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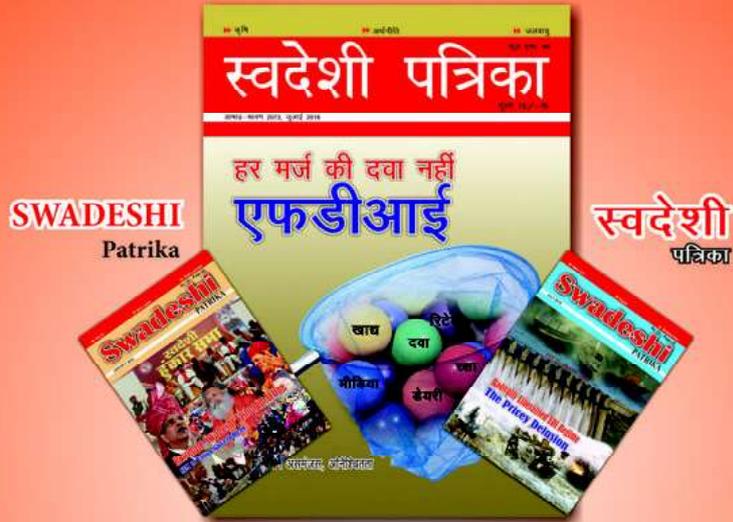
Swadeshi

PATRIKA

DECEMBER 2019



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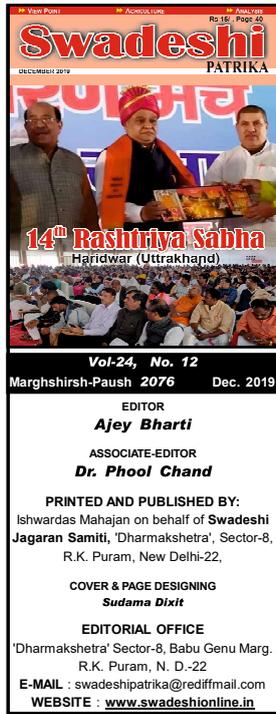
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पढ़ें और पढ़ायें



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Emerging opportunity for BSNL-MTNL

The telecommunication sector is the backbone of the emerging infrastructure. The world is moving fast towards accepting new processes of doing business. The arrival of IoT (Internet of Things) is a challenge to regulate. The business concept of - "anytime, anywhere, anyone" has moved one step further and has incorporated "anything" in itself. So, now it is - "anytime, anywhere, anyone, anything". This new civilization has its own share of concerns regarding data privacy as well as data security.

The data privacy is about restricting the use of data for the purpose for which it has been shared and data security is about the availability and integrity of the data. In such a civilization it is the responsibility of the government to intervene and address the worries of stakeholders. The scrutiny of credibility of telecommunication infrastructure which also provides internet services has increased may fold. It is the responsibility of the government to have majority ownership in such companies.

The revival plan of BSNL and MTNL is an opportunity to address all the concerns. The government should accept first that it's a new opportunity or a revival plan rather than a rescue plan. The announcement of the launch of 4G services by these public sector companies are enough to signal that good times are ahead. Instead of restructuring dues of private players the resources be spent in sales and marketing of BSNL and MTNL.

- Alok Singh, Delhi

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Quote-Unquote



Our civilization, culture and languages convey the message of unity in diversity to the whole world.

Narendra Modi
Prime Minister, Bharat



In a democracy, law is equal for all, there is no separate law for a family. We do not oppose the family. We oppose familism.

Amit Shah
Home Affair Minister, India



Not only India, the whole world has realized that whenever there has been a threat to Human Peace Crises or there is a threat to Global Peace and Stability, the professionalism that Indian forces have introduced is unmatched.

Rajnath Singh
Defence Minister, Bharat



Adopting Swadeshi enhances the pride of the country. Indigenous products and ideas symbolize self-reliance.

Baby Rani Maurya
Governor, Uttarakhand

Global Swadeshi

In the last nearly four years of globalisation, which took shape after 1990, has gone into reverse gear, starting from US, and later in Europe, getting manifested by Brexit. In the last two years, India has also started raising tariffs and imposing anti dumping duties, more aggressively to stop imports from overseas, with an objective to protect domestic industry.

Since 1990, the tendency all over the world has been to shed all barriers to trade, both tariff and non-tariff. As per the constitution of the World Trade Organization, or WTO, if any country raises barriers to trade, the affected country can use the dispute settlement mechanism to reverse the same.

Till recently, no country was arguing explicitly in favour of protectionism; rather, barriers erected earlier were being removed. In India, prior to the WTO, import duties of more than 400 per cent used to be imposed on many commodities, and there were more than 1,400 items on which quantitative restrictions (QRs) were imposed. As against this, today, leaving some exceptions, import duty of 0-10 per cent is imposed, and QRs have been totally removed. Because of aggressive trade by China in the last more than 15 years, markets all over the world have been overshadowed by its products. In the process, most industries around the world started getting closed. China turned into a manufacturing hub and the trade deficit of most countries with China, started mounting. US President Donald Trump, in his election campaign, raised the issue of closure of US industry. He promised to revive the rusting factories, create jobs and also restrict imports.

In India, it's an open secret that due to mass dumping of Chinese products, most of our non-ancillary industries closed down. Most of our small industries are now ancillaries of large industries such as automobile, pharmaceutical, chemicals and consumer goods. As a result, the share of manufacturing in GDP either stagnated or even declined in some years. It is known to all that our domestic industry couldn't withstand competition from cheap Chinese products. Our electronic and telecom industry couldn't take off; and our established machinery, chemical and consumer goods industries were badly hit.

Despite this, no effort was made to safeguard industry from the Chinese onslaught by imposing tariffs or even anti-dumping duties. Reason for lack of action from policy makers, to curb the same, was less of fear of action from the WTO if China complained, as China is a declared non-market economy, rather it was basically the overwhelming faith of policy makers and mainstream economists in India in the doctrine of free trade. Belief in free trade was so profound that there was seldom any effort by them to even use the flexibilities in WTO agreements. In these agreements, every country has committed a bound rate of tariff for each commodity. However, due to belief in free trade, our applied tariff rates are much less than the bound rates. It is important to note that we have the flexibility to impose average 40 percent tariffs (what we call bound tariff). Apart from this, every nation can raise barriers for protecting health and environment. So far, we have not made much use of these measures, because of the overwhelming belief in the doctrine of free trade. This is reflected in the fact that policy makers have been patting their back for increasing foreign trade as a per cent of GDP, irrespective of the trade imbalance.

Generally, countries have been following the rules of the game. However, in recent past, voices against free trade have become more pronounced. First, Donald Trump made several comments against free flow of imports, especially from China. His decision to increase tariff on import of most of the commodities has given rise to a debate whether the world will go on the path of protectionism. At the World Economic Forum, Prime Minister Narendra Modi stated that protectionism is no less disastrous than terrorism. But, immediately after that, when protective tariff was imposed on various commodities in the Budget, protagonists of free trade were not able to digest it.

Protectionism is not always bad. It is correct that free trade, if honestly adopted, can benefit all. The argument that if we continue to protect the inefficient domestic industry, inefficiencies will creep into the system, hindering healthy industrial development, is also valid. However, we find that countries are not honestly adopting free trade. This is also a fact that due to the dumping the products by China and other countries, our industry couldn't withstand the competition and was forced to close down. If the government is able to safeguard and promote the domestic industry while following international trade agreements and using the flexibilities available therein, it will be a welcome step. We must not forget, this is no protectionism of the past. This is a new informed protectionism based on the horrible experience of free trade obsession. This is carrying out international trade keeping national interest at the centre and not based on fundamentalist approach of free trade protagonists. This is what we can call 'Global Swadeshi'.



14th Rashtriya Sabha

29, 30 Nov. & 1 December 2019
Haridwar (Uttarakhand)

Resolution-1

Promote environment friendly agriculture

Rashtriya Sabha of Swadeshi Jagran Manch expresses grave concern on the agricultural crisis and vulnerable condition of farmers in Bharat.

Soul of Bharat lies in its villages. Ancient Indian villages were self reliant, consisted of skilled communities and all folks were gainfully self-employed. Besides producing country's food, they used to supply primary and secondary products to the cities. Cities were dependent on villages and many of goods produced in villages were traded and exported world over and as a result Bharat became "Golden Bird" and contributed 30% to world's GDP. Unfortunately, today's villages have become totally dependent on cities which are faced with burgeoning unemployment.

Green revolution in India converted traditional agriculture into an industrial system due to adoption of high yielding varieties of seeds, irrigation, chemical pesticides and fertilizers and mechanization. Although it increased food grain production and made India a food surplus state but caused greater long term sociological and financial problems for the farmers. As a result, dependence of work force on agriculture has shrunk drastically from 70% in 1947 to 44.8% now, with simultaneous lowering of its contribution to GDP from 49 to 15% now. Institutional crop loan to farmers stand at Rs 11.68 lakh crores now.

Even after applying such heavy inputs, productivity has stagnated and growth of agriculture sector is only 2.8%, far below the generally accepted 4% level. Despite economic reforms and globalization disparities in rural incomes are stark, leading to distress and large scale suicides. Demographic pressures have caused increased small and marginal holdings to 67.6%. Generally mindless policies have led to an unprecedented piling of over 50 million tonnes of food grains with storage agencies, increasing the subsidy burden manifold.

Chemical farming has poisoned our soil, water, rivers, air, food and even mother's milk. Life threatening diseases of cancer, heart attack, diabetes, hyper tension, psychological disorders, etc. are common now. The "cancer train" in the cotton belt is the curse of chemical farming. Use of costly pesticides and fertilizers has not only reduced the profitability of farming but also posed grave health hazards for the nation.

COVER STORY

Rising cost of production forced 25% of small farmers out of farming and along with 31% marginal farmers living below poverty line, despite increase in productivity. Chemical farming not only shattered rural economy but also sharply reduced employment leading to mass migration from the villages. In ten years alone, urban population has increased from 25.6% to 30.2%.

Father of green revolution in India Dr. M.S. Swaminathan acknowledged these ill effects and many scientists have proven that traditional agriculture was not inefficient as it had been publicised.

The belief that frequent famines were norm in India due to traditional farming was shattered by reports of Noble laureate Amartya Sen and Famine Commission in 1880, who noted surplus food was available in every province and problem was of distribution and poverty.

Traditional Bhartiya farming systems adopted highly productive "ecologically optimal model of agriculture" of organic farming based on animal husbandry including multi-layered crops, soil enrichment and product value addition that established a sustainable relationship with the environment. Traditional systems of farming were the most scientific methods of cultivation which ever evolved and centered around indigenous cow, providing 100% gainful employment to all the communities of the village.

Bharat can easily feed the entire world. Developed nations through their multinational companies want to capture Indian agriculture, destroy fertile lands through use of chemical fertilizers, replace its biodiversity of indigenous seeds with hybrids and GM seeds, replace indigenous cow with cross breed, and poison our crops with chemicals.

In order to overcome the ill effects of chemical farming, Swadeshi Jagran Manch proposes Swadeshi svavlamban model of "Environment resilient farming in Bharat. More than 15 different traditional farming methods are successfully practiced by over 43 lakh farmers and large scale operations of kaneri math and the first organic state Sikkim are notable milestones. Large scale and successful adoption of natural farming in Maharashtra, Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh clearly is a testimony that production actually increases compared to chemical farming. These lands are now "pesticide free" and farmer's income has increased by at least 25%.

Global scientific evidence reiterates unambiguously that "organic farming can feed the world population of 9 billion by 2050 from existing land". A recent study by Indian Council for Research on International Economic Relations confirms traditional Indian agriculture by default is organic, superiority of natural products and India as the world leader of organic products exported. Government of India realizing the success and potential of different natural farming techniques launched an ambitious "Paramparagat Krishi Vikas Yojana" with an outlay of Rs. 400 crores.

Some vested interests have opposed the hike in minimum support price to the farmers giving the argument that it increases inflation. Many recent studies by noted economists have busted this myth.

Swadeshi Jagran Manch appeal to the citizens of India to find ways and means to protect our agriculture from the clutches of foreign companies that are promoting hybrid/GM seeds, chemical fertilizers and pesticides. Central government shall also make favourable policies to ensure fair prices to farmers produce and liberate Indian agriculture from the poisonous jaws of foreign MNCs. It is therefore urgently required to promote agriculture in traditional Indian way of natural farming, ensure value addition of products and fairly increase MSP so that agriculture sector is put on fast recovery mode.

Rashtriya Sabha of Swadeshi Jagran Manch requests the general public and different state governments to take appropriate action in this regard.

Resolution-2

Employment generation should be Development Mantra

From ancient times Bharat was self reliant with self employment approach. Most of our people were creating wealth by their family occupation and all villages & towns were self reliant for their regular needs. Since Christ era Bharat was the country with highest production in the world, through decentralised production system. According to British writer Angus Maddison till 1500 A.C. India contributed one third of world's production and business. By destroying our own decentralized production system & introducing open import & foreign investment policy of globalisation, India now contributes hardly 3% in world's economy. Today

COVER STORY



due to slowdown and closure of micro, small, medium and big industry, unemployment is increasing and percentage of employed people is down to less than 50%.

In this situation, to prevent unemployment and encourage employment generation, in future, we have to make our young generation, employment creator by encouraging start-ups by youth. More and more people are initiating their start-ups after completing their studies. But un-

suitable situation for creating start-up is becoming speed breaker in generating self-employment and any kind of employment. Lock out in most employment creating textile sector, solar sector, electronic sector and many other sectors also draws concern. By using several government schemes like 'Mudra Yojana', 'Start-up', etc. we have to transform young generation from job seekers to job provider and have to make every house an employment creator. There are important government schemes like 'Start-up India', but after this scheme was launched from the govt. only 50000 start-ups could come up till now and in next five years also only 50000 start-ups are expected by govt of India. According to international labour organization, 80 percent of Indian economy belongs to unorganised sector and only 6.5 percent of employment comes from organised sector. For the last 28 years several lakh crores were given to the foreign companies of organised sector, by way of tax cuts, but hardly any scheme for unorganized sector was launched, which constitutes 80 percent of the economy. On the other hand foreign investment in retail sector, foreign company's investment in e-commerce sector etc. affects self-employment sector badly.

Swadeshi Jagran Manch demands from the govt.:

1. Help the self-employed sector by identifying their problem. To do this a database of self-employed persons and their related persons should be prepared. An authority be constituted for employment generation.
2. Govt should take steps to encourage self-employment. Selection of Mudra borrowers should not be with banks. There should be separate database with separate lists and separate selection system of willing borrowers.
3. New digital exchange with enlistment, enrolment, marketing and value addition and services of unorganised sector should be developed to help self employed in marketing.

Manch urges upon that government to list all people in self-employment including start-ups, like ferri vendors, rickshaw pullers, potters, carpenter, artisans, tiffin suppliers, beauticians etc. to promote and encourage them and for their welfare.

Manch appeals to the society:

1. All segments including youth should use the opportunities for self-employment and self enterprises and create employment not only for themselves, but also for others and become job providers. Guiding principle should be that 'we should not be job seekers but job providers' and for this awareness be created.
2. Call to buy local and swadeshi, will also become the catalyst to promote local and swadeshi enterprise and will help increase employment.
3. Value addition of agriculture produce and promote allied activities of agriculture (like animal husbandry, bee farming, poultry etc.) will also increase income and employment in agriculture.
4. Manch urges upon the patriotic people to create awareness in educational institution, local small industries clusters and the whole society about self enterprises and self employment and encourage and support the actions towards self employment through enterprise development activities, enterprise development centres including incubation centres.

Resolution-3

Data Sovereignty-Data Localisation-Digital Nationalism: The Need of the Hour

Data; the new fulcrum of the Industrial Revolution 4.0 & if we process it, with a sharp algorithm, it has the potential to do what human minds haven't envisaged as yet. Undoubtedly, this is a raw material for power, grains for influence & essence to govern the humanity. India, 1/6th of the world and 1/5th of the Internet consumers can't sit idle; when global powers are looking at all avenues to capture this data. India not only requires owning the data produced in the country; but also need to compute the data inside the geographical limits of our country.

The data is key to understand the behaviour, create influencers for these behaviours along with a big opportunity to create skilled jobs and entrepreneurship opportunities. It is future; it is present & country will have to rise to take the opportunity. If we look around, the data is the key to shaping robotic production and machine learning, which is shaping the manufacturing and service sector. E-commerce firms and platforms in the digital economy control the data and often indulge in rent-seeking behaviour. Can we afford to pay in dollars or Euros to learn behaviours & solutions of our own conducts or ventures? The Success in the industrial revolution 4.0 or digital industrial revolution depends on access to data.

We need to understand that the developed countries are taking various measures to ensure the uninterrupted flow of data to facilitate the competitiveness of their companies. The free flow of data will create an asymmetric relation between the developed countries and developing countries and put the developing country firms in a disadvantageous position. Therefore, the regulation of data is very critical UNCTAD's Trade and Development Report 2018 says: "it is important for the countries to control their data and be able to use/share their data and regulate its flow". Further, the UNCTAD report concludes: "The bottom line is that the potential for development provided by digital technologies can be easily eclipsed if developing countries are not given the flexibility and policy space to design their economic and industrial policies and national regulatory frameworks to promote digital infrastructure and digital capacities."

We have seen in the negotiations at RCEP, even the trade talks with the USA, a major focus is to convince us to abort our right to frame the laws to govern the data. It is matter of great pride that the Prime Minister Narendra Modi bailed India out of RCEP talks. There is also no need to get into trade deal with the US, surrendering sovereignty of data. Along with the economic interest, the cross border flow of critical data and lack of local servers poses a threat to national security. The developed countries are using trade and investment rules to seek the free flow of data. In January 2019, a number of WTO member countries initiated negotiations on trade-related aspects of electronic commerce. India continued to refrain from indulge in any such conversation. At G-20 Summit India refused to sign the Osaka Declaration on Digital Economy that was signed by 24 countries due to its implications for free flow of data.

Though privacy of individuals is no less important, with digitalization increasingly pervading every aspect of the economy, data rights cannot be seen solely as about privacy or otherwise just in an individualistic framework. Valuable data is often aggregated, group or anonymized data, and thus corporate lust for more and more profits, cannot underline collective rights over the economic resource of data. It is important to know a national community, city, village or neighbourhood communities, as well as communities/groups of workers, traders and producers, collectively have primary economic rights over the data that they contribute to different digital platforms. Unless such new alternative frameworks are developed, the proliferation of free trade agreements as well as efforts at a WTO plurilateral on e-commerce—with their 'global free flow of data' doctrine—will deprive the country of the ownership of valuable data.

Rashtriya Sabha of Swadeshi Jagran Manch demands:

1. India must refrain from negotiating data sovereignty at bilateral & multilateral trade negotiations.
2. Data should not only be stored within geographical limits of India, but must also be computed here.
3. Data is a national asset; it may be commercial, strategic or even elementary. The data must be protected.

4. Privacy of the data must be sacrosanct. The law defining privacy & setting the accountability must be passed at earliest.
 5. We understand that the data in raw form might not be of much use; the workforce with much greater analytical skills is encouraged.
 6. The government must identify the apps, which are gathering unnecessary data & seek more than required permissions. Take punitive actions against offenders. We need to encourage enterprises working in this field.
 7. The Indian alternatives for payment gateways, social media platforms, service aggregators et al must be encouraged, supported & promoted. India's own computer operating system in the need to the hour and we need to develop the same at the earliest.
-

Resolution-4**Strategic Disinvestment Not in National Interest**

The strategic disinvestment of Public Sector Enterprises (PSEs) is not only an imprudent business decision, but is also against the national interest. It not only denies the people of India—the real owners of PSEs—the fair value of the assets and capital investments, but it also brings in unfair advantage for those who intend to buy. Swadeshi Jagran Manch (SJM) do believe that, the government has no business to be in business, but resist the plan to handover the national assets to corporate houses of multinational corporations (MNCs) at throw away prices.

There is a need for fair assessment of the PSEs—their potential, strategic need, turnaround probability, market utility—and then the disinvestment strategy is required. The strategic disinvestment of the national carrier Air India and oil marketing company BPCL at this hour is uncalled for. Air India requires restructuring and professional management, not disinvestment. These are not emotional positions, but a pure business requirement. Close scrutiny of Air India's financial and other documents, reveals that the restructuring of Air India's debts and assets can not only reduce the liabilities for the company but also spin the national carrier back into profits. A major chunk of the losses are because of the servicing of the debt. This debt is taken because of the bad decision making (with malafide intentions). It's really painful and unfair to call Air India a bad asset. A developing country like, India needs the national carrier for strategic and market balancing requirements.

Meanwhile, the strategic disinvestment of BPCL is certainly not a good business decision. The second largest PSE oil marketing company is regularly reporting profits. The gross refining margins (GRM) of their refineries are matching the best in the global markets. What benefit a strategic investment will bring? The example of Hindustan Zinc's profits multiplying multiple times after its privatization is a misfit. BPCL is already operating in liberalized environment and is a professionally run organization. From product pricing to operations are of the international standards. If government wants to reduce their equities, the best place to execute this is stock market. BPCL is in profits and is already giving the exchequer dividends. And at present the Indian stock markets are performing well. The stock market will not only give better value for the equities, but will also allow fair chance to smaller investors to take the benefits of good performance of BPCL. On the contrary, the rumors are; the Saudi Aramco is eyeing these assets. This is not only unacceptable but also dangerous. The asset created with the national sentiments and hard work shouldn't land up in the lap of the foreign oil companies—who see these assets only as a statistic to swell their valuation. The 'strategic' sale shouldn't turn out to be only 'strategic' buy for MNCs. BPCL will only be a loser in this deal.

Similarly, the strategic selling of Shipping Corporation of India (SCI) and Container Corporation of India (CCI) too are also not great business decisions. The latter two PSEs are not only in a much better shape, but also are needed to execute the government's plan of making the logistics much faster for the Indian manufacturers. India in last five years, spent more than Rs Lakh Crore annually to rebuild the infrastructure—including roads and freight infrastructures, Dedicated Freight Corridors and Industrial Corridors—what sense it make for CCI to go to a private hand at this hour. Moreover, SCI is the only company, which runs ships across the world with Indian flags. Most of the private players keep the ownership to the low tax



jurisdictions not to the mainland India. SCI is an integral part India's target of doubling the gross domestic product (GDP) in next five years.

The onetime bounty by selling the equity will not be a wise business decision, especially, when the government is reporting that their tax collection is not matching the target. The recent statement of finance minister Ms Nirmala Sitharaman indicated that the government eyes to mop up Rs 1 lakh crore by selling their equities in five PSEs. The government has already lined up other 28 PSEs, their subsidiaries and joint ventures for disinvestment. The list include, strategically important Hindustan Aeronautical Ltd (HAL), Pawan Hans, Rural Electrification Corporation (REC).

There is a need of a larger public deliberation and debate on the methods and timing of offloading the government equities. The government must look at long term solutions, instead of falling into the Washington Consensus trap and 'strategically' selling the equities to some corporate houses or MNCs. India should not sell their national assets to the MNCs. Swadeshi Jagran Manch firmly believes that the present plan of disinvestments is the result of cahoots of certain consultants, bureaucrats influenced by some business houses. It is time to resist these moves and safeguard the national assets. The government must look into the allegations of conflict of interests and conspiracy to capture Indian assets.

This Rashtriya Sabha of Swadeshi Jagran Manch demands:

1. The NITI Aayog's report on PSEs must be junked. There is a need for a fresh assessment of the value and worth of PSEs keeping in mind the vision of doubling the GDP in next five years and accelerating it further in corresponding years. The report is handwork of a few consultants (who continue to work on game plan of vested interests), they should be kept away. The new report should be made with a new set of people, who are not only free from the pre-conceived notions but also open to consider the Indian requirements.
2. The re-assessment of the PSEs, their balance-sheet, asset-liability, strategic need in future and utility be made.
3. The comprehensive PSE policy is needed; defining the role of these enterprises, their worth in making India more stronger.
4. There are many PSEs like Air India, BSNL etc. which are required for the strategic needs of the country. These PSUs can also be turned around. The efforts need to be made to make it happen.
5. A national debate on the disinvestment in the profitable PSEs is the need of the hour. A white paper is needed on the previous disinvestment of HPCL, where ONGC acquired the equity. How this has benefited the operations of HPCL? Government must explain the benefits BPCL will get after its privatization. There are cases of 'conflict of interest' and formation of clique to capture India's assets. There is a need to probe the way consultants are been appointed to advise the government and subsequently to assist them to offload the equities.
6. The strategic sales are prone to infect corrupt practices to benefit the particular business houses. There is a need of establishing the transparent mechanism. The rights and views of all stakeholders must be considered before moving in any direction. □□

'Don't sell Air India, BPCL at a loss'

'National assets, created over the years through tax-payers's money, should not be handed over to business houses at throwaway prices.'

The SJM has termed the Modi government's move to strategically divest five PSUs as imprudent and against the national interest.

"These are our strategic assets and they should not go into the hands of multinationals," Swadeshi Jagran Manch Co-Convenor Dr Ashwani Mabajan tells Rediff.com's Shobha Warrior.

You oppose the government's decision to divest five PSUs. Does that mean you are against divestment per se?

No. Our resolution clearly says the Swadeshi Jagran Manch is not against divestment.

Right from the very beginning, we are for privatisation though we prefer small scale industries and cottage industries. But we are of the opinion that in some cases, we have to go large, for instance, airlines, refineries, etc.

So, we are not against divestment or privatisation. However, we oppose the idea of strategic divestment. We also opposed the divestment process followed by NDA 1.

In 2001-2002, the Vajpayee government had divested a few public sector organisations with good results.

At that time, we opposed it because we felt the process was not transparent. There were only a few buyers. So, we felt the government did not get a good valuation. That was why then also, we had suggested that the government should do divestment only through the equity route.

When NDA 2 came to power in 2014, we had a detailed discussion with the then finance minister, Arun Jaitley. He agreed that what NDA 1 had followed was not a prudent method and that they had learnt from their past mistakes. He told us that whenever they would go for divestment, they would take only the equity route.

So, whatever divestment the Modi government did in the first five years was all done through the equity route.

But in the last leg of the Modi government, when they spoke about divesting Air India, we had said we

were not against the idea of divesting Air India if it was done through the equity route.

What is the problem in a strategic sale if it is done in a transparent way when there is proper evaluation and when there are at least five bidders?

If you look at the way BPCL, which they are planning to divest now, is valued you will understand whether there was proper evaluation.

I am of the opinion that ownership of a company does not make it efficient or inefficient. It is the management that matters.

You always compare PSUs with private companies. So, if you compare BPCL and Essar, you will see that the profitability of BPCL has been rising consistently.

Essar is only half of what BPCL is in terms of refineries. Essar doesn't run petrol stations, but BPCL does and there are thousands of them.

You mean a profitable and professionally run PSU should not be divested?

That is not the point. The problem is, Essar, which is half of BPCL, is valued more than what BPCL's value has been sought now. Does it mean BPCL has been valued properly?

So, what you are opposing is the way BPCL is valued and not divesting BPCL...

Yes. If they had followed the equity route, this kind of valuation would not have happened. Whenever you make deals with strategic partners, the problem of valuation will arise. And there are only 2-3 buyers.

So, the question is: Why do you have to give up management this way when there is another way, when the equity route divestment will fetch you a very good amount?

If we look at the case of Hindustan Zinc that was sold during Vajpayee's time, its profits increased a hundred fold after Vedanta took over in 2002. So also Balco, IPCL, etc.

Yes, everybody says those companies became more efficient and profitable after divestment. We don't agree. The Rs 769 crores (Rs 7.69 billion) for



which Hindustan Zinc was sold was at an undervalued price. You look at it now. Just 30% shares are equivalent to Rs 30,000 crores (Rs 300 billion) now.

Is that not because the company's profits increased 100 times after divestment?

It is not just the profit, there are other considerations also like revenue to the government.

What I am saying is we have very bad experiences with private sector companies when you look at the way they pay taxes, the way they manage all kinds of concessions etc while public sector companies do not hide anything.

So, you are also against privatisation?

You are jumping to conclusions. What I am saying is when you give a PSU to a private business house, why do you want to sell it at a loss?

I will give you some examples of government companies which are run by independent boards. Take, for instance, L&T and ITC. Both are government companies, but run efficiently; the promoter is the government, but the management is not the promoter.

But why should governments be running businesses?

The government should not run businesses and these are not run by the government. As the private equity holding is 51%, bureaucratic control goes away and companies are run by independent boards.

Without bureaucratic control, things will improve.

The problem is bureaucratic control and not the ownership of the company.

National assets, which are created over the years through public sentiments and tax-payers's money, should not be handed over to business houses at throwaway prices. If you sell companies like BPCL to the private sector, they are always inclined to make them cartels. We have seen this earlier also. When cartels are made, consumers suffer. We have seen several cases of private houses looting public money.

Ownership does not make you good or bad. What is important is the way it is run.

So, our contention is, BPCL should be valued properly and should be sold through the equity route.

Why should NITI Aayog or other consultants come in the way of the government getting an appropriate price for the assets that are created by public sentiments and tax-payers's money?

Why should we sell them in the name of divestment at a lower price when they can fetch a higher price?

Why not the equity route?

If the strategic sale is transparent and there are more buyers...

It is not transparent and that's the problem.

If there are hundred buyers, it is transparent. Here you have only two or three buyers and they join hands and take away the national assets at throwaway prices.

Why should the government fall into this trap? Why can't they go through the equity route which they had followed in the last five years?

Now, let me tell you about Air India. The assets Air India has are not valued at all.

Over the years, Air India has acquired so many

Interview

air slots for landing rights and these air slots were not valued at all. When the consultants say Air India has a negative net value, they are lying. These consultants have not valued air slots at all.

Can you believe we sold one air slot at Heathrow for Rs 400 crores (Rs 4 billion)? And we have 70 such air slots in Heathrow and Birmingham alone.

We have more than 2,500 air slots internationally and there is an international practice of leasing of air slots. No mention of that is made by the consulting company.

But the Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs has approved the strategic sale of the five PSUs...

I would say the Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs, the Cabinet and the government had been misinformed and misled by the consultants.

So, when the government is going to sell them saying they had negative value, they are taking away all the tax with that.

What we are saying is you run Air India by a professional management, turn it around, come with an IPO and then sell Air India to retail investors.

We have an example of British Airways. In the 1980s, British Airways was in the same shape. In 1987, it was turned around and an IPO was issued, which was oversubscribed 11 times. It is now run very efficiently.

The attitude of cutting off the hands if they are unwell is not good. Treat them first.

At present the economy is slowing down, GDP growth is down and the government is desperate to turn it around. It is trying to create funds for infrastructure projects through the divestment of PSUs.

Who is stopping the government from infusing funds for infrastructure projects?

What we are saying is sell it through equity route so that they will get more money!

We want the government to get more money than selling at a lower price.

We are supporting the government's decision to invest more money in infrastructure projects.

We have always been critical of foreign consultants who have conflict of interests.

You spoke about the unfair advantage given to the buyers. What is it?

First, we shouldn't be allowing cartels to be made.

Next is these are our strategic assets and they should not go into the hands of multinationals.

Swadeshi Jagran Manch is a critic that tries to guide the government the right way so that the whole country gets benefited!

It is very unfortunate that a company that has created Rs 60,000 crores (Rs 600 billion) in the last eight years is being sold for Rs 56,000 crores (Rs 560 billion).

Not only foreign consultants, NITI Aayog also made assessment of the PSUs to be divested.

I don't have any faith in NITI Aayog's recommendations. In fact, we have asked for junking the NITI Aayog report. NITI may look like a Hindi name, but many of the consultants are foreign!

You opposed the government on sovereign bonds, RCEP and now divestment. Is the Swadeshi Jagran Manch going to be the Opposition?

No, we are friends of the government. In Hindi there is a saying that you must carry critics with you so that they can keep checking you when you go wrong.

We opposed RCEP from the beginning. Now, everybody is appreciating the government because they didn't accept RCEP. So, who is the beneficiary? Swadeshi Jagran Manch or me or the government?

We opposed the sovereign bonds and started a debate. Ultimately, the government decided against it. Who benefitted? The country? The government? Or the Swadeshi Jagran Manch?

Swadeshi Jagran Manch is a critic that tries to guide the government the right way so that the whole country gets benefited!

Is the Swadeshi Jagran Manch going the Left way?

The Swadeshi Jagran Manch is not the Left. The Left will never accept divestment either way. So, are we Left? There is no Right or Left in our thinking. There is a general feeling that Right means multinationals, corporates, globalisation and big markets. If that is right, we do not like to be called Right.

We are just nationalists. This is the nationalist way of looking at things, and not the rightist way. □□

https://m.rediff.com/amp/business/interview/dont-sell-air-india-bpd-at-a-loss/20191204.htm?__twitter_impression=true

Will Seed Bill 2019 deliver the goods?



Quality seeds are India's lifeline. Farming, food and the livelihood of over 60 per cent of the Indian population depend on them. A failed harvest has the potential to curtail our GDP and force millions of Indians into poverty and hunger until the next harvest. Overall, India depends on seeds to sustain life. The government is currently in the process of bringing a new Seed Bill in the winter session of parliament, which aims to ensure that farmers get the highest quality seeds, while the seed industry also experiences an 'ease-of-doing-business'. It aims to

foster competition by updating the Seed Act 1966 and Seed Rules 1968.

Seed Act 1966

After the 'Green Revolution', India was quick to introduce the Seed Act 1966 as the first act to govern matters of seed and seed quality. It was modelled on the US legislation and aided by a later enactment of the Seed Rules 1968, which were also developed with the collaboration of the USDA. The Act has served well in making the Indian Seed Industry vibrant and competitive to serve the interest of the farmers.

The labelling of seeds with notified quality parameters has been made mandatory under the 1966 Act with punitive measures against seed sellers in case of any deficiency in seed quality parameters mentioned on the label. Essentially, the seed label is treated as a guarantee card and it is given a unique identification number to ensure traceability of seed. The major deficiencies in the 1966 Act are lack of licensing provisions and lack of varietal registration prior to sale, which is now being incorporated in the new Seed Bill.

There is no major difference in seed quality regulation between the new Bill and the old Act. The major difference is in the registration and licensing of seed producers and processors separately. Our current legislative framework was inspired by the US systems where the variety registration is left to the discretion of the developer, while the new bill looks towards Europe to be her lodestar and define parameters and procedures for the release of new varieties.

Some of the salient features resembling the EU in the new bill are compulsory registration of seed varieties based on VCU (value for cultivation and use) evaluation and licensing of seed producers and seed processors. There are also provisions for price control in the event of an emergency, monopolization or profiteering.

When the 1966 Act was passed, there was no Consumer (Protection) Act. Subsequently, over the years the farmers are included in the definition of consumers and the seed business got regulated for compensation under the Consum-



We have to ensure that the seed bill of 2019 protects all the rights of farmers, national interest and operations clarity.

Indra Shekhar Singh & Prabhakar Rao

er (Protection) Act. Therefore, the government has not proposed any provisions for compensation and all compensation-related issues would be governed under the Consumer Protection Act like the present. This is a very progressive outlook by the government.

Farmers' interests

Our first suggestion is a tribute to Indian farmers. We hope the government retains all rights given to the farmers to save, sell, exchange all seeds and adopt the same rights and definition for the farmers as enshrined in the PPV&FR. We have already presented to the government a letter which adds 9 new definitions/ words (like Central Licensing, minor offence, National Level Integrated Seed Company, etc) to bring operational clarity to the proposed legislation and also given comments on 5 additional definitions like agriculture, farmers, transgenic variety, etc to ensure our national interest is preserved. Although there are arguments to limit farmers' rights, we shouldn't allow provisions like in the UPOV to enter our new Seed Bill.

The next major challenge for the sector would come from the magnitude of crop registration as the new bill proposes compulsory registration of varieties/hybrids. Considering India has more than 100 crops, 5 geographical regions and hundreds of seed companies with R&D, the workload for nationwide evaluation as compared to the current workload will be more than 100 times greater and impossible to handle. It is therefore essential to recognize the nationwide evaluation facilities including those within the private sector.

Overseeing seed companies

Today, there are several companies that can aid the government in this process, as they too have a very strong variety breeding programme along with the capacity to carry out multi-location trials across the country. As such, many trials of ICAR are evaluated using such facilities even now. An empowered committee can be formed to evaluate the infrastructure facilities of the seed companies to accredit them and also to evaluate all the data generated from such nationwide trials to accord fast track registration. Such systems exist in countries like China. Further, the varietal evaluation systems of seed companies can be subject to regular audit by the technical auditors appointed by the Empowered Committee from time to time to ensure genuineness.

The current licensing is based on the provisions of the Seed (Control) Order, 1983 which was brought in to enable licensing as the 1966 Act lacked this provision. Unfortunately, the order does not differentiate between Seed Producer, Processor or Seed Dealer who only sells the packed seeds (finished product). In the proposed Bill, there is a differentiation between the Seed Producer, Processor and the Seed Dealer for the purpose of licensing. However, there is no recognition of National Level Integrated Seed Companies with R&D capabilities, national-level variety evaluation system, seed production, testing and storage facilities etc.

It is pertinent to note that there are several hundreds of seed producers who only obtain the breeder seeds of the varieties developed by ICAR system, IARI or SAUs whereas there are certain other

companies who also have substantial facilities for research and development along with nationwide new variety evaluation system besides seed production, processing and testing infrastructure spread across several States. There is a need to recognize the scale and size of the operations of the companies and devise regulation accordingly. Therefore, this new provision is being proposed by NSAI. The national-level integrated seed companies may be registered centrally by the DACFW, MoAFW, Govt. of India and a central license may be given for production, processing and marketing of registered seed.

Price control

Also, we feel the government should continue with price control only as and when necessary, but suggest that this should be taken up by the Central government and DACFW. While addressing 'ease-of-doing-business' within the seed sector the government needs to discriminate between minor and major offences. The seed sector faces many issues like misbranding, damage to seed lot due to rain, weather, etc, contamination, etc some of them are intentional while others are not.

Many times, deterioration of seed quality is a biological process due to accelerated ageing when the seed lots are subject to very harsh conditions in summer before they are sown by the farmers. The government can set a framework based upon the intentionality and save the precious time of the courts. For the major offences due judicial process should be followed, but for minor offences, the seed inspectors should be empowered

[Continued on page no. 31]

Minimum wage macroeconomics

The government has taken several policy initiatives to address the current economic slowdown. These important and necessary measures to ameliorate the slowdown have addressed 1) sentiment, 2) the credit pipeline, 3) policy misinterpretations and 4) sector specific issues. However, if, as I have been arguing, the roots of the slowdown lie in deficient structural demand, then other measures are needed.

The structural demand problem has its roots in the historic pattern of growth since 1991 which is powered by the goods consumed by the top 150 million, reflected in the fact that high frequency leading indicators of the economy measure that only these people consume. At the heart of the structural demand problem is the fact that 1) the vector of relative prices is not conducive to broad basing aggregate home market demand, 2) low productivity limits the scope for a substantial increase in exports and, in the case of mass market textiles, inhibits import substitution, ceding home market demand to Bangladesh and Vietnam. In the first case, relative prices of things that the top 150 million consume- automobiles, air conditioners, etc. -have hugely decreased over the past twenty years; thus an air conditioner that would have cost an entry level civil servant a year's salary in 1989 now costs less than a month's salary. However, the same is not true of things consumed by those earning incomes at, or even triple, the minimum wage, such as nutritious food items, affordable housing, healthcare and education.

When relative prices do not serve the national good then there is a case for government intervention especially when distorted relative prices are a driver of



When relative prices do not serve the national good, then there is a case for government intervention, especially when distorted relative prices are a driver of macroeconomic slowdown.

Rathin Roy



macroeconomic slowdown. This case was made by John Maynard Keynes for developed countries and was part of the standard macroeconomic toolbox until forty years ago. It is back in the toolbox as neo-liberal macroeconomics is in discredited tatters after the 2008 crisis. In essence, the macroeconomic role of wages is expressed through linking the wage share to consumption and, transitively, to aggregate demand. The wage share could rise as unemployment falls and/or wage rates rise. This relationship is mediated through an Incomes policy which acts to secure relative prices of labour and capital that are consonant with macroeconomic stability.

In developing countries, the problem was often expressed in terms of a wage good constraint limiting home market demand driven, often, by low returns to agriculture employment. But India is now a market driven economy and therefore a contemporary incomes policy mediates relative prices through a national floor minimum wage (NFMW). For this reason I welcomed the code on wages, 2019 which stipulated a NFMW. This key reform uses the consumption power of the aam aadmi to leverage economic growth.

"In principle" objections to this measure come from neo-liberal economists who are out of date. The balance of contemporary theoretical and empirical research establishes that a NFMW contributes positively to aggregate economic welfare and growth, and that any negative employment effects are offset by the positive impact on human capital formation and the stability and magnitude of aggregate home market demand.

Micro principles vs macro approach

Arguments for a minimum wage in the Indian context have been based not on macroeconomic reasoning but on some notion of a safety net and Victorian notions of relative status. The calculation of the proposed NFMW is based on the basic needs that a family would need to meet to feed, clothe, and house itself at a basic level with some additional amount for emergencies. Thus, the proposed NFMW allows for a net intake of 2700 calories per household member which is not significantly higher than the intake used to define the poverty line. At the same time (as I discovered as member 7th Central pay Commission), the Government of India used a 1950s metric called the Aykroyd formula which provides for a more diverse and better quality basket of consumption in line with the supposedly higher status of a government employee. This tends to be 40-50 percent higher than the minimum wage stipulated for everyone else.

This approach is attractive to an old-fashioned socialist or feudal who sees minimum wages through a prism of class struggle/class hierarchy but not very helpful if the minimum wage is seen as the cornerstone of a macroeconomic incomes policy. There is no literature on this subject since it is only now with this government that we have a NFMW.

The NFMW should be determined based on macroeconomic considerations, namely (1) whether the NFMW would increase aggregate demand for mass market consumption. (2) Whether there are supply bottlenecks in responding

to such aggregate demand and, if so, calibrate the NFMW to not cause inflationary pressures by driving up demand that would not elicit a domestic supply response- mass market textiles is a good example. (3) The impact of the minimum wage on the factor distribution of income i.e. wage and profit shares should be a key consideration not from the point of view of equity, but from that of macroeconomic stability and growth optimisation. (4) Subnational minimum wages could be set above the floor as desired with other considerations in mind.

Bear in mind that this approach has macroeconomic trade-offs. A higher NFMW may mean lower profits and therefore lower taxes and lower public expenditures/fiscal stress. The NFMW may be lower than desired by those concerned with household welfare, dignity of labour etc. Political pressures to raise the NFMW may defeat the macroeconomic purpose in economies with weak political buffers. So these complexities will need to be addressed. But they do not detract from the need for an incomes policy, anchored in a NFMW determined by macroeconomic considerations, which is of urgent importance in the face of the structural demand slowdown.

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The Land of Plenty

These days, Punjab's farmers are in a burning hurry. They have to clear their fields of paddy stubble to prepare for the sowing of their rabi crops. A delay at this time is something they can ill afford-winter is setting in, and this is when they must till their farms. Their fields, which make up about 3 per cent of the country's land, produce about 19 per cent of the nation's wheat and 12 per cent of its paddy. Though many criticise these farmers for their methods-stubble burning most certainly does cause pollution and fill the region's air with persistent smog-that does not change their contribution to India's food supply. Every hectare of Punjab's fertile farms contributes about 52 quintals of wheat and nearly 45 quintals of rice.

Though there are some stretches of the state where cash crops like cotton, sugarcane and maize are grown, such crops form only about 15 per cent of the state's total agricultural yield.

Recently, the cotton belt in the state's Malwa region saw surge in production levels after years of slackening output, a result of crop pests like whiteflies and fungus, along with (an alleged) supply of spurious seeds and fertilisers in the state. This year, the area under cotton production increased from 2.38 lakh hectares to more than 4 lakh hectares. A major reason for this increase in production levels was an enhancement in the minimum support price (MSP), rising from Rs 4,220



Punjab continues to be the bread basket of the country and the state government hopes its infrastructure push can help its farmers become free of debt.

Anilesh S. Mahajan



Agriculture



per quintal in 2017-18 to Rs 5,350 in 2018-19. This year, the MSP was further enhanced to Rs 5,550 per quintal.

As an agricultural state, Punjab has the fortune of having several rivers flowing through it—specifically the Sutlej, Beas and Ravi—and the many canals that have been carved out of them.

However, a large part of the hinterland is still dependent on groundwater, with diesel and electric pumps being used to irrigate the fields. And this is where the state faces a major challenge. The paddy crop requires 5,000 litres of water per kilogram, which is itself dependent on a continuous supply of electricity. Punjab is among the few states which still supplies free electricity to farms. Ultimately, this leads to an increasing cost for the state government—according to RBI statistics, the state spends about Rs 1.5 lakh per hectare. And this does not include the recent announcements of crop and income assurance under the Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi Yojana.

However, official statistics also suggest that the average farmer in Punjab is burdened with debt. A

State's progress in agriculture is complemented by the improvement in its infrastructure specially highway network and transportation.

recent report by the NITI Aayog suggests that the average rural household in the state has a debt of about Rs 2.12 lakh, among the highest in the country. This is also borne out by the fact that in 2017, the Amarinder Singh government stormed to power promising debt waivers for farmers.

On the positive side, the state's progress in agriculture is complemented by the improvement in its infrastructure. All villages in the state are now connected by bitumen roads, and the state's highways have been improved drastically over the past few years. According to RBI statistics, the ratio of Punjab's highway network length

BEST-PERFORMING BIG STATES INFRASTRUCTURE

RANK 2019	RANK 2018	STATE
1	2	Punjab
2	2	Tamil Nadu
3	5	Kerala
4	8	Maharashtra
5	11	Gujarat
6	7	Karnataka
7	4	Haryana
8	6	Himachal Pradesh
9	10	Telangana
10	9	Andhra Pradesh
11	11	Uttarakhand
12	12	West Bengal
13	17	Uttar Pradesh
14	13	Rajasthan
15	14	Odisha
16	21	Bihar
17	19	Assam
18	18	Madhya Pradesh
19	20	Jharkhand
20	15	Chhattisgarh

BEST-PERFORMING BIG STATES AGRICULTURE

RANK 2019	RANK 2018	STATE
1	1	Punjab
2	2	Haryana
3	7	West Bengal
4	5	Madhya Pradesh
5	3	Uttar Pradesh
6	4	Tamil Nadu
7	9	Andhra Pradesh
8	8	Gujarat
9	10	Karnataka
10	6	Uttarakhand
11	15	Telangana
12	13	Maharashtra
13	11	Bihar
14	14	Himachal Pradesh
15	17	Rajasthan
16	20	Kerala
17	18	Assam
18	16	Jharkhand
19	21	Chhattisgarh
20	19	Odisha

to its total area is 0.1 km per sq. km, with around 84 vehicles operating on such a patch per day. This is one of the best figures for any state in India. At the same time, Punjab was among the first states to provide electricity to all its households, and the National Family Health Survey shows that it has nearly universal coverage of improved drinking water for households.

The state also has access to two international airports, one at Chandigarh and the other at Amritsar. The civil aviation ministry is also pushing for more flights from/ to its four domestic airports at Bathinda, Adampur, Ludhiana and Pathankot under the UDAN scheme. For a state the size of Punjab, six airports is a notably high number. Two new major infrastructure projects are also expected to be commissioned by 2020—an expressway running parallel to National Highway-1, connecting Delhi to Amritsar, and a dedicated freight corridor connecting Delhi with Ludhiana and Dadri. □

<https://www.indiatoday.in/magazine/state-of-the-states/story/20191202-the-land-of-plenty-1621276-2019-11-22>

SWADESH PATRIKA
DECEMBER 2019

Relief Package will worsen woes of the Housing Sector

A medium-scale builder of Ghaziabad explained the dynamics of the housing sector. He had purchased a plot for Rs 300 crores to build a housing society of 1500 flats. He planned to sell the flats for Rs one crores each, or for a total Rs 1,500 crores. He sold flats worth Rs 1,200 crores out of these before demonetization. He used one-half of this money, that is, Rs 600 crores, for building the project; and used the remaining Rs 600 crores to buy land for his next project. This was the “standard” practice used by him successfully for the previous two decades. The formula was to use the profit part of the proceeds from the current project for funding the next project. The catch was only of timing. The investment in the new project was done upfront while the existing project was completed “as you go,” or as he was able to sell the flats. He committed no crime.

Now came the crisis born of demonetization. The requirement for completing the project was Rs 900 crores. He could sell flats and raise only Rs 600 crores before demonetization hit the market. He could not sell the remaining flats. In this situation, both his projects—the existing and the proposed—got stuck.

The existing project got stuck because the property prices had fallen, he was not able to sell the remaining flats and not able to raise the required Rs 300 crores to complete the project. Then came RERA. The buyers approached the RERA and a case was filed against him. He got enmeshed in litigation and project remained far from completion. His future project for which he had purchased land for Rs 600 crores also got stuck. The price of the flats had declined, he could not sell the flats at a price at which the project could be completed. The project had become unviable. His investment got stuck.

The builder did not do any wrong. His “mistake” was only that he used the receipts from sales for buying land for the new project upfront. That being so, now



Although governmental funding for the housing sector would help the stalled projects, it would also increase the supply of unsold flats in the market.

**Dr. Bharat
Jhunjunwala**



the die has been cast. The “mistake” has been made. How to solve this?

The Government has made a scheme to help the stalled projects like this by providing them concessional funding of Rs 25,000 crores. This builder, for example, needed Rs 300 crores to complete the project. The Government would provide this amount. The builder could complete the project with this money. The buyers would get the flats and the Government’s aim to provide affordable housing to all will be secured. But, in the same breath, the supply of unsold flats in the market will increase. The 300 unsold flats that are completed with Government assistance will now be put on the block for sale. Analysts believe that about 13 lakh housing units are already lying unsold in the market. These 300 flats will be added to this unsold inventory. If the entire amount of Rs 25,000 crore is used to complete the stalled projects, another 25,000 housing units will be added to the unsold inventory. The price of the unsold housing units will decline further due to this increased supply. This will lead to more problems for the builders. The objective of the scheme was to revive the housing sector. Though a number of buyers will get the flats; but the impact on the housing sector will be the opposite. Increased supply will add to the unsold inventory, to a decline in the price, and make builders wary of starting new projects.

The Government must consider reworking the implementation scheme under RERA. The main problem today is that if a builder does not complete the project on time and the buyers create a dispute, then the matter goes

The need is to generate demand for housing and protection to small industries, so that employment and demand for housing is generated.

to the courts and gets stuck there. During this time both the builder and buyer bear the interest burden on their investment. Here we must take a lesson from China.

An Indian businessman having investments in China narrated this story. The land on which a factory stood had to be acquired for a high-way project. The businessman received a notice to remove his factory within six months. Then came a team of Government officials. The businessman, in this case, said that he would have to incur an additional expenditure of 30 percent over the money received as compensation to reestablish his factory elsewhere. The officials increased the compensation by 40 percent on the spot. They took 10 percent of this as bribes. This was beneficial for all. The businessman was happy because he got the 30 percent extra compensation that he needed to reestablish his factory. The officials were happy because they got bribes. The economy was happy because the production continued seamlessly. This shows that the Chinese bureaucracy is perhaps as corrupt as our own but there is a critical difference. The Indian officials would march into his office with a warrant of arrest and take bribes for not arresting him—leaving the problem

of shifting the factory unsolved. The Chinese officials took bribes for helping relocate the factory.

Coming back to our Ghazia-bad builder. The fact is that the property prices have declined and the builder, the banks and the buyers are all losing money. The dispute is that each party wants his own money to remain intact and the others to bear the burden. The Government must determine this sharing of the losses. It must establish a “Settlement Commission.” It should arrange a meeting of the builder, the banks and the buyers. The officials should decide across the table the amount of hit to be taken by each party then and there. This will truly resolve the problems of the project. Giving loans under the proposed scheme will solve nothing because each party would still want to recover his full money when the price of the property has declined.

The problem of unsold inventory will also get worse by the addition of completed flats to the unsold inventory. This problem cannot be solved by tinkering within the housing sector just as the problem of a malnourished poor man cannot be solved by tinkering with his meager food basket. The need is to generate demand for housing. The root cause of the decline in demand is the policy of the Government to promote large-scale production. This is mostly undertaken by automatic machines. Less employment is generated. Small industries remain in problems. The need is to provide protection to small industries so that employment and demand for housing is generated. Only then the housing sector will revive along with rest of the economy. □□

Recent events are beginning to challenge the narrative of a Rising India

Three developments defined the narrative of “Rising India” over the past quarter century. First, India’s economic rise; second, as a consequence of that rise, India’s globalisation and integration into a “Rising Asia”; and third, a growing recognition that India was liberating itself from the historical baggage of its neighbourhood. Events in the recent past have cast a shadow on each of these elements and are beginning to question, if not yet challenge, the narrative of a Rising India.

The turn of the century was when a new narrative about independent India began to strike root globally. India had not only come out of a serious economic crisis, in 1991-92, but had landed on its feet in the new post-Cold War world, switching sides from an imploding Soviet Union and building bridges with a rising Asia. Prime Minister PV Narasimha Rao’s sagacious leadership of major economic and foreign policy changes helped improve the performance of the economy and raised India’s global profile. Improved government finances and a growing confidence in the Indian economy allowed Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee to declare India a nuclear weapons power. Thanks to the economy’s new robustness, India overcame the impact of the economic sanctions imposed by the United States, Japan and several European nations in response to the nuclear tests of 1998.

Trade liberalisation, industrial delicensing and decontrol and fiscal stabilisation contributed to an increase in the share of foreign trade and manufacturing output in national income, rather than hurt growth. This boosted investor confidence in the economy’s growth potential. New firms began to come



Rising India narrative is suffering due to re-hyphenation with Pakistan, slowing growth, retreat from RCEP, Trumpism.
Sanjaya Baru



Analysis

up and so did new industries. Years of quiet investment in the teaching of computer sciences had created an army of technicians that the world needed in making the transition from the 20th century to the 21st. It was called the Y2K problem and Indians were equipped to solve it. The internet was entering homes and an Indian called Sabeer Bhatia had invented Hotmail.com and allowed the worldwide Indian diaspora to reconnect and mobilise. Indian companies were quoting on the New York stock exchange and new sectors of a protected economy were opening up.

Taken together, all these factors made American strategic analyst, Condoleezza Rice, later to become President George W Bush Jr's secretary of state, write an essay in the highly regarded journal, Foreign Affairs, in early 2000, urging the US political leadership not to think of India as a neighbour of Pakistan but as a neighbour of China. While China would emerge as a "strategic competitor", said Rice, India could be the US's "strategic partner". While President Bill Clinton gave China an easy entry into the World Trade Organisation in 2000, President Bush decided to get tough and, as he told this writer once, he chose "to break a lot of China (sic) to make sure India got the nuke deal."

Two unrelated developments around that time also contributed to the positive narrative about India. First, the manner in which India responded to Pakistan's incursions into Kashmir, near Kargil, and the fact that terrorists attacking the US in September 2001 had a Pakistan connection. By 2005, when President Bush spent five

days in India and five hours in Pakistan, the "de-hyphenation" of the South Asian adversaries had been completed.

Consider the events of the more recent past. For months on end in the run-up to the 2019 Lok Sabha elections, terrorism and Pakistan were on prime time news every single day. While the last major terror attack in India staged by Pakistan was in November 2008, the attacks across the border at Uri and Pathankot became the focal points of a sustained political campaign. Keeping terrorism in the news even when terrorist attacks are down has proved counter-productive and contributed to the re-hyphenation with Pakistan. This was only further facilitated by the decision to repeal Article 370 of the Constitution and alter the status of Jammu and Kashmir.

This in itself could have been managed if the Indian economy had been chugging along, but that was not to be. The slowing down of the economy, be it cyclical or structural, has been compounded by confused handling and mixed signals. Investors remain risk averse and consumers remain bearish, despite bold policy moves. The widely welcomed fiscal reform has had the adverse effect of reducing the government's fiscal space, further choking off investment even in infrastructure.

Against this background, the prime minister's decision to retreat from the Asian Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) negotiations has added to a sense of siege. If India delinks itself from the Rising Asia train, would its own Rising India strategy not get derailed? Questions are beginning to be raised not just

about India's growth potential and the government's fiscal capacity but also the competitiveness of the agricultural, manufacturing and even services sectors.

In the quarter century from 1991 to 2016, the US emerged as a strategic partner willing to aid India's rise. In the three years since President Donald Trump came to office, the US has signaled a change of gears, if not a change of course. While he has launched a strategy for the geo-economic containment of China, he has not taken his eye off India's trade policies nor has he been re-assuring on all of India's security concerns, with Pakistan regaining diplomatic ground lost in the aftermath of 9/11. On top of it all, global economic growth does not as yet offer much hope for India. One silver lining remains in subdued energy prices that would offer the government much needed fiscal relief.

Taken together, domestic economic management, recent political and geopolitical choices made at home, the regional and global consequences of Trump and Trumpism, the geo-economics and geo-politics of China's rise, are all beginning to pose a challenge to the extant Rising India narrative. The old narrative is taking a beating. A new narrative can only be built on the foundations of improved economic performance and better management of domestic political challenges. A return to the earlier growth path is predicated upon altering recent perceptions about India's economic prospects and policies, the political choices made and geopolitical options explored. □□

The writer is Distinguished Fellow, Institute for Defence Studies & Analysis, New Delhi.
<https://indianexpress.com/article/opinion/columns/india-needs-a-new-story-rising-india-6120237/>

The Beauty Of The Ayodhya Verdict Is...

November 9, 2019, will go down in history as the day when India finally found closure in a 500-year old dispute on the birthplace of Lord Ram, who is a deity, hero and icon to the majority of over 1.3 billion Indians. The day is also historic because almost all parties to the dispute have pledged to accept the need for reconciliation and unity and the Constitution Bench of the Supreme Court has come to a unanimous decision underlining the secular character of India while accepting Ramlalla *Vinayman* as a legal entity in the Ayodhya context. This, in a way, is recognition of the age-old belief that the land in question, which has now been allotted for a temple, is the birthplace of Sri Ram, considered holy by Indians.

The court has based its assessment mainly on the Archaeological Survey of India findings that there is a structure underneath the Babri mosque built 500 years ago by Mir Baqi, the General of Babar.

The Supreme Court has asked the centre and Uttar Pradesh government to find a suitable, prominent five acre land as an alternative site for Muslims to build a new mosque. The 2.77 acre land where the disputed structure existed will now become the site for a temple under a trust to be constituted by the centre.

The beauty of the final verdict is that there are no winners and losers here. India has won. The court went entirely by evidence. It even said there was no religion to the five judges who delivered the unanimous verdict; for them the Constitution was supreme.

There could not have been a better way of settlement as the Supreme Court went threadbare into every aspect of the case in its 929-page judgement. It said the 1992 demolition and the 1948 forced entry into the site were illegal. It noted the Muslim claim for Namaz as uninterrupted for over four centuries, that the



The beauty of the Ayodhya verdict is that India has won in which there are no winners and losers.

**Dr. R.
Balashankar**



Perspective

Hindus have always been worshipping at the outer periphery and that the place was always believed to be the birth place of Sri Ram. The Supreme Court rejected the three-way split of the land by the Allahabad High Court and the entire land now stands allotted to the trust for the temple. The Muslim claims proved weak on evidences. The court felt the general belief on the birthplace of Ram as strong.

No other issue in the last four decades has dominated political discourse in the country as much as Ram Janmabhoomi. It changed the course of politics, changed the fortunes of parties. Every party involved in the petition has called for unity and restraint. Political parties have also agreed to abide by the court verdict.

The Babri Masjid Action Committee is talking about filing review petition or curative petition.

Unless the Supreme Court stays its own Constitution Bench verdict, which is unlikely, such petitions will not stop the process of temple-building.

The ruling BJP, especially Prime Minister Narendra Modi, will be able to claim that two of the three core promises of the party over the last seven decades have been fulfilled in a brief span of just three months of PM Modi's re-election, which is historic. They are, the abrogation of Article 370 (end of special status to Jammu and Kashmir) and building of the Ram Temple in Ayodhya through an amicable court verdict. Now what remains is the Uniform Civil Code.

One has to wait for all reactions to come out before concluding that there is closure, finally, on Ayodhya. The initial response of hothead MIM leaders like Asaduddin Owaisi is not very promising.

But 2019 is not 1990. People want to move on. They are not interested in nurturing pestering sores. For the temple campaigners two judgments are on their side now, Allahabad High Court and Supreme Court.

Both courts have now accepted the plea on the birth place of Sri Ram. The 900-plus page Supreme Court verdict cited several evidences before coming to this conclusion.

Politically, two things are certain. The Ram Temple in Ayodhya has now become a certainty. Second, the Sangh Pariwar has largely succeeded in pushing its ideological boundary further with great flourish. This could make a big difference to Indian polity.

(Dr R. Balashankar is Member, BJP Central Committee on Training, and Committee on Publications and former Convener BJP National Intellectual Cell and former Editor Organiser.)
<https://www.ndtv.com/opinion/ayodhya-verdict-brings-closure-people-want-to-move-on-2129711>

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India holds its own

Soon after assuming office, when US President Trump withdrew from the Trans-Pacific Partnership mega-trade agreement among 12 countries, which shared a common coastline on the Pacific and made up for 40% of the global GDP, it came in for a lot of criticism. Terming it as a 'horrible deal', Trump was convinced that the treaty, which was meant to remove 18,000 tariffs on agricultural and manufactured goods, would steal American jobs.

Withdrawing from another mega-trade deal — Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) — which covers 45% of the global population and accounts for 25% of the world's GDP, PM Modi, in a recent statement, said: 'When I measure the RCEP agreement with respect to the interests of all Indians, I do not get a positive answer. Therefore, neither the talisman of Gandhiji nor my own conscience permits me to join RCEP.' Like Trump, what perhaps weighed on the PM's mind were the massive job losses and livelihood destruction expected on removing tariffs on 92% of the tradable goods, including manufacturing and agriculture.

At a time when economic thinking has swayed towards globalisation, a strong leader demonstrating political courage to withstand the tide is admirable. More so, at a time when such thinking creates a fear of the unknown — how much the country will miss out by not being a part of the proposed FTA (some term the phenomenon as 'fear of missing out') — the PM's assertion for fairness and balance is legitimate. Such a precautionary approach becomes essential, knowing that in the past, too, India had entered into FTAs with 12 of these RCEP coun-



*PM Modi's
assertion of
fairness and
balance to join
RCEP is
legitimate.*
Devinder Sharma



Discussion

tries with the same illusion of finding an access into their markets, only to register a whopping trade deficit of \$107.28 billion. The assumption that getting into an RCEP agreement at this stage will further widen the trade deficit and hit agriculture the most, therefore, is not unfounded.

Similarly, the overenthusiasm with which India signed Bilateral Investment Treaties (BITs) on the presumption that it will promote investments were in reality without proper homework. As the number of arbitrations increased, India terminated 58 of these BITs.

Given this backdrop, it is obvious that the fear of the unknown has been over-hyped. If the FTAs with the Asian countries were pushed in the search of penetrating important markets and participating in the value chains of East Asian economies, it didn't work. To illustrate, India's trade deficit with ASEAN, signed in 2010, has increased by 250%. It is obvious that the Indo-ASEAN agreement was signed without any adequate assessment, no proper scrutiny and was perhaps based more on the FOMO factor. Otherwise, there is no reason that the exposure to 10 Asian countries' markets should fail to provide any significant trade outcomes. It is, therefore, heartening to know that the PM has now called for a review of the Indo-ASEAN trade agreement. In fact, not only Indo-ASEAN, there is also a dire need to review all bilateral and plurilateral agreements that India has so far signed.

There are lessons. When the WTO treaty came into effect, a lot of euphoria was generated. We were told that a multilateral trading system — based on one-coun-

The extra precaution with which India wants to engage with RCEP trade partners is therefore justified.

try one-vote principle — would obliterate the need to get in cumbersome bilateral agreements. But over the years, this was proved wrong, with over 300 bilateral FTAs signed, which in principle were WTO plus treaties with stronger intellectual property rights (IPRs) and aggressive push to open up markets. Since most countries already are into bilateral agreements — with emphasis on zero tariff imports and removal of non-tariff barriers — one fails to understand how any incremental growth can be expected from regional treaties, where a majority of the members already have separate FTAs. Unless of course the new grouping includes a giant like China (with which India has a trade deficit of \$53 billion) and countries like Australia and New Zealand (like in RCEP) which desperately eye a foothold in India's dairy and farm sectors to pull out their own business from distress.

The extra precaution with which India wants to engage with RCEP trade partners is therefore justified. Although Commerce Minister Piyush Goyal lays out three conditions — strict rules of origin, updated base duty period (from 2014 to be moved to 2019),

and auto-trigger mechanism — to be addressed before re-entering RCEP negotiations, India's decision making should be guided by more detailed studies. The Ministry of Commerce should take other ministries on board. Reports that China was upset at India's terms a few months before the treaty was being finalised raises questions over the competence of Indian negotiators. How come for seven years of RCEP negotiations, they failed to bring up these crucial issues that India is in any case fighting for in the ongoing Doha Development Round of WTO?

Even during the earlier days of WTO negotiations, the promise of a drastic reduction in farm subsidies being provided by the richest trading block — Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) — was projected as a 'big bang' for India's farm exports. This was a mistake. Except for a jugglery in the way these subsidies were conveniently shifted among boxes — green, amber and blue (in WTO parlance) — they have remained more or less intact. The 28-member EU provides \$65 billion in farm subsidies, three times of what the US gives, and any quick effort to sign an FTA with these two giants must be carefully evaluated in the light of the damage it can inflict on India's agriculture. Considering that 600 million people are engaged in agriculture, directly or indirectly, it is important to weigh the fallout. Let's treat Mahatma's talisman for the preamble for any future trade negotiations. □□

<https://www.tribuneindia.com/news/comment/india-holds-its-own/860892.html?filed=In-IRIR&source=ZZ7-ZCAmny9QOrgrd-AiWw1gkPQDTyN2T-Bxa9n5velY>

Vedic Sciences for Sustainable Development

Development and nature have been at loggerheads for long. While, Homo sapiens have achieved tremendous material progress, deterioration of the environment has reached dangerous levels. Mankind has been an enterprising species since the earliest times; but the ecological disasters of the past 100 years, have been unprecedented. This is because modern humans lack the virtue of the ancient societies, which followed sustainable models by living off the interest, rather than robbing the natural capital. Hence, there is an urgent need to tap into the time-tested eternal knowledge of the Vedas and the derived treatises, which have the power to reintroduce real development that does not destroy the environment.

Nature is Sacred

Earth, water, air, fire and ether - the five building blocks of life - are called as Panchamahabhootas in Vedic culture. They have been worshipped and protected against over-exploitation for millennia in India. Vedas, Upanishads, Purans and Itihasas scientifically explain an inherently viable and practical philosophy of life. Mother Earth (Bhumata or Vasundhara) is considered sacred and the ultimate provider of all wealth. Aranyani Sukt of Rig Veda urges people to preserve catchment area forests to prevent soil erosion and floods. Rig Veda proclaims that plants are as respectable as one's own mother. All Vedas highlight the importance of natural resources and advocate harmonious living with all entities. They contain vivid descriptions of the wildlife of the subcontinent.

River courses and lakes have been regarded as divine and protected, as mentioned in Padma Puran. It is documented that wild animals often lived peacefully in close proximity of the hermitages. Varah Puran asserts that as long as there are mountains, forests and lakes on Earth, humans will live happily for generations.



Integration of mother nature into sacred domain and practices of Hinduism indicate concern for sustainable development and holistic growth in the Vedic civilization.
Atul Sathe



View Point

Hundreds of habitats have been considered holy and conserved due to the presence of patron deities. Sacred groves (Devrais) are such protected forests that serve as biodiversity hotspots, river catchments, gene pools and islands of peace. Even wetlands and grasslands have been protected this way. Worship of Mahapurush (ancient ficus trees) and mangroves in Konkan, Maharashtra, is an excellent example.

All living and non-living entities are considered to be manifestations of the supreme consciousness and hence, connected with humans through a special bond. Thousands of plant species have been documented and conserved under Ayurveda and Vrukshayurveda. Many key species of animals and plants are associated with deities, thus ensuring their protection.

- **Tiger, Lion:** Vehicle of Devi Durga – Apex species controlling the food chain
- **Elephant:** Associated with Bhagwan Ganesh – Maintaining the forest ecosystem
- **Cow/Bullock:** Deemed to be the Mother – Enabling agriculture, trade, medicine and transport
- **Lion, Snake, Fish, etc:** Associated with 24 Jain Tirthankars - Large and small creatures comprising the ecosystem
- **Langur:** Form of Bhagwan Hanuman – Dispersing seeds and regenerating forests
- **Cobra:** Associated with Bhagwan Shiva – Controlling rodents in the wild and in fields
- **Turtle:** Image in temples, signifying control over senses – Keeping water bodies clean
- **Peacock, Swan:** Vehicle of Devi Sarasvati – Controlling insects & indicating climatic conditions

Academia has an important role in rekindling the Vedic way and should offer courses in Indic knowledge.

- **Eagle:** Vehicle of Bhagwan Vishnu – Apex avian predator in the food chain
- **Owl:** Vehicle of Devi Laxmi – Controlling rodents in the wild and in fields
- **Vulture:** Jatayu and Sampati depicted in Ramayan – Keeping the countryside clean
- **Crow:** Considered as connector with ancestors - Keeping the countryside clean
- **Sarus:** Considered as symbol of love and fidelity – Maintaining wetland ecology
- **Banyan and Peepal** – Considered sacred – Enabling carbon sequestration, providing habitat/food to birds and animals
- **Cluster Fig** – Sacred - Maintaining and indicating the water table and providing food to birds and animals
- **Mango** – Leaves used on auspicious occasions - Source of nutrition for all
- **Neem** – Sacred - Use in medicine and pest control
- **Tulsi** – Sacred - Use in medicine and atmospheric purification
- **Wood Apple** – Incarnation of Devi Parvati – Use in medicine
- **Devdar** – Sacred - Controlling alpine soil erosion & temperature
- **Sita Ashok** – Sacred – Use in medicine
- **Brahmi, Durva, Rui, Kevda, etc:** 21 plants for Ganesh worship – Use in medicine & cosmetics

Law of Karma

Vedic philosophy explains that any harm done to others comes back to the doer. This scientific principle is called the Law of Karma, which is exactly what Newton's Third Law of Motion talks about - Every action has equal and opposite reaction. While, the Newton's Law describes the phenomenon at the physical level, Law of Karma encompasses both, the physical and spiritual domains. A believer tends to refrain from misdeeds, either out of profound understanding of the concept or out of fear of Karmic reprisal. For long, Indians have adhered to such eternal laws, embedded with era specific ethics and regional necessities. Material pursuits have also been based on sustainable foundations.

The principle of least violence is being practiced in India since eternity. Vegetarianism, either fully or partly, depending upon one's occupation and region, has been encouraged from the medical, environmental and spiritual point of view, even as judicious meat eating is accepted based on the situation. India, with its abundant sunshine, sufficient water supply and rich soil, can definitely support a plant-based diet. The Vedic concept of Ahimsa is elaborated in Ashtanga Yoga, and reiterated by Buddha and Mahavir.

Yoga for Holistic Growth

Yoga Sutras by sage Patanjali define Ashtanga Yoga as an eight-step process for all-round progress of the body, mind and soul. Yam (external code of conduct), Niyam (code of conduct for internal cleansing), Asan (postures), Pranayam (balanced breathing), Pratyahar (focusing the thoughts

inward), Dharana (concentration on the higher self), Dhyan (meditation) and Samadhi (oneness with the supreme energy) comprise Ash-tanga Yoga. They also help in ushering in a culture of environment conservation through internal transformation, since it is believed that balance in actions brings lasting happiness.

Under Yam, the aspects important in this context are Ahimsa, Asteya and Aparigraha. Ahimsa means non-violence towards all creatures. Asteya means non-stealing, which prevents robbing of natural resources. Aparigraha means non-hoarding, which includes prudent accumulation and consumption.

Under Niyam, three aspects are important here - Santosh, Tapas and Swadhyay. Santosh means contentment. As one becomes satisfied with judicious consumption, the burden on resources reduces. Tapas here implies self-discipline in order to achieve balanced growth. This includes preventing excessive consumption and wastage. Swadhyay means self-study and analysis of the scriptures to gain insights into the sustainability principles for contemporary application.

With Pratyahar, the mind is better placed to refrain from unbridled intake, with purposeful distancing from the sense organs. It gets trained to connect with the cosmic consciousness that dwells inside every living being, which promotes co-existence.

The last three steps of Dha-rana, Dhyan and Samadhi, aim at creating a situation of Advait (oneness with the world), which brings a feeling of being innately connected with everything. This leads to conservation out of inner free will, rather than through laws. Ashtan-

ga Yoga drives home the point that resources are not merely meant for endless utilization by humans. While, everyone may not succeed in all the eight levels, implementation of at least the earlier stages, will bring a significant change in how mankind treats the planet.

Going Forward

Soaked in such wisdom for ages, the average Indian continues to respect all life forms despite tremendous media pressure to become a mindless consumer. Indians tend to respect those who lead a simple, informed and peaceful way of life, a thought that's eroding at a hectic pace.

Academia has an important role in rekindling the Vedic way. Several institutions have started programs in mainstream education and as certificate courses, to enable the seekers to connect with the ancient knowledge to address present-day issues. Pune-based

MIT School of Vedic Sciences (SVS) offers courses such as Indic Knowledge Landscape, Indic Philosophy of Life, and Foundations & Facets of Ethics, which cover several sustainability aspects.

Indians are best placed to access the holistic knowledge, which lies buried right beneath their feet! For instance, despite hectic lifestyles, even urban Indians prefer locally made fresh meals over packaged food. Thrift makes Indians adept in the art of reduce, reuse and recycle. Most drivers slow down when an animal crosses the road. Presence of animals and birds in the vicinity is generally accepted. Plants are generally protected even as urban compulsions are making things difficult. People still try to have a balcony garden or at least a Tulsi sapling. Reviving this inherent sense of co-existence is the need of the hour. □

(The authors work as Content Developer-Curriculum & PR at MIT Group, Pune, and can be contacted on and.sath@mitpune.edu.in)

[Continued from page no. 16]

Will Seed Bill 2019 deliver....

to compound the offence or initiate a fine as per the relevant rules. This will function in a similar manner to the powers of the inspector in the Motor vehicles act.

Duration of registration

In the end, we hope that the government keeps the duration of registration of a variety at 15 years (annual and biennial crops) and 18 years in case of perennial crops to make bring relief to the industry and farmers and all registration be harmonized with the provisions of PPVFR Act.

The Narendra Modi government has a chance to seed a unique

and progressive Seed Bill or plagiarize from others. We are sure our government will not let us down in their decision, and ensure their seed bill will give plentiful harvests for Indian farmers and industry. Ultimately, the quality seed will be available to the farmers at competitive prices subject to a vibrant growth of the seed industry in an enabling environment. Healthy seed industry will lead to enhanced quality seed availability at affordable prices to the farmers.

(Singh is the programme director for National Seed Association of India and Rao is the president of the National Seed Association of India)

<http://www.thehindubusinessline.com/story/seed-bill-2019-deliver-the-good/article3661274.cms>

Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya: An Overview

Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya, was born on 25 December 1861. He is well known freedom fighter and he was the founder of Banaras Hindu University (BHU) which was founded in 1916. He was contemporary of Pandit Motilal Nehru and Rabindranath Tagore. Madan Mohan Malaviya was the third son of his parents. He was born and brought up at Allahabad and received his early education in two Sanskrit Pathshalas—the Dharma Jnanopadesh Pathshala and the Vidya Dharma Vardhini Sabha. Afterwards he shifted to an English school and passed his entrance Examination from the Allahabad Zila School. Then he joined the Muir Central College. He graduated in 1884 and received the law degree in 1891.

He took up the post of an Assistant Master in the Government High School at Allahabad in 1884 and remained there till 1887 on a salary of Rs. Fifty per month. He resigned from government service and accepted the editorship of News Paper, Hindustan at the invitation of its owner, Raja Ram Pal. He remained editor of the Hindustan for two years and a half and his salary was Rs. 200. He handled the paper with marked ability and moderation, and an acknowledgment was made of its public usefulness in the government Administration Report itself. He also became editor of the Indian Union, an independent organ of Indian opinion with which the honoured name of Pandit Ajoodhia Nath was associated. Pandit Madan Mohan's interest in journalism and faith in the Press as a powerful factor in the formation of public opinion and in influencing the course of administration have made his personality famous. Later he started the weekly Hindi paper the Abhyudaya and laboured hard to make it informing and instructive by himself contributing numerous articles to its columns. The Abhyudaya has made an excellent progress since it was started and has done a deal of public service. Pandit Madan Mohan felt the need of an "English Daily" at Allahabad to voice



Pandit Madan Mohan Malviya, a well-known freedom fighter was a multifaceted personality with his contributions to public life through education, religious philanthropy, journalism and law.

Prof. Nandini Sinha Kapur



the opinions and circulate the grievances of the people of the provinces are too well known to be discussed in detail.

While he was editing the Hindustan he was encouraged by society to pursue the study of Law. He was great favourite of Mr. A.O. Hume. The late Pandit Ajoodhia Nath, the late Raja Rampal Singh and Pandit Sunder Lal, were all great friends of his. Pandit Madan Mohan himself was reluctant to obtain a degree in Law and practice as a pleader. The bent of his mind was for public work particularly in the fields of religion and education—and money making as such had no attraction for him. But he was prevailed upon to become a lawyer, and he accordingly joined the law classes while editing the Hindustan. He took his LL.B. degree in 1891 and joined the High Court in 1893. Pandit Ajoodhia Nath once complained to Mr. Hume that since he had taken to the study of law, Pandit Madan Mohan's interest in Congress work rather decrease. We quote A.O. Hume, "Quite right. He must concentrate all his attention on law." And turning to Pandit Madan Mohan, Mr. Hume spoke somewhat as follows: "Madan Mohan, God has endowed you with plenty of brains. Slave at the profession for ten years and you are bound to go to the top. Then your public usefulness will increase greatly owing to the position you will attain, and you can do much for the country." Whoever, he was not destined to practice as a regular lawyer. The responsibility of various public works had always the lion's share of his time and attention. Although he was recognised as a skilled and successful Ad-

As a student Pandit Madan Mohan began to take an active interest in the public affairs of his country. The Allahabad Literary Institute served as his training ground. He found the Hindu Samaj with others and was one of its most active members.

vocate he had never reached the first two or three places at the bar. He never took advantage of the opportunities. "Malaviya had the ball at his feet," one of the Indian leaders of the local bar said once, "but he refused to kick it."

As a student Pandit Madan Mohan began to take an active interest in the public affairs of his country. The Allahabad Literary Institute served as his training ground. He found the Hindu Samaj with others and was one of its most active members. Politics, too, were not left alone.

Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya joined the Indian National Congress in 1886 when its second session was held at Calcutta under the presidency of Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji. Suddenly in the course of the proceedings when he heard other men speak, the feeling came to him that he might speak also, and encouraged by Pandit Adityaram, he made his first attempt. The man and the speech alike produced a favourable impression, and this is how Mr. Hume spoke of them in the Introduction to the Report of that year's Congress—one of those masterly essays by the way which we so much miss in Congress Reports of latter years: "But perhaps the speech that was most enthusiastically received was one made by Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya, a high caste Brahman,

whose fair complexion and delicately chiselled features, instinct with intellectuality, at once impressed every eye, and how suddenly jumping upon a chair beside the President poured forth a manifestly impromptu speech with an energy and eloquence that carried everything before them."

The speech was on "Legislative Council Reform" — and, one sentence at least of the speech, deserves to live. "No taxation without representation. That is the first commandment in the Englishmen's political. He spoke on the same subject at the Madras Congress of the next year, and the effect was equally successful. It called forth compliments from such men as Raja Sir T. Madhava Rao, Dewan Bahadur R. Ragoonath Rao and Mr. Eardley Norton, while Mr. Hume wrote as follows in his Introduction to the Report. "Then rose Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya, a very young and enthusiastic labourer in the cause, and from his speech we fell bound to extract largely; partly because though over fervid in expression towards its close it embodies truths that merit careful consideration.

"He presided over the United Provinces Conference at Lucknow in 1908, and his election as President of the Parent movement itself in the year 1909, came fittingly in time. □□

Report on Mumbai Program of Shraddehya Dattopant Thengadi Janma Shatabdi Samaroh

The Mumbai unit of the Shraddehya Dattopant ji Thengadi Janma Shatabdi Samaroh Samiti organised inaugural program of Shri Dattopant Thengadi Janma Shatabdi Samaroh on November 11, 2019 at 6 pm at the well-equipped Yogi Sabhagruh at Dadar.

The Program was inaugurated by former Governor of Uttar Pradesh Shri Ram Bhau Naik, a popular leader from Mumbai, having being elected a three-time BJP MP to the Lok Sabha from Mumbai North with unprecedented margins. The Karyakram Adhyaksh was Prant Sanghachalak & Director of Vivekananda Education Society's Institute of Management Education & Research, Dr. Satish Modh ji.

Well-known Economist, a leading Chartered Accountant Shri S. Gurumurthy ji was the main speaker who gave his Keynote address in simple and easy-to-understand English that the 2,000-plus audience lapped up with elan as Gurumurthy ji spoke about the cultural aspect of growth that GDP figures do not reflect; the Western mindset of GDP figures of growth are dry statistics, whereas they should reflect the throbbing and pulsating contribution made by large segments of population and which the Western Economists do not even consider although they talk about prosperity and participation of the people around whom all economic policies are hovered around.

This kind of analysis, Gurumurthy ji said, he learnt from Dattopant ji Thengadi while summarizing his book "Third Way" and discussing the impact of his writings with Dattopant ji who was born on Deepavali Day on November 10, 1920 at Aarvi Town in Wardha District of Maharashtra, and who lived a Brahmchari's life out of choice and his love for social service, and as a life time Sangh Pracharak, right up to the ripe old age of 84 till his demise in Pune on October 14, 2004.

On the occasion, a compact film on the life and works of Dattopant ji crafted by selfless volunteers



of the Swadeshi Jagaran Manch and Bharateeya Mazdoor Sangh, two of the many people-centric organisations initiated by Dattopant ji, was screened, and showcased Dattopant ji's participation in the Freedom Movement that was at its peak during his youthful days, the need to develop patriotism amongst the vast multitude of factory workers whom

Dattopant ji galvanised into a strong nation-loving force in 1955 everywhere. He went around the country. Dattopant ji also worked as the campaign manager to Bharat Ratna and Chairman of the Drafting Committee of the Constitution of India in 1947-49, Dr. Bhimrao Ambedkar who fought the Lok Sabha Elections from Bhandara in Maharashtra in the 1950's.

Dattopant ji coordinated the Lok Sangarsh Samiti activities while remaining underground during emergency. The Lok Sangarsh Samiti was initiated by Jaiprakash Narayan who was jailed during the Emergency of 1975-77, to counter the Allahabad Court Judgment that convicted the then Prime Minister Indira Gandhi of corrupt practices.

Gurumurthy ji also acknowledged the fact that Dattopant ji was his Guru who shaped up his analyzing capability of deep-tooted economics into simple theories in an environment that was full Leftist ideology influencing factory labour in a growing economy and a freshly independent country that loomed with immense potential for multi-digit economic growth and industrial productivity.

The jam-packed Hall was also addressed by Bharateeya Mazdoor Sangh's seminar leader Shri Udayrao Patwardhan, who explained the difference between Mazdoor or professionally paid labour and Shram Jeevi or a selfless worker who worked to help his own family, as well as other colleagues' families.

The audience also got the benefit of the thoughts and strategies for modern-day workers by the Janma Shatabdi Samiti convenor Advocate Anil Dhumne. □□

NEWS

Divestment of Air India, BPCL not in national interest: SJM



After a three-day general executive meeting in Haridwar, Swadeshi Jagran Manch has come out with a strong statement slamming the PSU disinvestment programme of the Modi government. It said the move to divest companies such as Air India, BSNL and BPCL was “opposed to national interest and prone to being misused by corrupt officials to benefit special business houses”.

In October, RSS chief Mohan Bhagwat in his Vijayadashami speech had supported the Centre’s foreign direct investment (FDI) and disinvestment ideas and had said the government was compelled to take these steps.

SJM has also demanded that Niti Aayog’s report on public sector enterprises be rejected, and stressed on the “need to examine their evaluation keeping in mind the idea of doubling GDP in the next five years”. On the sale of BPCL, SJM said Saudi Aramco was eyeing its assets. “This is not only unacceptable but also dangerous.

Property created with national sentiments and hard work should not be held in the possession of foreign oil companies. The purchase of BPCL will only be a number for them to increase their wealth. Strategic sales are becoming strategic purchases for multinationals,” SJM said.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/politics-and-nation/divestment-of-air-india-bpcl-not-in-national-interest-swadeshi-jagran-manch/articleshow/72324335.cms>

Desist from passing the MSME Amendment Bill: SJM

Desist from passing the Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (Amendment) Bill, the Swadeshi Jagran Manch and Laghu Udyog Bharati urged the government. Encouraged by the government’s decision

not to join the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP), which they had campaigned against, the two bodies said ahead of the Parliament session that the bill, which seeks to change the definition of ‘micro’, ‘small’ and ‘medium’ enterprises, would ruin the government’s Make in India programme and reduce Indian traders to mere “assembly unit makers” for overseas firms.

Representatives of the bodies also flayed the Economic Survey for stating that small firms find it difficult to sustain jobs they create while large firms create permanent jobs in larger numbers.

Earlier this year, the Centre decided to revise the definition of MSMEs on the basis of turnover instead of the existing methodology of classifying them as per cost of plant and machinery. The bill is expected to be introduced in the winter session of Parliament, which is scheduled to begin on November 18.

The amendments, according to officials, were proposed so as to allow enterprises to invest as much as they want to modernise their plants without the apprehensions of being denied incentives that come with the ‘small’ or ‘medium’ tag. However, the swadeshi lobby said that this will only harm the sector.



Laghu Udyog Bharati’s national general secretary Govind Lele said several changes, including removing reservations for the small sector enterprises, have reduced the potential of the sector. “It is important that micro and small industry not only get protected and promoted but also preferred in the national economic and industrial policy. It is well known that a stable micro and small industry helps in reducing exodus of rural youth to urban areas and several other social and economic problems.”

The body has demanded that the government formulate a separate micro and small industrial policy and exclude enterprises in the medium sector from the purview of the current MSMED Act, 2006 and

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make it the Micro and Small Industry Act. "We also think the definition of micro and small industry should be based only on investment in plant and machinery, with those less than Rs 50 lakh classified as micro and those that are more than Rs 50 lakh and less than Rs 5 crore as small," said Lele.

"Nowhere in the world we find the definition of MSMEs based purely on turnover, except for a few areas in the US," said Ashwini Mahajan, national co-convenor, Swadeshi Jagran Manch. "Nearly 98 per cent of small units have a turnover of less than Rs 15 crore, which would mean hardly 2 per cent would attain the status of MSMEs at the cost of 98 per cent.

Mahajan said the Economic Survey 2018-19 "insulted" the sector by terming 'dwarfs' all perpetually small firms as those with less than 100 workers despite being more than ten years old. "We take offence at the terminology and the suggestions. The government should conduct an enquiry into how this was even published," he said.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/small-biz/sme-sector/decide-from-passing-the-sme-amendment-bill-swadeshi-jagran-manch/articleid/72069411.cms>

Japan won't sign China-backed RCEP if India doesn't join

Japan is not considering signing a Chinese-backed regional trade pact without India, the top Japanese negotiator said, ahead of a series of diplomatic exchanges in the coming weeks that include a visit to Delhi by Prime Minister Shinzo Abe.

India announced this month it was withdrawing from the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership, citing the deal's potential impact on the livelihoods of its most vulnerable citizens. China said that the 15 remaining countries decided to move forward first and India was welcome to join RCEP whenever it's ready.

"We aren't thinking about that at all yet," Deputy Minister for Economy, Trade and Industry Hideki Makihara, said in an interview with Bloomberg. "All we are thinking of is negotiations including India."



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Abe has sought to beef up ties with India across a range of fields to balance China's regional dominance. Japanese and Indian foreign and defense ministers hold their first joint meeting in a so-called 'two plus two' format this weekend. Both countries are also part of four-way security talks with Australia and the U.S. called the Quad, a move that Beijing has complained could stoke a new Cold War.

"It is meaningful from the economic, political and potentially the national security point of view," Makihara said of the inclusion of the world's largest democracy in the pact. "Japan will continue to try to persuade India to join."

Trade Minister Hiroshi Kajiyama will accompany Abe on next month's trip to India, Makihara said.

The other countries taking part in the RCEP talks are Australia, Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, New Zealand, Philippines, Singapore, South Korea, Thailand and Vietnam.

China has sought to accelerate the RCEP deal as it faces slowing growth from a trade war with the U.S. An agreement would further integrate Asia's economies with China just as President Donald Trump's administration urges nations in the region to shun Chinese infrastructure loans and 5G telecommunication technology.

<https://www.livemint.com/news/india/japan-won-t-sign-china-backed-rcep-if-india-doesn-t-join-11575042512028.html>

Govt plans to scrap e-comm 'gifts' to curb China imports

The government is considering amending its rules to completely remove the provision under which citizens can receive duty-free 'gifts and samples' valued at under Rs 5,000 from overseas, after finding its rampant misuse by Chinese ecommerce vendors, senior officials ET spoke to said.

The Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (CBITC), which formulates policy concerning levy and collection of customs, was considering a cap on the number of gifts an individual can receive, but has decided against it given the complexity in its implementation.

"There were multiple legal options we were looking at, one being limiting the number (of gifts) to four per individual. But to implement this practically would be difficult, so we're looking at a policy that prohibits the clearance of gifts altogether," said a senior government official, who spoke on the condi-

tion of anonymity.

The customs department began cracking down on ecommerce imports masquerading as gifts in November last year. Starting this year, an approach to block the clearance of such packages across all express cargo ports was adopted, leading to a massive drop in the number of gifts coming into the country.

The official said all the three major express cargo ports in Mumbai, Delhi and Bengaluru, which constitute 90% of such imports, had blocked clearance of gifts. Other ports were also notified to ensure Chinese ecommerce vendors did not shift their base, but no such phenomenon has been seen. "We've curbed it (import of gifts) completely. Now policy-wise we're planning in such a way that the gift word itself is removed," said the official.

"The policy can say clearance sought as gift is not permitted, or in other words, whatever you're importing you need to pay duties and clear it."

While the board's action against imports through the gift channel has been largely tackled, another route for imports has opened up. Firms have been found to be acting as intermediaries between customers and Chinese ecommerce companies, to avoid paying higher duties that personal imports attract.

ET had reported in June that the Mumbai customs port had seized hundreds of packages of firms such as Sino India Etail and Globemax, which were acting as importers on record for Chinese firms SheIn and Club Factory, respectively. Both firms were found to be undervaluing imported goods. "B2C imports coming in the garb of B2B imports is another problem. Anywhere we see import volumes surging, we look into it and take appropriate action. However, the number of importers who don't cross this threshold are massive, and we can't look into everything," another government official said.

The board has been actively seeking feedback from the industry on ways to curb duty and GST evasion by ecommerce vendors located outside the country, ET had reported in August. For now, the board is working with the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade by furnishing inputs for the latter's comprehensive ecommerce policy. One of the measures that has already been highlighted in the draft policy is mandating all ecommerce entities, global and local, to register themselves in India for the purpose of monitoring their sales.

<https://retail.economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/e-commerce/e-tailing/gst-plans-to-scrub-e-comm-gifts-to-curb-china-imports/72216464>

Pesticides a major component of Hyderabad's staple, reveals FSSAI report



A report published by the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) has revealed that essential edibles such as vegetables, fruits, grains and spices sold in outlets across Telangana and Andhra Pradesh are laced with pesticides. In most cases, the items are said to contain pesticides which are not approved.

The report 'Monitoring of Pesticide Residues at National level', released on October 16, reveals that 40 per cent of samples collected in Hyderabad had pesticide residue with 2.5 per cent samples even exceeding the maximum limit. Curry leaves, spices and vegetables were revealed to be the worst when compared to prescribed standards with pesticides in them deemed to have been at a high level. The tests were carried out in two institutes in Hyderabad.

At National Institute of Plant Health Management Hyderabad, a total of 1,411 samples which includes vegetables, fruits, milk, pulses, rice, wheat, red chilli powder, curry leaves and surface water were tested. The samples were collected from Rajahmundry, Hyderabad, Sangareddy, Shadnagar, Tirupathi, Vijaywada, Visakhapatnam and Kurnool. In the analysis, researchers detected pesticide residues in 30 per cent of samples and one per cent of the samples exceeded the FSSAI's maximum residual limits (MRL).

Interestingly, pesticide residues were also found in organic samples apart from samples collected from farms and markets. The most commonly detected pesticides were acephate, acetamiprid, azoxystrobin, carbendazim, imidacloprid and tebuconazole. Residues of difenoconazole in fruit samples, carbendazim and imidacloprid in rice samples and pyriproxyfen in red chilli powder samples exceeded the FSSAI's MRL. Also found in samples were non approved pesticides like acephate.

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At the Professor Jayashankar Telangana State Agricultural University around 1,297 samples of various food commodities were collected and analysed. The samples were collected from Hyderabad, Kurnool, Kothapet, Mehidipatnam, Vijayawada, Karimnagar, Rajendranagar, Warangal and Tirupati. Residues were detected in 652 samples which is around 50 per cent of the total. Around 4 per cent of samples including vegetables, fruits, grains and spices were found exceeding FSSAI MRL.

“In spice samples, cardamom samples were found to have residues of quinalphos and cumin samples residues azoxystrobin and thiamethoxam, which exceeded FSSAI MRL,” the report said.

<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/hyderabad/pesticides-a-major-component-of-citys-single-remote-food-report/articleshow/71678693.cms>

Odisha orders restricted use of 2 herbicides



Taking note of persistent demands of restricted usage of herbicides glyphosate and Paraquat Dichloride, the Odisha government has asked its agricultural officers not to encourage their use in their demonstrations and subsidised sales.

The state's directorate of agriculture and food production asked all district agricultural officers in a letter to create awareness among farmers about the restriction on the use of glyphosate and Paraquat dichloride. Agriculture department officials, however, said there is no immediate plan to ban the two herbicides for the time being.

Glyphosate, one of the most widely used herbicides to kill grasses, was classified by the World Health Organization's International Agency for Research on Cancer in 2015 as “probably carcinogenic to humans.” Paraquat dichloride is another herbicide primarily being used by paddy farmers for weed control, but doctors have raised concern over its paraquat poisoning.

In September this year, doctors at the Veer Surendra Sai Institute of Medical Sciences and Research, Burla alleged that paraquat has been the cause of death

of around 170 people in the last two years.

Dr Shankar Ramchandani, who led the protest, said paraquat poisoning leads to problems in the kidneys, liver and lungs. Kerala and Punjab are the only two states that have banned the sale of glyphosate.

<https://www.hindustantimes.com/india-news/odisha-orders-restricted-use-of-2-herbicides/story-1Y1hgP90q951QXUVXJLJL.html>

Monsanto pays out \$10mn as it admits spraying BANNED toxic pesticide on Hawaii crops

Embattled biotech company Monsanto will pay a hefty fine for stockpiling over 72kg of highly dangerous pesticide and spraying it on “research crops,” even after it was banned by the US government. Monsanto acknowledged that it used methyl parathion, the active ingredient in PennCap-M, on corn seed and other crops on the Hawaii island of Maui back in 2014, knowing that it was prohibited by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) the previous year.

The US Justice Department, which investigated the case, said that over 72kg (160lbs) of the chemical – fatal if inhaled and hazardous if swallowed – was illegally stored at a company facility, endangering “the environment, surrounding communities and Monsanto workers.”

The controversial company told their employees to go back into the sprayed fields seven days after the toxic PennCap-M was used, whereas the area should have been closed off for 31 days.

Now, the biotech giant has agreed to pay \$10 million, which includes a \$6 million criminal fine and \$4 million in community service payments. The payoff is part of a deal by which federal prosecutors will dismiss felony charges against Monsanto in two years if it abides by the law.

The news comes as Monsanto faces a flurry of lawsuits over the potential hazards of its products. Just yesterday, Canadian lawyers launched a \$500 million lawsuit against Monsanto and its owner, Bayer of Germany. It says Canadian plaintiffs affected by weed killer Roundup have been diagnosed with different forms of cancer, including brain and lung cancer.

Last month, a suit pitched up by Maui residents blamed birth defects on chemicals from Monsanto corn fields. The plaintiffs believe that multiple toxins were heavily sprayed to test the seeds on Monsanto fields near their homes, local media reported. □

<https://www.rt.com/news/474047-monsanto-hawaii-penncap-pesticide/>

Swadeshi Activities

Dattopant Thengadi Janam Shatabdi Varsh (2019-20)

Pictorial Glimpses



Jodhpur, Rajasthan



Delhi (Central Office)



Kullu, Himachal Pradesh



Prayagraj



Punjab



West Vihag, Delhi

Prant Sammelan - Chittorgarh (Rajasthan)



Swadeshi Activities

14th Rashtriya Sabha Haridwar (Uttarakhand) 29-30 November, 1st December 2019

Pictorial Glimpses



