

## WHY INDIA SHOULD ONLY HAVE THE CROSS-OVER GOAL IN MIND

Today, many people would be amused, puzzled, and even perturbed at this ‘wasteful’ effort on IPI to study the policies needed to take India to the No. 1 position in the world. “Just let us do a little better than where we are today. That would be enough,” “These goals are utterly impractical,” are some of the thoughts that would arise in one’s mind.

But consider the table below, carefully. It is a slightly updated version of a table found in Easterlin’s book, “Growth Triumphant.”

**Table: Distinctive Characteristics of Economic-Demographic Epochs**

	Epoch I	Epoch II	Epoch III
1 Principle occupation	Hunting and gathering	Farming	Diverse
2 Principle type of settlement	Nomadic	Village	Urban
3 a. Initial date of epoch	-	8,000 B.C.	1750 A.D.
b. Terminal date	8,000 B.C.	1750 A.D.	?
c. Duration, years	2 million ?	9,750	247
4 a. Population at start	-	7.5	770
b. Population at end	5-10	770	8 billion ?
c. Years to double population	90,000	1,459	90

Source: Easterlin, 1996.

Notes: Population is in millions.

Note that ALL peoples of the world (there were no nation states till a few hundred years ago), first jointly achieved the technology of hunting and gathering. Then, ALL peoples of the world achieved the technology of agriculture. During each of these times, income shares of each group of people were roughly in proportion to their population share in the world. India’s population share was about 25% of the share, trade share, etc., were all in that range, in 1750.

250 years after the industrial revolution and its subsequent technological revolutions hit the world, we have fallen to distressing levels IN COMPARISON to the rest of the world. Our life expectancy has gone up, infant mortality has gone down, income has gone up. But our **relative share** of the best things of life HAS GONE DOWN.

We need to therefore NOT focus on tiny improvements here or there. We must focus **only** on regaining a 25% share of the world’s everything, from income to energy consumption, while enjoying the best life expectancy, health, and clean environment. That is the challenge: to rise above our minor goals, and aiming for the stars.

Now: do you finally agree or not: that we must have ONLY ONE GOAL? Does it sound that ridiculous any longer? It is difficult, indeed very very difficult. But it is not impossible. We can do it. The more we delay in recognizing this as our national goal, and the more we go for trivial pursuits, the more difficult this goal will become.