WHAT MAKES A NATION TICK?

A Mystic’s 10-point Programme

1. Build pride in ourselves, for how else will we build a nation? World over, children are taught how gifted we were even 8,000 years ago. Stories of our traders, invaders, and sculptors feature in text books in countries like Syria, Lebanon, and Cambodia, but not in India.

2. Rewrite history books. Underplay references to the years when we were looted, occupied, raped and robbed. Instead, tell our children that we were the biggest traders, good with both gods and goods, with enormous knowledge and wealth. Everyone wanted what we had.

3. We have genius and natural exuberance but need organisation, direction and authority.

4. Educate the 600 million who live in poverty. If you don’t skill the nation, you will kill it. Make them capable of buying wholesome, nourishing meals.

5. Give people focus, balance, and inspiration.

6. Throw out your feudalistic mindset. Democracy doesn’t work like this. Forget who a candidate’s father was. Care for who he is.

7. Base identity on culture, for that is inclusive. The greatness of our nation lies in its spiritual dimensions. This binds the nation, not religion.

8. Drill the idea of nationhood in schoolchildren. A determined leadership can achieve this.

9. Nurture people’s aspirations and create the possibility of getting there within one lifetime.

10. Build power stations in Pakistan and invite them to invest here. Then neighbours will become friends, not enemies.

“Did we make a mistake, then, in changing our name from Bharata to India?” asks Bedi. “A serious mistake! When a conquering force occupies a nation, they change the name; it is the technology of enslavement. African slaves had their names taken away and silly names were given to them, instead. Similarly, Thiruvanthapuram became Trivandrum and Chennai became Madras. And we acquired a meaningless name, India,” the spiritual leader replies.

And why are we Bharata?” wonders Bedi. The self-styled Sadhguru explains: Bharata: Bhasav is sensation, na is raga or tone and sa is rhythm. You find the right rhythm, and you are a great human being; if you miss it, you are crushed by the process of life.”

He cites the example of Bharata — a great king of the past, who had five sons. But he did not hand over his kingdom to any one of them, for he chose a commoner for his successor who found intelligent, able-bodied and with a raging fire in his belly.

“Bharata was the true embodiment of the democratic process in this nation,” says the guru.

India’s invaders of a thousand years ago, somehow, also “managed to bring to us a certain sense of shame about our roots,” Sadhguru says. It’s now so bad that “If visas are relaxed in certain countries, 80 per cent of our people will simply swim away.” he points out.

Big Mistake

“The concept of a nation is an idea that must sink into everyone’s head — it burns through your mind and goes to your heart,” he says, agreeing that the biggest mistake was that we did not change our name when we acquired Independence.

“We should have taken a name that reverberates in everyone’s mind. That’s the first thing we should do now,” he adds.

“With a name like Bharata, would people have retained their sanskar? Would our women have been safer?” That’s Bedi once again, quizzes the master. “A mere change of name can’t do anything. By itself, name change is not a solution. But nationhood is important and it is quite definitely the largest piece of humanity that you can identify with immediately. If not with the 7.2 billion people of the world, at least begin with 1.25 billion first — a lot better than just thinking of just you,” he says.

Bedi adds that we are becoming a more ‘Hindi’ nation ever since the BJP took over the reins of government. “Won’t that help unite the nation?” The master disagrees: “We are different people, yet we are fine together — and it will not come from teaching everyone Hindi. We speak different languages. In the same family, we can each worship different gods... and it doesn’t matter,” he says.

What makes a successful human being is also what goes into making a successful nation. “Looking after your four limbs is important; for the nation, these are the executive, judiciary, military and civil services. They should do yoga together — that way, they will keep people’s aspirations alive and they will remain limbered