In the present scenario when terrorism in its multidimensional form is creating a climate of insecurity in every part of the world and the 'green house effect' is imperilling the very existence of the living beings on this planet, there is an urgent need to realise the importance of duties in every society. It is more so in India where communalism, casteism, parochialism and regionalism threaten to tear asunder our fledgling democratic polity. The world, no doubt, is in a sorry mess today; but our own country presents a far more disturbing spectacle. But as it has been rightly pointed out, instead of lamenting on the foibles, one should make efforts to remedy the ills afflicting the Indian society by developing responsible citizens.¹

Need for creating an awareness of citizen's responsibilities.

One of the easiest ways to tackle this problem is to create an awareness among the people that citizenship in a democracy involves not only freedom but also responsibility. It is this sense of social
responsibility which can motivate all citizens to rise above self in order to render selfless service to the society. If 'We, the people of India' have given to ourselves a Constitution for establishing a Sovereign Democratic Republic, as the Preamble to our Constitution proclaims, we should translate this dream into reality through hard work and mutual co-operation. Fulfilment of this objective depends upon creation of a climate capable of igniting the Promethean spark in every citizen making him or her a reservoir of disciplined energy and resource.  

When one looks at India, one finds that it is inhabited not only by millions of people who are illiterate but also by people who, though literate, are mentally immature. It is a national tragedy indeed. Swami Vivekananda rightly called such people suffering from psychic immaturity as "moustached babies". According to him, such people are physically very mature, but mentally they are like babies - weak, dependent, demanding and bereft of the sense of personal dignity and responsibility. Such people are incapable of developing that human energy resource which can identify human problems and help them rise above themselves for the upliftment of their society. This is very much contrary to the expectation of our Constitution that every citizen
of India shall strive towards excellence in the sphere of his individual and collective activities.

**Crisis in Indian Society.**

In the context of the present scenario, when development in science and technology has led to a decline in values, the duties emerge as the greatest preservers of a stable social order. This becomes apparent when one takes into consideration the stark reality that our well developed civilization has failed to improve the quality of citizens, and the very existence of the nation is imperilled due to a concatenation of adverse circumstances. India today is undoubtedly passing through a period of turmoil, or, as some thinkers have aptly described it, a period of crisis.

The word 'crisis' has a definite connotation. As pointed out by Habermas: "crisis arises when the structure of a social system allows fewer possibilities for problem solving than are necessary for the continued existence of the system". (1973:2). Crisis represents a state of affairs when members of a society experience structural alteration as critical for continued existence", but at the same time feel that the state of affairs is a kind of "an objective force" that deprives
them of "a part of their normal sovereignty". In other words, when people see the need for critical changes, but find themselves incapable of initiating or attaining these changes, there arises a perception of crisis. A more vivid description of this state of affairs is: "We are being threatened with the loss of our capacity to imagine, prepare and build the future. A crisis is not a situation: It is incapacity to act". Crisis, thus, represents a serious disturbance in the structure of a society, which may have a disintegrative potential.  

Today, the people of India are facing a crisis which is multi-dimensional in its nature, and it certainly includes a crisis of identity. This is primarily because of their failure to recognize their duties. The panacea for the ills afflicting the Indian society is the development of a healthy outlook in respect of duties. There are two ways of looking at a crisis - one way is to accept it without resistance, believing it to be a 'cursed spite'; the other way is to welcome it as a unique opportunity to show our worth and grapple with it as best as one can. Accepting a crisis without resistance is to accept defeat. The human civilisation has progressed so far only because the homosapiens have successfully encountered challenges coming in their way. Here one is reminded of the noted
historian Arnold Toynbee's theory of the cycle of civilisation, according to which every civilization passes through an endless cycle of challenge and response. The civilisation progresses so long as it successfully responds to the challenges, but it declines when it fails to respond to the challenges. The late President Sukarno of Indonesia, in the introduction to his books in Indonesian and English languages, entitled respectively as 'Suara Vivekananda' and 'the teachings of Vivekananda', highlighted this aspect by quoting the following exhortation of Vivekananda: "We have wept long enough; no more weeping, but stand on your feet and be men".  

India became free after centuries of political and social immobilisation; it has now got the opportunity to build the structure of an enduring society on the basis of justice and equality, human dignity and unity, inspired by the vision of general human happiness and welfare. Swami Vivekananda called upon the youth of the country to bestir themselves to achieve the goal. It is not the time to sleep, he said, nor to waste time in idle talk, but to work intelligently, moved by the spirit of love of man; for 'on our work depends the India of the future'. Jealousy, selfishness, love of ease, utter lack of social awareness and work efficiency, and too
much talking and too little working, these are the
typical traits of the Indians of today. Although we are
producing and releasing physical energy by taming the
Brahmaputra and other rivers as also other geological
forces for the development of our nation, yet the supreme
energy needed to release forces of discipline and
creativity today still remains to be generated in
millions of our human beings. There is disharmony,
discord and distrust everywhere. There is selfishness
and greed in the various walks of life. All these
symbolise the bankruptcy of moral and religious values.
It has been rightly observed that bankruptcy of moral
values "has spurred men and women to a neurotic pursuit
of external pleasures and generated grisly greed for
rights without duties".

The Indian Constitution has tried to tackle this
problem by enunciating fundamental duties for the
citizens. It is the moral and constitutional
responsibility of a citizen to perform his duties
earnestly. Freedom needs to be nourished by
responsibility not only to make it dynamic and worthwhile
but also to uphold the true spirit of citizenship. It is
a fusion of freedom and responsibility which is the
quintessence of true citizenship, and not freedom alone.
Inadequacy of existing fundamental duties in the list to tackle the crisis, and the need for the new ones.

A point deserving serious attention in the context of the crisis-ridden Indian society is that the duties prescribed in the Constitution in Part IV-A do not seem to be sufficiently broad based and explicit to help us tide over the present crisis in the country. One has to refer to the teachings of thinkers like Swami Vivekananda, Mahatma Gandhi and Vinoba Bhave, for constructing, what Dr. Radhakrishnan has called, 'New Smriti'. According to Dr. Radhakrishnan, "We are today in the midst of a Hindu renaissance; waiting for a new Smriti, which will emphasise the essentials of the Hindu spirit and effect changes in its forms so as to make them more relevant to the changing conditions of India and the world. Forms which begin by being useful are soon diverted from their objects to which they owe their existence to new ones where they even become dangerous. The task of the wise reformer is to note the essential spirit of the institutions and reorient them so as to embody it better".

As we are already having a Constitution embodying fundamental duties, perhaps there is no need for drafting a new smriti. However, there is no denying the fact that there is an imminent need to improve the existing list of
duties by adding some important duties relevant to the present Indian scenario, keeping in mind the fact that the additional list of duties should not be inconsistent with the other parts of the Constitution.

The pursuit of wealth, the pursuit of pleasure, and the pursuit of power, these three pursuits have been dominating the minds of the elite classes of India, and these have almost destroyed their creative spirit and taken the nation to the brink of disintegration. These evil tendencies can be reversed only by a new pursuit - the pursuit of duty. This pursuit is highly desirable and urgent at this time. Just as every father and mother must remain deeply concerned about right habits which their children should develop, similarly the nation-builders should remain concerned about the right ideals which the citizens should inculcate in order to make this country a better place to live. Hence the need for a new list of duties which should cover important aspects of life.

(a) **Duty to educate oneself and others so that one can develop scientific temper, spirit of inquiry and reform.**

One of the duties which is important for the development of society is the duty " to educate oneself
and others so that one can develop scientific temper, spirit of inquiry and reform". Similar duty is included in Art. 21 of the Consitution of the Republic of China. Art 26 of the Constitution of Japan also recognizes this duty in the following words: "all people shall be obligated to have all boys and girls under their protection to receive ordinary education as provided for by law. Such compulsory education shall be free".  

A socialist society cannot be built by illiterate persons. Literacy and education are the essential ingredients of a socialist personality. The Directive Principles of State Policy enjoin upon the State the responsibility to impart education, but the Constitution does not lay down any duty for the citizens to equip themselves with the tools of literacy and education. It is because of this deficiency in the Constitution that the uneducated working force of the nation has not been able to rise above the miserably low level of scientific and technological education.

It is indeed an irony that part IV-A postulates in Art 51A(h) the duty "to develop scientific temper, humanism and the spirit of inquiry and reform," without caring to fulfil the essential condition for its realisation, namely, the duty to educate oneself. Therefore, the duty prescribed in Art. 51A(h) will always
remain a pipedream in the absence of the duty to educate oneself. It is too much to expect that a citizen would be able to develop scientific temper and the spirit of enquiry and reform without taking care to educate oneself.

The Upanisads also described true education as: tejasvinau adhitam astu- 'May we be enlightened by this study, by this education'.

In other words, the education should be that which enlightens and which develops the spirit of enquiry and reform. Without education and the spirit of enquiry, men and women will only be reduced to the level of low creatures. A creature or 'jantu', as it is called in Sanskrit, means something that is shaped by forces outside of itself and which is, consequently, not free. India was a creature of history for centuries. While other nations created history, the people of India became victims of exploitation. This was because the people had not developed the spirit of enquiry and reform, and had, thus, reduced themselves to the level of creatures. They never realised their own inherent dignity, glory and strength as human beings. It is only by education that we can develop the spirit of enquiry and scientific reform and rise above the level of low creatures. It is time to do some introspection in this sphere. As Socrates had said :"An unexamined life is not worth living". We have to develop
the spirit of enquiry if we wish to make our life worth living.

It may be worthwhile to bring every illiterate citizen under a Constitutional obligation to educate oneself and every educated citizen to educate others, and to participate in the national programme of compulsory literacy and education. As it has been rightly observed, "every person should become imbued with the idea that acquiring an 'intellectual capital' involves its possessor in the duty of sharing it with others".  

Self-discipline, efficiency, the spirit of social awareness and co-operation, are some of the virtues that can go a long way in helping us to build our society. But these attributes are slowly vanishing from our Indian society. Jealousy, self-centredness, love of ease, utter lack of social awareness and work-efficiency, and too much talking and too little working, these have become the traits of the Indian national character. According to Swami Vivekananda, the remedy of these problems lies in education alone.

Keeping in mind the truism that if we want to look at the future of a country, we should look at the youth and students of that country because it is they who represent the future, it becomes all the more important to introduce the duty "to educate oneself and others so that
one can develop scientific temper, spirit of inquiry and reform", as a fundamental duty in our Constitution.

Every Indian owes it to himself and to the nation at large a responsibility to strive to become strong and dynamic. Of course, State has to play a major role in this area, because without State's active involvement, it is not possible to achieve this objective, but there can hardly be two opinions on the point that not much headway can be made in this area unless the citizens themselves view it as a fundamental duty to pay attention to their own education.

(6) Duty to perform one's work conscientiously and diligently.

Another important duty which is listed as a duty in the Constitutions of many countries, but which has been omitted in the Indian Constitution, is the duty to perform one's duty conscientiously and diligently. For example, Art. 27 of the Constitution of Japan says: "all people shall have the right and the obligation to work". Similarly the Constitution of the Republic Czechoslovakia lays down in Section 32 that "it is the duty of every citizen to work in accordance with the abilities and to contribute by his work to the common weal". In the Constitution of the Republic of Italy it is stated that work is both a duty and a right. Every individual must
contribute to the progress of society by means of work. It is the duty of the State to obtain the incorporation of Italians into the national life. As stipulated in Art. 4: "Each citizen has the duty to exercise in conformity with his own ability and choice, an activity or function contributing to the material or spiritual development of society". The Constitution of the Republic of Yugoslavia also proclaims through Art. 33 that it is "the duty of every citizen to perform conscientiously the public duties to which he has been elected or which are entrusted to him. A similar provision has been made in Art. 76 of the Constitution of Poland.

Duty to work is perhaps the most important obligation of a citizen in a Socialist country and it includes the obligation to render to the nation the maximum production with minimum wastage of human labour. If we want to establish a Socialist Republic, we ought to give due importance to this duty. The Rev. Canon Liddon, in his lecture to young men at St. Paul's Cathedral, made an eloquent allusion, in his lecture to young men at St. Paul's Cathedral, made an eloquent allusion to work as the true end of life. "The life of man", he said, "is made up of action and endurance, and life is fruitful in the ratio in which it is laid out in noble action or in patient perseverance...... To pass life in indolence, in a
state of moral coma, is degrading, for life is only ennobled by work".

Gandhiji was indebted to Tolstoy for his philosophy of bread-labour. He said: "The law that to live man must work, first came to me upon reading Tolstoy's writing on Bread-labour." 24

There was a time when men threw their heart and soul into their work, and took pride in the quality of their work. But today we have people doing their work scampingly - without skill, without conscience, without industry. It is because of these maladies that in India we come across instances where tunnels cave in, iron bridges give way and buildings tumble down, causing colossal loss to our national resources. It is again because of these maladies that drains are left ununcovered, giving rise to epidemics resulting in loss of valuable human lives. All this is dishonest and dishonourable. Swami Vivekananda rightly observed that the national work should be suffused with national vision and enthusiasm and a spirit of joy. Otherwise, all work would become static, stereotyped and meaningless, and a source not of freedom but of bondage.

What we need to capture in every sphere of life is this national purpose and enthusiasm. Swami
Vivekananda exhorted the youth of the country to be up and doing to achieve this goal. It is not the time to sleep, he said, nor to waste time in idle talk, but to work intelligently, moved by the spirit of love of man; for 'On our work depends the India of the future'. Samuel Smiles clearly pointed out that "it is the idleness that is the curse of man - not labour. Idleness eats the heart out of men as of nations, and consumes them as rust does iron".

Viewed from this angle, it would be highly pragmatic to introduce it as a duty of every citizen 'to perform one's work conscientiously and diligently'. Today, one finds in India indifference to work. In other words, lethargy is all pervasive in our national life. This very well reminds one of a story recorded by Thomas Job:

"There is a story about four people, named Everybody, Somebody, Anybody and Nobody. There was an important job to be done and Everybody was asked to do. Everybody was sure that somebody would do it. Yet although anybody could have done it, Nobody did it. Somebody got angry about this because it was Everybody's job. Everybody, however thought that Anybody could do it. Alas, it ended up that Everybody blamed Somebody when Nobody did that Anybody could have
done".

This situation can be remedied only when every citizen is made aware of his obligation towards the society so that he performs his duties properly. It has to be appreciated that even the drudgery of the humblest labourer contributes towards the general well-being of society; and it was a wise saying of a Chinese Emperor that "if there was a man who did not work, or a woman that was idle, somebody must suffer cold or hunger in the empire".

(c) **Duty to cast one's vote during the elections of members for the Legislative Assembly and the Lok Sabha, and its importance.**

One of the duties which was proposed by the Swaran Singh Committee during the debates in the Lok Sabha, and which was not incorporated into the final list of duties adopted by the 42nd Amendment Act, 1976, was the 'duty to vote'.

Mr. M.C. Daga was to move a motion for amendment to include the duty to vote. Some of the Constitutions include it as a duty. Art.48 of the Italian Republic, for example, recognizes that the right "to vote is a civic duty". For an effective democracy, universal franchise is a must. But a mere
right to vote is not enough; this right must be exercised as a fundamental duty.

As the entire Constitutional machinery depends on the exercise of franchise by the citizens, and since the right to vote implies an obligation to vote, it is an important fundamental duty which has been left out. The political immaturity of the people and their lack of appreciation of the importance of vote, are the other compelling reasons for its incorporation. The Constitution must cast an obligation upon those citizens who are entitled to vote, a duty to exercise their franchise. A citizen should not have the option to abstain from discharging the obligation to elect the people's representatives, unless there are compelling reasons for this. If the experience of the past is any guide, very few citizens turn up at the polling booth to elect their representatives. Viewed from the experiences of the past, it is rather surprising that such an important duty i.e. "duty to cast one's vote during the election" was not incorporated into the list of fundamental duties, when our entire democratic structure depends on the exercise of franchise by the citizens.

Mr. Eliho Root, a Senator in America, had made the following observation on the importance of duty to
vote: "Of course, voting is a fundamental and essential part of the qualified citizen's duty to the Government of his country. A man who does not think it worthwhile to exercise this right to vote for public offices and on such public questions as are submitted to the voters is strangely ignorant of the real basis of all the prosperity that he has or hopes for and the real duty which rests upon him as a man of elementary morals. A man who will not take the trouble to vote is a poor-spirited fellow willing to live on the labours of others and to shirk an honourable obligation, to do his share in return". Mr. Root further says: "The experiment of popular government cannot be successful unless citizens of a country generally take part in the government. There is no man free from responsibility which is exactly proportional to each man's capacity, to his education, to his experience in life, to his disinterestedness, to his capacity for leadership, in brief, to his equipment for effective action in the great struggle that is continually going on to determine the preponderance of good and bad forces in government and upon the issues on which depend results so momentous to himself and his family, his children, his country and mankind. The selfish men who have special interests to subserve are going to take part,"
the corrupt men who want to take something out of government are going to take part, the demagogues who wish to attain places of power through passion and prejudice of their fellows are going to take part. The forces of unselfishness, of self-control, of justice, of love, of country, of honesty are set off against them and these forces should have every possible attraction and personality and power among men, or they will go down in the irrepressible conflict. The Scheme of popular government upon which so much depends cannot be worked successfully unless a great body of such men as one now in this room do their share and no one of us can fail to do his share without forfeiting something or his little to self-respect".

A plea for inclusion of these three duties.

The three duties enumerated above, namely, the duty to vote, the duty to work and the duty to educate oneself, are essential. Keeping in view the importance of these duties, their inclusion in Part IV-A as Fundamental Duty should go a long way in strengthening the roots of democracy in India.
NOTES


2. Ibid, p.12.


11. J.A. Yajnik. The Concept of Dharma and its relevance for Modern Indian Society: A paper presented at ICPR Seminar on "Moral and Aesthetic Value - Indian and
Western approach", held at M.S. University, Baroda, 1986, p. 7.


17. Prem Kirpal, in the Introduction in "Learning To be: The World of Education today and tomorrow" (He listed some of the important ideas and strategies which have not so far entered the Indian scene in any convincing way on which considerable reflection and work are needed). by Edgar Faure etc, UNESCO, Paris, 1972, Sterling Delhi, 1973, p(xx).

27. In A Citizen's Legal Power and Obligations, by Dr. R.C. Jha, Swan Publishers, New Delhi 1994, p.3.
30. Swarup Hari, Constitution: duties and
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