

ECONOMICS OF THE UNCONSCIOUS

Head of World Economic Forum Mr Karl Schwab has said that indiscriminate use of new technologies is putting the entire human civilization to peril. True, the present economic crisis, for example, has been caused by indiscriminate use of automatic machines that has rendered millions jobless. The consequent loss of purchasing power is the main cause of the present crisis. Similarly, the use of nuclear technologies is leading to proliferation and creating the possibility of the entire human civilization being wiped out from face of the earth.

The theoretical basis of such misuse of technologies lies in the definition of happiness propagated by the economists. It has been taught that increased consumption begets happiness. But experience shows that every consumption does not do so. The consumption of a bottle of soft drinks does not beget happiness if one wants a cup of hot tea. Psychologists beginning with Sigmund Freud say that deepest desires are rooted in the unconscious or the inner self. Thus, happiness cannot be secured by ignoring the inner self. Economists, however, do not entertain the concept of the inner self. They encourage creation of ever-new desires that actually push the inherited desires deeper into the unconscious. Young children, for example, are encouraged to consume junk food. The desire of eating fresh fruit is pushed back and suppressed. This suppression of desires leads to psychic disturbances. Economists are unwittingly pushing people into psychosomatic diseases by not adjusting consumption with the inner desires. The pursuit of economic growth is solely reckoned by GDP. It matters not whether the GDP begets happiness. Thus one sees that countries that are high on the scale of GDP are most often low on the scale of happiness.

Economists want to secure happiness of the people. But they see only the happiness obtained by increased consumption. Thus they advocate that dams, be built on the Ganga to produce hydropower; embankments be built to double up as highway and reduce the costs of transportation; and barrages be built to divert water for irrigation. They want make the River flow through tunnels and reservoirs in every inch of the hill stretch for the generation of hydropower. Two main tributaries of the Ganga are Bhagirathi and Alaknanda. Water of Bhagirathi already ferments for months in the Tehri Reservoir. Now it is proposed to build a dam on the Alaknanda at Srinagar. The water of the Ganga today is only half-dead. It will become fully dead after construction of this dam. The ability of those waters to reorganize the inner self will be wholly destroyed. The beneficent sediments that give special chemical qualities to the water settle in the reservoir. The water does not rub against the rocks and sediments to imbibe the chemicals.

The Kumbh takes place at *Har-ki-Pauri* at Haridwar. A barrage has been made upstream to divert water of the Ganga into a canal that runs through *Har-ki-Pauri*. The water continues flowing through the canal after *Har-ki-Pauri*. The psychic disturbance imbibed by the water is never removed because Rishis do not take bath in the canal that flows down from *Har-ki-Pauri*. The psychic give-and-take is converted into 'give only'. But the Government is concerned only with the agricultural production that is supported by the canal. It is unconcerned that the

give and take of psychic patterns will come to an end when Ganga flows through the canal after *Har-ki-Pauri*.

Economists and the Government have gone beserk with the power of new technologies in their hands. Technology has today made it possible to make tunnels in the mountains or to build dams. They are misusing the power of technology to increase consumption while ignoring the impact on the inner self. The increase in GDP that takes place from supplying electricity to the shopping malls of Dehra Dun is calculated but the loss of happiness that takes place from the destruction of the psychic qualities of the waters is ignored. Mr Schwab is in reality pointing towards such misuse of the power of technology.

The misuse of technology must be stopped. The Kumbh must be celebrated on free-flowing Ganga, not the canal at *Har-ki-Pauri*. *[contributed]*