

An Essay: Towards a Modern and Prosperous Global South

February 1, 2024

EDITORIAL COMMENTS: *The essay is divided into the HISTORICAL CONTEXT, the LEADERS, a few lines on (i) WHY HAS the GLOBAL SOUTH FAILED SPECTACULARLY? and on (ii) INTELLECTUAL LAZINESS of the EDUCATED. At the end www.DiGiNews360.com suggests a possible SOLUTION.*

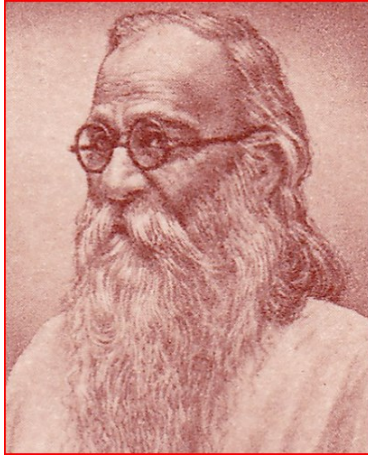
HISTORICAL CONTEXT: Democracies in the world developed from

- the 1789 slogan of **Liberté, Égalité, Fraternité** (means “Liberty, Equality, Fraternity”). Equality, or doing away with privilege, was the most important part of the slogan.
- the Parliamentary Democracy *of the elite* in UK. Progressively, the Parliament came to be elected through universal franchise.
- the Presidential system of USA, of 1776, ostensibly of, for and by the people, which left out the slaves. It took a long time before slavery was abolished by President Abraham Lincoln.
- the culture of ‘Dharmic Kingship’ rather than of ‘divine rights of Kings’ and of democratic functioning of Vaishali and other **Janpad** (meaning “District”) - level democracies of India.

After WW II, USA, as the pre-eminent power, started supporting democracies in the world.

Marxism had become a popular discipline of study in the western universities, even before WW II. It was inspired by the **Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR)**. Marxism espoused a system, where the poor would run the world and the rich, and the hitherto powerful, would have to bite the dust. Many of the young from the colonies were converted to Marxism during their studies at the western Universities.

Whereas Marxism taught compassion for the poor, it also made the young **hate their society’s feudal roots** and made them look down upon *all* the ancient traditions of their societies. www.DiGiNews360.com wonders whether Marxism made it difficult for the young, from the colonies, to develop the self-confidence, necessary for retaining *any parts* of their ancient traditions, which might have been useful for facing the challenges of today.



Dr. Bhagwan Das (honored with the **Bharat Ratna** in 1955)

During Freedom struggle, helped **Mahatma Gandhi** establish **KASHI VIDYAPITH** (Estd. 1921), a **National University at Varanasi** (also Benares, Banaras or Kashi).

The medium of instruction at **Kashi Vidyapith** was **Hindi**.

The others, who studied at the western universities started assisting the colonial administration in junior positions or joined foreign companies, in the colonies. (*Mahatma Gandhi set up two National Universities at Varanasi and at Ahmedabad*)

The LEADERS: These educated persons from the colonies assumed Leadership of the countries, created out of colonies of Europe, when the colonies got their freedom after WW II. (*The freedom in some cases was due to the efforts and sacrifices of the fighters for independence. In others, the moral pressure from UNO and USA were of great help.*) The leaders were enthusiastic but had no experience of running any organization.

In some cases, the leaders did not know that any one cannot run an administration, in a government department or in a company just by being given the 'corner office'. In such countries, anarchy and civil wars started. The **Democratic Republic of Congo** is one example.

In others, the leader permitted the colonial officers continue their working, with the leader's family and clan enjoying a good life. In some cases, like the **Republic of Côte d'Ivoire**, the people were also able to get some benefit from a larger GDP, as the country developed faster after freedom.

The only issue with both the types of leaders was that they considered themselves to be 'modern', they had no respect in their traditions and they did not even want to retain those **parts of their traditions**, which may have been found to be **valuable**,

after an objective and intense critical examination. According to www.DiGiNews360.com, it may be appropriate to say that the leaders had become **'intellectual slaves' of the west**, even though some of them may have made sacrifices during the freedom struggle for their country.

WHY HAS the GLOBAL SOUTH FAILED SPECTACULARLY? The business of **running a modern government in a tribal society**, in which citizens from one tribe hate persons from the other tribe, **is impossible**. It was the duty of **public intellectuals**, in the Global South, to take the bull by the horns and build the narratives for changing the hearts and minds of people so that a plural and modern society could be built. But, **the top-most sociologists, philosophers and educated in the Global South have been intellectually lazy** and have not even taken up the issue.

INTELLECTUAL LAZINESS of the EDUCATED: When www.DiGiNews360.com reads the comments in the media by learned commentators and writers, www.DiGiNews360.com finds that these learned persons blame the political parties and the leaders, when the democratic systems do not work well. In fact, it is the **intellectual laziness** of these commentators in building **new narratives for** their societies so that the people may be able to live in a **plural environment**.

www.DiGiNews360.com has come to the conclusion that hiding behind university credentials, **the educated masquerade as liberal and modern citizens**, when the truth is that **under the skin lurk persons, whose hearts are full of tribal hatreds**.

SOLUTION: The **public intellectuals** must look inwards and **make themselves fit for a modern country**.

The Global South has both **natural resources as well as the human cerebral cortices**, no less than the ones of those in the North. To repeat, www.DiGiNews360.com feels that it is not the Almighty but the **Global South's educated** who have **failed their respective country**.

The SPECIAL CASE of a LARGE COLONY: INDIA: The colonial administration required a much larger number of bureaucrats, at lower levels, in particular, than could be obtained from the **small island nation of UK**. So, the British recruited a **large number of Indigenous persons** and trained them to **man lower levels of bureaucracy, police, armed forces** etc.

TEMPLATE for POLITICAL PARTIES to enable a PERSON FROM a POOR FAMILY to become PRESIDENT/ PRIME MINISTER: India had the special advantage of a **template for Indian political parties**, implemented in Indian National Congress (INC) from 1916-20 by **Mahatma Gandhi**. Gandhi had worked out the template by using it practically and developing it **in Transvaal, South Africa**, where he had gone as **Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi**, the **Advocate** for an Indian businessman.

The **template for Indian political party** used by **Gandhi** in INC is **appropriate** for all the democracies, **in particular for the democracies of the Global South**. INC asks for a paltry amount from each member every year. A Treasure maintains the accounts of the party.

Examples: This made it possible for persons like **Lal Bahadur Shastri** (former Prime Minister of India) and **Gulzari Lal Nanda** (Acting Prime Minister of India, twice) to reach the top-most positions, even though **they came from poor families**.

Today's ruling party follows the same template. This made it possible for **Narendra Modi** to become the Prime Minister of India.

NEW CHALLENGES: Unfortunately, the cost of fighting a General Election has been rising. Public intellectuals must make efforts to both **reduce the costs of elections** and to find a **way of adding to the party funds in a legal and legitimate way**.

INDIAN SOLUTION: **Arun Jaitley**, the then Minister of Finance and Corporate Affairs, got the Parliamentary approval for an **Electoral Bond Scheme**, as a part of the **Finance Bill, 2017**. The **Scheme**, permits people to pay by cheques to parties in a partially opaque manner, and, it makes it possible for parties to spend money on elections, with **proper accounting and auditing practices**.

Let the public intellectuals in the Global South work for having a life of dignity for all, through the hard work and experiments in their own societies, without depending on the West or the China-Russia axis. **In the next two decades**, they have to work out both **the narratives for having a plural society** as well as **templates for their societies to have law & order and modern infrastructure**. The Global South has all the resources – natural and intellectual. The Public intellectuals have only **to drive their societies to harness the resources** for common good.

At the end, www.DiGiNews360.com wants to say that IT CAN BE DONE.
