

But, minerals, metals
and water, and
various



But, again, a huge population can prove to be a nation's biggest asset as well. For the all-round progress of a large nation, it is essential that all its people contribute significantly to diverse areas and sectors of the economy—like agriculture, service industry, construction and other industries, to name a few. The talented and hardworking people of a nation can emerge as a highly competitive human resource. A country marches ahead largely on the strength of its talented, educated and enterprising manpower. Many nations like Japan and Israel have proved it time and again.

These nations are poor in natural resources: they lack land and other natural resources such as minerals, metals and water, and various sources of energy like natural gas and crude oil. But these nations have shown that the general populace could be turned into a valuable human resource. As if taking a cue from some of these small but advanced nations of the world, India too, has been making the most productive use of its large population. It is quite heartening to note that India, harnessing its huge population most effectively, is emerging as an advanced and economically superior nation of the world. Our present GDP growth rate is impressive by any standards. Further, our huge populations of young people, a majority of whom are hardworking and enterprising, have made India a nation that finds respect worldwide, often evoking the envy of other nations which are under populated and lack the valuable human resources necessary for taking a nation forward. A few million young people graduate every year in India, a sizeable section of them in professional disciplines.

Very few nations of the world can boast of such a feat. These highly talented and educated people are proving valuable by providing their expertise and

technical and nontechnical know-how to various industries and vocations, and tremendously adding to the overall growth of India. Incidentally, Indian people have cornered a lucrative share of the worldwide outsourcing business to become a leading player in this industry. India's closest competitors like the Philippines and South Africa—arguably technically at par with India—are way behind India, as they lack the large human resource that India boasts of. We, however, have to excel in many fields by making the most imaginative use of our large human resource.

It is distressing to note that even after more than six decades of independence from the British yoke, India is not self-sufficient in food production. Apart from lack of technical expertise in agriculture and paucity of funds needed for promoting agriculture using scientific methods on a large scale, our people residing in villages and engaged in the agriculture profession are also to be blamed. Their overall inefficiency and inability to put to good use the available modern methods and techniques have led to poor agricultural yield time and again. The situation is more or less similar in some other fields as well. If this huge rural population was suitably educated, trained and equipped in agriculture know-how, the nation would achieve excellence in agriculture of an unforeseen kind.

When the technical finesse and hard work of a small section of the population has earned India the status of a software giant, imagine what it can achieve if its entire population is turned into valuable human resource! For this to happen, first of all, primary education would have to be given the kind of importance that in the fitness of things it deserves, as in India, a good percentage of the people remain uneducated. Secondly, greater efforts must

be made to end discrimination on the basis of religion, sex, caste and community as it makes the discriminated lot of the society unable to perform quality productive work. Last but not least, the government must realise that people are the biggest asset of a nation and provide suitable opportunities to them for turning them into valuable assets.

Even though lately, some efforts are being made in this direction, a lot more still needs to be done. For starters, by emphasising more on vocational and technical education, India could turn educated people into more productive human resources. The effort in general requires identification of areas and developing strategies and skills to turn the vast population into human resources and make maximum use of them for the largest benefit of society. This way the burden on the economy will ease and the nation will progress by leaps and bounds as all its people will have a significant role to play in the nation- building process.