

**BUILDING BHARAT 2.0**

# Sense of National Pride Need of the Hour

**Sadhguru Jaggi Vasudev**

Nations are always made on sameness. But ours is a nation which has defied the fundamental definition of nation making. Every 50 kilometers, people speak differently, look different, dress different. Still, we have called ourselves a nation for over 10,000 years. Not just us; even people from outside referred to us as one nation despite 200-bdd political entities ruling us. And yet, in 1947, when we truly became a nation in the modern sense of the word, a lot changed. To understand the modern India that we live in today, we must understand the basis of what makes a nation.

There are four fundamental ingredients that make a nation — territory; the systems and processes; and above all, the people.

**HOW LOSING OUR TRADITIONAL TRADE ROUTES SET US BACK**

After being enslaved for nearly 250-300 years, nation-making was new to us in 1947. Until then, we were focused on breaking 'British India'. Suddenly, they handed it over to us and went away. But we were still in the breaking mode. So, we broke the territory of this country into three pieces. I'm not trying to make a political point here, but something far more important.

The success of a nation depends not on its political processes or even military exploits. Fundamentally, the success of a nation is dependent on the success of its commerce. And no one knows this better than us! Just 250 years ago we were the largest economy on the planet. We were the biggest exporters. So we should have known that successful business means a successful nation. Yet, we went ahead and broke all our business routes.

For thousands of years, we were doing business through ancient trade routes that connected us to Arabia, Damascus, Jerusalem, Europe, Central Asia in the west, or Southeast Asia and other countries in the east. On both sides, we broke our trade routes, gave it away to somebody else



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and then tried to make a nation.

But we never found traction because we broke the fundamental trade routes which had nurtured us for thousands of years, without understanding that this is what makes us. Otherwise, perhaps by now we would have highways and railways running into European capitals. Well, now after seven decades, many things have changed. But the initial years were just lost not knowing what to do because our strength was trade by land.

**WHY OUR SYSTEMS AND PROCESSES CURB OUR SPEED INSTEAD OF LETTING US SPRINT**

The systems and processes that are employed to run a nation should depend on the nature of that nation. An outsider who wants to rule over a nation will set certain systems in place because they want obedience; they want to dominate. A free nation, however, has to make its own systems and processes. Sadly, in our case, we have made little change.

To understand this, just notice how even today, everyone from a little child to an adult in this country gets scared if he sees a policeman approaching. This is a hangover from another era, where a policeman coming to you meant he's out to do something bad to you. This is because

we have continued to follow the systems that were followed in an occupied nation. By simply copying systems set by an occupying force, just because it was easy, we have crippled ourselves. And if you are crippled, you will only drag your feet. You can't walk rapidly; you can't run.

Systemically we still believe that people must be controlled. Our education system; administrative system and political system are all about controlling people. But people's capabilities, intelligence, competence must be liberated in this country, not controlled. Only then can we become a true nation.

**BUILDING HUMAN BEINGS IS WHAT WE NEED TO FOCUS ON, EVERYTHING ELSE WILL THEN FALL INTO PLACE**

You build a great nation only when you produce great people. But what we invest in our education, health and nourishment is so minimal that we are producing underdeveloped human beings. South India is supposed to be better off. But even in the South, if you walk into a local village, you will see 60% of the male population has a skeletal system that's not fully developed. The condition of women is worse.

Even 35-40 years ago village people were robust. Now, they've all become smaller in size. Becoming small is

the body's attempt at survival when nourishment is not enough.

In contrast, look at the second-generation Indians from the US or elsewhere. Every child who grew up there is at least 4-6 inches taller than his/her parents. The obvious reason is nourishment. Sadly, we have not focused on developing human beings. You can't develop humanity, you can only develop individual human beings.

**STRONG SENSE OF BELONGING, IDENTITY AND PRIDE IN THE NATION NEEDED**

Now, for all this to become a reality, the first and foremost thing is that our people should have a strong sense of belonging, identity and pride in the nation. Nation is something we made up. It's just an idea. But if we don't own the idea, if we don't feel strongly for it, if we don't have passion and pride for it, it will fail.

In 1947, when we got freedom from our occupiers, the citizens of this nation, despite what they had or did not have, felt proud. We should have built on that in the following decades. Today though, there are debates about whether we should keep this nation at all or not. They think it's a very intellectual thing to do. They don't understand the pain we have gone through in breaking up our nation. This is happening because we did not bring that strong sense of pride that this is my nation and I must make this a great place to live.

I'm not trying to discount the great things we have done as a nation. In spite of all the problems we may have, we have kept ourselves as a functioning nation. Yes, we are dragging our feet a little but if we want the lives of this generation of Indians to improve, we must walk rapidly. If not, one more generation will go by living in a rudimentary way, without realising the possibility of what they could've been if they had the opportunity. Let's not waste more time. Let's sprint and let's not stop till we build a better Bharat.

*(The author is founder, Isha Foundation. He will be speaking at the Global Business Summit 2019 in New Delhi.)*