***Diabolic Indian Politics***

Conned Citizen

In the shortening interregnum before next elections, if no drastic changes are achieved, we will have to bear misrule and misgovernance for another five years. For, it is clear that current coalition has lost its mandate in the hearts, minds and souls of citizenry, unfortunately without any alternatives too. Scams and incompetencies aside, the tolerance of misdeeds amongst the coalition partners just to stay in power and reap the benefits is untenable. Hence it is incumbent on the committed to unite and work hard to cause changes that are prescriptive to correct the process and system.

In the sixty six years of the life-span of our democracy, we have transformed from an open fair and an enviable one to a populist one at the cost of its core principles and advantages. Let it not be buried deep for want of voices and actions to carry the “general will” and views of the populace. For, resurrecting it later will call for nothing but a violent revolution that is avoidable at this stage.

It is a pity that beneficiaries of development so far, are staying away from politics; well ensconced and well-connected too. The system can be corrected only by participating at all levels and stages rescuing it from *goondagiri* wherein *Satyameva jayate* is a misnomer. It will take time to get back on track as all democratic pillars: CBI, CVC, CAG, PAC, ECI, IB, RAW, Home Department, Parliamentary Committees for Ethics, Petitions *et al* are misused as power centres precipitating anarchy of elected.

Almost all Bills in the parliament/legislatures/councils are steamrolled through blatant muscle power without much discussions/changes, all parties having lost their vision due to nexus with business interests –their stands when in power and opposition reversing for the sake of convenience. Voting, if at all, is invariably on party lines as if constituencies can be taken for granted as fiefdoms. Though, rationally/logically, continuity is the norm -when cornered in decision making, it should be abhorred in pursuit of change; as such the call is on the right thinkers for quick concerted networked actions.

There is no point analysing history, except to ensure that its ugly phases are not allowed to repeat. On a long steep learning curve, what we have achieved is converting mandates from egalitarian ones to one of dynastic nepotism with cronyism in tow. No point blaming central figures too; but suffice it to add that the rote set in the ‘70s, when democracy was sacrificed at the altars of power and pelf.

The state of affairs can be simplified to: ignorance of masses, indifference of individuals, general apathy, callousness of the public, regurgitation by the informed, paralysis by analysis, failures in ethics leading to moral turpitude -all inherent in the argumentative Indians –especially the educated lot, characterised by polarisation and fragmentation on caste lines. Casteism to the core, in fact!

True, morality cannot be legislated and politics is a reprobate game. *Ubi est, ubi fueris egressus:* ideologies and philosophies! But that does not mean that we be bystanders giving away powers to the corrupt-crony-duos, instead of being watchdogs preserving our hard earned independence lest it be lost and require revolts and uprisings later as reversive corrective processes.

With alacrity, let us draw up measures to protect what is left of democracy in its current pathetic state, shore-up institutions that are to oversee/guard it, and bring back senses of reasonableness in seeking gains out of it disproportionately. Judiciary for one, needs to be strengthened and seen to function properly without delays, meting out justice –cleansing tarred justices themselves. Curse of justice system failingly mirrors its own predisposition to loopholes, rather than well-meant laws. The criminal depths we have sunk to in politics, sports, finance, environment matters and justice too has lost us trust of common man; a revolution in the making seems to be the only way out!!

Considering the increasing encroachment of political space by acrimonious religious bias, exhuming fallouts of a millennium-old invasion, is not in the interests of the nation and its people at large comprised of multiracial and multicultural hues. Majoritarianism -favouring primacy of majority at the risk of ochlocracy (tyranny of majority) endangering secularism- should not be allowed to conflict with majoritarian electoral system that enshrines power to all through fundamental rights.

Triad of religion, politics and funds making heady concoction of brew has had well catalogued devastating effects in the past. The challenge is to instil sanity in sectarian change chasers with motivated – nasty and scurrilous- portfolios and vendetta syndromes. (Two relevant pieces are attached for suggestive cures). Common sense and social inclusiveness must prevail.

The art of vote seeking to deliver for Greater Common Good (GCG) is to focus on obtaining highest common factor (HCF) so as to maximise on the needs and opinions minimising divisiveness, and not lowest common denominator (LCD) so as to exploit micro issues on a federal scale at ballot boxes. Typically, at our Indian hustings, unity in diversity –that we comfortably live with –is incisively used to create fissures for furthering agendas and gains. While it is easy to fault find, questions to address are whether politico-socio-economic developmental issues have been successfully handled through corrective welfare measures. Reportedly, it is obvious, if after garnering majority, very many pockets down-the-line are lined –high system leakages- with earmarked funds and so trickle down is meagre.

It is time to draw on the resources of apolitical ex-servicemen –a large pool of disciplined, thorough bred fit citizens well spread out- to the multi-party political arena, though they have had and have reservations on being projected against the hands that pay their pension. We need their energy, zest and drive in these trying times to bring us all back to one platform for futurisation. One Singh could make a difference, given the timeous moves and the reported vengeful counter-moves.

A generation of coalition politics-power sharing unsurprisingly has exposed strange bedfellows of immoral and unethical loot sharing. Liberalisation only sanctified such dealings sanctioning MPLAD, NREGA, JRY, NRLM yojanas/schemes (1258 per <http://india.gov.in/my-government/schemes>)

and the like percolating down to village levels undermining the well-sowed Panchayat Raj that has shown signs of fruition. Whilst a Westminster type `shadow cabinet’ -to keep eagle’s eyes on those wielding power- may be desirable, in current context, it may be dubious to invoke a righteous cause for power sharing across the floor that would result `hand in glove’ bipartisanship for mutual gains.

Utilising spirituality transcending to religion has proved to be the undoing of our political process. Caste based fragmentation is its unhealthy, vicious and dangerous fall out. This Achilles heel need be cured through better education and networking; sooner the better.

So as not to remain prosaic, let us draw up action plan achievable by/during next elections (more involved ones will take time/constitutional amendments like Restrict, Reject, Recall, Referendum, Proportional Representation, Reservation for women, Lokpal & Lok Ayuktha bills, limiting tenures ….)

**Get all to vote; increase participation to remove all biases and polarisation to reflect General Will**

**Mobilise youth……..they WILL make the difference**

**Get the criminals and corrupt out of the system**

**Do not succumb to divisive issues exploited for political gains**

**Examine candidate’s credentials, promises being made etc to take them to task later**

**Expose the undesirables and those in cahoots**

**While working against entrenched interests, work with the system as well, for better results**

**Obtain the candidates’ stand/position on major issues**

**Vote for best/better candidates and if necessary exercise nil (49-O) option**

**Pressurise the elected to prioritise on clean governance, development and employment**

**Follow up after voting (for the full next term) like a watchdog to improve the system, creating a rating on performance review**

**Prepare for cleaner elections five more years down the line**