

# AUTHENTIC DEVELOPMENT

## Gandhi's Vision of India:

" I shall work for an India in which the poorest shall feel that it is their country, in whose working they have an effective voice, an India in which there shall be no rich and poor class of people, an India in which all communities of people live in perfect harmony. This is the India of my dream." (Mahatma Gandhi )

## Nehru's Pledge

On August 15<sup>th</sup> 1947 India got independence. In his famous speech "Tryst with Destiny " on that day the first Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru declared " *It is fitting that at this solemn moment of Independence we take the pledge of dedication to the service of India and her people and to the still larger cause of humanity.*" We must strive to "fulfil the pledges we have so often taken and the one we shall take today. The service of India means the service of the millions who suffer. It means the ending of poverty and ignorance and disease and inequality of opportunity. The ambition of the greatest man of our generation (referring to M.K: Gandhi) has been to wipe out every tear from every eye. That may be beyond us, but as long as there are tears and sufferings so long our work will not be over. And so we have to labour and to work, and work hard, to give reality to our dreams. "

## India Today

On 15<sup>th</sup> August 2007 India celebrated 60 years of Independence. We have become a fast developing nation. We have many amazing success stories.

We are the first in milk production.<sup>1</sup>  
We are number one in Remote sensing satellites.  
We are the second largest producer of wheat.<sup>2</sup>  
We are the second largest producer of rice.<sup>3</sup>

India can boast of 2765 models of Televisions, 183 types of washing machines, 233 kinds of refrigerators, 74 models of cars, over 50 satellite and cable channels, and an ever expanding cell-phone network.

The other India consisting of the vast majority has 100 million families without water at home, 150 million households without electricity, 2.8 million people waiting for telephone connections, 40% of village without road connectivity, clogged sea-ports, and crammed urban roads.

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<sup>1</sup> FAO, Food Outlook *Global Market Analysis*, December 2006, <http://www.fao.org/docrep/009/j8126e/j8126e11.htm>.

<sup>2</sup> India AGRO Industry Website. <http://www.agriculture-industry-india.com/agricultural-commodities/wheat.html>.

<sup>3</sup> Invest Commission of India Website. [http://www.investmentcommission.in/abundant\\_resources.htm](http://www.investmentcommission.in/abundant_resources.htm).

## World Today

A recent report on the present situation of poverty in the world and on the number of lives that are lost is a terrible reflection on all of us. I would like to draw your attention to the present situation of poverty in the world. The following statistics are self-explanatory:

- Today nearly one billion people in the world are illiterate.<sup>4</sup>
- Over 110 million children of school-going age are not in school.<sup>5</sup>
- Nearly 1.1 billion people lack safe potable water.<sup>6</sup>
- Over half of the total world's population (2.6 billion ) are without access to adequate sanitation.
- Eleven million below the age of five die of lack of food and preventable diseases like pneumonic, diarrhoea, malaria and measles. This means everyday over 30,000 children die.

### *All of this when...*

Europe alone spends -

- 105 billion dollars on alcoholic drinks.
- billion dollars on ice-cream
- billion dollars on cigarettes.

Europe and USA spends 17 billion dollars on pet foods.

Japan spends 35 billion dollars on business entertainment

America alone spends 8 billion dollars on cosmetics.

The World spends 400 billion dollars on narcotic drugs  
780 billion dollars on defence.

All we need is six billion dollars to provide education for all and 9 billion dollars to provide water and sanitation for all.

If the world were to invest thirty cents out of every hundred dollars all our children would be healthy, well nourished and in primary school.

With regard to inequality here are some more statistics which are literally scandalous:

- Just three of the world's richest people have a combined gross domestic product of forty-eight least developed countries.
- The world's richest thirty-two persons' income exceeds the gross domestic product of South Asia which includes India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Nepal, Bhutan and the Maldives, and Iran and Afghanistan.

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<sup>4</sup> [http://findarticles.com/p/articles/mi\\_m1310/is\\_1990\\_July/ai\\_9276201](http://findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_m1310/is_1990_July/ai_9276201)

<sup>5</sup> <http://ncert.nic.in/sites/publication/ptchap8.htm>

<sup>6</sup> [http://www.wateraid.org/international/what\\_we\\_do/statistics/default.asp](http://www.wateraid.org/international/what_we_do/statistics/default.asp)

- The world's 225 richest people have a combined income of one trillion dollars, which is the total income of 2.5 billion people.
- The wealth of 358 richest individuals equals the wealth of 45% of the global population.

In the Gospel we see how Jesus vehemently resists the temptations to use his power for his own personal benefit and material welfare, for position and for vain glory. It is because people face these temptations all the time and they give in to them that we have landed in a situation which the above statistics clearly depict for us.

The Church's social teaching is very clear. This planet is for its entire people. There is enough for all. God has not been wanting to provide generously for our needs but the tragedy is as Mahatma Gandhi, the father of the Indian nation, said: "there is enough for our needs but not enough for our greed."

### **Authentic Human Development**

Throughout Catholic social thought, it is clear that authentic human development is not just economic development. Advances in wealth for individuals or nations do not necessarily reflect full development. Authentic human development is social, cultural and political as well as economic. It involves developing one's skills and gifts for service to the common good.

More recent Catholic social teaching has even stressed that economic development can impede authentic human development. Pope Paul VI pointed out that greed is the most blatant form of moral underdevelopment. (The Development of Peoples [Populorum Progressio], #19) Pope John Paul II has argued that the drive to "have" possessions can be the worst enemy to growth in the depth and quality of personal "being." He cites as one of the great challenges to authentic human development the reality of the miseries of poverty or economic underdevelopment existing side-by-side with the inadmissible super development which involves consumerism and waste. (The Social Concerns of the Church [Sollicitudo Rei Socialis], #28

True human development involves a commitment of solidarity with all people, especially with those in poverty and situations of oppression. "The development process should be understood as a liberating process aimed at justice, self-reliance and economic growth. It is essentially a people's struggle in which the poor and the oppressed are and should be the active agents and immediate beneficiaries." (Fifth Assembly of World Council of Churches in Nairobi, Kenya.)

*Submitted to the Dominican Italian Justice and Peace Commission*

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