



Had Nehru been a Nationalist, Or If Modi were the First One

By BS Murthy

Mistaking it as some sort of an accolade by one of Modi's so-called '*andh bhakts*', the skeptics shouldn't skip this for his mere presence in the subtitle. Whatever, as a matter of fact, the historical facts vindicate his choice for this hypothetical venture, rather than that of Netaji Bose or Sardar Patel. It's true, contrary to propaganda, Netaji caused the British-exist from India, confirmed by none other than Clement Atlee, the one who led them out. But given the turbulence of that time, he was not destined to become Azad Hind's first prime minister. As for Patel, the people's choice for the premier position, instead of shouldering the nation at its most critical juncture, he catered to maverick Gandhi's wicked whim, to put its fate in the ill-equipped hands of the fallible Nehru. So, that makes Modi, who proved himself as a nationalist to the core, in thoughts, words and deeds, as the right choice to man this piece, more so, as he just overtook Nehru's uninterrupted stint as the country's elected prime minister.

It is pertinent to note that in his 15 Aug 1947 midnight 'Tryst with Destiny' address to India's constituent assembly, Nehru had stated at the very outset - "Long years ago, we made a tryst with destiny; and now the time comes when we shall redeem our pledge, not wholly or in full measure, but very substantially". Well, for all intents and purposes, if it's not an exhibition of his utter lack of ambition to lead India to its once-held preeminent position in the world, what else. Just contrast his limited thinking with Modi's audacious vision of Vikasit Bharat and his energetic approach to realise that. So, hereunder is India's hypothetical tryst with destiny, had Nehru been a nationalist, or if Modi were in his position as the first prime minister. [Emphasis supplied]

"Dear Bharatiya:

No denying that on this august occasion, though it is tempting to indulge in grandiose posturing, I would rather resort to plain speaking to outline my thoughtful vision for the eternal good of our new Bharat in the making.

I, for one, believe that there is no cause for celebrating our long-denied freedom for which we paid the price of partition, of our precious land. Besides, I dare say that we

cannot remain oblivious to the fact that the spirit of our people, the soul of our *karma bhoomi*, came to be stymied under the alien regimens that lasted for a thousand years. Thus, at this historic juncture, as our resolve should be to lead our once-redoubtable country to the new frontiers of excellence, in the not-so-distant-future that is, so we must reckon this as a substantive moment, not a symbolic event.

Hence, it is incumbent upon us to apply our minds to nation-building, for which, first of all, we must, above all else, imbibe that spirit and induce it in the minds of our people, which Alberuni in 1030 CE characterised thus: *"The Hindus believe that there is no country but theirs, no nation like theirs, no kings like theirs, no religion like theirs, no science like theirs."* Thus, it is the onerous duty of all of us that happen to hold the positions of influence and power at this critical time, to reinvigorate that sense of pride in our people, with a resplendent past, distant though. So, let us all strive to create the Bharat Varsha of Swami Vivekananda's dreams in which his Sanatani, *garv se kaho hum hindu hai (proudly proclaim that we're Hindus)*, refrain is on every lip.

No mistaking that for this ancient land has historically been the Hindustan, and if anything, with the creation of Pakistan for the Muslims, the India today is unequivocally Hindu, by its composition, culture, custom and character. Thus, for some delusionary applause from within and without, I see no point in singing paeans to the mythical *ganga-jamni tehjeb*, which, anyway, the partition on the Hindu-Muslim fissures made fallacious. So, in the national interest, what is needed is a hard talk to deal with the ugly reality of the faith-driven Muslim disaffection of the Hindus, conceitedly called kafirs. Strangely though, having whole-heartedly subscribed to the Muslim League's two nation theory, based on the premise of *"Hindus and Muslims were two distinct nations with separate religions, cultures, and values"*, over a third of the enthusiastic believers of the same, chose to remain in the Hindu India! Is it mere hypocrisy?

Whatever, it should not be lost on them that Hindus, having been forced to cede one-fourth of their land for a Muslim homeland, did not insist upon their repatriation to it but instead, hosted them in their midst. If anything, that Hindu gesture alone, in the normal human course, is cause enough for these Muslims to rescind their separatist mindset to become the emotional ingredient of our national character. But the hitch, as pinpointed by my erudite brother, Dr. BR Ambedkar, is that *"Islam can never allow a true Muslim to adopt India as his motherland and regard a Hindu as his kith and kin"*, and I'm certain that he would love to be proved wrong on both counts. More so, as the onus is on the Muslims to become worthy of the Hindu magnanimity, it pays them to realize that the prejudices of their alien faith render them into square pegs in the round holes of Bharat that is India. And for that, it's essential for them to understand that the inimical content of their faith, shaped by the alien tribal mores of the dark ages, has become redundant in these altered times, more so in the multi-religious societies like ours.

However, lest the Muslims should feel singled out on the dogmatic front, we must caution the mistaken Christians that their urge to convert the vulnerable Hindus,

ostensibly for their supposed salvation, is grossly injurious to Indian social harmony, national unity and demographic health. So, they would be well-advised to desist from their ill-founded evangelism for unlike the prophet-centric prejudices of their, and the other Semitic faiths, the philosophy of Sanatana dharma has evolved through the ages, by the sages. Whatever, it is a travesty of enlightenment in that these dogmatic Semitic orders, sans philosophy, sworn to outrageous diktats of their intolerant gods, should have at all gained their cultish grounds in our land of the Upanishads. Oh, how they visualized that it's man, who created gods, not the other way round! It's another matter though, sadly over time, the Sanatani wisdom gave way to the Hindu superstitions, resulting in India's intellectual decline.

Be that as it may, we must admit that Hindus have to blame only themselves for the Semitic mess in their midst for they disregarded the Sanatana ethos of *Vasudhaiva kutumbakam* (holds world all in one household) to denigrate part of their ilk as lesser souls, and, what' worse, branded some others as untouchables. Sadly, though understandably, that make them all the easy prey of the evangelist poachers, equipped with false religious assertions and fake social postulations. However, wonder why it doesn't ever dawn on the proselytizers of either dispensation that the manner in which they go about luring the others into their lot, in essence, is a dubious way of spreading, what they propagate as a noble religion, or the God's straight path, or whatever! However, it goes without saying that before demanding the adherents of the alien faiths to imbibe Bharatiyata, the Hindus themselves must bring their sidelined ilk into the Sanatana fold, in both letter and spirit.

Last but not the least is our onerous task to reweave our tattered moral fabric, which, once, as noted by ancient Chinese pilgrims, was ethically pure in an economically prosperous setting. Why, for that matter, even at the end of the rapacious Islamic regimes, the forerunners to the exploitative British colonial rule, our GDP was over one-fourth of the global one, which sadly stands at a meagre three percent of it now. Just the same, without delving too deep into the myriad causes of our moral decay and the economic decline, suffice it say that as corruption is the source of our social scourge that plagues our country in every which way, it can be affirmed without any contradiction that it is treason by another name. It's thus, unravelling the well-entrenched graft from independent Bharat can only be our *vande mataram* in its true sense.

Just the same, the problem with a problem is that until one admits that it exists, one cannot address it, and unless it is addressed, it persists. So, let's honestly confess the problems our country faces, and sincerely strive to evolve feasible solutions to effectively address the same, collectively that is. Given the impeccable pedigree and innate genius of Bharat, I'm quite certain that our people and their progeny, sooner than later, would scale it to the formidable heights, at which our progenitors once positioned it. So, it is with that conviction, I commend this occasion as the beginning of the end of a millennial eclipse for our nation to regain and retain its resplendence for all times to come. Let's trust our people for that.

Vande mataram."

Now, from the hypothetical nationalism, back to the 'Tryst with Destiny' of the "Englishman by education, Muslim by culture, and Hindu by birth" Nehru, propped up by Gandhi, lo, for being "the most English among us all", for the comparative record. It's no wonder then that in its editorial, 'India: another tryst with destiny', *The Guardian* of England, opined that "Today, 18 May 2014, may well go down in history as the day when Britain finally left India", and that was the day when its 15th Lok Sabha was dissolved to make way for Narendra Damodardas Modi to be sworn in as its 14th Prime Minister later, on 26 May 2014.

And for record, the following is the rest of Nehru's 'tryst':

"At the stroke of the midnight hour, when the world sleeps, India will awake to life and freedom. A moment comes, which comes but rarely in history, when we step out from the old to the new -- when an age ends, and when the soul of a nation, long suppressed, finds utterance. It is fitting that at this solemn moment we take the pledge of dedication to the service of India, and her people, and to the still larger cause of humanity.

At the dawn of history, India started on her unending quest, and trackless centuries are filled with her striving and the grandeur of her successes and her failures. Through good and ill fortune alike, she has never lost sight of that quest or forgotten the ideals which gave her strength. We end today a period of ill fortune and India discovers herself again.

The achievement we celebrate today is but a step, an opening of opportunity, to the greater triumphs and achievements that await us. Are we brave enough and wise enough to grasp this opportunity and accept the challenge of the future?

Freedom and power bring responsibility. That responsibility rests upon this assembly, a sovereign body representing the sovereign people of India. Before the birth of freedom, we have endured all the pains of labor, and our hearts are heavy with the memory of this sorrow. Some of those pains continue even now. Nevertheless, the past is over, and it is the future that beckons to us now.

That future is not one of ease or resting but of incessant striving so that we might fulfill the pledges we have so often taken and the one we shall take today. The service of India means the service of the millions who suffer. It means the ending of poverty and ignorance and disease and inequality of opportunity.

The ambition of the greatest man of our generation has been to wipe "every tear from every eye." That may be beyond us, but so long as there are tears and suffering, so long our work will not be over.

And so we have to labor and to work, and work hard, to -- to give reality to our dreams. Those dreams are for India, but they are also for the world, for all the nations and peoples are too closely knit together today for any one of them to imagine that it can live apart.

Peace has been said to be indivisible; so is freedom; so is prosperity now; and so also is disaster in this one world that can no longer be split into isolated fragments.

To the people of India, whose representatives we are, we make appeal to join us with faith and confidence in this great adventure. This is no time for petty and destructive criticism, no time for ill will or blaming others. We have to build the noble mansion of free India where all her children may dwell.”

Now, the rest is for your contemplation