

'Yoga'kshemam

Coronavirus situation is becoming graver by the day. 2+ million infected, 1,25,000 dead globally. We are seeing reinfections and reactivations. 10 (or 100?) million and 1 million may be when we hit a plateau. Our guestimates and calculations go wrong. Vaccines have not yet come. Perfect medical solutions are not visible. Migrants have not reached their homes yet. Economies have slowed down and now are entering vicious cycles. Quantitative easing, 5-15% of GDP, to pump in investments have been initiated. This pandemic hit almost all of the humanity – death, infection, co-suffering, migrants stuck, migrants back home, by-stander collateral effect. Some are suffering more than the others. They need special care and support. India revealed its resilience by being slower to get infected, with lower fatality rate. However, India's infection rate exceeded 1000/day, India has extended lock down and has now entered a mandalam (40-day) lock down till 3 May 2020. Graded lock-down followed by punctuated and gradual exit from lock down, may be over another mandalam. Generic Saptapadi, as advocated by PM, is followed –

- Eldercare, particularly elders with severe health conditions, and infant care
- Maintain physical distance, use masks, wash hands with soap. Stay and work from home if possible
- Increase immunity
- Use Aarogya Setu App
- Help poor
- Avoid job cuts and pay cuts; avoid avoidable expenditure
- Respect Corona Warriors. Because they ensure essential care, goods, and services.

Life is more important than anything else, including slowing down of economy. Screening/Tracing, Testing, Quarantining/Treating, and Tracking continues. The curve appears flattening but growing. The downward trend is yet to come. The poor, vulnerable marginalized are supported with some survival cash-ration. Projection is that we hit zero growth. Negative growth is a distinct possibility. Multi-year global recession is predicted. Germany announced recession already. ILO indicates 40 Cr people in India in informal sector are at risk of slipping into poverty and 4 Cr persons slip into unemployment. This is huge, by any standards. But, this cannot be coming in the way of saving lives. At least 3.0 lakh crore Economy stimulus packages are being unveiled. And 5% of GDP as quantitative easing (helicopter amount)? While the world and India bounce back in a while, we need to get ready for new normal life, post-pandemic.

Coronaviruses are not uncommon. Some of them can be troublesome like COVID 19. These, along with other human-induced disasters are going to come more often, in future. It appears the planet is seeking 'rest' often. Can we annual holiday to the planet? Our ways of living have to change. Diets have to change. Sleeping habits have to change. Stepping up Hydration, Aeration, and Exercise matters. Less stress matters. Less paced life

matters. Less long-distance travel. Let us meditate. Let us be in the field. Let us be with nature. Let us say no to more. No substance abuse. At the level of Poor, Vulnerable and Marginalized, ways of life, living, spending, working, risks, engagement, leadership, institutions, governance, learning and training, transactions, identity-solidarity, rights-entitlements, wellbeing and freedom-choices change. Have to change. Democracy plays out differently. A new portfolio of virtuous cycles have to be initiated, to build resilience against our fragility, our civilization's fragility, our PVM fragility, and our climate change crisis. LPRD domain's portfolio has to transform itself. Thus, this portfolio includes: natural ways; local ways and local economy; e-ways; urgent actions; servant leadership; collective, communitizing equity imperatives; self-employment and micro-nano-pico enterprises; and appropriate technologies in sync with nature. More Knowledge-centric. More life. More Happiness. Less accumulating. Less long-distance. Less chemicals. Less Movement(s), Campaign(s), Network(s), Coalition (s), Organization(s), Enterprise(s), Foundation(s), Mission(s) and Program(s) have to be towards the same.

Let us work on 'New Normal'

Let us take this as a wake-up call. For building a life-centric economy. World Order. Augmenting, improving and/or building newer safer, fairer, and more sustainable systems. Supporting small enterprises, employment and incomes. Finding new emerging areas to invest. Getting more from people rather than machines. More jobs, person-days. With grants. With loans with no interests.

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We have to remember lock down situation will not continue either. Transport gets back on 'track'. Movement becomes normal. Hoarding comes down. Value-chain activities go on. Fair trade goes on. Megaretailers do bounce back. Labour returns to work places. Some migrants return back and some stay back in their native places. Financial flows, credit flows return slowly. E-payments retain higher share. Consumption patterns change, and consumption value comes down. Habit of keeping 'reserves' at home remains. Self-employment remains and may grow. Farmers miss high returns but remain linked with 'consumers' more. High value food consumption comes down. Hotels are visited less. MSME, tiny, nano and pico enterprises take time to recover. Unemployment and underemployment may remain longer at the new levels. Governments may announce bigger stimulus packages. May be 5% of GDP, or 30-40% of Gol Budget, in due course. Still, the new poor take time to cross the 'poverty line' again. Poor-Vulnerable-Marginalized may get living stipend-ration (at least deficit for living) for some time. Governments, Donors, Corporates encourage more direct benefit transfers.

New normal sets in. Be within new normal. Be rooted in, be in sync with nature. Be frugal. Happiness within. With life. In field. Be local. Across the planet at the same time. Self-help, mutual support. Let us be educated naturally. Let us be healthy, fit and more immune naturallu. Be and Pursue active relentless servant leaders, management workers, caring mentors and social entrepreneurs. Be emotional, social and spiritual.

Be electronic. E-transactions. E-learning. E-communications. Without losing 'nature'. Keeping self-learning, peer learning and metalearning intact. Better still, improving on them. Let us keep the portfolio of learning-training methods, tools and processes intact. These include: Fieldwork, Experience, Apprenticeship, In-situ training, Exposure, Interaction with Practitioner(s), Classes, Off-line/Online material - books, articles, cases, videos, notes, etc., interactive Online, text, pics, ppts, videos, links, tests, individual-group home and class tasks, long and short stories, songs, teasers, puzzles, interactive teaching, conversations, dialogues and reflections. We may need all of them, but one can play with the proportions.

But, beware of e-fatigue. Zoom fatigue. More data kills. Subtleties are lost. Additional taxing on brain and emotions. Body language is not fully helpful and so the stress. Unnecessary details and distractions get in. Therefore, let us Let us find natural settings. Let us space them. No back-to-back. Take small breaks. Look away from the screens, once in a while. Let the participants audio-video mute. Try podcasts. Use phone when possible. Keep having water. Some snacks too. Take e-offs. Let us go offline, and screen-free, 2-3 days a week. Give buffer time, before and after, for the e-events. Remember, we are in e-world for a long haul.

Farming includes post-harvest, value-addition and reaching the consumer. Farmers appreciate this scope and begins to acquire new skills. Farmers become scientists and researchers. More people shift into farming. Value-chains become shorter. Farmers begin to move away from chemicals. Farming entities become enterprises. Farmers begin to be collectives and Farmer-consumer collectives and partnerships begin to emerge. Staying back migrants begin to get absorbed in farming and offer new impetus to farming. We see emerging 'small' local value-addition and farm-based enterprises that focus on seeds, inputs, post-harvesting, processing, storage, packing/packaging, transport etc. Meanwhile, MGNREGS needs to be open for farming operations.

Financial Services become more formal. E-flows increase. We move from savings-leveraged financing to hybrid – savings and debt-financing. Financial Inclusion increases. Flexibility and customization increases across the services. Funds for existing and new Enterprise support services also need to be augmented in a big way, for them to bounce back fully. New small start-ups need to be supported too.

We should appreciate most of the funds flow initially to cope with COVID 19 immediate effects. Charities, grants and soft-loans for existing and long-term ends dwindle. But, surely, we move on. May be in a year.

When we move on, we need to invest in self-reliant local micro-economies, may be at a group of GPs, a town and a set of GPs around the town, so on. We need to have 'control' on technologies so that we do not lose sight of resultant unemployment. We need to be promoting self-employment in a formal way. Let us understand that we are greying slowly and they should not retire from work early. We need more generalists and people with multiple skills. We can have multiple jobs too. Futuristic skilling and reskilling has to be the focus. Let us remember we do not have to have long weeks and long days in work. If the wages and pay are

'regulated' we can have an equitable happiness-centric economy.

As we move on, we need to invest heavily into education. Education funnel needs to be wide even at the bottom. State should take responsibility for education to all till 18 years (3+12 years of schooling). This should include 10,000 hours of learning, including basic 3R, IT and e-skills, vocational skills, core (soft) skills etc. State should ensure 1000-day total care to the child – from the womb, to the nursery. Beyond this, quality education options can be offered to all. E-learning is embedded in all this.

As we move on, we need to have our healthcare system ready for future. More workers, more hospitals-beds-service units, more prevention, e-medicine. Plan infrastructure pandemic-disaster proof across. Redundancy helps.

As we move on, we need to work for universal basic income to all. We need to have preparedness plans and individual, family, community, office, social and mental readiness drills.

While the crisis may push us 2-3 years backward in terms of GDP, may be a decade or more backward in terms of the parameters of LPRD, the LPRD domain is well-equipped to go forward. It has people with knowledge, understanding, skills, institutional examples, technology etc.; it has models, flowing investments and community resolve; it has good will of the state; it has the benefit of social responsibility of the successful, philanthropies, support organizations and professionals. LPRD may tackle the situation triple quick, with robust ways, methods and processes. May be a decade. May be 5 years. With Participation. Inclusion. Universal Education and FNHW care. Mobilization. Collectivization. Communitization. Convergence. Accountability. Transparency. Governance.

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Right now, we have time. Repurpose within the new normal. May be for next 10-12-15-20 years. Can we, can each one of us, 'see' the universe? Can we 'see' the world? Can we 'see' the nature? Its ways, diversity, and variety. Can we walk? 100,000 km? Can we be in field journeys, 1,00,000 km a year? Can we see all states-UTs-regions/divisions? Can we see half-of-the-districts? 1000 blocks? 5000 GPs? Can we work with 100 Mentor-Leaders/Entrepreneurs intensely and long-time? Individually, each one of us as lead mentor-leader-entrepreneur can work with 100 mentor-leaders, 1000 professionals, 2500 inductees, 10000 learners and a lakh LPRD novo? Together, can we touch 1000 professionals, 5000 inductees (into LPRD), 50000 learners, 10 lakh initiated into LPRD thought and work? **Can we influence 10 Crore families and a 100 lakh Crore economy into a new normal economy?**

Remember, once upon a time, we were in nature. Then we moved away. We 'conquered' her. Now time has come to go back to her. Fully. Surrender. Let her take charge. She knows to care us better, if only we are in sync with her. We need to get going beginning with these transient times. Caring the PVM existing and transient. We get going Mentally. Emotionally. Physically. Spiritually. Let us unlearn, learn, live and let life live. **Let us remain useful flowing in N.** Else. When the 'ruling' human beings' made excesses, she acted. Decisively. Civilizations were gone. At Kurukshetra, Her friend, Krsna ensured cleaning of ruling class. Earlier, Bhargavaaraama did.

Join us in the world of yoga – samarpanayoga for 7L. We can go forward flowing in N, else world goes forward without us. ❖