

Matthew and I affirm; resolved: Prioritizing economic development over environmental protection is in the best interest of the people of India.

**Observation One:** Because there are only a finite amount of resources that can be allocated in any direction by a nation, this resolution is a question of comparison between a world in which the focus for the Indian people is economic development or environmental protection.

**Contention One:** An institutional infrastructure problem besets India's economy.

**Sub-point A:** Utilities and transportation

*There are two links.*

*The first is historical neglect. Manish Agarwal explains*

India's extensive infrastructure needs are well known. **Decades of underinvestment have left the country with dire deficits in such critical areas** as railways, roads, ports, airports, telecommunications and electricity generation. In the World Economic Forum's Global Competitiveness Report for 2011-2012, India ranked 89th out of 142 countries for its infrastructure. The report criticized its transport, ICT and energy **infrastructure as [is] "largely insufficient and ill-adapted to the needs of business,"** adding: "The Indian business community continues to cite infrastructure **as [it is cited as] the single biggest hindrance to doing business in the country."**

*Second is unprecedented and potentially unsupported growth. Rajat Gupta highlights*

**Infrastructure development is a critical enabler to economic growth.** Logistics infrastructure, covering the road, rail, waterways and air network of a country, is the backbone on which the nation marches ahead. Although the urgency to develop India's logistics infrastructure has been realised in the past decade, the task at hand is daunting. **India's logistics infrastructure is insufficient,** ill-equipped and ill-designed **to support the expected growth** rates of 7 to 8 per cent **over the next decade. This expected 2.5-fold growth in freight traffic will further increase the pressure on India's infrastructure.** India has the opportunity to address this issue. **Over two-thirds of the infrastructure network capacity of the future has not yet been built.** Learning from the past and adopting global best practices, India should pursue a logistics infrastructure strategy that minimises investment, maximises cost efficiency, reduces losses for users **and is energy efficient.** This will need India to build its freight infrastructure in a manner that creates an integrated network across modes and prioritises high-return programmes.

*The impact is two-fold.*

*First, infrastructure development reduces the need to compensate for India's constant outages. N.R. Murthy examines*

How does **the inadequacy of India's electricity system** affect companies, many of which contend with **[and] frequent power outages?** To give you an example, I know **[means that] several manufacturing companies** in states like Karnataka and Tamil Nadu that **don't get power for several hours a day.** Therefore, they've installed **their own generators.** But that power is **[are] about twice as expensive** — or sometimes 2.5 times as expensive — as the power the state provides, since the state has economies of scale. When you have to pay 2.5 times the normal rate for power, you **[therefore, companies] become less and less competitive in the marketplace.** you're **[because they're] not able to sell your [their] products**, so your corporation becomes weaker, **which means that it pays lower taxes and can't employ as many people.**

*Second, rural-urban inequality threatens to widen without proper infrastructure investment. Steve Hamm underscores*

The infrastructure deficit is so critical that it could prevent India from achieving the prosperity that finally seems to be within its grasp. **Without reliable power and water and a modern transportation network, the chasm between India's moneyed elite**

**and its 800 million poor will continue to widen, potentially destabilizing the country.** Jagdish N. Bhagwati, a professor at Columbia University, figures gross domestic product growth would run two percentage points higher if the country had decent roads, railways, and power. "We're bursting at the seams," says Kamal Nath, India's Commerce & Industry Minister. Without better infrastructure, "we can't continue with the growth rates we have had."

## Sub-point B: Health

### PriceWaterhouse Cooper outlines

India is at the crossroads of an exciting and challenging period in its history. Making healthcare affordable and accessible for all its citizens is one of the key focus areas of the country today. The challenge is immense, as nearly 73% of the country's population lives in rural areas and 26.1% is below poverty level<sup>1</sup>. While on one hand, **India lacks strong healthcare infrastructure**, on the other hand, the country has several inherent weaknesses in its healthcare system. Though the overall level of funding allocated for healthcare nationally is comparatively high (4.1% of GDP<sup>2</sup>), **the government's funding is low** (<1% of GDP<sup>3</sup>) compared to other emerging nations. The health care delivery segment is dominated by the private sector in India, with 70% of the total delivery market in India catered to by the private sector. However **most** of the organized private **infrastructure is confined to the** state capitals or **Tier I cities. Very few have made inroads in Tier II and Tier III cities. This presents the country with both a challenge and opportunity to not only increase the penetration of quality health services but also be the growth driver in these regions.**

*To the point where UNICEF finds two million children die from preventable infections in India, it should be very clear that lives would be saved.*

**Contention Two:** A priority on education can respond to demographic issues.

*While receiving more funding, education still has no direction in India. Nandan Nilekani in his book **Imagining India** details*

But while **the government** has now **ramped up spending on our government primary and secondary schools** to never before figures, we are **[is] still struggling to spend** these **[school] funds effectively**. Making progress here requires us to address politically uncomfortable questions. For example, as Ateeq notes, **it is impossible to tackle our [India's] school crisis without taking on the problems of accountability** among teachers and administrators. Governments in India have attempted this through decentralization, which brings teacher and administrator accountability under local governments rather than those of the state. This has met with mixed success due to resistance at every level of the government, the lack of awareness among local and elected ward members of their powers and the sheer political clout of the teachers' union.

*The first impact is that India can diversify its economy and provide freedom of choice. Edward Luce explains in his book **In Spite of the Gods***

The same argument could be applied on a much larger scale to the most distressing social problems that India continues to face. **One of the reasons India finds it so hard to develop a mass labor-intensive manufacturing sector is because such a large proportion of its rural adults are not educated up to a minimum standard.** **Even for the most basic widget making, the worker needs to be able to read simple instructions.** Yet for support for the highly inadequate status quo can be found in the most surprising quarters, for example, among Gandhian groups and trade union members. Weiner gives an example of workers in India's large tea plantations who are the most militant defenders of child labor since they want their children to inherit their jobs. I have heard similar arguments from Gandhian activists, including Aruna Roy, who believe that in many cases an early apprenticeship in traditional occupations, such as glassmaking or carpet making, will give the child a much more relevant skill in life than what the formal education system could offer. There are some merits to some of the arguments, not least because India's government school system is inadequate. But **the notion that children should do what their parents do – and be denied**, inadvertently or otherwise, **the skills to make their own choice when they are old enough** – is deeply conservative. At a much higher level of society, it **provides an underpinning to the culture of nepotism** that afflicts politics and administration. Essentially, it is about caste and the maintenance of hereditary occupations. Weiner called it "social reproduction." He wrote: "In short, trade unionists, like most parents, employers, teachers, and education officers presume a social order that is guided by the principles of social reproduction."

*Secondly, women, a historically oppressed demographic, are empowered. Mira Kamdar in her book **Planet India** outlines*

**Girls in India are the last to be educated. Indian female literacy stands at only 54 percent against male literacy of 76 percent** (2001 Census). **When girls are allowed to go to school, they must still shoulder household chores, causing many to drop out.** In many public schools in India, there are no toilets, an uncomfortable situation for girls in a mixed-sex environment. **Schools are often located far from home.** It is not safe for **young girls** to walk alone, and **so many [girls] stay back from school.** When families are strapped for funds, as so many are, they will educate their sons rather than waste the money on daughters, who will soon leave home.

*Prioritization is especially important in closing the gender gap. KB Wu elaborates*

Third, **to achieve gender and social parity in secondary education, India must improve its public schools. Because parents are reluctant to pay to send their daughters to private schools, improving government schools will give girls from poor or disadvantaged backgrounds a better chance to succeed.** Although using vouchers and stipends is an option where the supply of private schools is sufficient, this alternative is unrealistic in remote, rural areas. Government schools remain the provider of last resort for marginalized groups.

*Empowerment allows for increased opportunities. Pamela Johnson furthers*

The patriarchal nature of Indian society is seen quite clearly when one examines the role of women. For the most part, **women are viewed and treated as inferior to men** (Frankl, 1986; Gangrade & Chander, 1991; "India: Till Death," 1990; Narasimhan, 1994). **As a result of this domination by men, women are economically dependent on men and have fewer choices in terms of occupation, education, and life course** (Miller, 1992). From the day she is born until the day she dies, an Indian woman is expected to be under the control of a man and to serve him without question (Baig, 1988; Kelkar, 1992; Narasimhan, 1994). Female children are not as highly valued as male children, and females are often viewed as economic and social burdens. **As a result of this low status and domination by men, some women in India are quite susceptible to abuse.** Part of the reason they are considered a burden is because of the dowry system. This will be discussed further elsewhere in the article.

*Education can clamp down on overpopulation. Beth Kinsella corroborates*

Education acts through several pathways to decrease birth rates among women in developing countries. Economically, income increases by at least 10% for every additional year of school.[3] **Because education is associated with permanent increases in income, it allows women to more substantially focus their efforts on improving the quality of life of a few children, rather than improving the quantity of children** with the hopes of only a fraction of offspring surviving into adulthood. Additionally, by circumstance, women who have higher education are more likely to have mates of similar education levels, elevating the economic status of the whole household.[4]

**Another benefit of increased female education is improved accessibility and understanding of fertility options and health-promoting measures before and during pregnancy.**[4] In fact, many efforts to curb population growth emphasize family planning education as the sole intervention. However, although also shown to be effective in reducing birth rates, family planning education for women is insufficient compared to comprehensive education through secondary school. According to a study by Subbarao and Raney, **total fertility rate (TFR) of women in developing nations would decrease by 26% if female secondary education were doubled, while doubling family planning services would only decrease TFR by 9%.**[5]

*Fortunately, these problems can be combated via mobile education. Divya Datta highlights*

**Mobiles** hold various advantages as the preferred media for education, they are multi dimensional levelers. They **flatten socio-economic hierarchies**; counteract competency insecurities, cut across geographies **and require minimal hard infrastructure.** What makes them the sought after technology for the education sector is also that they are a deep embedded medium of communication in India today, due to increasing tele-density. **They are** a personalized and non-infrastructure dependant medium, **not disrupted much by** natural and social **calamities;** **therefore consistent and sustainable.** Key characteristics of the media like audio and voice, still and interactive graphics and numerics work naturally well to build accurate phonetics and oral expression, number intelligence, associative, cognitive and logical ability, overall comprehension and application skills. Learning has mostly never been tailored to user needs. **Individualized instruction can be easily achieved through**

**mobiles thereby overcoming challenges posed by varied degrees of learner competencies.** Since mobiles respect privacy and are nonjudgmental they have the potential to provide skill / need based learning, focused attention on specific areas, extra mentoring and counseling. In case of varying degrees of learning abilities, slow learners can subscribe to elaborate lesson explanations; **this cultivates interest in learning, builds confidence and empowers the student.**