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Call for A Vanijyik Kshatriya

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Guest Column-by Jagdish Narayan Pandey

This is a sequel to an earlier paper “ Call For an Intellectual Kshatriya”- by another IITian from Chennai. -Director

In recent years, correct government fiscal policies, and emergence of IT sector and our historic success in it has sent the national mood on cloud nine. With Sensex crossing 6000 mark, forex reserves soaring at an all time high of \$100 billions, lives of ordinary Indians are improving at a rate never seen before. But it is still not the time to indulge in celebrations. It is time indeed for serious deliberations on whether we can grow at a faster rate or at least sustain this pace.

In a country with 23% of its population living below the poverty line, there are many long miles to travel. But, even though the benefits of this economic boom may not have percolated to the lowest strata of citizens, it has certainly given them hope and optimism.

The working age population (15-59 age bracket) of the country has burgeoned from 55% of total population in 1991 to nearly 61% in 2003; more than 600 millions of them. That is the essence of optimism in Goldman Sachs BRIC report, which has fuelled a national euphoria about a far improved tomorrow. At a time when the largest economies of US and China face an aging problem, India is the youngest country in the world with 54% of its total population under 25 age against China's 45%. A higher working population could mean a higher per capita income provided we encourage all kinds of entrepreneurial activities and tailor our education and skill profile according to the emerging demand.

Our success in Software sector is inarguably because of us having played to our strength, which in this case is Indians' supposed ability to analyze and think rationally. Therefore it will not be far-fetched to suggest that should we recognize our strengths and expertise and put them to use judiciously, we will grow at a faster rate.

Success stories of Wipro, Infosys and Reliance are great enough to become the stuff of legends. Then for Azim Premji, Narayana Murthy and Dhiru Bhai Ambani to be able to raise such huge business empires despite seemingly insurmountable hurdles of red-tapism and pathetic infrastructure, only the term "Vanijyik (Business) Warriors' can be truly laudatory and satisfactorily complimentary.

Everyone will agree with me that this entire Brand India, India Shining and feel-good factor are primarily because of these *Vanijyik Kshatriyas* (Business Warriors). They have not built such giant business empires just to enhance their personal wealth; there was always this sense of making India powerful on economic front and improving the lives of fellow countrymen. Modern times have witnessed many such *Vanijyik Kshatriyas* rise to the occasion but we need more of such men for this country in a country of one billion people.

NSS survey has put the rural unemployment at 21% and urban at 13% in 19-59 age bracket. And BIMARU region is way behind the rest of the country. Also we should not be complacent considering the fact that certain anti-India elements such as Marxists, pseudo-environmentalists and Goddesses of Stalled Things – aptly called Resident Non-Indians - are out to sabotage. Marxists in West Bengal and Kerala – once the most prosperous lands in the whole world – have brought them to ruins. It is in presence of these villains, scholars like Dr. David Frawley gave the clarion call for an intellectual *Kshatriya* who could give them a fitting reply. When the Christian missionaries are out to weaken our social fabric by shamelessly using the dirtiest tricks to proselytise, and Minoritist demagogues are ready to mortgage country's interests for the gains of their Crescent and Star Inc., call for an *Intellectual Kshatriya* gets even more desperate. When pseudo-environmentalists have brought entire system to halt single-handedly causing loss to the state exchequer hundreds of crores and made a mockery of nation's decision-making capability, this call for *Vaicharik Kshatriya* (Intellectual Warrior) echoes much more urgency.

But at this point, I would like to stress on one thing. We cannot eradicate the missionary menace until we reach out to the poor, forgotten and vulnerable people and uplift them. No moral hectoring, cultural awakening or *Ghar Vapasi Abhiyan* would be sustainably successful, unless we improve their well-being. Just for a moment, imagine yourself living in the forests of Orissa or mountains of Northeast, eking out on roots and mango kernels, where even the most basic necessities of life *Roti, Kapda* and *Makan* – let alone talk of *Bijli, Sadak* and *Pani* - are a distant imagination and considered luxury. There won't be any second thoughts if someone were to offer you moolah just for the change of beliefs especially when you are not aware that it is a part of a large conspiracy – conspiracy to bleed this cultural marvel unto death by backstabbing in the garb of 'serving mankind'; and even if you knew, I don't know if you could care less. In this context, the role and need for the emergence of *Vanijyik Kshatriyas* becomes all the more important. With out them taking stand, the whole exercise will come to naught and all the plans will come a cropper.

Bauddhik (intellectual) war-veterans like Dr. NS Rajaram and Dr. Koenraad Elst have stood defiantly, like legendary Bhisma Pitamaha, against the vicious onslaughts from the pseudo-secular intellectual hooligans and Mullah-Marxist-Missionary brigades. But an intellectual awakening can at best result in people installing a nationalist government. In the absence of support from private sector, it is bound to disappoint people. I believe such intellectual awakenings have been realized in the past and – quite expectedly so – borne no fruit and people relapsed into sleep, as they could not be engaged in nation building activity. Therefore call for an Intellectual Kshatriya should be accompanied by a call for Vanijyik Kshatriya who would transform the awakened mass into a formidable formation and ensure their participation in the nation building process.

I view this struggle of ours as an economic freedom struggle. Like Gandhiji involved all sections, castes of the society to uproot the British, we must also identify roles for everybody and try and involve all including all classes. Mind you, each class has strength of its own. A *Vaishya*, for example, has in-born business abilities and we would be fools not to avail their expertise. Therefore raising the pitch for *Intellectual Kshatriya* alone will be a myopic step and disrespect for History. It is very clear that once the national well-being improves, the confidence - confidence in the culture, confidence in our religion and values - will start soaring high. This would render any dirty missionary trick futile, any Marxist propaganda useless as people will be more informed considering the fact that each one of us then will have Internet access.

The idea is to open two battlefronts: one intellectual and other economic. By producing business tycoons who are fired by the fuel of patriotism, we can hit the final nail on the coffin of these Marxists that Cultural Nationalism is nothing but a potential Nazism and always an anathema. Also the resultant rise in the per capita income would instil a sense of pride and confidence in our values and culture, after all poverty is a major reason - apart from the pseudo-secularists' propaganda - of loss in faith in the traditional value system and our vulnerability to the disinformation.

Take Gujarat's case. Had it not been for their entrepreneurial success, it would have been declared a god-forbidden and cursed Land of Demons. No doubt their successes with the business and economic well-

being has served a bulwark against and kept at bay the English-educated pervert Resident Non-Indians

Gandhiji was an intellectual Kshatriya in real sense of the term. He spoke vociferously against conversions (perhaps the reason why he never got Nobel peace prize) and, more importantly, sought to dispel our own superstitions. He successfully engineered a national awakening to realise Swarajya, but simultaneously called for promotion of small-scale industry so that the huge momentum that had built up could be systematically marshalled to culminate in making India a developed nation in true sense. However after his death, sadly, Pt Nehru and other Congress leaders proved poor thinkers and let the momentum die down. Ever since, the nation has been in deep slumber. It is after 50 years again, that one sees the right ambience being created spearheaded by these business and *bauddhik* warriors.

Like I said before, as a Brahmin is blessed with pen and a Kshatriya with great courage, bravery and leadership abilities, a Vaishya is endowed with innate business acumen. They have developed and perfected these skills over millennia. They have it running in their blood. The much cursed 'root cause of all misery' and 'national shame'; this anathema called caste system could finally come to our rescue if only we were to give the terms a fresh meaning.

The idea that 'it's not mine, it belongs to the nation' would have a true communist falling at our feet with veneration. The idea that 'it's my duty to generate wealth, it's the sole purpose of my life' will make a capitalist swoon with awe. But still – and how very singular! – we are neither a communist nor a capitalist. Now, this is our real strength and we must recognise and capitalise on it. Such kind of value system to a westerner would be an archetypal peculiarity.

Look at the Marwaris for example; all of them are amazing businessmen. They don't need any MBA degree, but can make the Harvard-educated ones bite the dust at their own game. I remember well a Marwari professor of Electrical Engineering who, every time, after introducing a new concept would elaborate how to use it to mint money. He along with other professors of IIT Madras have incubated a dozen companies, and persuaded people to give up high paying jobs to open their own small ventures. His TENET (Telecommunication and Networking) group is working with major IT service providers to ensure rural Internet and telephone connectivity at an affordable cost. They are setting up very low cost ATM machines aiming to provide farmers cash with ease, in Maharashtra and Tamilnadu. They are also offering to set up Internet kiosks at an initial cost of mere Rs 10,000 (rest 50,000 in form of loan). One such kiosk can earn its owner an easy 10,000 to 12,000 rupees a month. It was his Marwari brain at work, which made this seemingly philanthropic act a profitable activity.

Our ability to work for others, for the nation, for the progeny with a mind-bogglingly rude detachment from material gains is a matter of great pride and source of strength for us and others' envy. Hence it is this strength of ours that is going to install us on the top of the world and attain us the title of Jagatguru that once rightfully belonged to us. We just don't need to emulate either American Capitalism or Chinese Socialism. One couldn't agree more when Anil Ambani recently said: "I think we need to harness our core values, our religion, our spiritualism. This is what the whole world wants to learn from us.

May I take this opportunity to invoke the great *Vaishyas* (not necessarily by birth) of this country to show their enterprise and entrepreneurial skills. May I take this opportunity to spell out a charter of duty for such *Vanijyik Kshatriyas*:

1. Be driven by the passion to improve the lives of poor Indians and make India self-reliant. A statement by Bharat Ratna late JRD Tata should put it across better:

" No success or achievement in material sense is worthwhile unless it serves the needs or the interests of the country and its people and is achieved by fair and honest means."

2. To this end, erect big business empires serving to generate employment opportunities.

3. All their acts will be guided by the well-being and benefit of the country as a whole not just few individuals

4. Extend help to rear up aspiring such *Vanijyik Kshatriyas* even if means a threat to their own empires. To this end set up world class educational institutes imparting knowledge and skills that meet the emerging and futuristic demands

5. As late JRD Tata put it: one must forever strive for excellence or even perfection, in any task, however small, and never be satisfied with the second best.

To sum it all, each one of us must identify his/her role in the whole scheme of things and harness his/her momentum to roll the national juggernaut. We must recognise our real strength and have faith in our value-system and ourselves and use this unique heritage of ours as an 'ultimate', 'unmatched' and 'inimitable' weapon against not just this army of Resident Non-Indians but also against our own sloth, and stop not till we transform India, our motherland, into the most prosperous and powerful land in the world, that once it was. Those who can wield pen should join the intellectual battlefield to fight propaganda, throw light on our cultural greatness and expose fearlessly our own weaknesses. But without emergence of the tribe of *Vanijyik Kshatriyas*, the whole exercise will look more like trying to detonate a bomb

which has got an excellent fuse but the explosive is missing. It will result into explosion only when you have the right fuel to sustain it otherwise all you will see is a few brilliant sparks and then a despairing darkness. May God help such Vanijyik Kshatriyas in their endeavour!

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