

'Make in India'

Requires a Harmonious Environment

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■ Sanjay Kirloskar



BY DR M.D. THOMAS

Industrialist Sanjay Kirloskar, the Chairman and Managing Director of Kirloskar Brothers, which is the flagship company of the Kirloskar Group, said recently at Hanover, Germany, 'incidents like church attacks could affect foreign investment in India'. The welcome (by the Prime Minister to 'Make in India') has been very good but there has been a 'slight concern that India (should) protect Indian minorities'. We are a secular nation and we always have been a tolerant nation but these kinds of things, small incidents, which might take place in Delhi or Mumbai. 'In this age of Twitter and Internet everything goes across very quickly and specially if its churches then people might get upset and we have to understand that most of the investment that we want is from Christian countries', he told NDTV at the international trade fair here.

The immediate occasion of his comments was the inauguration of the India Pavilion by Prime Minister Narendra Modi and German Chancellor Angela Merkel at the fair in which India is a partner country. 'I am sure that the Prime Minister is talking to his people ... we have to send the right messages and make sure that this development story doesn't get sidelined', he added.

The Prime Minister had said that his government is committed to protect the right of every individual to adopt and retain the religion of his choice. Since the beginning of December 2014, five churches have been attacked in Delhi and two convents have been broken into. The Christian community has repeatedly expressed its insecurity and apprehension' (The Financial Express, Wednesday, 15 April 15).

Sanjay Kirloskar, very much an Indian, that too from the majority community as per the size of the population, is making a very valid observation. The implications of his anguish and anxiety are far-reaching, realistic and pointed. His voice is a valuable piece of advice to the stakeholders of development in India and the proponents of 'Make in India' programme. His concern is one that emerges from the field of entrepreneurship and this concern refers to the response to the invitation of 'Make in India' that is expected from the other side. He means to highlight the need of creating an atmosphere that is conducive to investment. No project can take off without a proper atmosphere. Failure in ensuring the milieu for the investors can be suicidal, in the sense that the very project of 'Make in India' would



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be rendered ineffective and ridiculous. Sanjay is arguing from the angle of serious business and is highlighting the imperatives on the stakeholders of the innovative project.

Besides, Mr Kirloskar is also advocating the culture of tolerance, which has been the glorious heritage of the nation and which is the firm foundation for a development worth the name. Drawing the attention to the global implications of the attacks on the Christian community and to the fact that most of the developed nations are Christian nations, he expresses his anxiety that the investors may think twice whether they should respond to the invitation of the Prime Minister or not. In other words, Sanjay invites the Prime Minister to understand that development is integral and all the communities have to be equal beneficiaries of the same. Therefore, he wants the Prime Minister to attend to the social environment of the country and to make everything possible to make sure that harmonious relations among all the communities are maintained as the indispensable foundation for his 'Make in India' project. On clearer terms, Kirloskar tells the Prime Minister that he is Prime Minister of all communities in India and therefore

he needs to put his national house in order and the necessary systems in place, as the mandatory environment for development.

In spite of the ancient tradition India is privileged to have had, to be frank, India has not contributed to the world society in any major way, especially in terms of the modern categories of development that prevail across the globe. It has to be humbly admitted that almost eighty to ninety per cent, if not more, of the items of the present day development and life amenities are a product of the western mind. Very probably the Christian religious fibre must have motivated them to think freely and scientifically and to pioneer innovations, even in the so called small areas of life. As a result, the developed countries have maintained an overwhelming discipline, a great quality of life and a fine sense of culture, may it be agriculture, horticulture or human culture, especially in the public sphere. The credit for the developmental heights of the developed countries, that are mostly Christian, as Kirloskar pointed out, goes to the secular, inclusive and egalitarian ethos and system they have learned to maintain in social life.

To be frank, India is yet to climb up several levels in learning the culture of development and progress. India has to develop the dignity and discipline of work as well as its ethics and spirituality. As a developing country, as a country wanting to develop and as a country aspiring to be a developed country, India has to first and foremost develop a culture of harmonious living with all communities, without any discrimination, as the basic setting for investment and integral development. The challenges of communal mindset, divisive thinking and highhandedness, along with all the mischievous and mala fide engagements, have to be replaced with a spirit of peaceful co-existence, fellowship and collaboration with one and all. Besides, having a preferential concern for the minority or smaller communities is the sign of nobility and greatness the majority community in India has to demonstrate to the world. I understand Sanjay Kirloskar, as a seasoned entrepreneur, holds vital and dear an amicable social setting as the strong foundation for development. Mr Sanjay Kirloskar deserves to be complimented for inviting the Prime Minister and all the stakeholders of development in India, especially of the 'Make in India' scheme, to do a substantial homework at home before inviting developed nations to invest in India.

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