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SADHGURU JAGGI VASUDEV/ISHA FOUNDATION

Poll preparations 8-9 months ahead of election date can be crime against the nation

By Vivek Law

The economic slowdown is a real problem for the Indian government, making it a challenge for them to decide how they can give companies an opportunity to breathe and to prepare for growth, says Sadhguru Jaggi Vasudev, spiritual head of Isha Foundation. While he says the large business people and the middle-sized business people are functioning, and in the way they respect the democracy, the smaller ones sometimes feel they are being squeezed. “There is a need for some more clarity and fairness in the way they handle these smaller companies.”

You have been a great believer of Indian entrepreneurs, which is why you started the Inquilab programme last year. You are in your second year; you’ve had quite a few weeks where you’ve travelled to different parts of India. Have you been pleased with the response?

Yes, we have been pleased with the response. We have changed the way we think about business. We have been talking about how we can bring the entrepreneur spirit to people who are not necessarily in the business world.

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Interview

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Wrong things, everybody is busy with something else. It’s atrocious that the government gets busy with election right or nine months ahead of the election date. Nobody has any business to be talking about elections eight months ahead. The nation has to get on its feet. Many politicians have stand for elections. The rest of the people, the citizens want the country to run well. Eight to nine months ahead we are in an election mode. It’s a crime against the nation if you ask me.

How would you describe the state of the nation currently? Not a single day goes by without some scandal or the other that we are talking about which is shocking through the media, through the headlines. Economic growth or the political condition of the nation or the citizens seems to be one of a very difficult kind. How would you describe the state of the nation currently? You meet so many people who are jobless, emigrants, homeless, how would you see it?

To sell a product, everybody is in there. It’s when we have to provide benefits to people who are not speaking up. It’s a difficult situation and it’s difficult and demanding. We have to go to the people who are not speaking up.

Don’t you think you are being a bit too harsh on the media because the fact is that the governance standards, haven’t they fallen except- tionally? I take your point that yes, there is perhaps too much of negative news suffering. But do you think the news system has collapsed?

Definitely, the media has done a fabulous job. I think it’s because of the media that the left and the large and part of India’s business leaders were quiet but others were saying great things about India. I said it’s great, we are genuinely 100% committed. Because over a period of time when commercial compulsions come, even the good and those with integrity will bend. Because when investments are made profits have to be made. Since the last time we spoke you seem to have been extremely up set with the way the media has conducted itself. Do you believe that so far as the mood is concerned, the media has had a big role to play in that?

Yes, I am saying this because the kind of impression the rest of the world has about India in the last one year is very bad. If you paint the country in such a way that this is what the whole nation is about, then this will affect the country. The Indians who speak in the financial sectors in America, nobody is ever in touch. They have had their bad times in the international as well as national situations and corruption. But still media has a role to play in that.

In the last one year, the mood has been very negative. But even if you are on the right track, if you sit there for too long you will get run over, especially if you are on the right track. Do not look right now into the Indian media is being run in the interest of what?

The last time you talked about leadership a bit, I remember last time you told me that the true test of a leader comes when the other are gone. Therefore, how would you use the leadership of this country at this point of time? I am not talking about one individual, I am just talking about the mass leadership in the country. Are we not looking at the leader- ship of the country in the right direction or not?

Don’t think anybody is steering the country. We are not steering in any particular direction. We are a free country. Free to go to our own doom. This happened in the year 2008, when recession was biggest and the government in the economic forum, all the western developed nations and the business leaders were all in depression. The only team was campaiging India everywhere. Today, there were a lot of great things being said about India. Of course, all Indians were talking about India being 100% commercial. Because over a period of time when there was compulsion, compulsions came, even the good and those with integrity will bend.

The important thing is if we handle things right in the next 5-10 years, we can move 500-600 million people from one level of living to another level, which is a significant thing. No nation has done this in 5-10 years time. When Chini did this, it did it with an enormous gale at behinds. They managed to do it. But if without doing it, we do not achieve it, this will be the most important new possiblity.

In the last one year, the GDP of India was around 8.7-8.8 and we are going to do more than 7-8%. I think we will be fabulously well. Let us hope this is the right course of action and let us give them some time to make the policies of the country. We have a history of doing that.

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Remains are too bound by all kinds of laws. If someone communicates this property, we are on the right track, but even if you are on the right track, if you sit there for too long you will get run over, especially if you are on the right track. Do not look right now into the Indian media is being run in the interest of what?

We are sitting at such a tremendous threshold. We are on the right track, but even if you are on the right track, if you sit there for too long, you will get run over, especially if you are on the right track. Do not look right now into the Indian media is being run in the interest of what?

We have a history of doing that.

So, everything that happens to us, we can either come out stronger and wiser or you can come out with no strength and no wisdom. It’s a choice. Our government is not doing anything to bring the interest rates back to normal. We are not doing anything to bring down the interest rates back to normal. The credit we are still not receiving.

How are you going to take on this? I don’t know whether you are going to take on this? I don’t know whether you are going to take on this? I don’t know whether you are going to take on this?