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Participant Code: 106

## A VISION FOR A NEW INDIA

"The time has now come when India, for India, to stand up to the world with it's head held high", these were the words echoed by Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam in his book "India 2020". Although we may have missed the mark of 2020, in becoming a developed nation, it is indeed true that, it is high time that we stood upto the world.

India's journey from a poverty stricken state at the time of Independence, to one of the fastest growing major economies is nothing short of a miracle. Even the West, are baffled at the very fact, that a diverse multicultural, multilingual, multireligious nation has held it's ground for nearly a century, and still manage to give competition in all sectors. India's achievements are truly something to marvel at.

As of now, India is the 5<sup>th</sup> largest economy in terms of (GDP nominal) and the 3<sup>rd</sup> largest economy in terms of Purchasing Power Parity. It is indeed a mammoth achievement considering the fact that, it has pushed down it's previous coloniser, Britain in GDP rankings.

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The Education sector has also shown tremendous improvements. The literacy rate has climbed from a measly 13% in 1947 to an astonishing 80% in 2011. If the trend continues, we can expect India to be a fully literate state by 2045.

India has also surged past many nations to be one of the strongest militaries in the world. According to Fire Power Index, India is the fourth strongest armed force in the world, led by USA, Russia & China. It also is one among the few countries to wield nuclear weaponry and have a fully functional Nuclear Triad. India has also shown prowess in the space industry, and has established itself as a low cost - satellite launching hub. Research and Development has also taken massive leaps with 3 IITs featuring in the QS 500 World Ranking for Research.

Sanitation and hygiene index has leapt from a pathetic 5 percent to a gigantic 90 percent as per studies. Human Rights has had significant improvement, like the abrogation of Homosexual Bill, in 2017 and legalising prostitution in 2022. Human Rights pales in comparison to other achievements, but it is still a reason to be happy about.

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Healthcare has also improved exponentially, which is evident from the reduction in infant mortality rate, and increased life expectancy.

While all these are positive indicators towards prosperity, it is not the time for complacency. India despite its massive and earth-shattering achievements still lags behind, when you assess each sector deeply. For instance, the Education system needs a complete revamp when it comes to methods of learning, and the effectiveness of syllabus. Human Rights in India is far from true equality and equilibrium. Infrastructure development with its slow pace cannot meet future demands. All of these require immediate attention and policy making, which then brings us, to the next probable question - A solution:

As they say "Rome was not built in a day" is my vision for India. It is both grand yet humble and requires patience and perseverance.

I want India, to be one of the most prosperous and developed nations in the entire world. It should not just rise, economically, but should also keep in

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mind the interests of the people. I want an India, that looks at rich and poor alike, the literate and the untaught, the "Cross" and the "Swastika" with the same eye.

But how do we do it, that is the bigger question.

For Economy - The economy can be boosted by FDI and larger exports both of which are a resultants of better taxing and investment policies plus a robust infrastructure infrastructure. To be a developed country, India must bring it's per-capita income to \$15,000 USD which can be achieved if rigorous work takes place.

Education sector must widen it's branches, to afford to the evergrowing needs of a rising population. It must focus on internet education, as well as the removal of any obsolete methods of teaching.

To establish itself in warfare, India must push for rapid indigenisation of technology and also raise the expenditure for R & D.

ISRO may have pulled off great missions on a shoe-string budget but it cannot thrive without a much needed cash-flow, to establish itself as a premier

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space agency.

Gender Equality must also be a focal point if we want to truly achieve prosperity. Women should have access to healthcare, education and economic opportunities without discrimination.

Human Rights, especially the rights of LGBTBI+ community must also take centre stage as all developed nations, must exercise tolerance. This will truly propel us to a more developed status.

"Access to — Healthcare" is still a distant dream for millions in India. Healthy citizens constitute a healthy nation. The government must intervene and develop policies for better healthcare. It should increase the number of primary healthcare centres and make decisive plans.

Even though, I ~~do~~ have listed a long list of suggestions and related jargon. The new India in my vision may need elaborate changes, <sup>but</sup> to me the absolute essence of India is its unity. I dream of an India, where children can hold their hands, look into each others eyes and shout "Jai Hind" without anyone questioning their

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gender, caste, color, creed or riches. I dream of an India where I can hear the tolling bells of a temple, Gregorian chants of a Church and the prayer call of a mosque all at the same spot. I dream of an India, which does not have reverberations of a screaming woman. I dream, of a India, which can stand up to the world with its head held high.

But yet, just like John F. Kennedy bespoke "Ask not what your country can do for you, but what you can do for the country". So let us, the youth of India make the smallest steps in order to realise and achieve this dream for India. I believe with utmost sincerity that our motherland can be ~~one~~ one among the best nations, that the world will come to respect. Jai Hind

x ————— x

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