offer large potential for employment, including small-scale, artisan-based and rural industries, infrastructure, housing (urban and rural), construction, agriculture, wasteland development and forestry and labour-intensive production;
3. Opting for projects and technologies, wherever choices exist, without reducing productivity, that offer larger employment;
4. Increasing productivity in the informal sector through the support of technology, credit and marketing;

5. Redesigning the special employment programmes – Integrated Rural Development Programme, Jawahar Rozgar Yojana, Nehru Rozgar Yojana, Scheme for self-employment of the Educated Youth, etc. – to increase their coverage and effectiveness;
6. Encouraging the employment of women;
7. Fully involving the private sector and non-governmental organizations;
8. Adopting the institutional approach of cooperatives, wherever possible;
9. Implementing the special employment programmes through panchayat institutions; and,
10. Vocational training.

Our Commitment: Removal of Hunger and Ensuring Food for All

IN this fiftieth year of Indian independence, we commit ourselves to freeing India of the scourge of hunger. The Indian social traditions abhor hunger and had instituted different social, religious and cultural mechanisms to eliminate hunger. The tradition which acted as a social security against hunger weakened with the advent of colonialism and it never revived after we attained freedom. The result is that hunger has become part of Indian social life. We have to and we shall, ensure that in this land, no one is obliged to sleep on a hungry stomach. For this purpose, we shall explore and encourage all possible ways, both Governmental and societal, of ensuring food for all. As a concomitant of food for all, we shall recast the agricultural policy of the country to increase food production so that India once again becomes the land of abundance in food in next five years.

Public Sector Reforms

CUTTING down of dissavings will be possible only by pruning the public sector and confining it to sensitive areas where the nation's physical or economic security is involved and to residual areas where the presence of public sector is necessary for providing a moderating or counterpoising role to the ill effects, if any, of an unchecked private sector. The minimal public sector will be managed professionally, with least interference by Government.

While pruning the public sector, it will be ensured that the interests of workers are duly taken care of. Greater emphasis will be placed on retraining and redeployment aspects of the National Renewal Fund rather than confining its scope to retrenchment.

Role of Foreign Direct Investment

IT is needless to add that national development will be largely funded by capital generated within the country and foreign investment will play only a small role. The percentage of FDI to total investment in India during the years 1991-96 is less than 2 per cent and confirms that even in the post-reform period, national development has been almost entirely financed by local capital. However, in areas like infrastructure (particularly energy, roads and ports), promotion of exports and high-technology industries, FDI can usefully supplement national efforts. Policies will be framed consistent with national interest in respect of FDI. The BJP Government will ensure that FDI flows into such priority areas and not in areas where the domestic industry is functioning well. The BJP Government will frame policies to restrict FDI in non-priority areas. FDI will be encouraged to promote exports rather than target the domestic market. FDI is welcome in a non-predatory role in joint ventures rather than in 100 per cent subsidiaries. Generally, the role of foreign capital should be in harmony with and advance, the nation's economic objectives, as also in line with other Asian countries. Again, until the Indian economy reaches a level of global strength, takeovers of existing Indian companies by foreign companies will not be encouraged and suitable, transparent rules will be framed to give effect to this policy. Even developed nations like France, Germany and Switzerland have restrictions on the takeover of domestic companies.

National Agenda for Bhagidari Sector (Un-incorporated Sector)

AN analysis of India's GDP shows that agricultural accounts for 27 per cent; corporate sector 12 per cent; and the Government sector 21 per cent; all adding up to 60 per cent. The balance 40 per cent of the GDP comes from the largest segment of our economy – the unincorporated sector (partnership/ proprietorship firms) which bore the brunt of the license-permit quota raj at the cutting edge

of its interaction with the organs of State power. Millions of unincorporated enterprises in the country contributing 40 per cent of our national income did not deserve even a small paragraph in our Economic Surveys and Reserve Bank reports.

This most important segment has so far commanded the least attention and virtually no legitimacy. The entire establishment ignored these unincorporated enterprises which have a share of nearly 50 per cent of national income in the manufacturing sector, a share of 60 per cent in the construction sector, a share of more than 75 per cent in the transport sector, nearly 90 per cent in the trade sector, more than 80 per cent in hotels and restaurants and nearly 100 per cent in the business and other services like that of a doctor, lawyer, accountant, goldsmith, plumber, porter, mechanic, electrician, tailor, barber, carpenter, driver, priest, cook, musician and in the crafts and professions. We neglected this sector (which is clubbed as part of households in our savings statistics) which constitute the largest segment of savers contributing around 60 per cent of our national savings. During 1990-96 out of the total gross domestic savings of Rs. 11,32,029 crore, the savings by household sector was Rs. 8,94,918 crore, i.e. nearly 80 per cent and the Bhagidari sector is the largest segment of the household sector other than the salary earners.

Any agenda for reform necessarily has to focus its attention on the largest segment of our economy which was also the least cared for during the inspector-raj nurtured by the socialistic regime. But the so-called reforms of the nineties did not address the serious issues of using the phenomenal and enormous savings rate of our middle-class.

The focus of the Government in the nineties, in the name of reforms, concentrated essentially on the corporate sector and foreign investment that came a cropper. A clear understanding and a broad national agenda, with the following measures, are needed for the Bhagidari sector.

- (a) The financing cost for this sector is phenomenal and they borrow at usurious interest rates. There is no exclusive, national-level financing agency for trade activities or for construction activities. Indian private-sector banks need to be encouraged and developed in these areas and the

Government policies should facilitate the same. A separate development bank for this sector will also be considered.

- (b) There is no social security net for this sector. With changing patterns in the joint family system, there is even more necessity to introduce the same. The Indian private sector insurance companies can provide this. Unless and until the social security net is developed for this sector (of course, from the contributions of this sector), economic reforms will be a castle built on American sands and the European air, but not on Indian soil.
- (c) In order to mobilize savings of this sectors for targeted poverty alleviation programmes, it would be desirable that full deduction is given for the traditional commitments of the sector, including family obligation and contribution of this sector for temples, mosque, gurudwaras, etc. where free food is provided to poor people daily. This would reduce the leakages in the anti-poverty schemes currently undertaken, since this method would directly deal with the target groups. Local citizens committee can monitor this. The fear of God is a more powerful authority than that of the Government in a country like India.
- (d) This sector is a target for all levels of the State machinery like politicians, policemen, tax officials and municipal authorities. A national-level awareness programme of this sector's contribution and a national-level law to guard them against State excesses should also be formulated.

This sector has the greatest potentiality to grow with a quantum jump if this agenda is implemented. Any attempt to increase employment and to eradicate unemployment must begin here. This sector at once provides self-employment and multiplies employment. This single sector has the greatest potentiality to attack unemployment, poverty and hunger.

Role of Non-Banking Finance Companies

THE BJP realizes that savings, banking and finance is in the Indian blood. There are tens of thousands of private finance institutions—nidhis, chits and other native methods of augmenting finance and also modern-day non-banking finance institutions. The

BJP views this sector as a potentially important one. The policy on NBFCs has been ad-hoc and they have been dealt with, at times, in a reckless manner. The new RBI guidelines preventing NBFCs from accepting deposits without rating is absurd, as we have not even developed standards for rating under Indian conditions. The BJP will review the entire regulation on the NBFCs and bring about an orderly growth and not planned destruction of this important segment. This sector alone finances most of the transportation business and the non-corporate sector, which is the most important and the largest sector of the national economy.

Industrial Policy Reform

THE immediate task of the new Government will have to be to create conditions for industry to regain its lost momentum. Persistence of the present conditions will cause irreparable damage to the fabric of Indian industry. The BJP recognizes the need for corrective action on a war footing. We attach particular importance to the interdependence of industry and agriculture. We will improve inter-sectoral terms of trade and other linkages so that benefits accrue to both. The BJP also reiterates the importance of the small-scale and cottage industry sectors, in view of their contribution to employment, wider participation and new entrepreneurship. These sectors, which have suffered neglect by the Congress and the United Front Governments, will be given all encouragement and support by the BJP.

The permit-quota raj created conflicts between large and small industries. The BJP will strive to make small-scale units and large units, particularly where the former is the supplier of the latter, into a structured ally like in Japan and Korea. The BJP will formulate policies for large units to invest up to 25 per cent in the capital of the small unit so that the small unit has the backing of the large unit for purposes of availing bank loans or other credit. By such a relationship, hundreds of small units can coalesce with a large-scale unit and benefit in a variety of ways.

In order to achieve the above objective, the BJP will:

1. Further simplify industrial approvals and remove the plethora of restrictive controls that now exist. The Industrial Development and Regulation Act will be replaced by an

- Industrial Development Act. The role of the Government will change from the restrictive, as it has been so far, to one of extending support and encouragement;
2. Encourage research and development in enterprises as well as in specialized institutions;
 3. Permit hazardous industries only in specified areas. Separate satellite industrial parks will be set up exclusively for such units;
 4. Give all encouragement and support to the small-scale and cottage industry sectors. Agencies will be established to give them help in getting scarce raw materials, technology upgradation and marketing of their products. Flow of credit to these sectors will be enhanced. We will reconsider the Abid Hussain Committee recommendations on SSI units in the light of the difficulties and apprehensions of SSI. The investment limit of Rs. 3 crore will also be reviewed if any misuse of the higher limit is found. The tiny sector will be relieved of labour laws and other legislations by which they are subject to harassment; and,
 5. Ensure a healthy capital market with the twin objectives of increasing capital investment in the corporate sector and of providing protection to the investing public.

Making Labour a Proud Partner in the Nation's Progress

OUR plan to reform the reform process through the Swadeshi approach, includes:

1. A strong commitment to make labour, both organized and unorganized, an equal and proud partner in the nation's progress;
2. Rationalize and simplify labour laws.
3. Recognize trade unions on the basis of secret ballot.
4. Introduce worker-participation from the shopfloor to the boardroom.
5. Strengthen institutional mechanisms to ensure speedy, just and corruption-free redressal of labour grievances.

Policy on Tourism

THE BJP recognizes the importance of tourism as a generator of jobs and foreign exchange. Its Government will:

1. Promote tourism as a way to have a more meaningful and wider understanding of India and its people.
2. Evolve a national policy for tourism to provide needed infrastructure such as hotels, transports and removal of bureaucratic impediments.
3. Create a regulatory mechanism to avoid long-term damage to the heritage and the environment.
4. Take care of the pilgrimage component of tourism by ensuring the cleanliness, basic facilities, etc. at pilgrimage centres of all sects.
5. Shift the exclusive emphasis from five-star tourism to tourism for the masses.
6. Enable India to have its rightful share in the growing global tourism industry, while ensuring that Indian culture, heritage and values are preserved and projected.

Policy on Infrastructure

SINCE infrastructure constitutes a critical aspect of the national economy, an overview of the BJP's thinking on infrastructure is presented under:

Policy on Energy and Power

INVESTMENT in power must be accelerated urgently. Any further delay in adding new capacity will inflict considerable costs on the economy.

1. In power generation, most of the private sector investments have got bogged down in never-ending negotiations. The Government will ensure that all eight 'fast track' projects start construction in 1998.
2. Transmission and distribution need to be strengthened. After appropriate study, a National and/or Regional Power Trading Corporation may be set up for efficient use of the generated power. Power Grid Corporation's plans to implement a national grid will be speeded up. To ensure that private investors in this sub-sector do not have

- the same experience as their counterparts in generation, the Government will create a standardized application procedure with clear and transparent rules for their entry;
3. The Government will strive for a national consensus to ensure that, in five years, a commercially viable power tariff structure comes into operation;
 4. BHEL will be revitalized to expand its capacity to emerge as a global player in the next five years;
 5. The Government will review the liquid fuel policy and institute a more efficient and fair policy regime;
 6. To encourage non-conventional sources of energy, the Ministry of Non-conventional Energy Sources and IREDA will be strengthened. Large-scale research and development will be instituted to develop more non-conventional energy;
 7. Other things being equal, preference will be given to Indian companies in power generation and distribution;
 8. The long-stalled nuclear power programme will be restarted. India has mastered the technology and the entire nuclear fuel cycle. There is no reason why only two nuclear plants have gone critical in the last seven years. Instead of importing nuclear power technology from Russia, there is no reason why our trained engineers should not be exporting Indian nuclear power technology to foreign countries;
 9. In the oil sector, the Government will involve the Indian private sector in oil extraction and refining on the explored oil fields and will, on viable terms, allow Indian joint ventures with foreign companies in oil exploration and extraction; and,
 10. In the coal sector, the Government will increase the production of coal, reduce costs and raise productivity. It will involve the Indian private sector in coal mining so as to meet the increased energy needs of the country.

Railways

TRANSPORT must become multi-modal to meet the needs of development. The most important type of transport is the Indian Railways. The rate of growth of the Railways has come down. A

complete review of the working of the Indian Railways would have to be undertaken along with a study of the use of roads in the areas served by the Railways. There are thousands of kilometers of rail track lying unused, while the roads alongside those very tracks are overburdened with traffic, despite Railways being cheaper.

1. Private participation in using such idle railway tracks will be allowed;
2. An efficiency audit of the Railways will have to be done to prevent wastage and disuse of stores and rolling stock;
3. Also, a study should be done to ensure that trains carry payloads up to 4,000 tonnes;
4. We will institute research and development for the Indian Railways suited to Indian conditions.;
5. Container transport will be encouraged on a point-to-point basis; and,
6. The Railways will also run pilgrimage specials connecting the several places of pilgrimage in the country both from a commercial point of view and service to the pilgrims, as well as from the standpoint of national integration.

Roads and Bridges

INADEQUATE road networks have led to higher transportation costs that have also eroded the international competitiveness of the Indian economy. Trucks in India travel only 200-250 kilometers a day, compared to 500-600 kilometers a day in developed countries. Therefore, proper road construction will lead to a big increase in transport efficiency. For this purpose, the BJP will do the following things:

1. The National Highways Authority of India will be made the regulator for this sector. It will be responsible for setting tolls, inviting bids from private companies, evaluating them and awarding them. The BJP will continue with the current fiscal incentives for this sector. Like in other sectors, it will identify the non-fiscal barriers to investment in this sector, for their speedy removal;
2. The Government will identify the four most heavily used stretches of the national highway system. It will formulate and implement an action plan to upgrade them within two

years using both the public and private sectors wherever necessary. It is important that these critical bottlenecks be removed as soon as possible;

3. For all other highways, the Government will invite the private sector to upgrade them, for which they will collect toll revenues. If the private sector is not interested, the Government will create a State-owned National Highway Development Corporation that will go ahead and upgrade these highways, for which it will also levy tolls;
4. A proportion of the taxes on motor vehicles and on petrol and diesel collected in each city will be handed over to that city or town to use to upgrade the roads in those cities; and,
5. Except for very long distance and high investment projects, the policy will be to involve only the Indian private sector in the bids.

Inland Waterways

THERE is an enormous potential for inland waterways in India. The estimated length of waterways available is over 30,000 kilometers and they touch almost all the important centres in our country. The cost of water transport is a third of the cost of surface transport. Waterways were once considered to be better for India than other forms of transport in many areas. The development of waterways will also lead to the proper maintenance of reservoirs and canals, since revenue would be generated from water transport. The BJP will develop a blueprint for water transport and allow private parties to get into inland water transport.

Sea Ports

MOST Indian ports are operating at more than 100 per cent capacity. Yet they are very inefficient when compared to other parts in the region. As part of a proper ports development programme, the BJP will do the following things:

1. Convert ports into companies that can raise funds from the debt and equity markets. The initial shareholding of this company can be divided four ways with the central Government, the State Government, the city administration

- and the general public;
2. Ports will be encouraged to invest in the latest information technology and cargo handling equipment to reduce turnaround time;
 3. The workers of ports should be retrained to use these new technologies. Ports must be more efficient, but they need to become so without displacing too many workers;
 4. Develop Mumbai and Vishakhapatnam ports as megaports, which will be warehouses for the country on either seaboard;
 5. Private sector minor ports should be encouraged. They will take the load of the bigger ports; and
 6. Except for large international ports, in other cases, preference will be given to Indian companies.

Coastal Shipping

INDIA has a long coastline and its peninsular formation is ideally suited for development of coastal shipping. Considering that coastal shipping is cheaper than surface transport and further considering that nearly 30 per cent of the cargo carried by Indian Railways is coal, coastal shipping can relieve the surface transport sector of a big burden. Indian private sector will be involved in coastal shipping development. Cheaper movement of coal by coastal shipping will also enable thermal power generation along the coastline to transmit power inland.

Telecommunications

The aim of our telecom policy will be to:

1. Increase the number of phone lines dramatically, especially in villages; and,
2. Satisfy the more demanding audio, video and data communications needs of business and homes.

For these purposes, the BJP Government will take the following steps:

1. The Indian Telegraph Act, 1885 will be replaced with new legislation that takes into account the advances in the last century and more and reflects the current and future status of the telecom sector;
2. The Government's role will be that of a regulator, so the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India will be strengthened;

3. The department of telecom will be converted into a company called India Telecom. To expedite the shift from a Government department to a profit-making company, the Government will divest a portion of its shareholdings in India Telecom at the appropriate time;
4. The Government will not discriminate between Government-owned companies or the new private companies coming into operation. All restrictions (inter-circle, long-distance, international) will be removed on schedule, or earlier, in the interests of greater competition;
5. However, the Government will maximize the returns from the companies that it already owns (India Telecom, VSNL, MTNL, ITI). To make these telecom companies competitive, they need to have the freedom to hire the best people and pay them market salaries. These companies will be given this freedom;
6. Since India is expected to have the sixth-largest number of phones in the world in the next few years, it must have a telecom-manufacturing industry to match this. The Government will encourage the creation of world-class telecom-manufacturing in India, that is encouraged to use indigenously developed technology; and,
7. The Government policy for foreign direct investment will discourage foreign majority holdings in telecommunication companies.

The BJP's Approach to the WTO

1. The major task facing our country in the economic sphere is the preservation of a measure of autonomy in the management of the national economy, which the Congress Government surrendered meekly by accepting without resistance the highly prejudicial WTO conditionalities. The Government should have the sovereign and inalienable right to choose its economic system as well as its legal, social, cultural and political system in accordance with its historic traditions, national genius and the express will of its people. This would be the foremost objective of our party to restore the desired autonomy.

2. Agriculture, which concerns the bulk of our people and, in particular, WTO issues connected with subsidies, fertilizers and seeds so that the interests of the farmer and consumer of food are not sacrificed would be adequately examined. No legislations concerning agriculture and commitments under the Uruguay Round would be allowed to be implemented without full democratic discussion.
3. The small-scale sector, which is the backbone of our economy and employment would not be exposed to unequal competition, both from large houses in the country and from the transnational corporations from abroad. The small-scale sector would be strengthened.
4. The agreement on services, particularly financial services, would be monitored in respect of the entry of powerful foreign interests in our country. The immigration laws abroad should also not confuse rights of the developed countries for effective opportunities for our people in those countries.
5. The patent system, in particular, would not be allowed to become an import monopoly and working of a patent and dissemination of technology would be ensured by an effective and strong 'license of right' and 'compulsory license' regime.
6. The BJP would strive to work out a strategy and consensus within the nation and with all nations similarly placed to lobby for legitimately justified modification of the perspective, programmes, rules and schedule of the WTO.

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Social Infrastructure

A Better Standard of Living is Every Indian's Birthright

DESPITE various programmes launched at various points of time and although food production has touched 195 million tonnes from a low of 50 million tonnes in 1951, India still loses 11 per cent of under five children and 3 to 4 per cent women in the reproductive age group due to malnutrition. It is a reflection of the performance of previous Governments that 53 per cent of the country's children aged under five are malnourished. India has an abysmal record of 28 per cent low birth weight babies. Fifty per cent of the population suffers from iron deficiency and 20 per cent of all maternal deaths are due to anemia. To wipe out these shameful figures, the BJP will:

1. Ensure household food security commensurate with the national food security so that all families in rural and urban areas get two square meals a day by the year 2003;
2. Review and vigorously implement the National Nutrition Policy and the Plan of Action on Nutrition so that all goals are achieved by their target dates;
3. Revamp and expand the scope of Integrated Child Development Services; and,
4. Use the PDS effectively to help the poorest of the poor.

Housing for All: A New Habitat Policy

THE BJP recognizes that soon one-third of India's population will be living in urban centres. It is important to ensure planned development of these centres from small towns to the big cities and the large metropolises. Urban slums are rapidly developing and conditions in them deteriorating. Particularly important are the problems of drinking water, sewage and waste disposal in

urban centres. There is a severe shortage of housing both in the urban and rural areas. For us, shelter is a basic human need that must be met at all cost. Extensive housing schemes also generate employment. Therefore, the BJP will:

1. Evolve a National Housing and Habitat Policy in consultation with State Governments and Urban Development Authorities. The policy will aim at providing shelter to all by year 2010 and also facilitate the construction of 20 lakh new houses each year;
2. Review the provisions of the Urban Land Ceiling Act and ensure that land and property prices do not escalate as they have in the past;
3. Promote affordable mass housing for low and middle-income groups;
4. Make available adequate credit to house-seekers on attractive terms;
5. Take steps to make additional rented accommodation available; and
6. Launch special concessional schemes to provide rural poor with adequate and affordable housing.

Health for All

OUR goal will be 'Health for All' by 2003, but the poor and disadvantaged will be a special responsibility. Health delivery is most effective when decentralized to State, district and local levels, with communities taking leadership and responsibility for health and development. In this context, our ancient and local wisdom is of greatest importance. Public health cannot be regarded as only a consumer of resource. It is essential for the creation of a good society with high productivity. It is an investment in human resources. Towards this end, we will strive for:

1. Clean drinking water in all villages and slums;
2. Attaining 100 per cent universal immunization of children against preventable diseases;
3. Vigorously attacking eradicable diseases like yaws, leprosy and filariasis;
4. Promoting awareness on cleanliness, sanitation and disease prevention;

5. Emphasizing prevention of diseases and maintenance of health which has been the basis of Indian culture and canalizing resources based on this philosophy;
6. Promoting traditional and alternative systems of medicine such as Ayurveda, Siddha, Unani, Homeopathy, Naturopathy, with particular emphasis on traditional wisdom and indigenous knowledge, with full quality assurance;
7. Safeguarding traditional medical knowledge and natural resources;
8. Spending more on pre-natal and post-natal health care programmes and thus drastically reducing India's infant mortality rate and under-five mortality rate;
9. Launching an attack through existing programmes relating to AIDS, tuberculosis and vector borne diseases like malaria, dengue haemorrhagic fever and kalaazar, with special attention to elimination of shortfalls/deficiencies in implementation;
10. Introducing health impact assessment in all development projects;
11. Ensuring that essential drugs are available at affordable prices;
12. Introducing low-cost health insurance schemes;
13. Providing concessional health care for the aged;
14. Instituting a mechanism to monitor and collate health-related information and ensure timely intervention through surveillance;
15. Providing every panchayat with a free and truly functional basic healthcare centre, particularly with facilities for mother and child care; as well as access to these centres;
16. Making the screening of blood at blood banks mandatory and provide for punitive punishment for any violation; and,
17. Making doctors, para-medical and non-medical staff at Government and private hospitals and healthcare centres accountable by suitable law.

Education for All

It is sad that fifty years after independence, the cherished goal of universal primary education enshrined in the Constitution, which was to have been implemented by 1960, yet remains to be achieved. In recent years, State support for education has been wholly inadequate. Quality education is fast becoming the preserve of the social and economic elite of the country. We hold that education is both a human right and a means to bring about transformation to a dynamic, humane, thinking society. Towards this end, the BJP will:

1. Increase State spending on education progressively to six per cent and more of our Gross National Product within five years;
2. Achieve near complete functional literacy in five years, particularly by mobilizing societal participation and full literacy by the year 2010.
3. Launch a nationwide Educational Quality Improvement Campaign covering all institutions from primary schools to universities;
4. Accord priority to free primary education and enroll the help of locally-funded non-government organizations in this area; also integrate early childhood care and pre-primary education with primary education;
5. Offer incentives in the form of free text books, mid-day meals and nutrition programmes and stipends to check dropout rate so that at least 80 per cent children, both boys and girls, who enroll, complete primary school education;
6. Introduce self-employment oriented vocational training programmes at high school level which will also be open to working youth interested in skill upgradation;
7. Introduce an anti-cheating law which will be applicable to all States and whose abuse will be prevented through adequate safeguards; ensure that examinations are held on time;
8. Set up a special monitoring authority to scrutinize the quality of education and remove gender disparity;
9. Ensure autonomy to universities and to colleges under them. Rid them of corruption and other baneful influences.

- Encourage them to mobilize resources for research and higher education and provide academic freedom to our scholars, especially in the social sciences;
10. Restore to teachers self-esteem and make teaching a respectable profession;
 11. Create centres of educational excellence in our academic system that can set an example and build self-confidence. Our Government will select 10 to 20 centres of higher learning and research that will be supported in all manner to make them world class;
 12. Take the help of industry to set up more agro-industrial and technical institutions that will provide affordable education;
 13. Replace the system of capitation fees by loan linked schemes and monitor the functioning of private engineering and medical institutions;
 14. Launch a scheme for low interest bank loans for meritorious students who want to go in for higher education;
 15. Thwart attempts by dubious, so-called foreign universities, colleges and institutes to open branches in India and prevent the outflow of foreign exchange on studies abroad unless the course is relevant to our needs and requirements;
 16. Provide specialized opportunities for highly talented students at school level;
 17. Introduce agriculture studies as a subject in rural schools;
 18. Ensure that traditional knowledge and skills are preserved and disseminated;
 19. Seek the help of industrial establishments for rapid proliferation of technical education;
 20. Encourage the enrichment, preservation and development of all Indian languages, including Sanskrit and Urdu; and,
 21. Encourage greater participation of social and charitable institutions in expanding the network of educational institutions and in improving their standards.



Our Agriculture, Our Farmers, Our Villages

Revitalized Rural Economy, Revitalized National Economy

AGRICULTURE sustains 71.4 per cent of the nation's population. It is the mainstay of India's economy and culture. India is blessed with every natural resource needed for sustaining a strong agricultural economy. We have vast cultivable land, ample sources of water, forests and most importantly, year-long tropical sunlight. We have a large agricultural human resource that has inherited a rich and hoary tradition in farming. It has also acquired the tools of modern science and technology. The combination of these two resources could have transformed Free India into a continental granary. But fifty years of neglect, corruption and wrong policies by successive Congress and quasi-Congress Governments have severely handicapped the Indian farmer and the entire rural economy. 'Villager is the salt of Indian earth,' said Mahatma Gandhi. 'Jai Kisan' said Lal Bahadur Shastri. But in the last five decades, a majority of our kisans have become poor and harried outcasts in their own country, with no respectful place in the Governments' scheme of things. Today they are on the margins of India's economic, social, cultural and political life.

Rural India and Urban India Complement and Supplement Each Other

THE BJP is of the considered view that India will not become a strong, prosperous and confident nation until and unless there is a qualitative improvement in our rural economy and the condition of our kisans. In the absence of any comprehensive and

enlightened agricultural policy, the Congress Governments made no attempt either to ensure remunerative prices for farmers based on a scientific assessment of all the input costs or to bring about a rational balance between the prices of agricultural and industrial products. Institutional credit and marketing support for the Indian kisan was deliberately kept weak and unreliable. As a result, the hardworking Indian kisan was pushed into poverty and the vicious clutches of debt. Newspapers have reported about 'serial suicides' by farmers in Andhra Pradesh. In 1950-51, the ratio between per capita rural and urban income was 1:2. Today, it has become 1:4.

The BJP believes that the one-fourth urban India cannot have balanced development without the rapid development of the three-fourths rural India. Hence, rural India is not antagonistic, but complementary and supplementary to urban India.

BJP's Agenda for Reinvigorating Rural India

- The BJP attaches the highest priority to ensuring India's food security and to the crying need to rid India of the scourge of hunger. Towards the goal of creating a hunger-free society, our Government shall appeal to Indian kisans to double food production by the year 2010 and pledges all support for the realization of this objective.
- The BJP pledges to reverse the process of economic, social and political marginalization of India's rural population and effectively fight the elitist, anti-kisan Congress mindset, which engendered this process.
- The BJP is committed to restore agriculture to its proper place in the national economy and re-establish, before the close of the first decade of the next century, India's farmers as a strong and self-confident community enjoying the fruits of prosperity and social justice.
- We shall take all the necessary steps to vastly increase both public and private investment in agriculture and agro-based industries, with the aim of harnessing its full potential for rural wealth generation and productive employment generation. In this, our priority will be the small and medium farmers and small-scale industries and businesses.

- Transfer of technology and development of appropriate technology has become a matter of great urgency for the revitalization of the rural economy. We shall support all initiatives to make agriculture knowledge-intensive, drawing on both ancient and modern farm techniques.

Jai Kisan: Our Commitments to the Farm and Rural sector

1. Earmark 60 per cent of Plan funds in the budget for agricultural and rural development.
2. Make a quantum increase in Governmental and private investment in improving the rural infrastructure of irrigation, all-weather roads, transport, power, telecommunication and credit and financing facilities.
3. Substantially increase Governmental and private investment in strengthening the social infrastructure in rural areas in the fields of drinking water, education, health-care, sanitation and housing.
4. Through a massive plan of rural housing, the goal of 'Shelter for All' will be achieved by the year 2010. At least half the task will be sought to be achieved in the next five years.
5. Give all possible support to increasing milk production and animal husbandry. Priority will be given to setting up milk processing and milk product manufacturing units close to the catchment area.
6. To make agriculture sustainable for even the smallest farmer, the following initiatives will be taken:
 - (a) Remunerative prices for the entire range of agriculture produce by linking them to input costs. Towards this end, our Government will constitute an Agriculture Costs and Prices Commission. Two-thirds of its members will be agriculturists and farm experts. The Commission will be an autonomous body and its recommendations will be mandatory. It will also recommend ways of achieving a balance between the prices of agricultural produce and industrial goods and services.
 - (b) In the interim, support price for farm produce to be

- linked to the general price index.
- (c) To help the farmers through a number of governmental and cooperative schemes to reduce per acre production cost.
 - (d) To help the farmers through a number of governmental and cooperative schemes to increase per acre farm productivity. Towards this end, attractive incentives will be instituted for those who achieve exceptionally high standards of productivity.
 - (e) To reduce the dependence on primary agriculture production by encouraging profitable ancillary activities.
 - (f) To begin a nationwide crop and animal husbandry insurance scheme to cover all farmers.
7. Allow free movement of foodgrains throughout the country.
 8. Unveil a comprehensive policy for bringing waste and barren land into productive agriculture or agro-forestry use. Private sector companies will be encouraged to invest in this activity, provided individual farmers and village cooperatives are given substantial share in the equity holding.
 9. Give a new thrust to social forestry, horticulture, vegetable growing, floriculture, sericulture, mushroom farming.
 10. Encourage inland fisheries, piggeries and bee-keeping.
 11. As part of a comprehensive National Agri-business Policy, help setting up of value-addition chains to link production, preservation, transportation, processing, packaging and marketing. This policy envisions the participation of the individual agriculturist not only as a primary producer and supplier, but as a shareholder who will benefit from profits generated at every stage of the value chain.
 12. Vastly expand the network of warehouses and mandis (market yards). Our policy will make it mandatory for the mandis to pay 80 per cent of the price as an interim payment at the time of delivery of the farmer's produce.
 13. Delicense the sugar industry and decontrol the price and movement of molasses.
 14. Encourage co-generation of power, as also production of

a wide variety of sugar-based by-products at all the sugar mills in India.

15. Continue subsidy on fertilizers.
16. Set up a vast network of easily reachable farmers' service centres and expand the scope of extension programmes.
17. Make comprehensive documents available to farmers giving land records, ownership and all other relevant information. Our Government will also promote rapid computerization of these records.
18. Reform land acquisition laws with the following objectives: (a) Farmers should get prompt and full compensation for his land at market rates; (b) Farmers who have to part with their land for industrial or urbanization projects should also be made shareholders in these projects; and (c) If any public or private sector agency which acquires farm land for a particular project fails to execute it within a specified period, the Government will take it back from the promoters.
19. Boost export of agriculture goods, especially processed goods, in a big way. Imports will be kept to the bare minimum and that too if warranted by extraordinary circumstances. In both export and import of farm goods, the interests of Indian kisans will be given the highest consideration.
20. Bolster efforts to increase productivity in dryland farming.
21. Re-orient agricultural planning on the basis of agro-climatic zoning of the entire country to fully harness the natural benefits of land fertility and ecosystems for specific agricultural produce.

Our Steps to Provide Irrigation Facilities

1. Double the area under irrigation in ten years through optimal use of small, medium and large projects. Priority will be given to small and minor irrigation projects with local investment and management participation.
2. Complete ongoing irrigation projects within a specified period and launch new projects on a firm, time-bound basis.
3. Encourage the use of alternative sources of irrigation

- through incentives and better water management.
4. Give attractive incentives for the popularization of drip irrigation and sprinkler irrigation systems.
 5. Ensure that farmers are made to pay only for the water they consume.
 6. Draw up a master plan for flood control and harnessing of flood waters for irrigation. Offer prompt compensation for crops lost in floods.
 7. Take effective steps to raise the ground water level.
 8. Check waterlogging, salination and soil erosion.
 9. Institute a Regional Water Corporation to plan and increase water supplies.

Our Steps to Revive Village Industry

1. Establish an extensive chain of small-scale, tiny and cottage industry units.
2. Give the greatest impetus to this sector by provision of easy and adequate credit at low interest rates.
3. Create new marketing opportunities and facilities for rural artisans and craftsmen.
4. Set up a National Artisan Development Bank.
5. Set up special institutes for skill upgradation.
6. Give attractive incentives for bio-gas units.
7. Create weekly mandis in towns and cities in which villages and artisans can sell their products directly to urban consumers.

Our Steps to Provide Power for Agriculture

1. Accelerate total rural electrification so that no village is left without power in the next five years.
2. Ensure adequate and reliable supply of quality power for agricultural activity.
3. Set up small power stations and sub-stations in rural areas for supplying power exclusively to villages.
4. The frequent breaking down of transformers and distributors in rural areas causes havoc with agricultural operations. SEBs, though, don't have the money to replace these assets. The Government will encourage farmers' (and

other users) to form cooperatives to install, maintain and charge for these rural electrical equipment. Loans from the Rural Electrification Corporation will be given for this.

Our Steps to Strengthen the Rural Cooperative Movement

1. To unveil a National Rural Cooperatives Policy which will review the working of the cooperative sector so far, simplify rules and regulations governing the functioning of cooperative societies and introduce necessary reforms to bring this sector in line with the reforms in the rest of the national economy.
2. The policy will also recommend measures to promote the cooperative movement in States where it is weak and ailing.
3. Free cooperatives from political and bureaucratic interference.
4. Take effective steps to eliminate corruption and nepotism in cooperative bodies.
5. Ensure that rural cooperatives are not only commercially viable but also promote equity and social justice.
6. Make entry in passbooks mandatory for all money deposits.
7. Only those entirely dependent on agriculture will be allowed to become members of farmers' cooperative societies.
8. Ensure free, fair and timely elections to cooperative bodies.
9. Encourage collaboration between the cooperative sector and the corporate sector in the areas of marketing, manufacturing, technology transfer, mobilization of investible resources and exports. All necessary measures will, however, be taken to ensure that the interests of small and medium farmers are not only protected but promoted by such collaborative ventures.
10. The BJP will enact the long-pending Multi-State Cooperative Act.
11. Multiple and often conflicting laws and agencies governing cooperative banks and other rural financial institutions will be streamlined.

Our Steps to Implement Land Reforms

1. Enforce the implementation of land ceiling laws in all States.
2. Set up designated courts to quickly deal with all land ceiling disputes and monitoring enforcement of verdicts.
3. Expedite distribution of ceiling surplus land among landless farmers.
4. Monitor the use of the distributed land to prevent its alienation from beneficiaries.
5. Reclaim cultivable land lying fallow.
6. Time-bound registration of all lands.
7. Decide ownership rights at the level of Gram Panchayats without any delay.

Our Steps to Improve Rural Education

1. Re-orient education in villages and rural towns to address the varied needs of agriculture, agro-processing, agri-services, management and other areas of the rural economy. Agriculture and related subjects will be specially included in the curriculum in rural schools.
2. Give a big boost to technical and vocational education as it is crucial to the development of rural human resources.
3. Set up a chain of Krishi Vidyalayas in each block to enrich the knowledge content and expertise of young people who are engaged in farming and farm-related activities.
4. Increase facilities for informal farm education, short-term courses, seminars, field trips, etc. for the benefit of practicing agriculturists.
5. Give a major boost to rural R&D by strengthening the link between agricultural universities and top achievers in the farming community.

Our Steps to Ensure Cow Protection

THE BJP regrettably observes that, despite Article 48 of the Constitution, millions of cows and cow progeny are slaughtered every year, most of them for export, thereby causing irreparable harm to agriculture and villages. Keeping in view Article 48, the BJP will:

1. Impose a total ban on the slaughter of cows and cow-progeny, including bulls and bullocks and prohibit all trade, including export (state as well as private) in beef.
2. Create a policy that will result in improved cattle breeding.
3. Exempt the income of Goshalas and Pinjrapoles from tax.

The BJP recognizes the fact that from times immemorial, cow-protection has remained of the basics of Indian culture and Indian agriculture and it is on the patient back of the cow and its progeny that the entire structure of Indian agriculture rests. Over seven crore animals are employed in farming operations in Indian villages, more than 80 per cent of the rural transport needs are met by the bullock cart. Our livestock is also an effective protection against environmental degradation.

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Our Foreign Policy

Protecting India's National Interest

THE end of the Cold War has brought with it hopes of an era of peace and harmony. We see many welcome new manifestations in our collective attitudes towards resolving longstanding international issues of common concern relating to the environment, health, economic development and conflict resolution.

While the possibilities are immense, some old habits persist. We see a renewed tendency by some big powers to dominate and to impose conditionalities to advance their political and economic interest even if it is detrimental to others. There are also perceived notions of civilizational conflicts as also spurts in conflicts. This demands that India's national interest must be protected and pursued more vigorously. Our diplomacy must, therefore, be proactive rather than being merely reactive without sacrificing the values of peace, equality and cooperation.

In the recent past we have seen a tendency to bend under pressure. This arises as much out of ignorance of our rightful place and role in world affairs as also from a loss of national self-confidence and resolve. A nation as large and capable as ourselves must make its impact felt on the world arena. A BJP Government will demand a premier position for the country in all global fora.

The BJP rejects the notion of nuclear apartheid and will actively oppose attempts to impose a hegemonistic nuclear regime by means of CTBT, FMCR and MTCR. We will not be dictated to by anybody in matters of security requirements and in the exercise of the nuclear option. We will pursue our national goals and principles steadfastly. Briefly these are:

1. To give India a role and position in world affairs

- commensurate with its size and capability;
2. To promote sovereign equality among nations. The BJP rejects all forms of political and economic hegemonism and is committed to actively resisting such efforts;
 3. To vigorously pursue endeavors for India to become a permanent member of the United Nations Security Council. We believe that the existing arrangements in the UN are tilted in the favor of certain countries to serve their narrow interest. We are committed to the reform of the UN;
 4. To re-orient Indian diplomacy to our economic and commercial goals and to ensure that our missions abroad play a more active and supportive role in meeting these;
 5. To ensure greater coordination between the ministries and agencies responsible for external affairs, defence, finance, international trade and our external and internal intelligence;
 6. To promote greater regional and civilizational relationship and strive for Asian solidarity in general and the development of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation in particular. Integral to this would be renewed efforts to improve bilateral relationships with all neighboring countries without any third party mediation or interference;
 7. To have greater interaction with more African nations and to build ties with our traditional friends like Kenya, Nigeria, South Africa, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe;
 8. To place relations with the USA on a more even based on mutual respect, shared values and congruence of interests. We expect the United States to be more sensitive to India's security and economic interests;
 9. To further develop the long and traditional relationship with Russia by increased cooperation in trade, technology, defence and other security related areas. India and Russia have many common interests in Asia and we will strive for greater cooperation to serve them;
 10. To strengthen political and economic relations with the European Unions, ASEAN countries, Japan, South Korea, South Africa, Iran, the Arab nations, Israel, Central Asian

- republics and fellow Commonwealth nations;
11. To take active steps to persuade Pakistan to abandon its present policy of hostile interference in our internal affairs by supporting insurgent and terrorist groups. The BJP affirms unequivocally India's sovereignty over the whole of Jammu and Kashmir, including the areas under foreign occupations;
 12. To improve relations with China by seeking speedy resolution of the outstanding border problem. Even while doing so we will seek greater cross-border trade and cooperation in other areas. We are also concerned about China continuing transfer of advanced weapons and technologies to Pakistan as this has a vital bearing on our ties with China;
 13. To support a united Sri Lanka within which the legitimate aspirations of the Tamil people should be fully accommodated. The BJP greatly regrets the continuing bloodshed particularly since the Indian people have long standing, traditional and fraternal ties with the Sri Lankan people;
 14. To maintain the unique, warm and friendly relations with Nepal with which India has the closest cultural, religious and historical ties. We will seek to widen existing areas of cooperation and also develop new avenues of fruitful cooperation. We recognize in particular the great scope for increasing cooperation in the energy and environment related areas. A BJP Government will seek to resolve all outstanding issues quickly;
 15. To further improve relationship with Myanmar with India has a long border and age-old cultural, religious and historical ties. There is much scope for greater cooperation in the fields of defence, security, economy and culture;
 16. To further consolidate the close and friendly ties between India and Bhutan;
 17. To reinforce the improving relations with Bangladesh. We however continue to view with concern the unabated illegal infiltration into India from that country and will seek the active participation of the Bangladesh authorities

in curbing this; and,

18. To take an active role in seeking an early and peaceful resolutions of the internecine Afghan conflict particularly since its continuance has adverse security implications for India and the development of trade and economic cooperation with countries in the region.

The BJP re-affirms its commitment to peace amongst all nations; to the prosperity of the peoples of the world; and to an enhanced role for India in world affairs as befits this great and ancient civilization.

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Our Nation's Security

Suraksha for Country and Citizens

THE nation faces grave challenges to its integrity and security as never before. The internal and external security environment has deteriorated sharply in the last decade. The previous Governments have been found wanting in their efforts and determination to face these threats and are responsible for this. Since 1991, the country's defence budget has been declining in real terms. They have declined from 3.4 per cent of the GDP in 1989-90 to a mere 2.2 per cent this year. Successive weak and irresolute Governments have imperiled national security. There is a mistaken view that there is a conflict between national security and economic development. But these two go hand-in-hand. There cannot be economic development without commensurate security preparation and the reverse, too, is equally true.

The dimensions and directions of present and future threats need to be constantly analyzed and evaluated. In the glaring absence of governmental interest and inter-ministerial coordination, the mechanisms for this have fallen into disuse. The armed forces have been ignored in defence policy planning. Misguided bureaucratic interference has demoralized the higher echelons of the armed forces and has also had a telling effect on defence preparedness. The BJP Government will take immediate steps to reverse such negative trends and establish coordination between the armed forces and the Government at all levels.

The BJP notes with concern the inadequate pace of defence research and development despite abundant talent available in DRDO. Inadequate budgetary support is a major reason for this. The inordinate delays in the LCA, nuclear submarine and guided

missiles, and other programmes are matters of particular concern. Our scientists and technologists are second to none and it is lack of political will and clarity on strategic issues that is the main cause of the delay. Defence production performance, too, has not been up to the mark. The performance of defence production units need to be monitored more closely and brought up to acceptable commercial and international standards.

A National Commission will study and analyze the trends in defence technologies and appropriately advise the Government on the development and induction of advanced weapons.

External Security

THE frenetic pace of military expansion and modernization by some of our neighbors and the growing pressure and power of foreign navies in the Indian Ocean compel us to take the state of our defence preparedness very seriously. We also cannot remain oblivious to the new developments in weapon technology and the induction of very advanced conventional weapons systems in the region by some power. These must be neutralized. We are, therefore, committed to:

1. Establish a National Security Council to constantly analyze security, political and economic threats and render continuous advice to the Government. This Council will undertake India's first-ever Strategic Defence Review to study and analyze the security environment and make appropriate recommendations to cover all aspects of defence requirements and organization;
2. Re-evaluate the country's nuclear policy and exercise the option to induct nuclear weapons;
3. Expedite the development of the Agni series of ballistic missiles with a view to increasing their range and accuracy;
4. Increase the radius of power projection by inducting appropriate force multipliers such as battlefield surveillance systems and air-to-air refueling;
5. Enhance the traditional and technical capabilities of our external intelligence agencies and also to increase the interaction and co-ordination with user departments; and,
6. Place para-military forces in sensitive border areas under

the full control of the Indian Army.

Jai Jawan

THE country is justly proud of its soldiers who constantly brave the elements, endure extreme hardships and risk their lives to defend the nation. Service in the armed forces must be made attractive for young people and must be considered a honour. Consequently:

1. The BJP Government will take measures to make employment in the armed forces more rewarding and secure for soldiers greater respect of society;
2. The BJP Government will suitably improve living and service conditions and expeditiously rectify existing anomalies;
3. The BJP Government will recognize the services and sacrifices of retired personnel and attend to their problems immediately;
4. The BJP Government will increase the benefits and compensation to widows and dependents of service personnel who die in action;
5. The BJP Government will be committed to increasing avenues of lateral induction into other security forces and other Government departments/undertakings/agencies for retired officers and jawans; and,
6. The BJP Government will appoint a committee to examine the question of retirement age at different levels in the armed forces and make appropriate recommendation to this effect.

Internal Security

THE BJP will give utmost attention to security-sensitive areas in the North, the North-East and the South. The BJP Government will review the role and performance of the police organizations and take urgent steps to revitalize them. We recognize the need for the permanent cadre officers in CPO's to have greater avenues for advancement.

The BJP Government will ensure far greater co-ordination between the armed forces, police organizations and the administration

in areas beset with insurgency and terrorism. Armed insurgents and foreign mercenaries will be eliminated. Our security forces will be given a free hand to deal with armed insurgency and terrorism.

The BJP Government will revamp the intelligence agencies to enhance their effectiveness and ensure greater coordination with security and police forces.

Central and State Police Forces will be reorganized and modernized while simultaneously improving working and living conditions of their personnel.

Jammu and Kashmir

WE welcome the restoration of an elected Government in the State. The BJP Government will take suitable measures for establishing a durable peace in the State to promote progress and prosperity. Repeated massacres of Hindus in Kashmir show that unless the State Government takes the business of curbing militancy seriously, a durable peace will be hard to achieve. The BJP Government will strive for a more structured coordination between the Central forces and the State Government.

North-East

THE conditions in the North-Eastern States continue to be disturbed. The situation in Assam in particular has worsened in the last few years. It is the Congress Party's manipulative and corrupt politics that have contributed most to this. Poor governance, corrupt and callous administration, the flow of narcotics and foreign interference have together contributed to the rapid deterioration of the law and order situation. The unchecked and unabated illegal infiltration from Bangladesh has been the single largest causative factor in destabilizing the region. The spread of heroin addiction and HIV infection in some States is cause for utmost concern.

The BJP will give socio-economic problems of this region high priority as lack of development has helped anti-national and separatist elements in their attempt to foment disaffection. We believe development is one of the effective antidotes against such attempts.

The distance between this region and Delhi has further heightened their sense of alienation. Nothing has been done in

the past 50 years to bridge this physical and emotional distance. The BJP commits itself to forging new and strong economic and emotional bonds between the North-East and the rest of India.

Therefore, we propose to do the following in the North-East:

1. Draw up and implement a comprehensive development programme, focusing on basic communications infrastructure like roads, railways, bridges and air link;
2. Harness the immense hydro-electric potential in the region both for rapid development of these States as well as for augmenting the power supply of eastern States, thus enabling the North-East region to mobilise additional resources;
3. Put into place effective checks and balances to prevent seepage of development funds which should reach the people of the region and not be pocketed by a corrupt few.
4. Strengthen the North-Eastern Council to effectively oversee and speed up the social and economic development of the region.
5. The security apparatus will be strengthened to check infiltration, stem the flow of narcotics and weapons and eliminate insurgents;
6. Provide all citizens in the region with identity cards;
7. It will strengthen the North-Eastern Council to effectively oversee and speed up the social and economic development of the region;
8. Repeal the Illegal Migrants Determination by Tribunal Act (IMDTA) and strengthen existing immigration laws and rules; and,
9. Enact new laws and rules to make illegal infiltration difficult and deny the extension of benefits of citizenship to such entrants.

Illegal Infiltration

THE Congress and United Front Governments for their own narrow and selfish reasons have been deliberately negligent of this problem. The total number of illegal infiltrators from Bangladesh is officially ascertained at over 1.7 crore. The adverse impact of

this on our economy and social and political order poses problems of grave magnitude. This cannot be allowed to continue. Our Government will:

1. Take more stringent measures to intercept illegal infiltrators and turn them back. Fencing of the border wherever possible will be urgently taken up. Border patrolling will be intensified;
2. Initiate steps to detect illegal infiltrators and delete their names from electoral rolls; and,
3. Maintain a national register of citizens.

The BJP has the vision and the political will to transform India into a prosperous and powerful nation in the initial decades of the next century. A strong and secure India is an essential requisite for this.



Our Social Philosophy

Rooted in Integral Humanism

THE Bharatiya Janata Party's social agenda flows from its ideology of Integral Humanism. Our ideology rules out contradictions between society and its very components, as also between society and the individual. Our concern for the last man in the last row is as deep as that for the first man in the first row, if not more. The BJP's concept of social justice, therefore, does not seek to create rifts and schisms between various sections of society, but aims at removing social and economic disparities that have resulted in denial of a share in power, impoverishment and erosion of human dignity. An ideal society is not one that is compartmentalized in segments, but is an integral whole, harmonious and conflict-free. Hence, we subscribe to *Samajik Samarasata* (social harmony) and *Samajik Nyaya* (social justice) and strive to avoid social strife.

Equal Rights for all in *Satta* (power), *Sampatti* (prosperity) and *Samman* (dignity)

1. The BJP will actively promote a casteless socio-economic order that will effectively provide access to equal opportunity for all citizens, irrespective of their caste, creed, religion and gender.
2. The BJP will, if necessary through legislation, dismantle practices, customs, beliefs, usages and institutions, which in any manner hurt the dignity of an individual.
3. The BJP will ensure that the place of an individual in society is not determined on the basis of his/her birth.

Untouchability: A Crime Against Humanity

1. The BJP will remove the last vestiges of untouchability, which we believe is an unpardonable crime against humanity.
2. The BJP will strive to inculcate an ethos of equality in social and inter-personal relationships.
3. A befitting National Memorial in honour of Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar, who dedicated his life to the cause of social justice, will be erected at Chaityabhoomi in Mumbai on the lines of national memorials like Raj Ghat, Shanti Van and Vijay Ghat.

Our Commitment to the Welfare of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes

NEARLY four-and-a-half decades of Congress rule and the recent UF regime have failed to empower the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes. While thousands of crores have been spent, ostensibly for their welfare, Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes face increasing impoverishment and marginalization. Eighty per cent of members belonging to these sections of Indian society have been pushed below the poverty line. The BJP is committed to the social, economic and political empowerment of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, so that the wrongs of the past are corrected in a time-bound manner for a better future. To fulfill our commitment, we will be guided by a policy whose highlights are as follows:

1. Existing institutions and Constitutional safeguards for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes will be strengthened and made operationally more effective.
2. The provision of special facilities and preferential opportunities, including reservations, will be implemented in a manner so as to benefit the broadest cross-section and largest number of SCs and STs.
3. The reservations policy will be backed up with a statute and all backlogs will be cleared within a specified time-frame. Special tribunals will be set up under CAT to expeditiously deal with complaints of non-implementation of the reservations policy and related grievances.

4. All cases of atrocities against members of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes will be promptly inquired into and the guilty punished through special courts.
5. A comprehensive development package will be introduced for the economic empowerment of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. The highlights of this package will include:
 - (a) Setting up of a credit agency on the lines of NABARD to meet individual and institutional credit needs;
 - (b) Vocational training, skill upgradation and financial assistance to encourage greater participation in cottage and rural industries and other means of self-employment;
 - (c) Food-for-education schemes to raise literacy levels;
 - (d) A comprehensive national programme of minor irrigation facilities for irrigable land held by SCs and STs;
 - (e) Endowing every landless rural family of the SCs and STs with land and ensuring sustenance level of income through requisite facilities;
 - (f) Amending the existing forest policy to provide Vanvasis their rightful share of minor forest produce;
 - (g) Processing claims of Vanvasis and Girijans for pattas in forest and hill areas promptly; and,
 - (h) Separate development plans for tribals living in the plains.
6. The specified allocation for the Special Component Plan (17 per cent) for Scheduled Castes and the Tribal Sub-Plan (8 per cent) for Scheduled Tribes within the total Plan allocation will be strictly followed both at the Centre and in the States. Every effort will be made to ensure that allocated funds do not lapse and are spent as per Plan provisions.
7. The pernicious practice of carrying night soil will be eliminated and all those engaged in scavenging rehabilitated.
8. Allotment of pattas for land, home site and homes in the names of wives/widows/ daughters. These will be properly

- drawn up and handed over to actual beneficiaries;
9. Unifying the Banjaras under a common category and ensuring that they are benefited by the Minimum Needs Programme;
 10. Necessary steps to stop the exploitation of tribals by contractors and to free them from indebtedness. We will consider enacting a law whereby the outstanding debts of those tribals who have paid back the principal amount and 50 per cent of the capital as interest, will be written off;
 11. Stringent action to prevent tribal land alienation through conversion of tribal land for industrial and other purposes;
 12. A National Policy for the 'total rehabilitation' of families displaced by development projects. The policy will include social, economic, educational, environmental, occupational and cultural aspects;
 13. An engineering and a medical college will be set up in the national capital in honour of Maharishi Valmiki and Babasaheb Ambedkar. Fifty per cent seats in these institutions will be reserved for students from Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and OBCs;
 14. Panchayat institutions in scheduled areas and tribal areas will be made effective and functional in the light of Bhuria Committee's recommendations;
 15. Claims for inclusion into the ST list by erstwhile 'criminal' tribes and others will be entrusted to a commission for recommendations.

Our Commitment to the Welfare of Socially and Educationally Backward Classes

THE BJP is committed to ensuring social and economic justice to the Other Backward Classes. This is integral to our concept of Social Harmony (*Samajik Samarasata*). We reject the divisive and casteist politics of our adversaries that have neither economically empowered the bulk of the OBCs nor reduced their educational backwardness. We propose to:

1. Continue with the current reservations policy for the Other Backward Classes till they are socially and educationally

- integrated with the rest of society;
2. Provide training, financial support and management facilities for upgradation of skills in traditional industries and professions of OBCs;
 3. Take corrective and remedial measures in view of recent macro-economic policy decisions that have rendered several sections of people belonging to the OBCs jobless; and,
 4. Make the National Backward Classes Finance Development Corporation fully operational.

Our Commitment to Minorities: Towards Equal Opportunity and Prosperity

THE BJP's concept of Positive Secularism is: Justice for All, Appeasement of None. In the name of 'secularism', the Congress and the United Front parties have shamelessly pandered to communalism and indulged in 'vote-bank politics'. As a result, members of the minority communities have been reduced to nothing more than numbers to be played with at the time of elections. While these parties have gained, the minorities have lost – as also has India. The minorities have been cynically used for the purpose of garnering votes these past 50 years, but their socio-economic problems have remained unattended. The true meaning of 'secularism', equal respect for all faith – *sarva panth samadar* – has been perverted by the pseudo-secularists into appeasement of regressive elements.

The coming election provides a window of opportunity to the minorities to take a fresh look at the options that are available to them. They should not go blindly with the so-called 'secular' parties that have done nothing to solve their real socio-economic problems. Instead, they should make a clean break with the past and support the BJP. The patron-client relationship advocated by others is different from what we offer – equal rights, equal opportunities, equal privileges and equal responsibilities. Above all, we have proved in the States where the BJP is in power that we can maintain communal peace and harmony; we can ensure security of life and property; and, we can protect the honour and dignity of the minority communities. In keeping with this commitment, we will:

1. Provide all minority communities with equal opportunities

- for prosperity;
2. Encourage access to education which is the key to social and economic progress;
 3. Give all incentives to artisans, especially those involved in traditional arts and crafts;
 4. Initiate special self-employment schemes and the requisite training programmes;
 5. Launch community programmes for raising the level of awareness among women members of the minority communities and providing them with education;
 6. Amend Article 30 of the Constitution suitably to remove any scope of discrimination against any religious community in matters of education;
 7. Entrust the responsibilities of the Minorities Commission to the Human Rights Commission, thus providing greater protection to members of minority communities;
 8. Set up special courts to try cases of communal violence and, if necessary, amend existing laws to provide for exemplary punishment to those inciting or taking part in communal or sectarian violence. The BJP's commitment is to create a riot-free India;
 9. Protect wakf properties from being usurped by unscrupulous individuals and help wakf boards to develop these properties for the welfare of poor Muslim families; and,
 10. Ban job advertisements which require applicants to declare their religion.

Our Commitment to Kashmiri Pandits

SEPARATIST and sectarian militancy in Jammu and Kashmir during the late '80s and right up to the mid '90s resulted in mass migration from the Valley and other areas in Kashmir. More than 300,000 people, including 250,000 Kashmiri Pandits and Pandits, and Punjabi and Dogra Hindus, apart from Muslims, were forced to flee their home and hearth in the Valley by terrorists and fundamentalists. The BJP promises immediate action to help those displaced from the Kashmir Valley and other parts of the State. Towards this end, we propose to:

1. Work with the Jammu and Kashmir Government to evolve

- a feasible scheme for the phased return of the displaced people, especially the Pandits, to their ancient land;
2. Provide all assistance to the Jammu and Kashmir Government in order to ensure that the displaced people receive adequate financial assistance, health care, housing, education and employment facilities till such time they are able to return to their land;
 3. Evolve a rehabilitation package, including adequate assistance to rebuild houses that have been destroyed, that will be an incentive for returning to the Valley; and,
 4. Ensure that their security is in no way imperiled after they have returned to the land from which they were forced out against their will.

Our Commitment to Human Rights

THE BJP believes that upholding human dignity, ensuring justice for all and protecting citizens from the tyranny of the State are integral to India's ancient traditions and together form the cornerstone of civil society. A just State is one that is kind but also firm in dealing with those who seek to undermine the foundations of a civil society. We will:

1. Make the National Human Rights Commission a more effective body by providing it with more powers, additional resources and better infrastructural support;
2. Publicize the findings of the National Human Rights Commission and take action against those found guilty on the basis of irrefutable evidence;
3. Inculcate among security forces a greater appreciation of the need to safeguard innocent citizens from being harassed in insurgency-affected areas; and,
4. Include the study of human, civil and democratic rights in school and college curriculum.
5. Prevent foreign interference in the internal affairs of our country under the guise of monitoring human rights violations.

Non-Resident Indians

THE BJP believes that Mother India has a special responsibility towards her children abroad. We will depart from the current

policy of disinterest and disregard for Non-Resident Indians and actively pursue a policy that will nourish the umbilical link between all people of Indian origin, wherever they may be, with their motherland. We propose to:

1. Create conditions conducive to the return of talented Non-Resident Indians so that they can fulfill their desire to serve their motherland;
2. Strengthen the economic, social, cultural, emotional and spiritual links between Mother India and her children abroad;
3. Re-examine difficulties in granting dual citizenship to Non-Resident Indians;
4. Mobilize Non-Resident Indians to effectively lobby India's case with the Governments and business establishments of their host country as well as in international fora. In this context, it would be instructive to study the role of Jews and Chinese in the USA in mobilizing opinion favorable to their countries;
5. Encourage Indians living abroad to project their national identity even while retaining their respective regional and linguistic identities;
6. Introduce fresh incentives for Non-Resident Indians to invest in their motherland, like China has done with the Chinese people living abroad;
7. Play an active role in ensuring job and social security for Non-Resident Indians working in the Gulf and South-East Asian countries with special emphasis on preventing exploitation and providing legal assistance; and,
8. Revitalize the ties between Mother India and people of Indian origin living in countries like Guyana, West Indies, Fiji, Mauritius and South Africa.

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Nari Shakti

Empowerment of Women

THE BJP believes that true human development cannot take place without the empowerment of women. It is not enough to talk about removing discrimination against women and establishing gender equality. We need to create new mechanisms for the social, political and economic advancement of women as also to generate social awareness on gender issues. One such mechanism is empowerment, including empowerment through enactment of laws. Yet another mechanism is capacity-building through education and skill acquisition. The BJP pledges itself to legal and policy level initiatives to remove discrimination against women and to ensure that their rights and dignity are not trampled upon. Special emphasis will be laid on the rights of the girl child. To harness the full potential of Nari Shakti, the BJP will:

1. Provide free education to women up to graduation, including professional studies like medicine and engineering;
2. Immediately seek the passage of the Bill reserving 33 per cent seats for women in all elected bodies, including the Lok Sabha and State Assemblies;
3. Actively promote the legal and economic rights of women which must be equal to those of men and not subject to the debilitating clauses of personal laws;
4. Entrust the Law Commission to formulate a Uniform Civil Code based on the progressive practices from all traditions. This Code will:
 - (a) Give women property rights;
 - (b) Ensure women's right to adopt;
 - (c) Guarantee women equal guardianship rights;

- (d) Remove discriminatory clauses in divorce laws;
 - (e) Put an end to polygamy;
 - (f) Make registration of all marriages mandatory.
5. Create conditions in society and workplace to ensure equal opportunities in matters of employment and promotion;
 6. Enact and enforce an anti-sexual harassment code;
 7. Enforce the principle of equal wages for equal work, both in the organized as well as unorganized sector;
 8. Encourage the introduction of part-time and take-home job schemes for working mothers;
 9. Promote a health-care system, especially in rural areas, that will focus on the non-reproductive health needs of women;
 10. Provide assistance to single and working mothers and introduce a forward-looking housing policy for their benefit;
 11. Work with State Governments to establish adequate number of working women's hostels and short-stay homes for destitute women;
 12. Make women partners in the management of community assets and properties in rural areas;
 13. Enroll the help of panchayats to set up latrines for women in rural areas;
 14. Expand the scope of the existing micro-credit system through an enlarged corpus to which both the Union and State Governments, apart from banks, will make liberal contributions;
 15. Encourage the setting up of cooperative societies in rural and urban areas to be managed by women for the benefit of women entrepreneurs;
 16. Introduce skill-based training programmes and self-employment schemes which are area-specific and job-specific;
 17. Design special functional literacy programmes for women who have been denied access to education;
 18. Amend laws that deal with molestation, rape and dowry, to provide for in-camera trial, swift justice and tough deterrent punishment as well as rehabilitation of the

- victims of these crimes;
19. Amend the Prevention of Immoral Traffic Act to make clients as culpable as commercial sex-workers;
 20. Strictly enforce age of consent laws and launch a vigorous campaign against child prostitution by making it a cognizable offense;
 21. Establish family courts in residential areas for speedy disposal of family dispute;
 22. Mention of mother's name will be made mandatory on all official documents, starting from a child's birth certificate to a person's death certificate;
 23. Set up special courts in every district for the expeditious trial of all civil and criminal cases in which women are the accused;
 24. Rapidly induct more women in the police force and appoint women to senior positions as well as increase the number of 'Crimes Against Women Cells' so that no police station area is left uncovered by the year 2003;
 25. Enact and strictly implement a special law to deal with domestic violence against women;
 26. Promote a social agenda designed to discourage negative influences and end discrimination against the girl child in any form;
 27. Strictly enforce the existing laws that prohibit unethical practices like pre-natal sex-determination tests, female foeticide and infanticide;
 28. Invest in the girl child's health, nutrition and education, from infancy through adolescence, by formulating appropriate programmes and incentive schemes;
 29. Universalize primary and secondary education to narrow the gender gap;
 30. Prevent media's projection of women in any manner that demeans them or hurts their dignity; and,
 31. Set up a national-level apex women's development bank on the lines of NABARD and SIDBI. There is need for setting up a dedicated development bank to cater to the financing needs of women entrepreneurs and the vast number of self-employed women.

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Our Population Policy

Making it a People's Movement

THE BJP views India's runaway population growth with all the concern it deserves. Expected to hit the one billion mark by the year 2001, India's population is set to overtake that of China unless the growth rate is checked and then reversed. The danger of a runaway population growth is there for all to see: A rapidly expanding population means a slower rate at which development can be effected. While India was one of the first countries in the world to recognize the need to control the growth of its population in order to ensure a better distribution of the fruits of development, successive Union Governments have failed in the implementation of this important programme. Excesses during the Emergency have given way to complacency and dangerous negligence. The BJP will put population-related issues, including family planning, firmly back on the national agenda. The BJP believes that the country's runaway population growth can be arrested and rolled back through increased awareness, facilitating access to family planning measures, persuasive Government policies and rapid development. It is an universally acknowledged fact that 'development is the best contraceptive.' But we realize that Government alone cannot fulfill this gigantic task. The Government's efforts must be supplemented by a vigorous people's movement. In addition, the BJP proposes to:

1. Formulate a National Population Policy by acting on the reports of the National Development Council and the Swaminathan Committee. This Policy will seek to bring the population growth close to stabilization by the year 2010;
2. Provide incentives to those who opt for the 'two-child'

- norm and high incentives to those who embrace the 'single-child' norm;
3. Take all measures for reducing infant mortality rates and improving child health;
 4. Promote women's education, employment and empowerment since these can be effective means of population control as they will allow women a decisive role in regard to their reproductive health and family planning;
 5. Introduce disincentives which will apply to all sections of society in order to discourage large, unsustainable families;
 6. Ensure universal access to family planning information and quality contraceptive facilities by involving non-government organizations and promote awareness among the people, especially women, through counseling, educational programmes and widest use of modern multimedia capabilities;
 7. Introduce family planning methods and facilities that will allow women greater freedom of choice without imperiling their health as well as support research relating to these methods;
 8. Encourage women to seek reproductive health services as well as launch a special campaign to educate local communities about negative practices;
 9. Offer a special incentive in the form of a fixed deposit that will mature in 21 years for those couples who have only a girl child or those who adopt a girl child under a 'Dattak Putri Yojana';
 10. Make family planning an integral part of our development policies to ensure widest applicability of these incentives and disincentives and provide motivation for a small family norm; and,
 11. Ensure that the legal age of marriage is strictly implemented.

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Our Policy for India's Youth

Yuva Shakti for Rashtra Shakti

OUR youth are the strength of the family, village, locality and the community. They are also the biceps or triceps of the nation. They are the most idealistic, inspired and energetic section of our nation. But in the absence of a driving national vision and a credible national leadership, their energy has remained dormant or got misdirected. Today, the youth of India see the BJP with great hope and we see them with equally great hope as the inheritors of India in the 21st century.

The BJP recognizes their immense creative potential to effect positive social, cultural and political changes. We pledge to create a conducive environment and a supportive policy framework for the full realization of this potential.

Towards this end, we will unveil a National Youth Policy, for the implementation of which our Government will set aside substantial budgetary resources. A permanent National Youth Commission will be set up to monitor the implementation.

Promotion of a Robust Sports and Physical Culture

SPORTS has been neglected since Independence and the blame must be shared by both the Government and society. Also neglected is the development of a hardy physical culture, which alone provides the necessary basis on which a nation can promote excellence in sports. It is a national shame that India, the second most populous country in the world, almost never finds a place in the medals tally in the Olympic Games. It is a sad commentary on our sports culture that, in a country of nearly one billion people, we have not more than 2,000 top-ranking sportsmen and women.

To promote Indian sports to attain international recognition and to develop a sports ethos in India, the BJP will:

1. Make physical education and sports coaching compulsory up to the +2 stage.
2. Make a substantial budgetary allocation for instituting methods to identify and train sports talent.
3. Look for sports talent outside the educational institutions, particularly in villages and in coastal areas.
4. Promote traditional Indian sports and, in association with neighboring countries, make them international sports.
5. The functioning of sports bodies will be immediately freed from all bureaucratic and political interference.
6. A yearly Rural Sports Meet and (depending on the concentration of tribal population) a Tribal Sports Meet will be held in each village, taluka, district and State.
7. With regard to India's participation in the Olympics and other international games, a well-conceived, long-term policy will be evolved to achieve success.

Bharat Punarnirman Vahini

THE BJP Government will unveil a nationwide scheme to tap the spirit of voluntary service among the youth and channel it for the realization of twin goals: Self-growth and Nation-building. The scheme envisages the setting up of a Bharat Punarnirman Vahini, whose youthful voluntary members will devote one year of their life for national reconstruction. They will take part in diverse activities such as rural reconstruction, water maintenance, social forestry, public health, environment protection, social harmony, adult literacy and preservation of traditional knowledge systems. Initially, this scheme will be taken up on an experimental basis in a few pilot districts from different parts of the country.

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Family and Society

Preserving Integrity of the Family

IN the Indian view of life, an individual is not an independent or sovereign being, but an integral member of the family, community, the nation and the human race. The basic institution that anchors the individual in society and the nation, as also links him to the past and the future, is the family. The BJP believes that the integrity of the family institution is the main guarantor of India's civilizational continuity. Hence, the importance of protection and nurturing of family values cannot be overstated in the context of nation-building. If the family is the brick, society is the edifice.

Our Charter for Children: No Child Shall Go To Sleep Hungry

THE BJP believes that children are born—and have the right—to be happy; they have the right to food, shelter and clothes; they have the right to education. But the facts as they exist paint a dismal picture. India has a high infant mortality rate. Many children suffer from malnutrition and hunger. The majority of them have no access to education. Deprived of their childhood, millions of children have to work to feed themselves and contribute to the family income. Constitutional provisions and legal safeguards have been followed more in the breach than in practice. There are more children working in factories and fields than in schools; there are more children living in deprivation than in secure homes. The BJP, in keeping with the Convention on the Rights of the Child, will ensure that the 'best interests' of India's children are taken into account in all situations. Children's rights are the foundation on which better societies can be built and, therefore, we will implement the Convention on the Rights of the Child in both letter and spirit.

Towards this end, we will protect:

1. Children's right to survive and develop to their full potential;
2. Children's right to the highest attainable standard of health care through compulsory health check and by strengthening the ICDS;
3. Children's right to be registered immediately after birth;
4. Children's right to protection from all forms of sexual exploitation and sexual abuse;
5. Children's right to play;
6. Children's right to education; and,
7. Children's right to shelter.

As we step into the next millennium, child labour must be left behind, consigned to history as completely as those other forms of slavery that it so closely resembles. We will amend the present Child labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Act to remove the distinction between hazardous and non-hazardous processes. We will achieve the goal of wiping out the scourge of child labour in factories and fields through:

1. Regular and persistent inspections by labour departments at the Centre and in the States;
2. Special annual campaigns to detect child employment;
3. Identity cards which will be mandatory for all young workers;
4. Welfare benefits, especially social assistance to poor families, aimed at ensuring a minimum income and thus removing the need to rely on their children's labour;
5. Free and compulsory primary education.

No nation has the moral authority to claim prosperity if its children are hungry. The BJP promises that by the year 2000, no child who attends primary school will go to sleep hungry. We will devise a suitable scheme with full community participation to keep this solemn promise.

Caring for our Disabled

AS many as fifty million Indians are denied the chance to participate in the nation-building process because of their physical and other disabilities. Rather than recognize the contributory

potential of these differently abled men and women, they are socially, economically and politically marginalized. Successive Congress Governments, as well as the UF regime which made cynical use of the slogan of 'social justice', have done nothing to empower the disabled. Budgetary allocation to help the disabled amounts to less than pittance. Parliament passed a Bill for the welfare of the disabled, but it is yet to be implemented in both letter and spirit. The BJP will adopt a holistic approach towards the disabled so that they are able to contribute their mite to the nation-building process instead of being condemned to the margins of society. Towards this end, the BJP will:

1. Conduct a special census to collect accurate data about the number of disabled people and the nature of their disability in order to formulate an effective policy;
2. Emphasize on empowerment and development of the abilities of the disabled into specific skills;
3. Ensure access to public services and public places, to begin with in metropolitan cities;
4. Provide employment in suitable categories of Government service through a pro-active 'equal opportunities' programme;
5. Offer incentives to the private sector to introduce a similar 'equal opportunities' scheme in suitable job categories; and,
6. Encourage State Governments to set up centres for counseling and skill acquisition.

Caring for our Senior Citizens

INDIAN family and social traditions have always held elders in high esteem. A person who attains the status of an 'elder' and a 'senior citizen' is looked upon as a repository of experience, values and wisdom, which need to be transmitted to the younger generation. Sadly, the alien nature of socio-economic development in India in the past fifty years has brought the institution of family under great pressure. One of the worst victims of this process are our senior citizens.

1. Our Government, in line with the BJP's philosophy, will take all possible measures to alleviate the difficulties and

hardships suffered by our senior citizens.

2. We will also support and encourage all societal efforts to restore the traditional respect and regard for the elders.
3. A person who retires after long years of service does not, by the very act of retiring, lose his ability to contribute in his field of expertise. Our Government will prepare a decentralized database of such skilled and knowledgeable individuals, so that both Governmental and non-governmental agencies can use their services.
4. Organizations of senior citizens will be encouraged to participate in consultative, advisory and, wherever possible, managerial capacities in the implementation of suitable Governmental programmes.

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Our Policy on Environment

Ecological Security for Sustainable Development

THE BJP believes in the traditional Indian position that Nature is sacred. The Atharva Veda sets out the principle that Nature is the mother of humans and that humans owe a responsibility to maintain the ecological balance. The BJP will ensure institutional measures to bring about ecological security so that all developmental programmes are in conformity with the principles of sustainable development.

It is essential to ensure production with lower inputs of energy, water, chemicals and at lower costs. This will call for significant scientific research, new technologies and implementation strategies. To deal with these critical problems, the BJP Government will:

1. Introduce a National Environment Policy incorporating a healthy balance between development needs and preservation of natural resources. The interests of States and consultation with them will be fully ensured. To implement the policy, the Ministry of Environment and Forests will be recast as the Ministry for Ecological Security;
2. Formulate a programme for developing sustainable cities with special emphasis on urban planning, safe drinking water, waste management and lowering the use of natural resources like water through recycling and reduced usage intensity.
3. Implement better management and harnessing of river waters as well as sources of ground water;
4. Control land, air and water pollution by industry and urban centres. Municipal sewage treatment plants will be made obligatory;

5. Revive the faith of the people that Nature is sacred and make environment studies part of school, college and university curricula. Also, make environment issues an integral part of the visual media so that our children develop a caring and protective attitude towards the ecological system that sustains our lives;
6. Protect the traditional and other rights of Vanvasis and Girijans over forest resources and produce;
7. Involve local Self-governments at all levels (panchayats, nagar palikas and zila parishads) both in villages and cities, in implementing the National Policy;
8. Provide easy access to information on conservation and sustainable use of natural resources;
9. Ban the import of hazardous chemical wastes for recycling by any industry or for dumping;
10. Minimize the use of non-biodegradable material for packaging by the consumer non-durable products industry;
11. Restrain the conversion of forests or grazing areas for other purposes;
12. Adopt afforestation policies to be fulfilled within a given time frame and prevent the degradation of forest by natural or manmade causes. The cornerstone of the BJP's forest policy will be a part of the total framework of land management, adoption of a dynamic programme of productive forestry and moving to private investment in forestry from total State management of forests. A programme will also be drawn up for conversion of degraded forests, wasteland and marginal land into quality forests;
13. Deny exploitation of offshore resources, especially marine life, by big trawlers;
14. Promote research and development in environment-related issues and eco-technology for application in agriculture, industry and the services sector;
15. Provide incentives to manufacturers of eco-friendly products;
16. Not sanction tourism-related projects that disturb the environment and cause degradation;

17. A major effort will be mounted to clean up our river systems and other water bodies;
18. Develop machinery for prevention, integration and management of national disasters;
19. Encourage energy conserving techniques in all areas of production.



Our Policy on Science & Technology

R&D for People's Welfare

THE BJP firmly believes science and technology has a very important role to play in bringing about sustainable national development and in transforming India into a prosperous, strong and self-confident country. The BJP is proud of the achievement and capabilities, scientific and technological community of the country. The BJP endorses the basic philosophy outlined in the Scientific Policy Resolution of 1958 and the Technology Policy Statement of 1983. The BJP will increase public outlays on scientific research; and also ensure that the potential of science and technology to improve the lot of vast sections of our society living below the poverty line and to bring about a more equitable society is fully harnessed. The BJP is committed of the urgent need to ensure integration of efforts in science and technology with the development programmes in the various socio-economic sectors. The BJP recognizes that while science and technology has a very important role to play in the creation of wealth and improving the material conditions of the society, it is also a vital component in enriching the mind, enlarging the human spirit and creating a thinking society. Towards this end, the BJP Government will:

1. Foster scientific mind and attitude among the people, using all the available powerful techniques of the mass media and in the various languages of the country; and support locally-funded non-governmental organizations in their efforts in this regard;
2. Ensure the use of science and technology in all important developmental sectors for increasing production and productivity, efficiency and for generating employment;

3. Simplify administrative and financial procedures for efficient functioning of scientific institutions;
4. Implement a vigorous programme to enrich science and technology subjects at all levels of education;
5. Provide capital grants on a selective basis to restore university-and national laboratory infrastructures, particularly to replace obsolescent research and teaching equipment;
6. Halt the decline in funding of civil research and development and prepare a national budget for public and private-sector investment in research and development so as to increase the outlay on R&D.
7. Introduce effective measures to stimulate a substantial increase in private investment in industrial research and development and innovation; and assist in raising capital for start-up and growth;
8. Provide incentives for formation of regional/local collaborative networks including 'Technology Parks' and for strong linkages involving universities, national laboratories and industry in research and development;
9. Ensure the creation of a network of centres for application of science and technology in rural areas, particularly, for implementation of 'lab-to-land' programmes and to develop a strong low-cost agro-industrial base with focus on decentralized employment;
10. Create conducive work environment and facilities to retain the best scientists in the country and enthuse young scientists to pursue science as a career;
11. Safeguard national interests and our intellectual development, strengthening the innovation base, developing patents awareness and related infrastructure;
12. Support and accelerate research in high priority areas of basic research as well as in underpinning enabling technological areas such as informatics, new materials and biotechnology;
13. Launch at least 10-15 time-bound result-oriented national science and technology missions of societal relevance to harness the fruits of scientific research for welfare of our

society;

14. Provide fullest support so that India can be at contemporary leadership level, in carefully selected areas, particularly where it has advantages and where outstanding individuals, groups and institutions exists.
15. Strengthen mechanisms for increased, meaningful and relevant interaction with the global scientific community.

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Our Policy on Information Technology

Making India a Software Superpower

RECENT advances in Information Technology (IT) have enshrined IT as the most revolutionary tool ever created in known human history. IT promises to transform every facet of human life and usher in a knowledge-based society in the next century. It has already been delivering on some of these promises. The world of computers, telecommunication, television, the Internet and all other media is converging very rapidly, shrinking, in the process, Planet Earth into a Global Village. This has opened up infinite and previously unimaginable new possibilities in work, education, communication, commerce, manufacturing, agriculture, services, health-care, leisure and entertainment. It will influence the working of our political and democratic institutions, too.

Although India lagged behind in the earlier phases of the Industrial Revolution due to historical reasons, she has served notice of soon emerging as a major global IT power. Indian computer scientists and professionals – both those serving in India and abroad – have shown with their achievements that they have the potential to make our country a front-runner in the age of Information Revolution. The BJP attaches a high priority for accelerating this process. Specifically, we will do the following:

1. Unveil a National Informatics Policy with a strategic 10-year perspective to fully harness the benefits of IT in every sphere of our national life;
2. Create awareness that IT is not a luxury, but the very backbone of future development;
3. The biggest contribution computers and the Internet can make is in the field of education. Our IT policy shall strive to take India towards the goal of universal computer literacy and Internet access in the shortest possible period;

4. Make India a software superpower by giving all-out encouragement to software companies to grab a large share of the global market. Our aim is to have software exports increase by ten times in the next five years;
5. The BJP will endeavour to provide, by the year 2000, computers and facilities for computer education in all secondary schools in the country, including those in rural and remote areas, which otherwise have basic facilities like a proper building and power;
6. Formulate a bouquet of policy initiatives to support, within a competitive environment, Indian IT companies and professionals to rapidly expand the scale of their operations and to enable them to take the Indian IT flag all across the globe;
7. Provide broad-band nationwide communication links using satellites, optical fiber-cables and wireless. No region will be without this essential IT infrastructure;
8. Ensure the fast nationwide onset of the Internet, Intranet and Extranet as part of the global and national information superhighways. These will be evolved to carry mail, finance and banking, electronic commerce and all other multimedia communication needs in the shortest possible time at the least cost;
9. Quickly collect, compile and reformat all official records, especially those which have a direct bearing on the country's economic progress and the average citizen's interaction with Governmental agencies, into a usable electronic format;
10. Network, through the Internet, Intranet, Extranet, local area networks and wide area networks, all limbs of the Government to facilitate quick, multiway flow of information amongst ministries, departments and key administrative functionaries. This will help the Government work faster, more efficiently and in a more pro-people manner; and,
11. Facilitate our schools, colleges and universities, in all possible ways, to harness the rich knowledge resources available on the Internet to improve the standard of education.

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Our Policy on Media, Cinema, Arts

Freedom with Responsibility

WHILE the BJP believes in the traditional Indian position of *Ano Bhadraha Kritavayo Yantu Vishwataha* (Let noble thoughts come to us from all sides), it equally believes in the Gandhian dictum that we should keep our windows open for fresh air to come in, but keep the walls intact, so that we are not blown off our feet. This is the guiding principle of the BJP in its approach to the media.

Consistent with this, the BJP would enact rules to ensure that ownership of the media is in the hands of natural-born Indians only. While, a limited extent of 20 per cent foreign equity investment may be allowed in the electronic media in view of its large capital requirements, no investment will be allowed in the other media, including the print media. On the use of editorial matter from outside in electronic media, the BJP would ensure that the safeguards present in Article 19 (2) of the Constitution are fully implemented to balance freedoms and public interest.

Voluntary Normative Standards for Media

THE BJP believes that, a healthy polity and democracy cannot survive without the support of an extra-political moral order which the democratic political order cannot itself impose on its citizens. This belief is also the emerging belief of more advanced democracies that are experiencing a steep slide in morality which is endangering the very idea of orderly society. These decaying societies are beginning to understand that no society, especially a democracy, can long endure without the consensus of the majority of its citizens to some normative moral code. Within the boundaries of this code, cultural diversity can flourish, outside of which it quickly

degenerates into a jungle of conflicting special interests enveloped in moral chaos.

While world shrinks, India will have to provide against such danger in our society too. Fortunately, at the family and social levels, the age-old 'dharma', which is distinct from religious practice, acts as an extra-political normative moral order. But the normative moral order or dharma needs to be protected and preserved as it is already under pressure. With this end in view, the BJP will strive for a national consensus with the involvement of all sections of the Indian society for a voluntary moral standard for the media, for the media plays a very important role both in fostering and prejudicing such a moral order. The inherent idea behind such a moral code may be summarized as under:

1. Promotion of family values and extended family relationships to preserve its character as a basic socio-economic and socio-cultural unit.
2. The importance of religious faith in moulding human life, with due understanding that religions should not conflict; nor should there be uniformity.
3. Projection of regard and respect for women and motherhood.
4. Criticism of political parties and personalities, without eroding the self-confidence of the nation.
5. Promotion of interest in Indian traditions, history, literature, arts and values as a source of emotional support and as a link with the nation's past, thus strengthening the civilizational and cultural roots of the country and its people.
6. Entertainment as an embodiment of the traditional Indian view of 'Navarasa' so that it does not degenerate into a source of amoral living.
7. Healthy development of an open and scientific mind, the spirit of adventure and patriotism among the youth.

The BJP will ensure that the rights of free speech of Indian citizens are guaranteed and will promote the availability throughout India of a diverse range of radio and television services offering information, entertainment and education. A BJP Government will ensure the development of a non-partisan Indian expression

through programmes which, while reflecting Indian attitudes, opinions, ideas, values and artistic creativity would, at the same time, encourage rational thinking, a scientific temper and lead Indian society to modernity in the 21st century.

This is an indicative and not exhaustive idea on the subject. The BJP Government will start a nationwide debate on this concept of a voluntary moral code and strive to evolve a consensus.

To achieve this goal, we will:

1. Improve the provisions of the Prasar Bharati Act to let Prasar Bharati organize an effective public broadcasting system, which would be accountable to Parliament but free from Government control, immune from political influence and sensitive to the diverse needs of Indian society.
2. While permitting, by license, the entry of private enterprise and investment in radio and television broadcasting, purely on commercially acceptable terms determined by bids, we will ensure that:
 - (a) The uplinking of television programmes will be from India.
 - (b) Foreign equity investment in audio-visual media is restricted to 20 per cent.
 - (c) Management of all types of the media is in Indian hands.
3. Ensure, by law, that there is appropriate statutory guidelines for the content of the broadcast in line with the terms of Article 19 (2) of the Constitution of India.
4. Ensure and encourage the availability of a variety and plurality of views and diversity in programming by discouraging monopolies and maximizing the number of voices, which can use the mass media. We will, therefore, impose appropriate cross-media and cross-platform restrictions and also restriction on investment by media in cable-TV companies and vice-versa.
5. Facilitate the development of an efficient and competitive Indian broadcasting industry by providing a level playing field to the nascent Indian industry vis-à-vis a highly developed foreign-based broadcasting industry.
6. Encourage providers of both public and commercial

broadcasting services to be responsive to the need for fair and accurate coverage of matters of public interest including matters of local significance and respect community standards in the provision of programming.

7. Ensure the providers of broadcasting services place a high priority on the protection of children from exposure to programmes that may be harmful to them.
8. Ensure the adaptability of the Indian broadcasting system to scientific and technological change.
9. Create an exclusive 'Kisan Channel' in Doordarshan.
10. Establish an independent autonomous public authority comprising representatives of all sections and interests. This authority will regulate broadcasting and set up a system to address complaints.
11. Evolve a strategic plan to strengthen India's national news agencies like PTI and UNI to let them become influential global players in the shortest time.
12. Economic security and social welfare of working journalists shall be ensured. The Working Journalists Act, 1955 shall be further strengthened and steps shall be taken for proper implementation in all media establishments.
13. Freedom of the Press shall be ensured and protected at all costs.

Cinema

POPULAR cinema has played an important role in promoting social harmony and nationalism, apart from providing inexpensive entertainment to the masses. However, in recent years, popular cinema, increasingly funded by the underworld, has had a negative impact on society, especially on impressionable young minds. Sex and violence on the screen is beginning to gnaw at the moorings of our cultural ethos. The BJP is committed to checking this abuse of popular cinema. A BJP Government will:

1. Allow movie-makers through suitable provisions in law to raise resources from financial institutions to curb the influence of underworld financiers and Mafia dons.
2. We will provide a 'green channel' clearance for the automatic certification of movies that do not have explicit

scenes and dialogues of violence and sex. Producers of such movies will not have to wait in the queue for Censor Board clearance. Deterrent punishment will be meted out to any movie-maker who abuse this facility and to theater owners who screen such movies.

3. Exempt quality movies, which will be certified 'Q', from entertainment tax.
4. Encourage viewers to form local Darshak Sanghs – on the lines of consumer organizations – to monitor the quality of movies being screened in their area.
5. Set up theaters at all district headquarters and large population centres for screening art and popular movies.
6. Reserve 50 per cent of the places on the Censor Board and Censor Panels for women.
7. Create a special fund for promoting regional cinema.
8. Introduce legislation to ensure minimum wages and retirement benefits for movie artistes and crew.

In the field of performing and literary arts, our broad approach will be:

1. Preservation, propagation and popularization of our diverse cultural heritage.
2. Creativity and experimentation.
3. National integration through arts.
4. Taking arts to the people and bringing people's arts to national limelight.
5. Recognition and honour of and support to outstanding persons in creative pursuits.
6. Debureaucratization of arts and culture and freeing them of excessive Governmental interference.
7. Creation of basic supportive infrastructure for arts and culture in all the States.

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Achievements of Governments in BJP-Ruled States

THE Bharatiya Janata Party has provided the people with a clean, efficient and purposeful administration in the States where it is in power. We have pursued pro-people policies, implemented programmes that have benefited millions of lives and, above all, maintained peace and communal amity. Peace and prosperity for all has been the hallmark of our State Governments in Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, Delhi, Maharashtra (where we share power with the Shiv Sena), Punjab (where we share power with the Akali Dal) and Haryana (where we share power with the Haryana Vikas Parishad). In Uttar Pradesh, although the BJP has been in power for a few months now, far-reaching decisions have been taken and action initiated to restore rule of law in a State that had come to represent 'jungle raj' during prolonged Central rule. Attempts have been made by our adversaries to destabilize these Governments, but they have failed.

With a firm, but fair hand our State Governments have cracked down on criminal and anti-national activities. The criminal-politician-bureaucrat nexus that had emerged during Congress rule in these States has been smashed. In Maharashtra, the underworld mafia has been put on the run. Our Governments have attached significant attention to maintaining law and order, which has contributed to the economic well-being of the masses. Complaints of corruption have been vigorously followed up with impartial inquiries. Prompt action was taken wherever it was called for without fear or favor.

Special attention has also been paid to the problems of farmers

and socially disadvantaged sections of society. Women's issues have been addressed to through innovative schemes. Health, education and nutrition have been given top priority as these issues affect the common man the most. All efforts have been made to mobilize resources for development without burdening the people with fresh taxes. Infrastructure and job-generating industry have been the focus of our attention.

We are proud to list some of the salient achievements of our State Governments.

Rajasthan

1. Adoption of a new Industrial Policy aimed at rapid industrialization and employment-generation. Increased investment in small-scale sector. Higher investment inflow.
2. Setting up of institutions for imparting technical education. New polytechnics have been opened, including eight exclusively for women.
3. Implementation of special schemes for the welfare of Scheduled Tribes. Increased budgetary allocations and effective targeting of funds. Focus on education and health facilities. Special norms adopted for development projects and the setting up of health care facilities.
4. Introduction of schemes for the welfare and empowerment of women. Special focus on women's education and health. Before the BJP took charge, only nine districts were covered by women's welfare schemes. Today, 31 districts are covered by innovative schemes based on community participation. Steps have been taken to protect the interests of the girl child, infancy through adolescence.
5. Access to primary education in all districts through effective implementation of literacy mission. Special incentives introduced to encourage families to send their children to school and lower the dropout rate;
6. Improvement of villages and urban centres through participatory development schemes. The Government pays part of the expenses; the people contribute the rest.

Maharashtra

1. Rapid infrastructure development with focus on power generation and roads. High infusion of investments and setting up of new industries.
2. Improved health services and increased access to healthcare for the economically underprivileged. Assured food security through innovative 'jhunka-bhakar' scheme which provides the poor a meal for as little as one rupee.
3. Crackdown on underworld criminals and trouble-makers. Steps to break nexus between mafia and some sections of the film industry. Strict maintenance of law and order, thus preventing any communal violence which was a regular feature in Congress days.
4. Ensured supply of power for pumps which has directly benefited 200,000 farmers. Construction of 400,000 lavatories in rural areas, thus ensuring hygiene and preventing communicable diseases.
5. Allocation of Rs. 1,200 crore for increasing drinking water supply. The target: Potable water for every citizen.
6. Concessional travel for elderly citizens aged above 65 on State Transport buses. They have to pay only 50 per cent of the ticket price. Girl students will be offered free travel facilities.
7. Introduction of employment and education programmes for women and girls. Legislative action to provide women with equal rights and dignity.

Uttar Pradesh

1. Revamping of law and order machinery and restoration of rule of law. Offensive launched against criminals and action initiated against policemen with criminal links, resulting in a fall in crimes.
2. Prevention of crimes against Dalits through alert administration. Prompt action against those committing atrocities against Dalits.
3. Cleansing administration of corrupt elements. Inquiries initiated into several cases of corruption to bring the guilty to book.

4. Ensuring panchayats and municipalities become economically self-sufficient. Greater functional autonomy for local self-government bodies.
5. Generation of employment. Reducing scope for corrupt practices by making the process of employment more transparent.
6. Stamp paper no longer mandatory for registration. Simple and corruption-free alternatives put into place to stop harassment.
7. New scheme to pay cane-growers through banks. New molasses policy to benefit producers under consideration. Kisan Seva Kendras set up to help farmers.
8. Steps to increase power generation and improve distribution. Special programme to increase investment in industry. Plan initiated to improve road conditions.

Delhi

1. Municipal elections held after fifteen years. All efforts to improve civic amenities. Steps initiated for better distribution of power and ensure water supply.
2. Nine districts and 27 tehsils created for better administration and effective grievance-redressal.
3. Shelter for economically weaker sections of society. Financial assistance to pregnant, scheduled caste women. Social and economic rehabilitation of scavengers.
4. Old-age pension increased by 100 per cent. More people brought under pension cover. Old age homes opened for the elderly. Jan Arogya health insurance scheme for indigent elderly people.
5. Distribution of Rs. 100 crore for the welfare of victims of the 1984 anti-Sikh riots. All help extended to people displaced from Kashmir Valley due to terrorism.
6. Ban on lottery and liquor advertisements; smoking banned in public places. Strict enforcement of excise laws.
7. Pension for freedom fighters doubled from Rs. 500 to Rs. 1,000. Financial assistance to widows for the marriage of their daughters. Special assistance, including scholarships, for the disabled.

Haryana

1. All-time high procurement price for sugarcane; liberal licensing for manufacture of molasses. Arrears in sugar mill payments to cane-growers more or less cleared.
2. Total prohibition on liquor. This has led to remarkable increase in small savings and decrease in drinking-related violence.
3. New power plants being set up to increase power availability for domestic, farm and industrial use.
4. Steps to make process of employment more transparent and ensure that the deserving get jobs. Cut-back in avoidable Government expenditure. Discretionary powers to allocate land removed.
5. Rapid industrialization through special projects. Several new industrial units have been set up, generating jobs and higher levels of income. Sales tax on several items has been reduced to give a boost to trade.
6. Focus on education and health for all; new schools and health care facilities have been set up in rural and urban areas. Special programmes for the welfare of the socially disadvantaged sections of society.

Punjab

1. Maintenance of law and order. Strict vigil kept on disruptive elements and pre-emptive action taken to nip mischief in the bud.
2. Farmers given free electricity to operate tubewells and free canal water for irrigation. All-time high wheat prices and price differential between fine and superfine rice removed.
3. New projects to make Punjab a 'power surplus' State. Incentives for setting up new industrial units.
4. Innovative Dalit welfare schemes introduced. Shagun scheme for Dalit girls; free electricity for Dalit households; and, loans for Dalits to build homes.
5. Initiative on the education and health fronts. Medical and technical universities planned. There will soon be a science city and an electronics city.

One of our unique achievements has been the setting up of

a Council of Chief Ministers of the States where we are in power. This Council has been established with the purpose of greater co-ordination among the BJP-ruled States. The Council also articulates, from time to time, the aspirations of the States vis-à-vis the Centre. It has played a major role in formulating fiscal demands of the States and in seeking to resolve problems plaguing Centre-State relations. The Council has formally met thrice-in Gandhinagar, Mumbai and in Jaipur. After each meeting, a document has been released, listing areas of commonality, programmes of action and suggested measures for the Union Government for harmonious relations with the State Governments.



Towards a New Culture of National Consensus and Responsible Citizenry

CONSENSUS-building is an essential part of nation-building. Cooperation for the larger good of the nation has been a cornerstone of our civilization. Yet, one of the many baneful contributions of the Congress Party to India's post-Independence polity has been the politics of confrontation and negativism. The BJP believes that, in a multi-party democracy like ours, constructive dialogue, consultation and cooperation between the ruling and opposition parties is, not only desirable, but essential. It has become all the more necessary since several major national issues confronting India today cannot be effectively addressed without evolving a broad platform of national consensus.

Some of the issues where such a national consensus is most urgently called for are: electoral reforms; Centre-State relations; population policy; empowerment of women by legislating 33 per cent reservation for them in all elected bodies; inter-state water disputes; environmental protection; and effective institutional guarantees for the welfare of the weaker sections of society in the course of economic reforms.

Specifically, our Party and Government shall do the following:

1. We shall not practice 'political untouchability' vis-à-vis any party;
2. In all issues of national importance where a national consensus is needed, we shall adopt a policy of dialogue and consultation with other political parties;
3. The consultative mechanisms and procedures in Parliament, towards which the Congress Party always had a casual or contemptuous attitude, will be revived; and,

4. We shall actively seek the views, suggestions and, wherever feasible, participation of citizens and organizations outside the sphere of politics.

An equally important dimension of democracy and nation-building, which the Congress Party totally neglected in the past five decades, is the need to build a responsible citizenry. Democracy is not only about rights, but also about responsibilities and duties. However, since the rulers themselves threw their responsibilities to the winds and turned Statecraft into crass commerce and politics into an unscrupulous power game, the average Indian naturally became cynical about politics. His awareness about his responsibilities as a citizen weakened and, to that extent, his conscious contribution to nation-building also diminished.

As the adage *Raja kaalasya kaaranam* (The ruler is responsible for the times) reminds us, the blame for this sad state of affairs rests with the Raja and not the Praja. The BJP pledges that, when it is in power, the people will see a qualitative change in the culture of governance. There will be a marked change in the mindset and behavior of those in Government. Their duties and responsibilities will take precedence over their perquisites.

Though such a change in the culture and content of governance is the first prerequisite for building a New India, it alone is not enough. A change in the mindset and behavior of citizens in their daily lives is also equally necessary for building a strong, prosperous and proud nation. On the occasion of the Swarna Jayanti of our Independence, therefore, the BJP makes the following appeal to every Indian to inculcate the spirit of the Freedom Movement:

1. 'We, the people of India, shall not discriminate on the basis of caste, creed, class, gender, language, or region in any of our actions and decisions in life. Instead, we shall behave with all our compatriots in the belief that we all are equal children of Bharat Mata.'
2. 'We, the people of India, in whichever profession or vocation we are in, shall work with honesty, dedication and discipline in the spirit of a New Work Culture.'
3. 'We, the people of India, shall always give priority to our patriotic duties and responsibilities over narrow self-interest, even as we zealously strive for the realization of our rights enshrined in the Constitution.'

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The BJP's Appeal to Dear Countrymen

TO translate this manifesto into reality, we appeal to our all compatriots to vote for the BJP and its allies to power in the elections to the 12th Lok Sabha. A moment comes when the right choice can change the course of a nation's history. This is the moment to make a decisive choice between the BJP and a decrepit, morally bankrupt Congress; between the BJP and opportunist parties that have no ideological conviction like the Janata Dal and the Samajwadi Party; and between the BJP and the Communist parties who have a hideous history of betrayal of the national interest at every crucial juncture.

In the coming election:

- The choice is between stability and another mid-term election soon.
- The choice is between an able Prime Minister and prime ministerial pretenders.
- The choice is between a Government that will change the life of every Indian for the better or one that will make a bad condition still worse.
- The choice is between nationalism and a Foreign Hand.

The BJP gives a solemn assurance to the people of India: 'We shall sincerely strive to fulfill all the commitments set out in the manifesto. If the BJP is voted to power, the India that enters the 21st century and the next millennium, will be an India that will hold her head high and whose citizens will be enjoying the long-awaited fruits of progress made possible by a Government committed to Su-raj (good governance). Guided by a 10-year perspective, our Government will aim to achieve what others could not in the last fifty years. Our victory will be people's victory. It will be the victory of Bharat Mata.'

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BJP's 10-Point Freedom Charter

We'll do in 10 years what others couldn't in 50.

1. Freedom from Unemployment – One crore new jobs a year for the next 10 years.
2. Freedom from Homelessness – 20 lakh new houses a year for the next 10 years.
3. Freedom from Hunger – Double food production by the year 2010.
4. Freedom from Illiteracy – Full literacy by the year 2010.
5. Freedom from Fear – A riot-free and terrorism-free India.
6. Freedom from Social Strife – Harmony between all castes and communities.
7. Freedom from Centre – States Discord – More powers for States and local bodies.
8. Freedom for Women – Free education upto graduation and 33% seats in Parliament.
9. Freedom from Poor Infrastructure – More power, better transport and modern communications.
10. Freedom from Mental Slavery – Make every Indian BELIEVE IN INDIA.

Vande Mataram!