



“Don’t let yesterday take up too much of today.”
—Will Rogers



For true health

For decades the idea of healthcare has largely revolved around hospitals, medicines and treatment after illness strikes. A patient falls sick, seeks medical help and the system responds by curing the disease. While this approach has saved countless lives, it is increasingly clear that the future of healthcare cannot depend on treatment alone. If India wishes to build a healthier society and emerge as a true global superpower, the focus must shift from curing illness to preventing it. India today stands at a critical moment in its health journey. With a population exceeding 140 crore, the country faces challenges that are both vast and complex. Rapid urbanisation, changing food habits, long working hours and rising stress levels have created a silent epidemic of lifestyle diseases. Diabetes, hypertension, obesity and heart ailments are no longer rare conditions. They are becoming common across age groups. Treating these diseases after they appear is expensive and often too late. Prevention therefore becomes not just a medical strategy but a national necessity. A healthcare system built around prevention focuses on keeping people healthy rather than waiting for them to fall ill. It encourages healthier lifestyles, balanced nutrition, regular exercise and mental well-being. This is where the idea of holistic health becomes important. True health is not simply the absence of disease. It is a state where the body, mind and lifestyle remain in balance. Physical fitness, mental stability and proper nutrition together shape the well-being of an individual. When these elements are ignored, the consequences eventually appear in the form of chronic illness. India has a unique advantage in this regard. For centuries its traditional systems of knowledge have emphasised balance between body and mind. Practices such as yoga, meditation and seasonal dietary habits were designed not merely as wellness routines but as ways to maintain long term health. Modern science is now recognising the value of many of these principles. The challenge today is to integrate this wisdom with modern medical science. Hospitals and doctors will always remain essential. But alongside them, there must be greater emphasis on awareness, lifestyle discipline and community health programmes. Schools must teach children the importance of healthy habits. Workplaces must recognise the impact of stress and sedentary living. Families must return to balanced diets and active lifestyles. Technology can also play a transformative role in this shift. Digital health records, telemedicine and artificial intelligence can help detect diseases earlier and guide preventive care. Health monitoring tools can alert individuals to potential risks before they become serious problems. When combined with public health programmes, these tools can strengthen the entire healthcare ecosystem. For a nation aspiring to global leadership, the health of its people is its greatest asset. A productive workforce, strong communities and sustainable development all depend on a healthy population. No country can achieve lasting economic or social progress if large sections of its citizens remain burdened by preventable diseases. India's rise in the world will not be measured only by economic growth or technological advancement. It will also be measured by the well-being of its people. Shifting the focus of healthcare from treatment to prevention is therefore not just a policy choice. It is a strategic step towards building a stronger and more resilient nation. The future of healthcare lies not only in curing illness but in ensuring that fewer people fall sick in the first place.

INDO-ARAB RELATIONS: A NEW CHAPTER?

In the backdrop of Prime Minister Modi intensifying diplomatic outreach to Gulf nations amid the escalating West Asia conflict following US-Israel strikes, we revisit this week a prescient article from April 1975. The piece offers a valuable window into the thinking of that era. At the time, Indian missions in the region were often perceived by the Foreign Office as “glorified Haj offices.” The writer then perceptively observed, the visit of President Fakhruddin Ali Ahmed to attend the funeral of King Faisal “could well help open a new chapter in friendship and mutual cooperation with Saudi Arabia and the Arab world.” Nearly five decades on, that foresight resonates strongly.

INDER JIT

President Fakhruddin Ali Ahmed’s quiet initiative in attending King Faisal’s funeral, could well help open a new chapter in friendship and mutual cooperation with Saudi Arabia and the Arab world. From all accounts, the President’s unprecedented gesture in proceeding to Riyadh, notwithstanding the physical strain involved in the rush, was greatly appreciated not only by King Khalid and Prince Fahd, the new Crown Prince, but also by the heads of other Arab states present there in full strength. The visit also yielded two unexpected side dividends. First, a brief but interesting meeting between Gen Idi Amin and President Ahmed at Jeddah airport; Uganda’s President delayed his homeward departure to greet Mr Ahmed. Secondly, a first-hand knowledge of the poor, then scandalous, functioning of India’s diplomatic mission in a vital area.

Some in New Delhi feared that the President might not be able to reach Riyadh in time. But Air India handled the operation with remarkable pluck and enterprise and got Mr Ahmed into Riyadh by the special plane in record time – an hour before the *namaz-i-janaza*, the last prayer for the departed. From the airport, Mr Ahmed rushed off to the main mosque for the final rites instead of joining the other heads of state in the open park. This enabled him to join King Khalid and the bereaved Princes in offering, first, the afternoon prayer (*asar-ki-namaz*) and thereafter the *namaz-i-janaza*. Later, he joined King Khalid and the rest of the family in the exclusive burial ceremony and was invited by King Khalid to participate in the final rite of putting *matti* on the simple grave. Interestingly, Gen Amin was the only other head of state present alongside.

Two hours later, President Ahmed formally called on the new King at his palace where Crown Prince Fahd was also present. King Khalid was friendly and conveyed to the President through the interpreter the late King Faisal’s pleasure on Mr Ahmed’s election as President of India and added; “My brother was looking forward to meeting you”. (A move was initiated in December last for an exchange of visits.) Significantly, President Ahmed was housed in the same palace as President Sadaat, President Boumedienne and U.S. Vice President Rockefeller, who arrived shortly before Mr Ahmed left for Jeddah the following morning. Mr Bhutto was also at Riyadh and was spotted by some members of the Indian delegation at the city’s leading hotel. The Pak Premier brought a 60-man top-level team with him, lending substance to a popular quip that Mr Bhutto prefers to carry all his top Generals with him leaving nothing to chance back home!

King Khalid and his court also graciously and efficiently arranged for President Ahmed to fly to Jeddah and from there to undertake his first-ever pilgrimage to the holy Qabah at Mecca, some 80 miles away, where he offered his maghreb prayers on *jumeraat*. The follow-

ing day, Mr. Ahmed and his pilgrimage party of about ten persons flew by a special Saudi Boeing to Medina where he went around the holy spots and said his Friday prayers at Masjid-un-Nabi, the Prophet’s mosque, before returning to Jeddah for the night. (Interestingly, the jet was piloted by a Pakistani since non-Muslims are not allowed in the holy city.) President Ahmed’s visit to Medina (as to Mecca) aroused wide popular interest. Thousands of Arabs present at the Mosque greeted him enthusiastically as

my Chief Guest”. Mr Ahmed listened to Gen Amin with interest and tactfully chose not to enter into a discussion. Uganda has today less than 500 persons of Indian origin as against 80,000 in 1962! Almost 50 per cent of the latter were eligible for citizenship and thousands accepted it. But, before long, most of them found it impossible to stay on and quit, notwithstanding the loss of their life’s earnings. Incidentally, available information shows that Uganda is currently facing an economic crisis and most business enterprises

vamping them and making them a much-needed spearhead for a timely economic and commercial thrust. While the rest of the wide world, including the US, is bending over backwards to woo the Arabs and leading countries assign some of their top diplomats to the area, our Foreign Office still prefers to send its senior officers to cosy and sophisticated European or other Western postings. Junior officers of the rank of no more than Deputy Secretaries are currently manning some of our new missions in the Gulf area. These

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“Sadar, Jamhuriat-i-Hind”.

A surprise awaited President Ahmed as he arrived at Jeddah airport the following morning to fly back to New Delhi. He was warmly greeted by Gen Amin who said he could not possibly leave without conveying to Mr Ahmed personally his joy over the latter’s election as President of India -- and putting across to him developments in Uganda in proper perspective. Gen Amin said the World Press had presented a distorted picture of the events and vilified him. He only wanted the foreigners to either take Ugandan citizenship or leave -- and asked: “Would you, Mr President, tolerate foreigners owning property and factories in your country?”. The General then asserted that those who had accepted Ugandan citizenship were “happy and well-off”.

Indeed, he invited Mr Ahmed to visit Uganda and see things for himself. He also assured Mr Ahmed that I would pay “every single penny of compensation to those who had decided to leave Uganda”. That was not all. Gen Amin next told Mr Ahmed that he was calling a conference of the heads of African states, especially Muslims, in June and added; “Mr President, you must come as

left behind by Indians are not working.

Incredibly enough, India’s Ambassador to Saudi Arabia, Mr Zahir Ahmed, a retired civil servant from Hyderabad, was not at the airport to receive President Ahmed when he arrived at Riyadh. In fact, the President saw the Ambassador for the first time some four hours later when he was due to make a formal call on King Khalid at 7 p.m. Much valuable time was wasted and opportunity lost of making other important calls because of the astonishing non-availability of the Ambassador and his manifestly poor contacts in the court at Riyadh. (President Ahmed was, for instance, keen to meet President Sadaat and, in the absence of the Ambassador, his energetic Minister-in-Waiting, Mr Shafi Qureshi, vainly tried to contact top Egyptians accompanying their President for a meeting.) The Ambassador even showed an amazing lack of initiative in arranging for some leading Indians residing in Jeddah to call on the President.

Unfortunately, Indian missions in the area, which has assumed great economic significance, continue to be treated by the Foreign Office essentially as glorified Haj offices. Little, if any, thought has been given to re-

postings may have come as a windfall to the young officers. But these have not proved of much good to the country. At the same time, New Delhi has been looking at these Arab countries for far too long through what may well be described as the distorting Pakistani prism. Pakistan is no doubt “in” with the oil rich Arabs in a big way and is getting a sizable chunk of their aid to the developing countries. (It is also earning foreign exchange by supplying the area with both skilled and unskilled labour.) India has to take note of the religious susceptibilities of the Arabs and no amount of effort can help us to out-Islam Pakistan. What is needed is a new strategy to forge economic and commercial ties independently of what Pakistan does and, for instance, not react immaturely if these countries ask New Delhi only for Muslim doctors. (They alone can be posted to Mecca and Medina during the Haj season.) Simultaneously, personal equations will need to be built even more among a people who are not easily inclined to shed suspicion of the foreigner. President Ahmed’s initiative now requires to be followed up with more purposeful exchanges and a pragmatic approach.---INFA.

HUMANITY AT CROSSROADS

Between Technological Growth & Moral Responsibilities

PROF (DR) JAIPAL SINGH

Loving one’s country is natural as it gives identity, culture, language and a sense of belonging. It teaches values, connects people to their roots and inspires every individual to contribute positively to society irrespective of divisions of caste, creed, sex, gender, religion, region or language.

However, true love for one’s nation should not turn into ego or a sense of superiority. When patriotism transforms into pride, especially when it looks down upon others, it creates division instead of unity.

At the same time, loving neighboring countries is equally important. We may have different nationalities, religions or traditions but we undoubtedly share common human experiences of families, dreams, desires, struggles, and hopes. Respecting neighbours reduces conflict, builds trust and promotes peace. It helps nations grow together through cooperation rather than competition driven by ego or hatred.

It is pertinent to mention here that the whole world is one family. This is a universal truth and humanity stands above all divisions. When people act out of ego, supremacy or hooliganism, they

destroy harmony and create suffering.

True strength lies not in domination but in understanding and compassion. Human values such as kindness, respect, equality, and empathy are the foundation of a peaceful world. They remind us that we are all humans first. Ignoring vested interests and focusing on shared values helps us build stronger relationships across borders. It enables nations to resolve long-standing issues through multiple dialogue process, mutual understanding and respect. Here arises the need for well-educated and responsible leaders across the world, leaders who understand their roles and responsibilities toward humanity as one family, not just in words but in action.

Such leaders must rise above narrow interests for the survival of mankind before conflicts escalate into unprecedented destruction as witnessed on 6th and 9th August 1945 during the Atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. They should promote dialogue instead of war, cooperation instead of confrontation and peace instead of destruction. Their responsibility is not only to protect their own nations but to safeguard humanity as a whole thereby ensuring safety, stability and a healthy environment for future generations in this era of deep global interdependence.

In today’s world, the cost of ego-driven con-

licts is no longer limited to battlefields. It is being paid by humanity as a whole. The ongoing tensions involving the United States, Israel and Iran along with the prolonged Russia-Ukraine War clearly demonstrate their global impact. Economies are shaken, markets become unstable and essential resources like oil, food and energy are disrupted.

One of the most immediate impacts of such conflicts is seen in global trade. GDP growth slowed from around 6.0% in 2021 to nearly 2.4%–3% in subsequent years due to geopolitical tensions and supply disruptions. Supply chains are disturbed, shipping routes become risky and international trade slows down. Developing nations are the worst sufferers as they lack the financial resilience to absorb such shocks.

Financial markets also react sharply to global instability. Stock indices like the NIFTY 50 and the BSE Sensex witnessed significant volatility and periodic declines during major geopolitical escalations. Investor confidence weakens, capital flows fluctuate and wealth erodes rapidly. Small and middle-class investors who invest their savings with hopes of financial security suffer the most.

The financial cost of present war itself is staggering to billions of dollars within a month time

on weapons and destruction. These are resources that could have been invested in education, healthcare, infrastructure and poverty alleviation. Instead, they are consumed in conflict, leaving behind destruction rather than development. Infrastructure is damaged, industries collapse and global economic growth slows down.

Yet, beyond economic losses, the greatest cost of war is loss of human lives and families. More disgusting is that children grow up in fear and entire generations carry the burden of trauma. At the individual level, war creates unemployment, displacement, insecurity and mental suffering. At the global level, it weakens cooperation and diverts humanity from its true purpose.

In an age where the world is deeply interconnected, conflict in one region affects livelihoods everywhere. A war in one part of the world can influence fuel prices in another, disrupt markets globally and impact the daily lives of millions who are far away from the battlefield. As Albert Einstein once warned, “I know not with what weapons World War III will be fought, but World War IV will be fought with sticks and stones.” His words remind us of the irreversible consequences of unchecked conflict.

If humanity continues on this path of ego, superiority and domination, we risk not only eco-

nomics but also moral collapse. The lesson is clear that no nation truly wins in war. Humanity always loses. Therefore, the need of the hour is not more power – but more wisdom, not more weapons – but more understanding. Only by rising above ego and embracing unity we ensure peace, stability, and sustainable growth for present and future generations.

Further in times of war, like the present conflict, leaders must rise above pride and prejudice. Their duty is to promote dialogue, reduce insecurity, protect trade and safeguard the environment. Real leadership lies in replacing confrontation with cooperation, ensuring peace and harmony for all.

In gist, In the eyes of the Almighty, humanity is one—beyond borders, beliefs, and identities. When ego rises, humanity falls but when compassion rises, peace prevails. True progress is not measured by power or technology but by our ability to live in harmony. If we choose wisdom over pride and unity over division we can transform conflict into cooperation and fear into faith. The future of mankind depends not only on what we build, but on how we treat one another.

The author is Principal, Government Degree College for Women, Kathua.

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