



***FIVE BIG QUESTIONS ON THE  
BJP'S MANIFESTO OF OMISSIONS***

APRIL 16, 2009

All India Congress Committee  
24 Akbar Road, New Delhi



### **Question 1:**

***Will the BJP abolish the National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (NREGA) scheme that is providing employment to crores of poor households across the country, while generating tangible public assets?***

The BJP claims in its manifesto that “*the much-publicised National Rural Employment Guarantee Programme (NREGA) has turned out to be as much a flop as all other schemes of the Government*”, which shows that the BJP is once again in slumber or in denial about one of the most successful social welfare and public works programme in independent India.<sup>1</sup> More than 4.3 crore poor households have already been provided employment and over 204 crore person days of employment has been created in rural India through the NREGA, raising incomes of the poorest households. So, the question to the BJP is: Does the BJP propose to abolish this landmark employment programme that is transforming the lives of poor households across India?

*The poorest households of India deserve an answer.*

### **Question 2:**

***Why is the BJP manifesto silent on the role of the public sector? Is it because it wants to continue its policy of indiscriminate and non-transparent privatization by stealth?***

There is not a word in the BJP manifesto on their policy towards the public sector. Perhaps this is because the BJP does not have faith in the public sector as evidenced by its actions when the NDA government was in power. When in power, the NDA privatised public sector companies such as BALCO and Centaur Hotel at discounted prices causing a major losses to the exchequer. So, the question to the BJP is: Why is the BJP’s manifesto silent on the public sector? Is it because it wants to continue by stealth its policy of blind privatization that it followed during the regime of the NDA government?

*The people of India deserve an answer.*

---

<sup>1</sup> The BJP has a fine record of misrepresenting facts. Another example of this is its claim in the manifesto that “55 million people have been pushed below the poverty line over the past five years”, quoting a Study by the Indian Statistical Institute (ISI). The fact is that there is no reliable data on poverty in India beyond 2004-05, a fact confirmed by the ISI, and that the ISI has done no such study; it’s either a figment of the BJP’s imagination or a deliberate attempt to mislead the people of India. Perhaps the BJP is referring to the increase in poverty numbers under the NDA rule, which were the last five years for which poverty data is available.



### **Question 3:**

#### ***Why is the BJP's manifesto bereft on any ideas on industrial development?***

There is not a word in the manifesto on how the BJP will spur industrial development. How does it plan to create new jobs for India's youth if it doesn't have any plans for developing the industrial sector where, as we know from historical experience, the bulk of new jobs are created in a country at our level of development. Is the BJP intellectually bankrupt on ideas for the industrial development of India?

*The youth of India deserve an answer.*

### **Question 4:**

#### ***Does the BJP have any tangible plan on agricultural loan waiver beyond the vague statement "Waive Agricultural Loans" that adorn its manifesto? Or is it promising to do something that the Congress-led UPA government has already done?***

The BJP's manifesto has exactly three words on agricultural loan waiver: "Waive Agricultural Loans". Does the BJP have nothing to offer the farmers of India beyond this vague rhetoric? Is this because the Congress-led UPA government has already done what the BJP is now beginning to promise, having waived farm loans worth Rs 65,000 crore? Whose loans will the BJP waive? Those whose loans have already been waived by the UPA government? How much of the loans will it waive? For how long?

*The farmers of India deserve an answer.*

### **Question 5:**

#### ***How exactly does the BJP propose to "improve upon the POTA"? What more will it do that goes beyond the strong anti-terror law – the amended UAPA – that the Congress-led UPA government has already enacted?***

The BJP has promised in its manifesto to "improve upon POTA"? But once again, it is an attempt to use vague rhetoric to sway the people of India, with no details. The truth is that there are only two provisions of POTA that are not included in the amended Unlawful Activities Prevention Act – the anti-terror legislation that was strengthened by the Congress-led UPA government – and both are obnoxious provisions. The first is the provision that confession to a police officer will be admissible as evidence in court. The second is the provision that if the public prosecutor opposes bail, the court should not grant bail. The first has been criticised recently by the Supreme Court. The second is opposed to all notions of justice. So the question to the BJP is: Will it "improve" upon the POTA by adding these provisions? If not, what other draconian provisions does it have in mind?

*The citizens of India deserve an answer.*