



② Changing mass consciousness is an individual responsibility.

Recently, India celebrated its first moon landing. The whole country was Jubilant, be it students, politician, sportsperson, religious heads, professionals etc. These celebration reflect the contemporary mass consciousness toward scientific temper & significance of exploring space frontier.

However, at the root of this mass consciousness lay the groundwork done by some pioneer individuals like Vikram Sarabhai & Homi Bhabha, who persuaded the political class post independence, to initiate India's space program.

To envisage an ambitious space program, while India was still dealing with existential problems, shows the significance of individual responsibility in evolving mass consciousness.

Mass consciousness simply refers to the perspective or collective point of view of a society, towards and object, event, issue or idea. The subjects may range of social, political, economic, technological, spiritual ideas, concerns & issues.

Further, such mass consciousness is always in a state of flux, where the change is determined by range of factors. However, one of the significant factors is individual responsibility.

in changing ~~that~~ mass conscious-  
-ness.

→ Individuals & Mass consciousness  
→ 'A Reasoned perspective'

'Society is macrocosm of individuals'. This is because society, in fact is made up of individuals. Thus social change is essentially individual change.

For instance, Swaccha Bharat Movement, won't be a success unless each individual understands his responsibility ~~to~~ of keeping environment clean. Thus, behavioural change is at the core of swacchata drive.

In individual's lives people often find themselves frustrated due to the problems existing in society. We generally

want others to change for society to improve. However, it is often we as individuals who need to understand our responsibility & change. As is said, 'charity begins at home'.

For instant issues like corruption persist, as somewhere there is social acceptance of corruption, which is inturn result of individuals role, like, bribing, 'Chalta hai attitude', lack of morals etc.

Further, individuals in form of political leaders, social activists, Religious & spiritual leaders etc. have always played a significant & role in changing mass consciousness.

For instance, sati abolition during British period, was

largely result of individual efforts of Raja Ram Mohan Roy, who made it his life mission after he was agast by witnessing his own sister in law being forced to commit sati.

It was the persistent efforts of Rukmani Devi Anundate, to become voice for voiceless animals, that Prevention of Cruelty to Animal Act 1960, was passed. It helped drive home the message that animals too have dignity and <sup>they</sup> deserve to be treated with respect and compassion.

Mahatma Gandhi, as a political leader, elevated the mass consciousness of Indians. He thus united Indians belonging to diverse persuasions based

on language, religion, caste, class, gender etc. His individual role as a leader was paramount in not just winning freedom, but also uniting the country.

Further it is often the case that social change in mass consciousness is not always evolutionary, but sometimes Revolutionary. At the root of some of these revolutions is deep intellectual reasonings given by individual thinkers.

For instance, the Communist-ist Revolution in Russia in 1917 and a wave of socialism in rest of world after that, was result of deep intellectual stimulation generated by the 'Communist Manifesto' of Karl

Marx and Engels. Such were their ideas that aspects of it reverberate even today.

In field of science, it was 'Origin of Species (1859)' by Charles Darwin, that brought about such revolutionary change.

Such was his impact that mass consciousness on Human Centricity, can be divided as 'Before Darwin' and 'After Darwin'.

Before Darwin, Humans were seen a superior beings created in Image of God.

After Darwin, it was realised that Humans too are subject to same environmental controls as rest of organisms.

Moreover, another aspect of <sup>individual</sup> human responsibility is that, 'Humans are social beings'.

Thus, they are endowed with feelings of empathy, kindness and compassion.

Thus, those individuals who have realised a higher reality see it as a part of their compassion to elevate others.

For instance, Buddha's journey was initially and individual journey to remove pain & desires to ultimately attain Nirvana.

However, later as a teacher & spiritual leader his ideas helped spiritual elevation of millions of people. This process continues even today.

Thus, having established that individual responsibility is

significant to change mass consciousness, there arise certain questions.

Is individual responsibility alone sufficient? How far would such individual endeavour be successful if environment around is not supportive?

For instance, take the case of LGBTQ rights. Despite individual efforts, significant change in mass consciousness, to accept LGBTQ as a part of society has still not taken place.

Thus, it is imperative for state institutions like legislature and judiciary to come up with 'Bill of rights' for LGBTQ individuals. Legal enforceable rights, too lead to change in masses' perspective through hierarchical top down change.

Even in case of climate change ~~and~~ action, not much results have occur despite the efforts of individuals. For instance, role of activists like Greta Thunberg, to raise awareness on climate action.

Thus, there is need for a supportive environment to change mass consciousness, like climate action under Paris agreement, legal initiatives like banning single use plastics.

→ Inculcating individual responsibility

'Change begins at home'

This has to be the first principle, to bring about a change in mass consciousness.

This is important to bring about a greater integrity

in mind, speech and action of individual. For instance, Gandhiji was trusted, because he practiced what he preached. He adopted scant clothing to identify with poverty of teeming millions of poor Indians.

Further, emotional intelligence is important attribute which helps one to use oneself and others emotions, creatively for social change. For instance, Abraham Lincoln, emotional intelligence helped balance the ~~the~~ interests of Northern & Southern states of America and abolish slavery.

Further, change in mass consciousness should have purity of underlying values and intentions. Negative values like religious polarization, ethnic

divisiveness shows and irresponsible attitude toward long term repercussion.

Further, courage is most significant quality. Malala Yousefzai's courage did not deter her from campaigning for female education in Pakistan, despite enduring a bullet attack on her face.

Thus as droplets of water make an ocean, it is the individuals who make a society. Any change in traits of ocean (mass consciousness) is result of change in droplets (individual consciousness)

⑦ we build too many walls and not enough bridges.

A significant aspect of human progress in evolutionary history has been their ability to cooperate. However, in modern times many of our contemporary problems like protectionism, xenophobia, mutual suspicion and hostilities between the countries etc. reflect that we build too many walls than we build bridges.

The walls here reflect what differentiates people, societies, nations and regions, while bridges represent the mutual commonalities and the underlying potential to cooperate.

In context of Individuals, around the world there is a 'silent pandemic' of mental health problems like depression. One of the reasons for this is that in modern life, people are often forced to build too many walls around them.

In fast paced competitive world, people rarely have time to interact even with their friends, family and loved ones, resulting in isolated living. For instance, in Japan, there are cafe's where people can pay to make friends and inter-act with them.

Thus, even the bridges in current times are superficial ones, restricted to chance, commercial & social media interaction. This prevents develop

-ment of deeper psychological connection in human relationships which every individual desires for.

In context of society and communities within it, there is rising trend of mutual hatred, which is accentuated by rise of social media.

Often people focus more on what divides them in terms of their culture, religion, customs, practices, rather than on what unites them.

For example twitter often seems like a warzone where people tend to fight and spread propaganda on basis of superiority of ones own religion, gods, culture. And moderate voices, that call for respect

to diversity, secularism are often derided against.

The recent ~~Mizo~~ Meiti vs Kuki conflict in Manipur is a case in point where, despite huge historic and cultural commonalities between the two ethnicities, the difference i.e. the walls have assumed greater priority resulting in mutual hatred and clashes.

Politically, border conflict like US-Mexico, with calls for a literal wall across border, the Indo-Pak border conflicts, Azerbaijan-Armenia border conflicts, are result of physical and psychological walls separating the countries.

Even though the bridges can be made based on

commonalities ~~eg~~, example  
similarity of race across US-  
mexico borders, with spanish  
speaking latino population and  
punjabi culture across Indo-  
pak border, such efforts have  
not yielded results, due to  
political differences.

Economically too, there is  
issue of protectionism, trade  
wars between US & china,  
discrimination against migrant  
labours from North towards  
South of India. This shows  
the salience of Economic walls  
The bridges on the other  
hand like WTO dispute resolu-  
-tion mechanism is dysfunctional  
due to hegemonic behaviour  
of countries like USA.

Environmentally, there has been a fragmentation of forests and creation of walls of human habitation, which acts as barrier to environmental exchange to take place.

Bridges to connect such forests like ecological corridors are often not focus upon or given less priority, due to dominance of human centric developmental paradigm.

→ Why we built walls & not bridges?

Human nature is such that it focuses more on dichotomy, differences and conflicts more than commonalities.

The dichotomy of Hindu vs

Muslim, left v/s right, Ours v/s  
outsiders, Environment v/s Deve-  
lopment etc.

These conflicts narrow do-  
wn our perspective to address  
a issue and thus, one focuses  
on more selfish narrow interests.  
For instance, International Rela-  
tions is still driven by Real-  
politik ideology of National self  
interests even at expense of  
others.

Further, building bridges,  
is a time and cost intensive  
process, which requires one  
to build consensus through  
negotiations. Thus, it is a  
difficult task.

For instance, Indus water  
treaty mediated by World  
Bank between India and Pakistan

is a bridge of sorts, to cooperate  
in hydrological domain. However,  
still differences remain and  
there are calls to re-negotiate  
the treaty.

Another impediment is  
lack of wisdom both in indi-  
vidual & societal terms.  
For instance, politics today driven  
by number game of majority,  
politicians find it easier to  
build walls of religion, caste  
& ethnic division, to pursue  
vote bank politics. This reflects  
lack of ethics in politics.

Such lack of statesmanship  
also prevents development of  
bridges to resolve issues. For  
instance, the last sincere  
efforts to resolve Indo-Pak  
border issues happened way  
back during tenure of Shri

Atal Bihari Vajpayee, since their political statesmanship has been lacking from both ends.

→ lay the groundwork, to build the bridges

Building bridges essentially involve inculcation of certain values within individuals and society, these include → tolerance, empathy, compassion, openness and inclusivity.

No matter what the outward differences are, dignity of all human beings & even animals need to be respected. This would help to broaden outlook, to that of 'Vasudhaiv Kutumbakam' i.e. world is a family.

Further there is need to establish as many channels of communication, particularly when one has differences with others, to better understand their perspectives & do not give way to any miscommunication or misinterpretation.

This is true for both nation level & individual human relationships.

Third important ~~mechanism~~ <sup>aspect</sup> is need of innovative mechanism to resolve difference and create win win situation. For instance, sustainable development concept that balances between human, environment and economic developmental need. Such a developmental

secures rights of marginalised,  
like, tribals, ensures develop-  
ment and inter generational  
equity.

Building bridges also invol-  
ves leaving no one  
behind in the process of  
development and ensuring  
redistributive justice. This is  
aligned to concept of 'sabka  
samth, sabka Vikas aur sabka  
Vishwas' of Indian government.

Thus, building bridges is  
economic, political, ecological  
and ethical imperative.  
Further, one should go beyond  
bridges and even build  
airways, waterways, and  
even tunnels, to ensure  
a much more comprehensive  
Human interaction and coopera-

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Don't write  
anything this  
margin  
(इस भाग में  
कुछ ना लिखें)

-tion which charts an inclusive  
course of our common future.