

Containing conflict and war, terrorism, inequity, climate change, environmental pollution, and food insecurity.

Lord Beveridge identified 'Five Evils' in his report to the British government, namely want, disease, ignorance, squalor and idleness.

In the absence of an ordered system of governance, the life of a human being as “solitary, poor, nasty brutish and short”.

“God himself dare not appear to a hungry man,
except in the form of bread”.

Food security refers to the availability of food in a country (or region) and the ability of individuals to access, afford, and source adequate foodstuffs.

According to the United Nations'

- Committee on World Food Security, food security is defined as meaning that all people, at all times, have physical, social, and economic access to sufficient, safe, and nutritious food that meets their food preferences and dietary needs for an active and healthy life.
- The availability of food irrespective of class, gender or region is another element of food security.

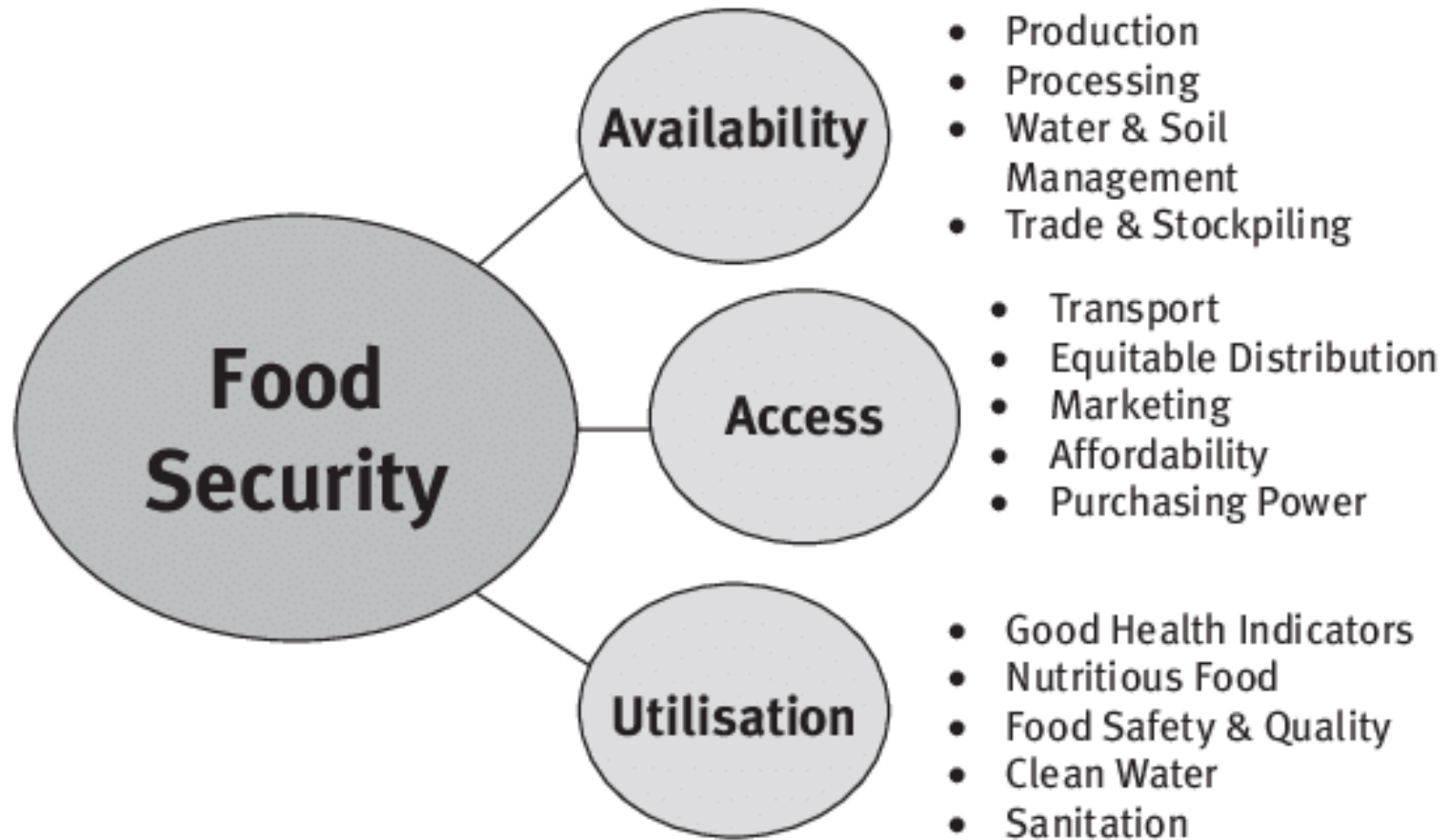
There is evidence of food security being a concern many thousands of years ago, with central authorities in ancient China and ancient Egypt being known to release food from storage in times of famine.

References to food security can also be found in the scriptures of many religions.

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- According to Hinduism, food is verily an aspect of Brahman (annam parabrahma swaroopam). Because it is a gift from God, it should be treated with great respect.
- The Holy Bible says that, bread is also a gift from God: Moses fed his people in the desert with food which fell from heaven, and during the last supper, bread became the body of Christ.
- ‘God has given food to human for his health, life, and ability to perform his duties’ according to the Holy Quran.

- 1974 World Food Conference, defined food security defined as the “availability at all times of adequate, nourishing, diverse, balanced moderate world food supplies of basic foodstuffs to sustain steady expansion of consumption and to offset fluctuations in production and prices”.
- World Food Summit, 1996, food security “exists when all people, at all physical and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food to dietary needs and preferences for an active and healthy life.”
- According to the Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO), the four pillars of food security are availability, access, utilization, and stability.
- United Nations (UN) recognized the Right to Food in the Declaration of Human Rights in 1948.
- The main global policy is in the Sustainable Development Goals gun Goal 2; agreed on targets to end hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition, and promote sustainable agriculture by 2030.



- The United Nations World Food Programme (WFP) is the 2020 Nobel Peace Prize Laureate
- The latest Hunger Hotspots report, co-published by WFP and FAO, reported that 970,000 people faced catastrophic levels of hunger in five countries, namely: Afghanistan, Ethiopia, South Sudan, Somalia and Yemen.
 - That is a tenfold increase in a decade. Nigeria, with rising violence and restricted humanitarian access, is also one of the highlighted countries of greatest concern.
 - WFP said it had "scaled up direct food and nutrition assistance to prevent famine and aims to reach a record 153 million people in 2022.
- The International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) is a specialised agency of the United Nations mandated to enable poor rural women and men to improve their food security and nutrition, raise their incomes and strengthen their resilience.
- The International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI) was established in 1975
 - in recognition of the need for an independent research institute that would deal with socioeconomic policies for agricultural development.

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- Food Insecurity and Vulnerability Information and Mapping Systems (FIVIMS) of FAO aims to provide accurate and timely information to national governments to enable better assessment current situation of food insecure and vulnerable people, for design and evaluation of possible policies and interventions, for monitoring purposes.



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- Achievement of independence through a bloodless revolution – Ahimsa – nonviolence, unparalleled in history from USA to Sudan.
- Ship to mouth (PL 480) existence to self-sufficiency and (although knee – jerk), exports, – thanks to rainbow of revolutions, including green, white, blue and yellow courtesy Swaminathan, Norman Borlaug, Kurien, Dr. M.V. Rao, and others enough food – not only for thought!



Norman Borlaug



Varghese Kurien



Dr. M.V. Rao



M.S. Swaminathan

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The Bengal famine of 1943 was a famine in the Bengal province of British India (present-day Bangladesh), during World War II. An estimated 2.1 to 3.8 million Bengalis perished, [A] out of a population of 60.3 million, from starvation, malaria and other diseases aggravated by malnutrition, population displacement, unsanitary conditions and lack of health care. Millions were impoverished as the crisis overwhelmed large segments of the economy and catastrophically disrupted the social fabric. The accusation that Winston Churchill, the then Prime Minister, asked cynically, whether Gandhi had died when informed of the large number of deaths, is probably untrue. The jury, as they say, is out.

- Performance of institutions, including the Supreme Court, UPSC, Election Commission and Chief Information Commission of India.
- Significant and outstanding contributions to various fields from science and technology, exploration of space and Antarctica, sports, music and dance, literature.

Outstanding Indians in various these areas such as Sir C.V. Raman, M.S. Subbulakshmi, Rabindranath Tagore, Sachin Tendulkar among others.

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- Establishment of Centres of Excellence such as the IITs and IIMs whose alumni have significant achievements to their credit from Silicon Valley to Germany and from UK to Japan.
- Regular conduct of free, fair, impartial elections by the Central Election Commission. Contribution of Seshan and Lyngdoh.
- Running a tight ship and earning laurels from the Chairman, Federal Bank of USA during the financial meltdown.

But, if you look at the flipside, at what has NOT been done, a fairly bleak picture presents itself.

- Hunger, poverty and inequality continue to haunt the vulnerable sections in several pockets of the country.
- Women continue to be killed in some places in the name of honour,
- Children are sold like commodities in many metropolises.
- Thousands of farmers have committed suicide on account of distress in the farming sector.
- Persons from various walks of life such as politics, civil service, and the corporate sector, including those from Noble professions, such as medicine, engineering, architecture, and the law have not only been found guilty of crimes, tried, convicted and jailed.
- The global level availability of food grains has failed to convert itself into local level accessibility, which remains an issue in terms of regions, sectors of population and components of nutritional requirement, either on account of difficult terrain or poverty.

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- India ranks 68 out of 113 major countries in terms of food security index 2022.
- The Human Rights Measurement Initiative finds India doing 56.8% of what is possible.
- According UN nearly 195 million undernourished in India, quarter of the world's hunger burden.
- Roughly 43% of children chronically undernourished.
- The infant mortality rate of Indian children is 34 and the under-five mortality rate is 39 and 25% of newborn children are underweight among other nutritional, immunization and educational deficiencies of children. Figures for India are below the standards of the developed world.

- A host of social and economic evils, including sati, child marriage, untouchability and feudal regimes were all done away with, literally overnight. The abruptness of the influx of the slew of reforms was comparable to a person calling off a hunger strike and being given not a glass of the customary lime juice, but a seven course sumptuous meal. A degree of indigestion naturally followed.

Steps taken by the Government of India and States/UTs

- Ensuring food security requires action in multiple dimensions, including:
- improving the governance of food systems; inclusive and responsible investments in agriculture and rural areas, in health and education;
- empowering small producers; and
- strengthening social protection mechanisms for risk reduction.
- Among the many initiatives taken by the Gol for ensuring food security are the National Food Security Act (NFSA), the arrangement of a Minimum Support Price (MSP) for various crops, especially food grains - not only to make food grains production remunerative, but also to ensure availability of food grains for distribution within the country,
- MSP is a form of market intervention by the Gol to ensure agriculture producers against any sharp fall in farm prices and to protect them from distress sales and also to make available foodgrains for public distribution under the PDS.

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- the establishment of a network of Fair Price Shops (FPS)s through the Public Distribution System (PDS)
- and the Integrated Child development Scheme (ICDS).
- ICDS provides nutritional meals, preschool, education, primary health care, immunisation, health check – up and referral services to children under six years of age and their mothers.

- The National Food Security (Right to Food Act), provide subsidized food grains to thirds of India's 1.33 billion population. It converts into legal entitlements existing food security programmes of the GoI
- Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) is a government program in India which provides nutritional meals, preschool education, primary healthcare, immunization, health check-up and referral services to children under 6 years of age and their mothers.
- The Supplementary Nutrition Programme (SNP) under ICDS aims to fill the gap in nutrition amongst children under six years of age as well as pregnant and lactating women. SNP is delivered through two modalities – Hot-Cooked Meal at Anganwadi Centers and Take-Home Ration (THR).

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- The Public Distribution System (PDS) evolved as a system of management of scarcity through distribution of foodgrains at affordable prices. Over the years, PDS has become an important part of Government's policy for management of food economy in the country. PDS is supplemental in nature and is not intended to make available the entire requirement of any of the commodities distributed under it to a household or a section of the society. It is operated under the joint responsibility of the Central and the State/UT Governments.
- Having evolved as a system of management of scarcity through the distribution of foodgrains at affordable prices PDS, has, over the years, become an important instrument of government policy for the management of the food economy of the country. It is supplementary in nature. It is operated through the joint responsibility, of the central and state governments through the statutorily established Food Corporation of India (FCI) which has been entrusted with the responsibility for procurement, storage, transportation and bulk allocation of food grains in the state governments, presently, wheat, rice, sugar and kerosene are being allocated to the states for distribution. Some states also distribute other items such as pulses, edible oils, are salt, spices.

Under the PDS, presently the commodities namely wheat, rice, sugar and kerosene are being allocated to the States/UTs for distribution.

Some States/UTs also distribute additional items of mass consumption through the such as pulses, edible oils, iodized salt, spices, etc.

- The Central Government, through FCI, has assumed the responsibility for procurement, storage, transportation and bulk allocation of food grains to the State Governments.

The operational responsibility including allocation within State, identification of eligible families, issue of Ration Cards and supervision of the functioning of Fair Price Shops (FPSs) etc., rest with the State Governments.

The Food Corporation of India (FCI) is a statutory body created and run by the Government of India.

- It is one of the largest Corporations in India started by the government and probably the largest supply chain management in Asia.
- It procures rice and wheat from farmers through many routes like paddy purchase centres/mill levy/custom milling and stores them in depots.
- It maintains many types of depots like food storage depots and buffer storage complexes and private equity godowns and also implemented latest storage methods of silo storage facilities.

It is one of the large corporations started by the Gol and is regarded as the largest supply chain management Asia.

- It also produces rice and wheat from farmers, and, stores them in depots for supply to the PDS.

The Central Warehousing Corporation (CWC), is another statutory body under Gol tasked to provide reliable, cost-effective, value – added, integrated warehousing, and logistics solutions in a socially responsible and environment friendly manner.

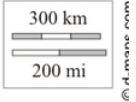
- The Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA), is a labour law and social security measure that aims to guarantee the ‘right to work’.
- Employment under MGNREGA is a legal entitlement. Apart from providing economic security and creating rural assets, other things said to promote MGNREGA are that it can help in protecting the environment, empowering rural women, reducing rural-urban migration and fostering social equity, among others.”
- The National Food for Work program is open to all poor people who are ready to do manual unskilled labour work. Food grains are provided to the States free of cost. The transportation cost, handling charges, and taxes on food grains will, however, be the responsibility of the States.

- In Karnataka State, under the 'Indira Canteen' programme, breakfast, lunch and dinner are supplied at low prices so that no one goes hungry and everyone has healthy food.
- Andhra Pradesh State, in collaboration with Nalabottu Foundation, provides free meals to people in need redistributing access, food from homes, restaurants, businesses, canteens and gatherings.
- Tamil Nadu has a programme called 'Amma Unavagam', a food subsidization programme run by the Ministry of Food and Civil Supplies, Government of Tamil Nadu in India.

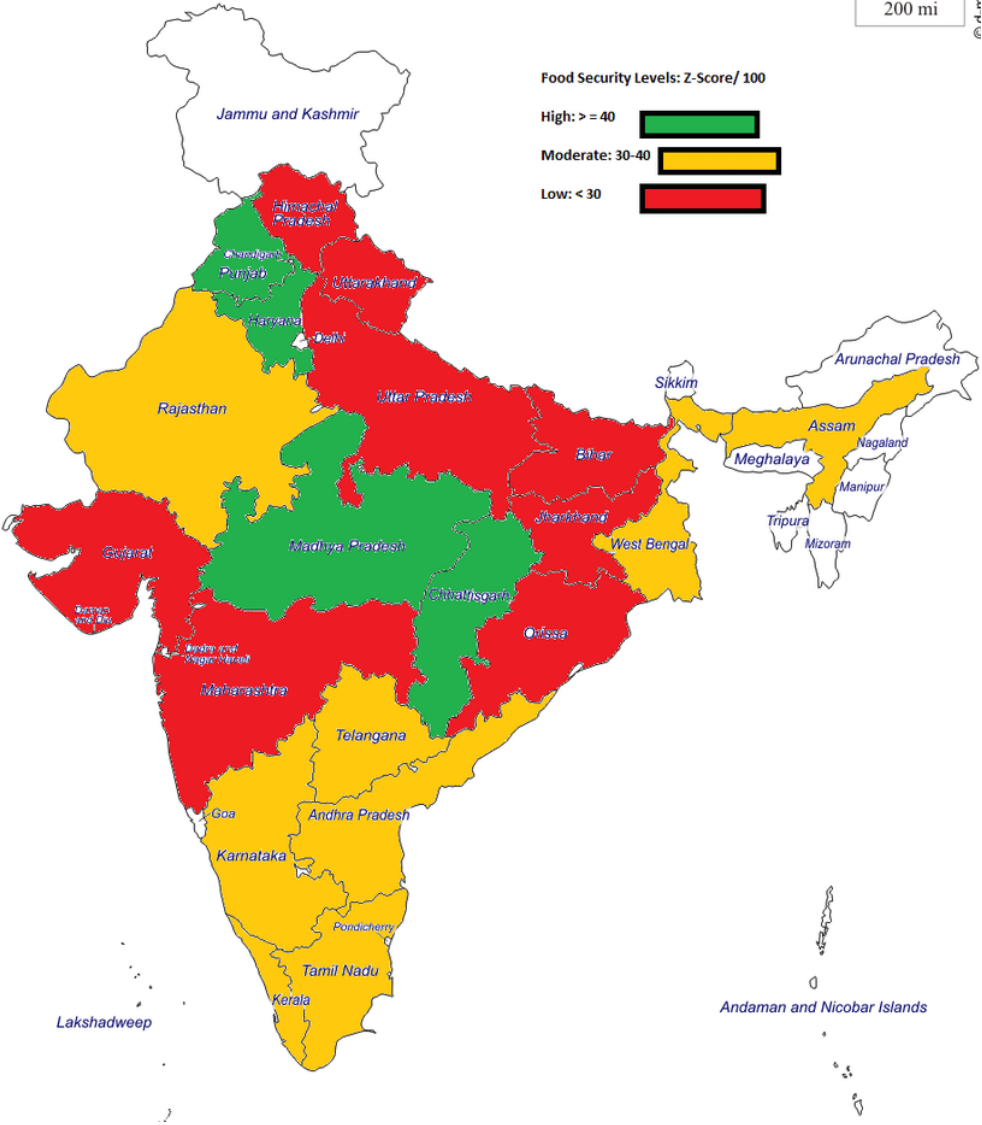
Under the scheme, municipal corporations of the state-run canteens serving subsidised food at low prices.

- Uttar Pradesh has a law which enables food going waste from parties to be preserved and distributed to needy people.
- Chhattisgarh state ensures access to adequate quantities of food and requirements of good nutrition, to the people of the state at affordable prices, apart from providing daily free cereals to pregnant women, lactating mothers and certain categories of children.

STATE WISE FOOD SECURITY LEVELS IN INDIA: 2014-15



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Measures that can be taken to minimize post-harvest losses

1. Assess Maturity
2. Check Your Water Quality
3. Check Your Water Temperature
4. Avoid Injury
5. Keep Your Produce Cool
6. Proper Storage

Challenges for India

- Availability not that reliable
- Accessibility remains an issue over regions, sections of the people and nutritional content – either on account of logistical issues what economic compulsion
- Millions of malnourished children

Road Ahead

- Ensure food security requires action at many levels, such as improving the quality of governance in food systems, promoting inclusive and responsible and investments in the agriculture, rural development sectors, as also in health, education;
- Take affirmative policy actions to incorporate all stakeholders to improve the current food system.

Provide additional public funding to bridge the gap between production and nutrition caused by the dominance of staple crops in agriculture

- Improve quality of food forecasting systems and methodologies
- Strengthen social protection mechanisms for risk reduction, such as insurance.
 - tackle the triple burden of malnutrition, nutrition, disparity, and food insecurity

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- Enhance coverage under the Direct Benefit Transfer system - transferring money directly to the account of a beneficiary rather than routing it through a government official.
 - use latest environmental friendly technologies which do not require additional land or water.
- Using latest environmental friendly technology without need of additional land and water.
- Concentrate on methods to improve the availability and affordability of protein rich food products
- Use biogas or natural gas or methane produced from farm/agro/crop/domestic waste in conjunction with mined natural gas for producing protein rich cattle/fish/poultry /pet animal feed.-as the diet of the average Indian lacks fruits, legumes, nuts, fish and dairy it is necessary to bridge the gap in the composition of the daily meal. -
- Empower small producers.

Options and Priorities - the Wood or the Tree Dilemma! – Excerpted from the book – “Ethics in Governance - Resolution of Dilemmas with case Studies”

- Every situation in administration at any level presents options and priorities.

If one were to take over as Prime Minister, say two months later, one may face a fiscal crisis, food and nutrition crisis,

There may be problems with

the welfare of women and children or the environment, neighboring countries,

the need to decide whether we bid for the Asian Games and diplomatic parlays may be required to lobby for a place in the Security Council of the United Nations,

apart from the usual issues like provision of housing, drinking water or roads, etc.

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- Similarly taking over any job in the government, at the State, or the Centre, in a Public Sector Undertaking or district brings with it its own set of governance issues that present a set of many options for the officer.
Of course a lot depends upon what functions your charges covers.
- Important to find the right questions to ask.
Answers will come on their own in due course.
- Draw up a list of things to be done
 - First choose from your list,
 - Category A - things which you want to achieve during your tenure.
 - Then Category C
things that you want to do away with, a negative list if you wish.
 - What you have left in your list is Category B – everything else!
- .
 - Aggressively - go after A,
 - With equal determination pursue C, and
 - With matched aggression and determination, firmly ignore B. Contd..

- Golden principle that applies here is ‘The urgent crowds out the important’ - meaning that you end up fire-fighting only, and never get to real policy issues in governance and contribute to development.
- Meaning of ‘focusing’ upon an object before clicking the photograph is that the rest of the picture should get blurred.
- Like Arjuna seeing only the sparrow's eye in the mythical incident with Acharya Drona, while all other students who were asked to look at the tree saw so many things.
- Now looking at Categories A and C, you may find that there are far too many for your time even now
categorize them further into
 - Vital - do them first,
 - Essential - Immediate next priority
 - Desirable if you have the time.
- Open two tracks in your administration:
 - One would be the day to day urgent – Track 1, and
 - The other would be the parallel, slow, but important Track 2.

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‘The mantra’ is hence a simple ABC, VED and Twin-Track!

- These options and priorities need to be in the shape of concentric circles - the outermost circle being most important, the next one being less so and the third one being almost irrelevant or unnecessary. Take Hyderabad city for instance. The outer circle would comprise nagging issues relating to sale of children in the city, the threat of bomb blasts etc. The second town concentric circle would represent the annual, recurring feature of submersion of several areas in the city, on account of heavy rains etc., And the innermost of the concentric circles would represent the almost farcical activities government are prone to indulge in, like the car racing witnessed in the last couple of days.
- Avoid the “grasshopper mentality” - waving attention with short span
- Another danger to be wary of is the temptation to succumb to “time robbery”.
- By means of general advice, I would like to emphasise the importance of remaining physically fit, mentally, alert and emotionally stable. These imperatives are absolutely essential for the performance of your duties efficiently and also for you to remain a happy and productive citizen. Regular physical exercise, stimulation of the mind through activities such as solving of riddles/puzzles or participation in quizzes and remaining emotionally stable through the practice of yoga or, if you are a religious person (which I am), prayer.

AB Vajpayee – “Ooncha mastak, ubhara seena/jeena ho to aisa jeena” – self-esteem overriding quality to possess

Sahir Ludhianvi - “Ehl-e-dil hai hum chasm-e-karam se bhi beniyaz” – Rise above temptation

To quote stanza from the Sanskrit poem, of Rajani Kantha Rao (bard of Telugu people, playwright, actor, composer, singer, poet – multitalented genius.

I was there for his 96th Birthday in Vijayawada a few years ago.

Omkaraparivritam viswam

Sankalpa parimitham drisyam