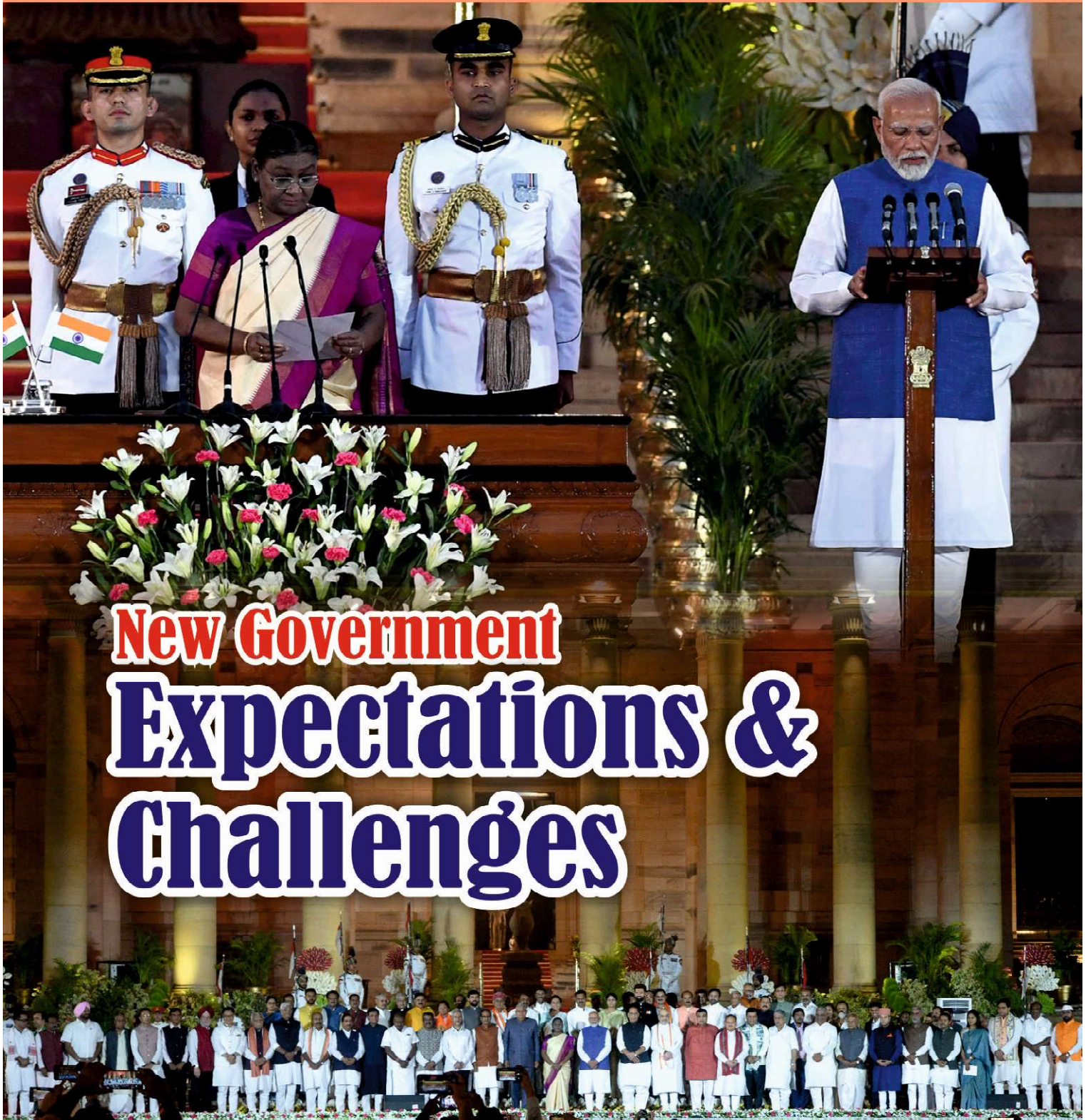


Swadeshi

PATRIKA

JUNE 2024



New Government Expectations & Challenges

Swadeshi Activities Prantiya Vichar Varg

Pictorial Glimpses



Gujarat



Durg, Chhattisgarh



Mahakaushal



Madhya Bharat





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India's increasing self-reliance in the field of Semiconductor

To make India self-reliant in semiconductors, the country's largest IT company, Zoho, has announced an investment of \$200 million to begin the production of silicon carbide chips in Tamil Nadu. For this purpose, they plan to license technology from Class-Sic, based in Scotland.

This initiative is a result of the government's scheme that provides various benefits to companies under its semiconductor and display manufacturing program. In June 2023, the government introduced a plan to offer fiscal incentives equivalent to 50% of capital expenditure, with certain conditions, to reduce dependency on semiconductor imports.

Apart from Zoho, the Tata Group is also starting its first mega semiconductor plant in Dholera, Gujarat, with an investment of Rs. 91,000 crore.

Globally, even developed countries like the US and Japan depend on Taiwan and China for semiconductors. However, large-scale semiconductor manufacturing in India will not only reduce India's dependency but also enhance its stature in the world.

— Nandita Purkait, Delhi

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Quote-Unquote



Together, we will achieve the target of 'Nation First' with one intention of Viksit Bharat 2047.

Narendra Modi, PM, Bharat



At the moment, the Indian economy is at an inflection point in its path towards greater transformational changes that will bring about more stability and growth.

Shaktikanta Das, Governor, RBI



India's verdict is one for stability and continuity. Policies of the incumbent government have added significant thrust to economic development as well as fast-tracked infrastructure development.

Ajai Chowdhry, Co-founder, HCL



We need to understand how India's growth rate is accelerating year after year and what fundamental changes have taken place in the economy, especially after 2020-21? We also need to understand what are the main drivers of a higher rate of growth in 2023-24.

Dr. Ashwani Mahajan, National Co-convenor, SJM

Case for Tweaking Inflation Targeting

Monetary policy is governed by the central bank of the country, that is, Reserve Bank of India in case of India. Monetary policy deals with quantitative and selective measures of credit control, which include policy rate of interest, open market operations, cash reserve ratio and others. All over the world rate of interest is an important instrument in monetary policy operations. Reserve Bank of India announces the policy rates of interest, depending upon their perception about inflation and the demand and supply of credit in the economy. Before 2017, Reserve Bank of India was using Wholesale Price Index (WPI) to determine their perception about the stance for future inflation. On that basis, RBI used to announce policy rates of interests. However, in 2014, when Raghuram Rajan was the Governor, RBI, under the chairmanship of the then RBI Deputy Governor Urjit Patel, a committee recommended to use Consumer Price Index (CPI) rather than WPI for inflation targeting. Since that change the decisions of RBI about inflation targeting has been impacted, as there was a huge difference between CPI and WPI.

On 27th June 2016 the Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) first came into existence. The Monetary Policy Committee consists of 6 members, out of which three members are the officers of Reserve Bank of India and three are external members nominated by the Government of India. The Governor of the Reserve Bank of India is the Chairperson ex officio of the committee. MPC announces the monetary policy for the country. Decisions are taken by majority with the Governor having the casting vote in case of a tie. The current mandate of the committee is to maintain 4% annual inflation until 31 March 2026 with an upper tolerance of 6% and a lower tolerance of 2%. In the past few years there has been a huge difference between CPI and WPI, while CPI remaining too high as compared to WPI. In the last financial year, though CPI continued to be high, WPI came in negative zone. But based on the mandate for MPC, that they will use CPI for their inflation targeting and therefore, determination of policy rates of interest, MPC has been keeping the repo rate at the same high level of 6.5 percent, since January 2023, despite a much lower WPI. It is no secret that policy rates of interest, especially repo rate is very crucial for growth in the economy. We understand that low rate of interest encourages investment and purchase of consumer durables and houses. If rate of interests keeps high, those with surplus funds will try to hold interest bearing bonds and not invest the same. Also, those who need to borrow for investment and purchase of consumer durable and houses, would be less inclined to do so. In this context it become important that what we consider as inflation and inflation targeting.

Many economists have now started questioning the CPI based inflation targeting, as it is becoming evident that there is a need to tweak, what we are targeting at monetary policy. Though, there is near unanimity that monetary policy needs to target low inflation rate, to make sure that masses do not reel under inflation, as it hits poor the most. However, questions are been raised about sanctity of using CPI as the basis of inflation targeting. Those who say so, base their case on the following arguments:- First, and foremost point they make is, that the idea of inflation targeting is an imported idea from the west. We understand that the objectives of monetary policy in a developing country like India, include growth, employment and uplifting of poor and downtrodden. No monetary policy is complete without addressing these objectives. Secondly, we have to see whether WPI or a blend of CPI and WPI or some other indices should be used for inflation targeting. Though, in the post MPC and CPI anchoring era, when CPI inflation rate was low, and therefore, rate of interest has been generally gradually declining, growth obviously did not get hamper. However, in the post Covid period due to reasons not related to fundamentals of Indian economy, CPI was keeping high (primarily due to disruption in global value chains, soaring food prices due to global shortage of food and increase in fuel prices), which led MPC to raise policy rates of interest. However, we see that during this period between 2021-22 and 2023-24, the WPI was keeping much lower than the CPI, and ultimately entered into negative zone. However, since MPC was using CPI as anchor for inflation targeting, higher interest rates, started impacting growth by causing WPI travelling in negative zone. This caused a situation of deflation in the country. This situation is not very auspicious for the economy. Therefore, it is the time to pause and think about tweaking the anchor for inflation targeting. Must remember, economic policies, whether fiscal or monetary, cannot move in straight line fashion. We must realise the complexities of the real world before deciding on economic policies.

Expectations from the upcoming budget

The Ministry of Finance is preparing for Union Budget 2024 which is to be presented in July. The ministry is already holding consultative meetings with different stakeholders including economists, farmers, NBFCs, market experts and others.

On June 19, a meeting was held with eminent economists who were invited to give their viewpoint about the forthcoming budget. The market mood is upbeat as India records higher GDP growth, a booming manufacturing sector, cooling of inflation, lowering of CPI inflation in April, WPI slumping to in the negative zone and lowering of fiscal deficit than budget estimates. Though the rupee is depreciating, but at a much lower rate of 1.4% in the last fiscal year and current account deficit in balance of payment (BOP) is lower at hardly 0.7% of GDP. In 2023-24, the foreign exchange reserves reached all time high at \$665.8 billion by the first week of June, giving more reasons to celebrate.

Now the challenge before Modi 3.0 is to sustain this growth and also address the issue of inflation, especially food inflation and unemployment. The economists present in the room were all appreciative of the government's fiscal prudence, manufacturing growth and handling of BOP issues. Continuing with fiscal prudence is something which cannot be compromised. This is a precondition to keep inflation under check and push growth. There was a consensus about continuing with lower fiscal deficit. Since the government has already proposed fiscal deficit of 5.1% of GDP in the interim budget 2024-25, there is no reason for the government to deviate from the same.

But there are pressing needs due to which the government may need more funds for capex, especially infrastructure; spending on welfare schemes, including Prime Minister Awaas Yojana; PLI scheme, especially with extension of the same in the new sectors. Moreover, there is also an urgency to address the problem of unemployment, especially among the educated youth.



The challenge before Modi 3.0 is to sustain this growth and also address the issue of inflation, especially food inflation and unemployment.

Dr. Ashwani Mahajan



AI and Jobs: A Case For Robot Tax

Some economists in the room, raised concerns about loss of jobs due to new technology, especially AI. It was agreed that new technology cannot be ignored or avoided but those gaining jobs must compensate those who are at loss, that is, workers who are losing jobs or new entrants in job market, who are not being absorbed.

While referring to the attack on job creation, it was suggested that the possibility of exploring 'Robot Tax', which can be used to reskill and rehabilitate workers who are displaced. A paper by IMF has noted that though AI can boost overall employment and wages, it argued that AI can 'put large swaths of labour force out of work for extended periods making for a painful transition'.

PLI Designed For MSME

Encouraged by the success of first phase of PLI scheme, which helped reduce dependence on China in APIs, defence equipment, mobile phones, electronics and many others, economists favoured the next phase of PLI to be designed around MSME sector. This is important to design PLI scheme for MSME for more balanced industrial development, with an eye on employment generation.

Preparing for Custom Duty on E-Products

It's understood that as per the outcome of 13th Ministerial Conference of WTO, from 14th Ministerial of WTO, moratorium on custom duty on digital products will end. As a preparation for imposing custom duty on digital products, we can initiate custom duty on digitizable goods with

most favoured nation tariff of zero percent on electronic transmissions by creating specific tariff heads in Indian Custom Tariff Manual for software and other digital goods transmitted electronically including operating system software, application software, multimedia, support or Driver Data and other Digital Products. Indonesia has already taken this step. This will facilitate collection of data and imposing custom duty at appropriate rates after 01/04/2026 when moratorium on custom duty of e-transmission, imposed by WTO shall end.

Encouraging Private Investment

No doubt, in the long run, imposition of tariff on e-products will encourage private investment in digital and electronically transmitted products, there is an urgent need to boost investment in several other industries and start-ups. To finance this investment from domestic sources, we need to give conducive atmosphere for domestic investors. To promote private investment, suggestions, talked about in the meeting included:

1. Long-term capital gain parity may be introduced between listed, unlisted space to remove friction in flow of Alternative Investment Funds (AIFs). Investments held for more than one year by AIFs are classified as long-term capital gains and accordingly taxed as per the rate applicable to long-term capital gain tax. Long-term capital gains on listed shares are typically taxable at the rate of 10% and on unlisted shares and other assets at the rate of 20%.

2. Production-linked incentives (PLI) scheme should be introduced for import substitution

No doubt, in the long run, imposition of tariff on e-products will encourage private investment in digital and electronically transmitted products, there is an urgent need to boost investment in several other industries and start-ups.

from China including organic chemicals, plastic and EV related equipment.

3. Industrial parks with Plug and Play facilities, common tool room and R&D facilities may be established in declared defence corridors for small and medium enterprises. ISRO model can be adopted for enhancing defence production at reasonable cost.

4. Though, government has made it clear that those returning home must pay the requisite tax and majority of those 'reverse flipping' are even ready to pay the same, yet there are some issues related to red-tapism and procedures and tons of paperwork. Since, it's (reverse flipping) a one-time affair, government may come out with a package for facilitating reverse flipping and reduce inconvenience for those who are returning. This can be a win-win situation for all; be it government revenue, start-up eco system and country as a whole.

5. Blended Fund of Funds may be anchored by the government as subordinate mechanism for funding long term innovation. □□

New realities of governance



With a coalition government at the Centre and strong opposition in the new Lok Sabha, the ruling party will have to be more accommodating and democratic in its legislative and governance practices. Frictions will have to be tactfully handled.

KK Srivastava

Results of 2014 elections, giving BJP simple majority, prematurely seemed to hint that the coalition era of past nearly 25 years may be behind us. Come 2019 and BJP gets 303 seats, again erroneously suggesting that Indian polity was heading for a unipolar moment. The Congress, with state level alliances failed miserably, except in Tamil Nadu and Kerala. Not to forget, however, that regional parties including Trinamool, YSCRP, BRS, BJP, BSP, and Samajwadi party could find decent representation, having survived Modi wave.

But 2024 is entirely different. The BJP, on its own, was 32 seats shorter than a simple majority. The NDA, a coalition, is forming the government. On the other side, the INDIA bloc, an expanded version of the erstwhile UPA, has wrested 235 MPs, promising a strong opposition. The polity has turned bipolar, with voters backing two strong coalitions. Significantly political parties that opted out of any alliance failed to make any impression-look at the seat tally of BJD, BRS, YSCRP, BSP, etc. Some of them might even face an existential crisis. And there would be only 16 independents in the present Lok Sabha. On the other hand partners in coalition, INDIA bloc or NDA, Like TDP, JDU, JDS, Shiv Sena, NCP, etc. will have good representation in the Parliament. Conclusion: Perhaps in the world of ideological polarization the electorate demands clarity has regards a party's standing. Coalition is the name of the game, at the centre it is perhaps part of the natural political order for India, and the 2014-2024 period was likely an aberration. Excluding these 10 years, since 1989 India has been governed by coalition governments (direct, or, implicit).

2014 vote was a vote for change essentially in the background of charges of corruption on then existing Congress led government. BJP could consolidate and gained more seats in 2019, thanks to its good governance, but also on nationalism



plank after Pulwama and Balakot. But this years in what can be termed as normal elections shorn of any emotive issues, the BJP failed to hit its target; the governance and local issues occupied the mental landscape of the voter, and the ruling party failed to convince enough voters to let it sail on its own in this election; it fell short of the majority mark by 32 seats. Not to forget, however, that the BJP led NDA has formed the government the third time.

Conditions favour coalition governments at the centre. In eleven states regional parties have a substantial presence. These states account for 347 Lok Sabha seats. There are 10 states where local parties either never had a heft or have declined. These states have representation on 169 seats. Together, these 21 states matter on more than 500 seats of Lok Sabha. Earlier, the loss of Congress was a major contributory factor in BJP hitting good scores in 2014 and 2019. But this time INDIA alliance worked, most notably in UP, Maharashtra and some other states. The fact that the Congress has gained significant credibility among its ally regional parties (and in turn it is willing to give them more space) points towards the fact that coalitions are the natural order. Likewise, things would have been very difficult for the BJP had the JDU and TDP not come to the rescue of the majority party. Given this, the BJP has to adopt and adapt to the coalition politics and compromises.

Understandably there are worries among the stake holders, bureaucrats, financial markets, economists That the pace of reforms will be affected now.

However, the past record of coalition governance (Narsimha Rao, Bajpai, Manmohan Singh) point to the contrary: coalition governments have a good record of implementing reforms. A lot of it will depend on how the new NDA government moves forward. And, equally importantly, how responsibly the strengthened opposition behaves. By no means the task would be easy, however.

To begin with, it is fair for coalition partners to demand ministries they prefer and in disproportionate number. And yet, they know their limits. Understandably coalition cannot be pushed to a breaking point; who wants to fight expensive elections that have surprises inbuilt prematurely? Contesting elections is both expensive and fraught with uncertainty. Ministerial preferences are an outcome of the desire to exercise huge executive power (home), control of finance (finance), provision of employment (Railways), return on political investment (defence, infrastructure), etc. Politicians don't think merely in terms of contributing towards serving the interests of the nation; their individual survival precedes the nation's interest most times. But then politics, as famously said by Bismarck, is the art of possible. Coalition dharma has to be practiced by all the partners. Indeed Modi has shown how is the boss while allocating ministries and no one as demurred.

However, that may not be the only worry for the present regime. Having read the current political landscape the opposition INDIA block, for the moment, has restrained from staking a claim in government formation; the political climate was not conducive. It

would have, if at all, resulted in foisting an unstable administration on the nation. But have no illusions. Indubitably it shall bide its time until it can put (or attempt to, at least), the NDA regime on the mat. It will continue to lure away JDU and TDP, incessantly attempting to sow seeds of disaffection between the BJP and these two parties which anyway have love hate relationship between them. This will have a positive outcome too. The NDA government led by Modi would be restrained from toeing majoritarian line. But then the flip side may be that it may have to excessively accommodate the alliance partners, at times even compromising on basic premises on which the party fought election (think uniform civil code, quota for Muslims). This will be a letdown for the BJP.

In a healthy democracy a strong opposition is as crucial as a capable government. A brute majority may lead to hubris, as seen during the 2024 elections. BJP failed to read the undercurrents with local issues, economic miseries, and the power of minority votes going against it. A responsible opposition must offer constructive criticism and come up with credible and viable alternatives. It is to be seen if the INDIA bloc in opposition will stick together and perform the role of a constructive critique by playing the parliamentary role with finesse, instead of indulging in creating unnecessary road blocks for the government which is attempting to steer the nation towards attaining political heft and economic prosperity.

We will have to wait and watch how the tide turns. □□

Creativity and Innovation for Sustainable Development

It was in September 2015 that the United Nations adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development with 17 SDGs (Goals) including a plan to end poverty, inequality, to protect the planet and ensure prosperity for future generations. As a matter of fact these are also the important goal post for A Vikasit Bharat@2047.

Quality education (SDG 4), clean water and sanitation (SDG 6) and no poverty (SDG 1) are the major goals which our Hon'ble Prime Minister is also advocating in his socio-economic development objectives. Besides this We in India also speak about Entrepreneurship and self reliance for zero unemployment. These goals can be achieved through innovation and new ideas and creativity. United Nations General Assembly has adopted a Resolution (71/284) on 27 April 2017 to designate 21 April as "World Creativity and Innovation Day". Besides UN has also embarked a "World IP Day" on 26th April every year which is organised under the banner of World Intellectual Property Organisation (WIPO). IP and innovation are two different concept although complementary to each other. IP or intellectual property leads to IPR or intellectual property rights which is protected under Trade Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS) regulated by the World Trade Organisation (WTO) and the different IPR laws for Patents, Trade Mark, Copy Rights etc. However Innovation basically means to use the new ideas into products and the commercialisation of the creativity or of the intellectual property (IP).



One must understand the difference between creativity and innovation. Creativity is the function of the intellect for breeding new ideas but innovation converts the same into tangible products.

Dr. Dhanpat Ram Agarwal

Innovation can be in any field of Marketing, Finance, Production or even in any social field of education, health and governance. Thus innovation is a much wider term and need not have any IPR behind it. Therefore in order to have economic growth, the society must encourage and create a conducive environment for incubating the ideas of the young mind in schools and nurture it for converting the ideas into wealth or the social capital or the human capital. In today's knowledge era, this is very important and for a country like India where we have the richest Human Resource in the world, there is tremendous opportunity for promoting innovation and creativity through proper education and skill development. The Atal Innovation Mission (AIM) is a flagship initiative of Government of India under NITI AYOOG set up in 2016. AIM has set up Atal Tinkering Labs in schools across districts, Atal Incubators and Atal Community Innovation Centres and to provide support to start ups.

Climate change and global warming is a major problem to the Mother Earth. In G-20 meeting our Prime Minister spoke about "One Earth, one family and one future" and this became part of the Delhi Declaration. Green house gas (GHG) or the black carbon absorbs the Sun's energy and light, affects cloud formation and rainfall patterns causing violent storms, rains and floods. Glaciers are melting and the sea levels are rising endangering the lives of the people living in coastal areas and many of them have already become the victims as climate

refugees. The climate change and air pollution causes neurological, respiratory and immunological diseases including cancer. The World Bank has estimated the cost of damage to health due to air pollution to the tune of US\$8.1 trillion a year equivalent to 6.1% of global GDP. (Source WIPO Magazine, Issue 1/2024).

Therefore, there is an immediate need for adoption of Green Technology. Today there is a positive change in the field of innovation and as per WIPO Patent Analysis, out of over 15.2 million active patents, more than 4.7 million are already linked to SDGs and it is also reported that 31.4% of active patents are addressing the sustainable development goals (SDGs).

India's position in the Global Innovation Index 2023, is 40 out of 132 economies published by World Intellectual Property Organisation. India has been on a rising trajectory from a rank of 81 in 2015 to 40 in 2023 which is owing to the immense knowledge capital, the vibrant start-up ecosystem and the active participation of various science department including department of space, the department of biotechnology and also the departments of electronic, IT, telecommunications. Niti Aayog has also been working tirelessly to ensure optimisation for bringing policy led innovation for electric vehicles and for green energy.

However, India's R&D spending remains very dismal and is one of the lowest in the world. India spends less than 0.7% of GDP on R&D in contrast to 2.43% for China, 3.3% for Japan 3.14% for Germany and 3.46% for the US. It is also very unfortunate that the private sector spend-



ing on R&D is practically nil and whatever little bit is spent is for Pharmaceutical and IT and the major part or almost 2/3 of the India's R&D is spent by Government department and the public sector.

One must understand the difference between creativity and innovation. Creativity is the function of the intellect for breeding new ideas but innovation converts the same into tangible products. For example, one person may be very creative in his thoughts for improvement in a particular field of technology and even in the business and may bring out a very good document or a research paper but an innovator is an entrepreneur who will translate his idea in producing a new product. It may be a new machine or an e-vehicle or a mobile App which can be used by the consumer. Similarly, there is a difference between an invention and an innovation. An invention is generally in the field of science and technology which is in theory or may even be tried out in a laboratory. However, an innovation will look for a pilot project or a prototype through several attempts and ultimately bring out a product in the form of a medicine or a motor car or an engine or an aeroplane. Thus there needs to be collaborative approach and an ecosystem for proper co-

ordination of incubating the ideas or creativity and for providing research facilities for invention and for proper venture capital funds for a start-up whereby an entrepreneur can really make the product by taking some risk.

Lately some unique initiatives are being taken to provide support to startup's by private enterprise. One such is by India Accelerator which has launched a new vertical, RUMS (Robotics, Unmanned & Space) to provide strategic support to unmanned aerial systems, counterdrone and ground robots with the help of dedicated team led by Indian Army Veteran Lt. General Anil Chait. Similarly Zoho corp of Sridhar Vembu has also invested in Drone startup Yali Aerospace providing drone solutions for medical, surveillance and logistics globally. India is becoming the World's fastest growing startup ecosystem with more than 100 Unicorns as of March 2024 and more than 100000 startups and the number is rising in geometric progression.

Thus for Vikasit Bharat @2047 innovation and creativity is the right answer where our youth which is highest in number globally can act as the engine of growth and prosperity for a sustainable Mother Earth. □□

Dr. Dhanpat Ram Agarwal: Director, Swadeshi Research Institute and National Co-Convenor, Swadeshi Jagaran Manch

Education is for Empowerment and Swavalambi Bharat



People of India, specially the youth who are under confusion shall better understand, what is the goal of education? Ultimate aim of education is Character building, & getting knowledge. *Education shall shape the personality of the student and enable him to become good and prepare the student to do good as a responsible citizen. Education shall motivate students to reach out to the needy to extend all possible help and to address his problems.* Swami Vivekananda said “Education is the manifestation of the perfection already in man. We want that education by which character is formed, strength of mind

is increased, the intellect is expanded, and by which one can stand on one’s own feet. I look upon Dharma (religion) as the inner most core of education. Education is not filling the mind with lot of facts. Perfecting the instrument and getting complete mastery of my own mind is the ideal of education. Education can bring out a student’s inherent talents and creativity to enable him to become self reliant, dynamic, trend setters and nation builder with character.



We want that education by which character is formed, strength of mind is increased, the intellect is expanded, and by which one can stand on one’s own feet.

**Mahadevayya
Karadalli**

Literacy is not Education

Now a day in the name of education, literacy is being imparted. Making students to learn how to read and write. But education is beyond literacy. As a parent we are experiencing examination and marks oriented education system. This method neither produces good students nor responsible citizens for the country. On introduction of New Education Policy the definition of Education has undergone a sea change. Now it is not just imparting literacy. Youth has to understand that education is not for job. It is for knowledge. Further, education is not for getting a job either in Government/public or private sector to earn a handful of monthly salary. Education is to establish a real relationship between education, employment and empowerment. Further, also to understand the barricades of self reliance, reasons for increasing under employment and unemployment. Education is for self esteem, self reliance, to stand on his own feet, to engage self employment etc. On completion of education student shall either depend on his parents or run office to office with degree certificate in hand. A student shall not wait for years for getting job, which attracts handsome money on first day of every month. He should not forgat his marital responsible getting married and taking care of family etc. Whereas on completion of his education a student shall be able to start his own business, startup with full command on the job which creates more and more jobs for the needy & deserved.

Let us have a glance what is happening in the name of education. Parents invest their lifetime earned money just to see their sons or daughters getting degree in Engineering. They think that jobs are easily available for engineers. But they cannot digest that their wards do not even have minimum required technical knowledge. Now a days getting a First class or Distinction without having fundamental knowledge of engineering has become so easy that It's high time for parents to stop running behind engineering degrees.

Students opting for Engineering degrees have to think of their future as a engineer. Since USA produces around 1 lakh engineers per year for a \$16 trillion economy. Whereas India produces 15 lakhs engineers for a \$2 trillion economy as per 2018. Earlier mass recruiting sector was manufacturing. It used to recruit from the core branches like Electrical, Mechanical, Civil etc. But, now a day manufacturing Sector is relatively stagnant at 17% of the GDP. Hence, the core branch placements have become very difficult. Recent days mass recruiter was the IT sector. It grew from scratch to almost 5% of the GDP in a short time. IT Employed millions of engineers. Now, IT is also saturating. Only a good, skilled IT Engineer is in demand. Demand is low in Engineering where as supply is abundant. Over and above this, skill level of an average engineer is poor, almost it is non-existent in many cases. If we have set aside the top 200 colleges, most of the fresh engineers have no idea of what they have studied. Ask a fresh mechanical engineer. Can he/she design a simple frame?

Today, the situation is grave. Since the most of engineers are working in a field that has no connection to what they have studied in the college. This is a waste of resources. Every one knows engineering degree is costliest compared to other courses. On an average it costs about Rs. 5-15 lakhs. But for poor parents, it's a huge burden. When their son/daughter is not able to secure a job, they are devastated. It is a heavy loss to the family. For the nation, you can calculate the loss. If we left around 1 lakh engineers then NASSCOM says that they are employable. The rest of the 14 lakhs have each wasted 10 lakhs of fees. That the totals to around \$20 Billion! Almost equal to the Government's spending on Health care. Over this, there is loss of human capital.

Average students shall thought of alternatives

It is crystal clear that most of the sectors do not need engineers. For example, Tourism is 10% of the GDP, does not require engineers. Financial sector, trade, hotels and restaurants do not require engineers. Requirement of engineers in health, education, agriculture is also negligible. More than 50% of the GDP has no role for Engineers. Still most of Indian youth are becoming engineers. The situation is not sustainable. It is high time for planners in India to look afresh and need to replan the whole engineering education system. Government needs to cut down on the number of colleges and improve the quality. Therefore, average students who have much less ranking shall explore other career options other than Engineering courses.

Further, Bharat has 140 crores

of population. Among them almost 60% are young. The jobs for which they are eagerly waiting i.e. white colored, fetches handsome salary per month, either in Government, public sector and Private sector put together may come around 10 crores. But these jobs attract the educated young. They waste years to get them. So, Youth shall come out of salaried job hangover and select such courses and adopt skills, so that on completion of their degree they can be self employed and creator of employment.

Join the race. Chariveti Chariveti

Leaving aside tiredness, Bharat is blossoming. Our GDP crossed 8.2% against 7.7%. The world is envisioning a bigger role for Bharat. In this context it is essential to understand our inherent capabilities, acknowledge strengths, nurture them and utilize them to build Bharat of 21st century. As a each citizen the youth shall step forward towards much more greater duties and goals. It is crystal clear that reforms and developments are multi dimensional. We must excel in our handling duties. Work with speed, maintaining standards, focusing on quality and perfectness. Let us redefine heritage, thinking, professional skills and beliefs to make them much relevant (Yuganukul). Then undoubtedly success will blossom. In this perspective students and parents of Bharat shall understand education, empowerment and employment. Young ones, student researchers, shall study with enhanced energy, enthusiasm, sustained team efforts for building a new Swalambi Bharat. □□

Mahadevayya Karadalli: Thinker on Swadeshi.

Ref: 1. An Article by Dr. Milind Kulkarni - HR L&T, 2. PM speech /available data in social media.

Marching Towards Third Largest Economy and Beyond - 3 Global Challenges

In the previous two articles, we discussed the strengths and pillars of our economy. Bharat has marched from 10th largest economy to 5th rank and ready to board the 4th position in 2025 and achieve 3rd spot by 2027 with economy crossing \$ 5 Trillion. The United States of America, China, Japan, Germany, and Bharat are the largest economies in the world in 2024, as per their GDP data. It is imperative to understand our strength and weaknesses realistically for marching beyond 3rd largest economy. GDP serves as a key metric for assessing the magnitude of a nation's economy.

United States

The United States upholds its status as the major global economy and richest country, steadfastly preserving its pinnacle position from 1960 to 2023. Its economy boasts remarkable diversity, propelled by important sectors, including services, manufacturing, finance, and technology. The United States enjoys a substantial consumer market, fosters innovation and entrepreneurial spirit, possesses resilient infrastructure, and experiences advantageous business conditions.

The U.S. accounted for 25.4% of the global economy in 2022. The U.S. dollar is the currency of record most used in international transactions and is the world's reserve currency, backed by a large U.S. treasuries market, its role as the reference standard for the petrodollar system, and its linked Eurodollar. Several countries use it as their official currency and in others it is the de facto currency.

The largest U.S. trading partners are Canada, Mexico, China, Japan, Germany, South Korea, the United Kingdom, Taiwan, Bharat, and Vietnam. The U.S. is the world's largest importer and second-largest exporter. It has free trade agreements with several countries, including Canada and Mexico (through the USMCA), Australia, South Korea, Israel, and several others that are in effect or under negotiation.

The New York Stock Exchange and Nasdaq are the world's largest stock exchanges by market capitalization and trade volume. In 2014, the U.S. economy was ranked first in international ranking on venture capital and global research and development funding. The nation's labour market has attracted immigrants from all over the world and its net migration rate is among the highest in the world. The U.S. is one of the top-performing economies in studies such as the Ease of Doing Business Index, the Global Competitiveness Report, and others.



Bharat must grow 9-10% for 3 decades to be \$ 35 Trillion economy by 2047 says NITI Aayog CEO Amitabh Kant.
Vinod Johri

Rank & Country	GDP (USD billion)	GDP Per Capita (USD thousand)
1. United States of America	27,974	83.06
2. China	18,566	13.16
3. Germany	4,730	56.04
4. Japan	4,291	34.55
5. Bharat	4,112	2.85

The US economy has a strong impact on the global economy and vice versa. There are some factors to create a sustainable business amidst the fluctuations of the U.S. and global economies, that come into play include:

- The synchronicity of U.S. and global business cycles
- Global spillovers from U.S. growth and policy shocks
- US trade and financial connections with nations around the world

The US President Joe Biden's administration has restricted American companies from selling advanced semiconductor chips to China and banned US investment in China in sensitive technologies including AI, quantum computing and semiconductors.

Germany

The German economy strongly focuses on exports and is renowned for its precision in the engineering, automotive, chemical, and pharmaceutical sectors. It derives advantage from its proficient labour force, robust research and development initiatives, and a pronounced commitment to fostering innovation. Germany's GDP is estimated to grow by just 0.2% as against previous estimation of 1.3%.

Japan

Japan's notable economy is distinguished by its progressive technology, manufacturing prowess, and service industry. Prominent sectors encompass automotive, electronic, machinery, and financial domains. Moreover, Japan garners recognition for its unwavering work ethic, pioneering technological advancements, and exceptional exports of superior quality.



China

China has witnessed a notable upsurge in its economic progress, moving from the fourth rank in 1960 to the second rank in 2023. The Chinese economy predominantly hinges upon manufacturing, exports, and investment. It possesses an extensive workforce, robust governmental backing, infrastructural advancements, and an expeditiously expanding consumer market.

China has set an ambitious economic expansion target of around 5% for 2024, as its leaders vowed to “transform the growth model” in the face of significant challenges facing its development.

Chinese Premier Li Qiang seeks to boost confidence in China's economy, while grappling with a troubled property sector, deflationary pressures, an exodus of foreign capital, a battered stock market and a record low birth rate.

China has unveiled its annual military budget for 2024, which will increase by 7.2% to 1.67 trillion yuan (\$230.6 billion), according to a draft report released separately. The growth rate for the defence budget is the same as last year's. China had gone too far toward prioritizing national security at the cost of economic growth, call-

ing for the country to “ensure that high-quality development and greater security reinforce each other.”

As part of its strategic goals, China boosted its annual budget for science and technology by 10% to an unprecedented 370.8 billion yuan (\$51.6 billion) — the biggest increase since 2019 after years of minimal growth.

The emphasis on self-reliance in science and technology comes after the United States tightened control over the export of cutting-edge technologies to China, especially in the field of AI, which Washington said could be used to strengthen the Chinese military.

Pitfalls in Chinese economy

Unsustainable levels of debt: Investment in infrastructure and property development have been core pillars of China's growth, and for fifty years, the principal method of financing these projects has been debt at the local level. The claim is that, much like the ‘balance-sheet recession’ of Japan during the 1990s, this debt has reached a point of unsustainability, and China is now facing an inevitable slowdown of the economy.

Loss of confidence in economic policy: Another prominent view is that consumer confidence

in the government and in the political system has finally burst, leading to a collapse in consumption, as citizens choose instead to save their resources in expectation of future and further downturns. In contrast to many Western countries that injected cash into the economy via stimulus packages, for both businesses and consumers, when the pandemic hit in China, the CCP largely did nothing to support its citizens financially. Altogether, this does not necessarily reflect a loss of faith in the government's ability to steer the economy but can instead be explained by reduced income streams; citizens have chosen to save, in the face of poor economic conditions, and consumption will likely rebound as incomes recover.

Poor management and bad luck: The extreme shutdown of Chinese society, the lack of any stimulus spending, and a hard turn in the geopolitical situation—especially in Sino-US relations—have combined to weaken the appetite for investment and new ventures amongst China's entrepreneurs.

While these factors will likely affect growth for the foreseeable future, there are also clear signs of strength in certain sectors of the economy. For example, there is robust investment in the manufacturing sector. China is ranked first in the world in auto exports as of 2023 (domestic production is now equal to that of the US, EU, and Japan combined). China leads in clean energy technologies and accounts for 70-90% of sales at every stage of EV battery and solar production.

FDI inflows into China fall to the worst in last 30 years. China's direct investment liabilities in the

We can conclude by quoting A. Michael Spence, 2001 Nobel laureate in Economy “Among all major economies, India has the highest potential growth rate right now”.

balance of payments rose by \$33 billion last year, 82% down in 2022. Profits of foreign industrial firms in China dropped 6.7%.

China's Semiconductor manufacturing: In recent years, China has rapidly emerged as a powerhouse in the semiconductor industry, with several companies making significant strides in manufacturing and innovation. The top 5 China's semiconductor Equipment companies highlight their contributions and impact on the global semiconductor landscape. The Chinese government announced a \$10 billion investment in a new semiconductor equipment manufacturing plant in 2022.

- SMIC (Semiconductor Manufacturing International Corporation) based in Shanghai is China's largest and most advanced semiconductor foundry, offering integrated circuit (IC) manufacturing services on 200mm and 300mm wafers. SMIC provides a wide range of services, including wafer manufacturing, mask making, and wafer probing.
- SMEE (Shanghai Micro Electronics Equipment) is considered China's potential competitor to the Netherlands-based ASML,

the world's leading lithography machine manufacturer.

- Advanced Micro-Fabrication Equipment Inc (AMEC) founded in 2004 and headquartered in Shanghai, China, is a leading manufacturer of micro-fabrication equipment for the semiconductor industry. They develop and produce equipment used in processes such as etching, chemical vapor deposition (CVD), and metal-organic chemical vapor deposition (MOCVD).
- Naura Technology Group is a leading Chinese manufacturer of semiconductor equipment and electronic components. Founded in 2001 and headquartered in Beijing, the company has established itself as a major player in the domestic market and is expanding its global presence.
- Yitang Semiconductors is a Chinese company that manufactures semiconductor equipment, specifically focusing on dry cleaning, etching, and thermal processing tools used in 12-inch wafer fabs.

No dream too Big

Bharat must grow 9-10% for 3 decades to be \$ 35 Trillion economy by 2047 says NITI Ayog CEO Amitabh Kant. Union Ministry Hardeep Singh Puri asserted that Bharat can become \$ 5 trillion economy much before 2028. Bharat now walks like a Colossus.

We can conclude by quoting A. Michael Spence, 2001 Nobel laureate in Economy “Among all major economies, India has the highest potential growth rate right now”. □□

Vinod Johri: Retd. Additional Commissioner of Income Tax

Terrible Weekend of Accidents Re-emphasizes the Need for Many-Sided Improved Safety

This week-end (May 25 and 26) saw a sudden spurt of many serious accidents in India. In six serious accidents that were reported at the national level, at least 65 persons were killed, many were seriously injured and several others were reported missing. Some of these accidents were related to glaring neglect of safety measures.

On May 25 in a fire that broke out at a gaming zone in Rajkot (Gujarat) 33 persons were killed and many remained missing. The Gujarat High Court has already called this a man-made disaster as fire safety provisions in the sprawling entertainment zone were almost entirely missing. The operators of the amusement park had not applied for fire no objection certificate. Even inflammatory materials were stored here, it has been reported. At a wider level, glaring shortcomings in Gujarat's development regulations have allowed illegal recreational facilities to proliferate, ignoring safety. Children are among those who are badly endangered in the process.

In another most horrible accident that has shocked people, seven newborn babies were burnt to death in a hospital fire in Delhi while five others are under treatment for recovery. Courageous rescue effort by some neighbors could rescue some children. The hospital's license was inadequate and had expired. The building had no fire extinguishers or emergency doors.

On May 26 in another fire accident in a residential building in Krishna Nagar area of Delhi, 3 persons were killed and 10 persons were injured, while several parked vehicles were also reduced to ashes. On the night of May 25 a bus carrying pilgrims to Uttarakhand overturned in Shahjahanpur district (UP) when a gravel carrying dumper overturned on their bus, killing 12 pilgrims and seriously injuring 9 others. This incident was reported after several other accidental deaths involving pilgrims had been reported in the previous few days.



What is of the greatest importance is to improve safety measures and to increase safety consciousness among people regarding all accidents, adopting a comprehensive approach to the reduction of all accidents.

Bharat Dogra



On May 25 four workers were killed and five others were seriously injured when a private bus rammed into two roadside shanties in Panaji, Goa. The driver was under the influence of alcohol at the time of the accident and threatened laborers that they will be killed if they complain about the accident. Medical help reached the victims very late.

At least 3 coal miners were feared dead in a rat-hole mine accident in Patkal hills, Tinsukia district of Assam. A landslide sealed mine's entrance. Mafias operate hundreds of illegal mines here which are very unsafe and many miners have died here from time to time, but these deaths are often hushed up.

Meanwhile a serious train accident on the Konkan route was barely averted by timely action on the part of a track maintainer. Trains passing between forest fires in Himachal also faced a serious threat which could be averted.

These various accidents and near accidents on a single weekend draw attention to the increasing risks from a wide-range of accidents, only a few of which get reported in the national press.

Many people see accidents mainly in terms of road accidents. They may find it surprising to know that according to a WHO data base on worldwide accident related deaths, the number of deaths caused by road accidents, while very high in itself, is still significantly less than deaths caused by other accidents. More specifically, this data-base tells us that while deaths caused by road accidents in a single year are around 1.3 million, deaths caused by other accidents are about 2.2 million. These other sources include falls, drowning, fires, poisoning etc.

It is important to make available highly reliable information and also to organize and present it in a much better way so that it can make the best possible contribution at both policy and implementation levels. In fact this research can contribute much to the better organization of the accident prevention effort itself with improved cooperation of various agencies involved.

While domestic accidents get very little attention in accident research, data going back to about a decade for Britain reveals that the number of deaths in home accidents in 2013 in Britain were three times higher than the number of deaths in road accidents.

By focusing most attention only on road accidents, we do not get a comprehensive understanding of the situation needed for policy.

This becomes even clearer when we look at the number of injuries and disabilities caused by accidents. WHO data tells us that the number of injuries and disabilities caused by road accidents is about 35 million in a year, whereas ILO data tells that the number of injuries caused by occupational or workplace accidents in a year is about 395 million, about 11 times the injuries caused by road accidents.

To take this statistical analysis further in a different context, according to data provided by the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents, in Britain in 2013 home-place or domestic mishaps caused about 2.7 million accident and emergency (A and E) department attendances. The number of injuries in domestic accidents was about 13 times higher than the numbers injured in road accidents.

Again if we look at injuries

and disabilities caused by all accidents, these are many times more than deaths caused by all accidents, and often result in long-term difficulties and complications. Yet while discussing the issue, often only the number of deaths caused by accidents is highlighted.

It is important to make available highly reliable information and also to organize and present it in a much better way so that it can make the best possible contribution at both policy and implementation levels. In fact this research can contribute much to the better organization of the accident prevention effort itself with improved cooperation of various agencies involved.

What is of the greatest importance is to improve safety measures and to increase safety consciousness among people regarding all accidents, adopting a comprehensive approach to the reduction of all accidents. Just as disaster prevention and response authorities have been set up in all districts in India, similarly accident prevention and response authorities should also be set up so that comprehensive response and planning to reduce all accidents as much as possible can become a reality. In addition it is important to allot adequate budgets for prevention of accidents. □□

The writer is Honorary Convener, Campaign to Save Earth Now. His recent books include Planet in Peril, Protecting Earth for Children, Man over Machine and A Day in 2071.

Masked power play: CoPs are places for grandstanding and inane statements

Climate Conferences of the Parties (CoPs) never fail to amuse, but inane statements by global leaders and grandstanding by activists mask a power play that seeks to defend an extractive economic system that is essential to the survival of the current world order and the contingent balance of power.

Carbonisation is driven by consumption. The more we consume, the more carbon is generated. There are two ways to tackle this problem. The first is to cap aggregate consumption at a level compatible with a maximal carbon budget. The other is to technology to produce less carbon per unit of use consumption such that the maximal carbon budget is not breached.

Carbonisation, since the Industrial Revolution, has been driven by huge inequities in consumption, leading to overproduction and depredation of the commons. This remains so even today. People go hungry, homeless and without life-line energy although there is enough food, means of shelter and energy for no one to be deprived of these essentials. The problem is one of inequitable distribution. Rich geographies and rich people everywhere consume to obesity, live in extravagant built environments and enjoy a heated and air-conditioned lifestyle while the poor go hungry, live in slums and hovels and lack basic fuel and light.

The solution to the problem, therefore, must be to reduce those inequities in consumption. But this is not the solution that the CoP process or indeed, most work on climate change has any interest in. There is therefore almost zero interest in funding research into this problem. This is so because this is not the problem of rich geographies or of rich people in poorer geographies. The path the rich world has chosen and has forced the poor world to submit to and is at the core of discussions on climate change, climate finance, and climate almost everything



Carbonisation is driven by consumption. The more we consume, the more carbon is generated. But by design, CoPs are consumption blind.

Rathin Roy



CoPs, by design, are consumption blind. Hence they are equity blind as is most of the research and convening that happens there, because the climate crisis presents uncomfortable questions about resource capture and power balance, which the rich and powerful do not wish to raise.

is (1) ignore consumption (2) zero in on technically less carbon-intensive ways to consume energy, and do not debate consumption (3) do not discuss the equity and extractive implications of the supply chains that provide renewable energy. Hence, do not ask what the energy is to be used for or how it is produced.

This means that at CoP and in the climate eco- system there is great noise about things that support this pathway and a deafening silence about things that do not. Indian researchers T. Jayaraman, Tejal Kanitkar and Akhil Mythri (<https://climateequity.in>) carried out an equity assessment of the majority of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change future scenarios that would achieve the temperature goals of the Paris Agreement. They found that all the scenarios projected (1) rising inequality and (2) declines or very small increases in energy consumption in poor geographies but much higher consumption and levels of per capita income in rich geographies. Rich countries at net zero will continue to appropriate a disproportionate share of the global carbon budget. Rich countries will break all promises and all pledges when the trade-off is

discomfort to rich countries. Thus, Europe's response to the Ukraine crisis is emphatically not net-zero compatible. It is to burn more coal. The UK and Germany have just massively increased fossil fuel subsidies.

Almost all research that uses the word "climate" and "equity" together is conducted in developing countries, because the global balance of power is upset if consumption, rather than technology, is at the centre of the analytical framework. Hence, most funding on climate change research goes to institutions in rich geographies. Some \$454 million was spent on researching climate change in Africa between 1990 and 2020. Of this 14 per cent was spent in Africa, the rest in the US and Europe (Overlan, I et al (2022) "Funding flows for Climate Change Research on Africa" Climate and Development). In research blogs and think pieces from rich country think tanks on climate change, the word "equity" is rarely mentioned. Terms like "climate justice" or "just transition," much bandied about in rich countries, only refer to assisting people and geographies affected by technology switching or, at best, by the "loss and damage" caused by the consequences of climate change.

They do not refer to the unequalising nature of future net-zero pathways. The plea that the poor suffer most from climate change is based on the assumption that the poor will stay so in perpetuity. Ending poverty would be equalising and, therefore, an effective adaptation to climate change, but that is not on the table. In fact, global poverty rose substantially last year for the first time in my adult life.

From this, many things follow. The bean counting of "fossil fuel subsidies", the lecturing about coal, the entire focus on instruments, profitability and volume in the climate finance space with no regard to its unequalising impact, the marked preference for discussion about mitigation (which is all about energy) and net zero and not adaptation (where the "who consumes" question is inescapable), the muting of voices that ask why cobalt and lithium are extracted from poor geographies but batteries that power electric cars for the rich are made in rich countries, and what the sustainability implications are of such extraction, which will only multiply as net-zero cars and ski resorts proliferate?

CoPs, by design, are consumption blind. Hence they are equity blind as is most of the research and convening that happens there, because the climate crisis presents uncomfortable questions about resource capture and power balance, which the rich and powerful do not wish to raise. Until this changes, CoPs will continue to be places for grandstanding and inane statements by global "leaders". History will perhaps record this trivialisation as the biggest tragedy of our lifetimes. □□

The writer is managing director, ODI, London. r.roy@odi.org. The views are personal.

ICMR must compel processed food industry to conform to established standards

Sometime I wonder as to why we issue guidelines when we know a majority will never be able to follow it? For instance, I wonder how we expect a person to ensure that he/she keeps the intake of salt at 5 grams per day when highly-processed foods freely available in the market contain a heavy dose of sugar and salt.

The limit prescribed will certainly give you an idea that you have to keep salt intake as low as possible. Fair enough, but I don't think any household will begin to keep a measuring spoon or start reading the info on the product labels so carefully to maintain a track record of how much salt is being consumed daily.

The point I am trying to make is that in addition to prescribing these guidelines, it would have been more beneficial if the National Institute of Nutrition (NIN), Hyderabad, had come up with a set of dos and don'ts for policy makers. Like the 'go' and 'no go' areas in case of granting approval for industrial activities in the environmentally sensitive areas, a similar set of policy parameters need to be laid out to reduce the dietary burden.

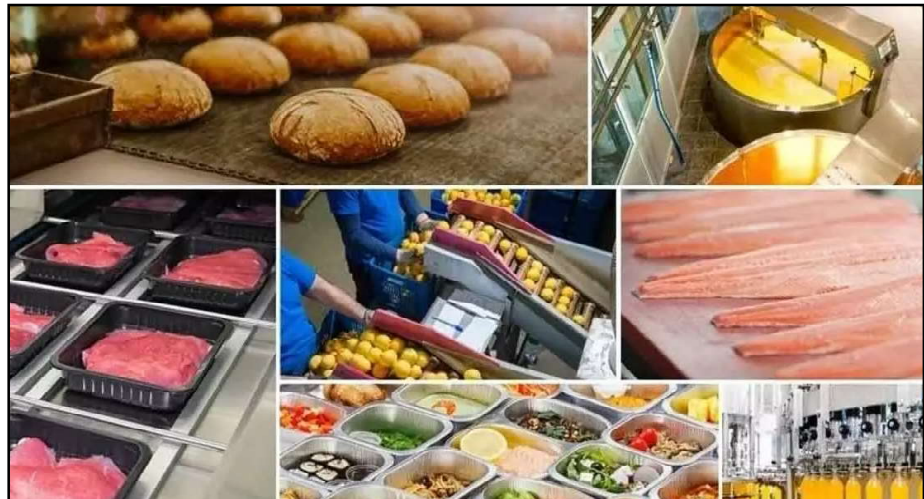
Let me explain. When the Genetic Engineering Approval Committee (GEAC) approved the first genetically-modified crop – Bt cotton — for commercial cultivation, it came out with a guideline for farmers to grow 20 per cent refuge crop all around the field. When told that this guideline will never be followed, the then Chairman of GEAC is reported to have said 'so what, at least we are laying out a guideline for the farmers to follow'. As expected, nowhere in the world have farmers followed the guideline of growing a refuge crop. Even in the United States, satellite images show the absence of refuge crop thereby exacerbating resistance building up in the target pest species.

Balanced use of fertiliser has been proposed for several decades now. And yet, despite all the guidelines laid out, farmers have been over applying nitrogen



Nowhere in the world have farmers followed any guidelines on growing a refuge crop.

Devinder Sharma



fertilisers. Similarly, the guidelines for environmental protection have often been ignored so much so that in cases where tree planting measures have to be undertaken, the shortfall in number of trees planted is glaring.

Therefore to expect the dietary guidelines to be followed is perhaps asking for too much.

Why I am saying this is because meeting nutrition challenges for the general public is demanding but perhaps laying out a comprehensive policy outline will help draw a lakshman rekha for the processing industry. This becomes exceedingly important given that 56.4 per cent of the disease burden in non-communicable diseases – like coronary heart disease, hypertension, type-2 diabetes and cancer, among others – in the country is from unhealthy dietary habits. And if I look at a global study, 89 per cent of the processed food on the supermarket shelves in India has been found to be unhealthy. Unless the industry is tamed and mandated to strictly adhere to the quality standards laid out, I don't think it will ever be possible to nip the evil in the bud.

A more recent meta-analysis, published in the New York Times, and involving 10 million participants, links ultra-processed foods with 32 health problems, including heart disease-related deaths, Type 2 diabetes and common mental health issues like anxiety and depression.

It is because of policy failure that the market is inundated with unhealthy, ultra-processed foods – which are high in fat, sugar, salt and edible oil. These processed foods are not only harmful but are also within the reach of the common

man. Marketing blitz through advertisements for children (and also for adults, involving celebrities, and at times of IPL cricket matches), makes it not only accessible but also sought-after products. But it is the reluctance on the part of concerned ministries to initiate a tough action that the market for these processed foods proliferates. What is the use of asking the general public to avoid sugary drinks, processed fruit juices and saturated foods like packaged chips, cookies, ketchup and candy, among others when these are freely available?

Even in the residential societies, hawkers selling junk food do multiple rounds during the day. No RWA, to my knowledge, has ever restricted entry of junk foods in residential areas.

To say that it is not possible to contain the production of processed foods low in sugar, salt and fat is only a reflection of the incompetence of the concerned authorities. After the recent controversy on higher sugar availability in baby foods produced by Nestle (which was selling no-sugar version in Europe), a social media influencer by the name of 'Food Farmer' has succeeded in forcing the agribusiness giant PepsiCo to replace palm oil in its potato chip brand Lay's with sunflower and other vegetable oils. PepsiCo has not been using palm oil in its potato chip products being sold in the America. But it is because of one person's efforts alone that Cadbury's Bournvita and Maggi Ketchup brands have agreed to reduce sugar in its products. In fact, such was the public pressure that Bournvita has been subsequently deprived of using the 'health drink' tag.

If one person can do it, I see no reason why the Ministry of Consumer Affairs as well as the Ministry of Health continue to be mute spectators. How long can we allow the Food Safety Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) to get away with claims of tough standards?

That is why I think it is important that ICMR takes up the responsibility to go beyond the guidelines and come up with a policy framework that it can recommend for binding the processed food industry to conform to the standards laid out.

Let us not spend time copying the international standards but come up with our own quality standards depending on the domestic needs.

All these are, however, linked to financial investments.

Just because a big agri-business giant wants to make a heavy investment does not mean that we should allow it without seeing the harm it eventually will end up doing to the society. Many dirty industries have entered the country under the promise of making huge investments. Whether we want to acknowledge or not, these investments have led to huge pollution fallout. It is time the Ministry of Commerce and Industry (as well as the State governments) draws policy parameters that firmly say no to such investments.

Guidelines alone will not help. Bold and tough decisions are required. It is the duty of the Union Government to ensure that what is available in supermarket shelves is safe and healthy. □□

(The author is a noted food policy analyst and an expert on issues related to the agriculture sector. He writes on food, agriculture and hunger)
<https://www.bhaskar.com/story/opinion/industry-to-conform-to-established-standards-1313742/>

Raisi and Fico: Symbols of a new world order

The mysterious death (and suspected assassination) of Iranian President Ibrahim Raisi, Foreign Minister Hossein Amirabdollahian and other high officials on May 19, 2024, occurs at a defining moment in the first quarter of the twenty-first century. The response of the non-Western world shows that this incident cements Tehran's place in the emerging multipolar world, and may expedite justice for the long-suffering Palestinian people. The first vice president, Mohammad Mokhber, has taken over as Acting President; fresh elections are slated for June 28, 2024.

Others who perished in the crash include Ayatollah Seyyed Ebrahim Raisi al-Sadati; Ayatollah Seyyed Muhammad Ali Ale-Hashem (Tabriz's Friday Imam); East Azerbaijan Governor Malek Rahmati; Sardar Seyyed Mehdi Mousavi; an Ansar al-Mahdi Corps; pilots Colonel Seyyed Taher Mostafavi and Colonel Mohsen Daryanosh. Raisi had gone to inaugurate a dam across a river marking the border river between Iran and Azerbaijan. The delegation travelled on three helicopters flying in a row when one suddenly disappeared while climbing above a cloud patch. The weather was not foggy, and two helicopters got through without incident but the third went down without any distress signal. Israel was quick to deny any involvement.

It is premature to draw conclusions. However, we should recall that on January 3, 2020, the CIA assassinated Quds Force commander, Maj. Gen. Qassem Soleimani, as he was leaving Baghdad International Airport to meet Iraqi Prime Minister Adil Abdul-Mahdi. That strike revealed that the United States, and very probably Israel, tracks the movement of Iranian leaders.

Many believe that the helicopter may have been tracked and targeted from inside Azerbaijan, as it crashed very close to the Iran-Azerbaijan border. Israel drew close to Baku in 2020 when Azerbaijan occupied Artsakh (Nagorno-Karabakh) which has a 138-km border with Iran. Tel Aviv supported Baku militarily and diplomatically, established an intelligence base and airfield there, and signed an agree-



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Sandhya Jain



ment to develop two new surveillance satellites from Azerbaijan. Baku now imports around 70 per cent of its weapons from Israel, while Israel imports around 40 per cent of its oil from Azerbaijan via a pipeline through Türkiye.

Strategic analyst Alison Tahmizian Meuse notes that Armenia and Russia withdrew their forces from the region after Armenian Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan recognized Artsakh as part of Azerbaijan. Thereafter, Iran tried to maintain some diplomatic engagement with Baku, hence President Raisi agreed to inaugurate the dam with President Ilham Aliyev.

Türkiye promptly joined the search for the missing helicopter as it is regionally responsible for emergency research coordination for aviation accidents in the region. Turkish transport minister Abdulkadir Uraloglu told the BBC that the helicopter either “did not have its signal system turned on or did not possess such a system”. Russian President Putin offered to help in the search, but the helicopter was finally found by rescue workers of the Red Crescent Society; the bodies were reportedly in bad shape. Iranian State Media reported that the crash site was discovered by a Turkish Bayraktar “Akıncı” Long-Range Surveillance Drone (AKINCI07) with a Thermal-Imaging Camera.

The closest eyewitness account came from President Raisi’s Chief of Staff, Gholam Hossein Esmaili. He said the weather was clear, but that after about 30 minutes in the air, near the Sungun copper mine, there was a small patch of clouds. The pilot of Raisi’s chopper, who was also the commander of the fleet, told the pilots

to ascend above the clouds.

Esmaili clarified that there was no fog at that height, though there was fog on the ground: “In one small compacted area, there was a small patch of clouds above a cliff... This cloud was on the same height as our flight’s height.” It was then there that the fleet commander told the pilots to ascend above the clouds. “We were the third pilot, behind the president’s helicopter. We came above the clouds, we advanced for approximately 30 seconds. Our pilot suddenly realised that the main helicopter carrying the President was missing.”

The last radio contact with the chopper had been 180 seconds earlier, and though they circled the area a couple of times, it was too risky to descend. 30 seconds, they landed at the Sungun copper mine to investigate.

Emali said that while flying, there was regular cell phone communication with the passengers, Mr. Abdollahian, the governor of East Azerbaijan and the Friday imam of Tabriz. Later, Ayatollah Hashem answered the captain’s cell phone call and said, “I’m not feeling well.” He added that he didn’t know what had happened, or his whereabouts, but he could see that he was surrounded by trees. Asked about the condition of the others, the Ayatollah said he was alone and couldn’t see anyone else.

The head of Iran’s Crisis Management Team confirmed to the media that Ayatollah Hashem was alive for an hour after the crash and spoke to Esmaili. Michael Maloof, a veteran security analyst, observed that Israel has a long history of alleged and often tacitly acknowledged ‘wet’ clandestine operations inside Iran, including the bombing

of pipelines, murders of nuclear scientists, and the recent military response to Iran’s retaliation after the bombing of its embassy in Damascus, Syria, on April 1, 2024. Speaking at Sputnik’s The Critical Hour, Maloof warned that if investigations show that Israel was involved, “I think you’re going to see a very major response.”

The current theory is that the helicopter’s communication system and radar were jammed, which would explain why it went down without any warning. It is no secret that the beleaguered Israeli Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu is desperate to draw the United States into his war in Palestine, something President Joe Biden is resisting in an election year.

Others counter that Israel has never killed a Head of State so far, as that is an act of war and would invite a fitting response from Tehran. Yet, even before the President’s funeral (May 22), the US Civil Defense News announced that “The head of the Intelligence Organization of Lorestan province in Iran was killed by Mossad agents” (May 21). The Mossad agents who carried out the assassination made a safe exit.

Iran’s role is critical in the Middle East and stands between Israel and US domination of the region, hence its natural alliance with Russia and China. President Raisi helped Iran to grow economically despite sanctions, joined the BRICS grouping of rising powers, restored relations with Saudi Arabia, signed a 25-year deal with China, and defended Palestine as leader of the Axis of Resistance. He made Iran a pillar of the emerging multipolar world. A key figure of the Global South, Raisi prioritized South-South integration against

Western imperialism and deepened ties with Latin America. He and his foreign minister concluded the long-term agreement for India to manage the Chabahar port.

Hossein Abdollahian, widely seen as an Iranian ‘Lavrov’ on account of his skilful diplomacy, crafted Iran’s current foreign policy. Abdollahian had good relations with Arab countries, as a result of which Iran was able to normalize ties with Saudi Arabia in 2023 and establish bilateral trade and economic cooperation, besides agreeing on mutual understanding in matters of regional security.

The highlights of his tenure include Iran becoming a member of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation in 2023 and BRICS in 2024. He endorsed Russia’s military operation in Ukraine in 2022. In discussions with Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov in 2023, Abdollahian expressed satisfaction with the “record figures with 20% growth” of trade turnover.

Abdollahian was critical of the UN Security Council for its failure to put pressure on Israel and help the population of Gaza during the current war. A sharp critic of the collective West, especially of the US and Israel, he accused Washington of “publicly supporting” Israel’s “killing of thousands of children and women in the Gaza Strip.” After Israel bombed the Iranian Embassy in Damascus, Abdollahian promised “a proportionate response”, and personally flew to Damascus a week later to open a new consulate in Syria.

Independent analyst Maria Dubovikova said the recent deadly crash has to be seen as part of a series of recent events, from the May 7 report of an assassination

Fico won the elections in October 2023 after promising to halt military aid to Ukraine, condemning sanctions against Russia for its invasion, and criticism of LGBTQ+ rights.

attempt on the Crown Prince of Saudi Arabia to the May 14 report of a thwarted coup in Türkiyei followed by the May 15 assassination attempt on Slovak Prime Minister Robert Fico and the May 16 arrest of a man who threatened Serbian President Aleksandar Vučić to the May 19 helicopter crash that killed President Raisi. The common thread in these events was that all these countries are friendly with Russia and China. Interestingly, in the same period there was also an attempted coup in Congo, led by the West-backed Christian Malaga.

Slovakia Prime Minister Robert Fico

On May 15, 2024, Slovakian Prime Minister Robert Fico was shot and critically injured in the town of Handlová after a government meeting. He survived after emergency surgery. Police caught the suspect, Juraj Cintula, an activist of the Progressive Party and one of the organisers of the Committee against Violence that is linked to the Soros Foundation.

Dmitry Medvedev, deputy chairman of the Security Council of Russia, said on Telegram, “Is it surprising that for the first time in decades, an assassination attempt

was made in Europe on a politician who took a reasonable position towards Russia? By the way, by no means pro-Russian. Just a pragmatist and a non-Russo-phobe.” Medvedev said that Fico “personifies the part of the European establishment that has not lost touch with reality and does not want its citizens to turn into grey radioactive ashes...”

Slovakia is a member of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). Slovak Interior Minister Matúš Šutaj Eštok said the attack was “politically motivated” and came soon after the national election. Fico won the elections in October 2023 after promising to halt military aid to Ukraine, condemning sanctions against Russia for its invasion, and criticism of LGBTQ+ rights.

Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orban said the attack on Premier Fico, who advocates peace in Ukraine, came amid preparations by Western countries to directly join the Ukraine conflict. Speaking to a morning show on Kossuth Radio, he mentioned the recent visit to Kiev by US Secretary of State Antony Blinken; the US plans to collect \$100 billion in aid to Ukraine in the next five years and debates about sending Western troops to the former Soviet republic.

Slovakia supported Hungary which favours talks to end the conflict. Orban said that in Western Europe, only the Vatican promotes peace but “does not vote in solving political issues” at EU meetings. Reports say Viktor Orban is also being threatened.

Turkeyi

On May 15, 2024, President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan informed parliament that there was another

Discussion

attempted coup in Turkey by supporters of US-based preacher Fethullah Gulen. Turkish media reported that on May 14, law enforcement conducted searches at the Ankara Security Directorate and the homes of high-ranking officials and detained a group of police officers on suspicion of “conspiracy to commit a crime.” The Ankara prosecutor’s office began an investigation into three officers from the capital’s police department with alleged links with the leader of an organized crime group, Ayhan Bora Kaplan.

Tehran Funeral

Nearly 50 high-ranking foreign delegations attended the funerals in Tehran. Leaders such as Tunisian President Kais Saied and Egyptian Foreign Minister Sameh Shoukry visited Iran for the first time to pay tribute to the late Pres-

ident Raisi.

Other dignitaries included Russian Chairman of the State Duma Vyacheslav Volodin; Chinese Vice Prime Minister Zhang Guoqing; Indian Vice President Jagdeep Dhankhar; Türkiye’s Vice President Cevdat Yilmaz and Foreign Minister Hakan Fidan; Qatar Emir Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani; Pakistan’s Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif; Lebanon’s Parliament Speaker Nabih Berri; Armenia Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan; Iraqi Prime Minister Mohammed Shia al-Sudani and Parliament Speaker Mohammad al-Halbousi; Azerbaijan’s Prime Minister Ali Asadov and Foreign Minister Jeyhun Bayramov; Tajikistan’s President Emomali Rahmon; Kuwait Foreign Minister Abdullah Al Yahya; UAE Foreign Minister Abdullah bin Zayed Al Nahyan;

Oman’s Foreign Minister Badr-al-Busaidi; Iraqi Kurdistan Region President Nechirvan Barzani; Uzbekistan’s Parliament Speaker Oliy Majlis; Hamas leader Ismail Haniyeh and senior official Usama al-Hamdan.

Iran extended the same protocols to the leaders of Ansarullah-Yemen, Hezbollah-Lebanon, Hamas-Palestine, and Hashad Shabi-Iraq as to other world leaders, a significant show of Iran’s steadfast support to the Islamic resistance.

The presence of the Emir of Qatar and foreign ministers of Oman, Bahrain, the UAE and Saudi Arabia was widely regarded as a testimony to the success of President Raisi’s Middle East policy. Some Jewish rabbis also attended the funeral ceremony of foreign minister Amirabdollahian. □□

<https://www.sandhyajainarchive.org/2024/05/31/raisi-and-fico-symbols-of-a-new-world-order/>

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March of the Arbitrary Raj

A business executive who has spent his entire professional life knocking on doors through corridors of power in New Delhi and state capitals, described pithily the change in the policy environment since the pre-liberalisation era of the “Licence-Permit-Control Raj”. “In the old days,” he says, “we used to chase joint secretaries in Udyog Bhavan. Then we had to chase secretaries. Then came the era when we were liberated from babudom, but we had to still supplicate before ministers. Today, it is a waste of time chasing bureaucrats or ministers to get hurdles out of the way of business. We now genuflect before judges.” The Licence Raj has been replaced by an Arbitrary Raj, he says.

The judiciary, once viewed as protection for business from the arbitrariness of the Licence-Permit-Control Raj, has today become yet another pillar holding up the Arbitrary Raj of governance. Indeed, many had hoped that an Arbitration Raj would liberate them from governmental and judicial arbitrariness, but that has not yet happened. Even when mutually agreed upon arbitration proceedings come to a conclusion, governmental and judicial arbitrariness intervenes.

Pradeep Mehta’s recent book, *Supreme Court and the Indian Economy: A Story of Economic Impact of Six Landmark Cases of the Supreme Court* (Academic Foundation, Delhi, 2024), sums it up well when it draws attention to the “uncertainty” created by judgments that “reopen earlier decisions and override economic growth and hurt the creation of jobs. The outcome uncertainty of a ruling hurts business, compliance, and society overall. One way to move towards a sounder middle ground would be by applying an economic impact/cost benefit analysis as being fundamental to responsible and sustainable judgments”.

Mehta and other authors in the book recommend “the institutionalisation of assessment of disputes, where a dispute or concern that a stakeholder may have in terms of economic or environmental concerns must be adequately addressed. To this end, an independent committee of experts of diverse subject backgrounds



*The Licence Raj
has been replaced
by an Arbitrary
Raj.*

Sanjaya Baru



The question arises whether avoidable judicial intervention, in the name of interpreting and defending law, is in the interests of the public at large, or even in that of the justice seeker or whether it only serves the interests of the powerful, contributing to governmental arbitrariness, imposing a cost on the economy as a whole.

is required, to assist the court in balancing its assessment and undertaking quantifiable analysis.”

Consider the example they cite of Shivashakti Sugars Limited vs Shree Renuka Sugar Limited, where the court observed that the economic impact and effect of a decision ought to be kept in mind, and critically, the court needed to “avoid that particular outcome which has a potential to create an adverse effect on employment, growth of infrastructure or economy or the revenue of the State”.

It would appear none of these considerations crossed the minds of the Supreme Court judges who pushed the envelope of Arbitrary Raj in the case involving Anil Ambani’s Delhi Airport Metro Express Pvt Ltd (DAMEPL) and the Delhi Metro Rail Corporation (DMRC). First, an arbitration tribunal gave its opinion in favour of DAMEPL. Then, a high court judge ruled in favour of that decision. Next, a two judge high court bench reversed that ruling. Following which, two Supreme Court judges overruled the two high court judges. On top of it all, another SC bench overturned the verdict of their brother judges.

My former colleague Swaminathan S Anklesaria Aiyar has dubbed this as judges playing ping-pong. Commenting on this bizarre

legal game in which the left hand of the nation’s highest judiciary questions the actions of the right hand, Aiyar says that such reversals of the courts’ own decisions not only open a Pandora’s box of wasteful litigation but call into question the wisdom of the judiciary. Indeed, they raise doubts about judicial intent and motive.

During my brief tenure as the secretary-general of the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI), we invited a senior Supreme Court judge to speak about the economic cost of judicial arbitrariness, even ignorance, and sought guidance on how to remedy this. Quite honestly, there is no better remedy than the exercise of restraint by the so-called “Learned Judges” in matters where (a) the judiciary ought to have a limited role; (b) the judiciary should be guided by subject matter expertise and not legalese alone; and (c) where the judiciary should respect the system set up for arbitration.

The last, however, requires that even the government should respect the decisions arrived at through arbitration. Having institutionalised arbitration, especially in matters pertaining to business and commerce, successive governments have been encouraged by bureaucrats to disregard the out-

come of arbitration and pursue judicial action. In the case of DAMEPL vs DMRC, at the very first instance, the arbitration proceedings went in favour of DAMEPL. Why then question and challenge it?

When arbitrariness replaces arbitration, the economic impact not just on businesses and governmental revenues concerned but on the economy as a whole is huge. It raises the cost of business and political risk. The fact is that despite policy reform and governmental good intentions, investment risk in India remains high because of the uncertainty created by different arms of the State — ranging from investigative, enforcement, and compliance agencies of the government to the lowest and highest levels of the judiciary.

Bibek Debroy, chairman of the Prime Minister’s Economic Advisory Council and someone who has extensively researched the burden of outdated laws on economic freedom and business competitiveness, quoted the Roman Publius Tacitus to say, “The more numerous the laws, the more corrupt a State.” Some rephrase that quote to say, “The more corrupt a State, the more numerous the laws.” Either way, Debroy concluded, “The correlation is not in doubt.” So the question arises whether avoidable judicial intervention, in the name of interpreting and defending law, is in the interests of the public at large, or even in that of the justice seeker or whether it only serves the interests of the powerful, contributing to governmental arbitrariness, imposing a cost on the economy as a whole.

<https://www.financialexpress.com/opinion/march-of-the-arbitrary-raj/>
3475652/

Swavalambi Economics of General Election



It is true that small businessmen won't be able to match the resources of big event management companies and hence small rallies, small road shows can be incorporated as a binding rule by the policymakers and the independent agency i.e. election commissions of India will be an active partner in promoting vocal for local and strengthen the march towards AtmaNirbhar Bharat.

Alok Singh

The general election conducted usually once every five years is a living entity. It is a living entity as it provides an opportunity to eligible voters to select their respective candidates who represent them in the highest panchayat of the governance. It is a living entity as the administrative powers of the government are temporarily in the custody of the election commission of India during that time. It is a living entity as it engages media platforms aggressively, the opinion of every social media post, and every article written matters. It is a living entity as it forces the big corporations particularly in the fast-moving-consumer-goods (FMCG) segment to strategies the maximum capture of market share in ready to consume eatables and drinks. It is a living entity as it provides an earning opportunity to service providers in the mobility sector whether it be roadways or airways. It provides an earning opportunity to businesses in stage, tent, chair, loudspeakers, and variety of printing business. It provides a business opportunity to local artisans like folk singers and other artists to showcase their creativity for their clients.

The big corporations have eyed this opportunity. The big FMCG companies are stealing the business that should be an opportunity for local FMCG to earn. The big event management companies are stealing the businesses of local and small service providers. The Bhartiya general election is conducted in hot summer and people including the workers and voters are reluctant to leave their cool comfort zone of their home. But the stakes are so high that it forces even the five-star lifestyle dependent individuals to hit the street in the hot weather. So, there is an opportunity for the support providers to milk the business opportunity.



The foreign brand FMCG companies depended on this general election to level the lost revenue and lost market share of previous financial calendar that they lost to the indigenous FMCG companies. They came up with many quantitative discounts, bundled product offers, and bulk packaging offers to reduce the bill of their customers and establish themselves aggressively in the market. In this case the customers are the political parties and the individual candidates as well as the administration that is maneuvered by the election commission of India.

The new format of the election in terms of engaging digital technology, huge and luxury automobiles, big rallies, mega road shows and plethora of appealing dresses and volumes of flowers are all shifting the business from local indigenous manufactures and service providers to big corporates and event management companies.

It is good to see that big data analytics and foreign social media trend setters are unable to impose themselves on the local population. Someone sitting abroad and sending questionnaires to our population and doing the analyses are failing in their business. There will be a few more failures and they will be out of business.

There is an anecdote that one foreign consultancy firm was doing the inventory management of egg consumption in Pune and the company was always missing the forecast band. One local consultant agreed to offer consultancy. The problem with the foreign firm was that they were unaware of the eating behaviors of the local population. In this case the local population do not eat eggs on Tuesday,

Thursday or Saturday, few of the locals don't eat on Sundays and so on. The other information that the local consultant had and the foreign consultant didn't have was the Ganesh Chaturthi, and Navratri and other festivals like Ganga Dussehra. Moreover, the foreign consultant was dependent on the English calendar while the local population followed the Hindu Calendar. The days of the week are still easier to track but the festivals that keep changing dates in the English calendar are completely blind to foreign consultants. If they attempt to capture Kumbh mela that also has a variety of Maha Kumbh and Ardha Kumbh.

All these foreign consultant's egg consumption forecasting business will throw continuous eggs on their balance sheet. They can't forecast for a city and it can be imagined if they attempt to forecast for the nation. Eggs are perishable and they can't help themselves. This city wise consumption deviation might have forced them to use toxic preservatives in the cold drinks inventory to forecast for the nation.

Now the foreign data analytics companies and the social media influencers are reinforcing each other to forecast the outcomes of the general election of our country with an acceptable margin of error and expect the stock exchange to dance to the outcomes of their tunes. Even domestic retail investors who might have followed the trap of such forecasts and social media financial advisers might have felt huge surprise. The first misbehavior that threw the eggs on foreign analytics and social media influencers are our stock exchanges. This egg on the face is tangible, measurable, and a hard

big stick to foreigners and a warning to the artificial intelligence to not ever try to mingle in our matters and that too in matters of democratic process of election. They can't forecast egg consumption and attempted to forecast the outcome of our general election.

But we should remember that apart from failure in eggs and election forecasts they have succeeded in the FMCG sector and we have to counter it, as the self-reliance and AtmaNirbhar Bharat is moving very slowly in this segment. Consumer awareness about the toxic preservatives and the attack on our food habits since the last four decades needs policy intervention.

The political parties should start encouraging local businesses in their election related expenses as it will provide an opportunity to connect with the locals. We can have a policy to restrict the mega road shows, and the mega rallies so that the dependency on big event management companies are eliminated.

It is true that small businessmen won't be able to match the resources of big event management companies and hence small rallies, small road shows can be incorporated as a binding rule by the policymakers and the independent agency i.e. election commissions of India will be an active partner in promoting vocal for local and strengthen the march towards AtmaNirbhar Bharat. The festival of democracy is an important stakeholder in Swavalambi Economics that leads to Swavalambi Bharat. □□

(Alok Singh has a doctorate in management from the Indian Institute of Management Indore and is currently co-founder and director at AGET Business School, Jhajjar, Haryana).

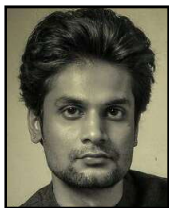
Climate emergency in India: Impact of heatwave on agriculture and inflation

As the temperature reaches over 50°C in Delhi continuously for a few days now, India must wake up to the truth—that we are in the middle of a climate emergency. For it is not only Delhi but other parts of the country that are reporting their highest temperature ever recorded. IMD has already issued severe heat alerts for central and northern India.

Signs of this heatwave have been clear since March and April. The IMD had warned the nation of a severe heatwave until June; perhaps with the elections in view, they watered down the temperature details. The government took notice and also organised a few meetings on the topic. But what is happening now is unprecedented and could have a lasting impact on humans, as well as our rich biodiversity and agriculture.

But let's look at the human losses first. At least 15 people have died due to heat strokes in under 24 hours in the Bihar and Odisha regions. Meanwhile, India has reported 16,000 heat stroke cases and 60 deaths since March 1, 2024. The situation in the southern states of Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, and the way up to Telanagana has been worse due to excessive heat. It is adding a heavy health burden to the working people who are working in the sun all day. This includes construction workers, food delivery workers, and farm labourers. All people working under the hot sun are at high risk; these include the millions of MNRE-GA and political workers.

The extended periods of heat in cities are getting worse, as the cement jungles heat up pretty quickly and continue to emit heat way after sunset. This



Many of the commercial varieties of seeds used aren't climate-resilient and are not bred for high temperatures. If this spell continues, we may see a dampened harvest.

Indra Shekhar Singh





increases the load on cooling machines and eventually the power grid. Video surfaced from Allahabad, where the electricity department was using a desert cooler to cool down transformers.

The case of Allahabad is very peculiar, as it is situated on the confluence of Yamuna and Ganga, yet due to the excessive heat, water consumption has tremendously increased, and now the ground water levels have also rapidly plummeted. Imagine a city with two rivers running dry. What will happen to the rest of our country?

In the villages, without piped water or water tankers, the situation is turning for the worst, as hand pumps and wells are drying up. While the cattle have fewer places to satisfy their thirst, apart from humans, cattle and farm animals are at major risk from these heatwaves.

Agriculturally, 50°C is the danger threshold for the current biodiversity and puts vulnerable areas at risk, like the Himalayan ecosystem system. Orchard crops like mangoes, guavas, litchi, etc. will all be deeply impacted by extended periods of high heat. Newer saplings or young plants may be worst hit, especially in rain-fed or water-scarce areas. High heat temperatures

In the villages, without piped water or water tankers, the situation is turning for the worst, as hand pumps and wells are drying up. While the cattle have fewer places to satisfy their thirst, apart from humans, cattle and farm animals are at major risk from these heatwaves.

in eco-sensitive zones will also trigger faster ice melts and a loss of biodiversity. Once the plants are dead or stunned due to heat, invasive species can move in, or in the worst-case scenario, native species can die forever.

Many of the commercial varieties of seeds used to grow our food aren't climate-resilient and are not bred for high temperatures. If this spell continues, we may see a dampened harvest. For example, wheat productions for 2022–23 and 2021–22 were both impacted due to the erratic weather and heatwaves. If this trend increases, very soon our current commercial seeds

will be redundant, and breeding new varieties and successfully commercialising them will take a few years at best.

To top everything off, cyclonic conditions are developing over the Bay of Bengal, like Cyclone Remal befalling Bangladesh and the Sagar Islands in West Bengal recently. The winds were blowing at 110–120 km per hour. This cyclone, like Cyclone Biparjoy, which hit India's western front last year, had the potential to eat up our Kharif monsoon. Last year, we witnessed droughts in August and October, resulting in heavy agricultural losses. And it also pushed many regions towards drought and flood conditions.

Simply put, extreme temperatures are adversely affecting all life and threatening our food production. The Indian government ought to declare a state of climate emergency to prevent the loss of lives. Wherever the temperatures reach 50°C, offices, schools, and other activities should be curtailed to a minimum. Essential daily workers should continue, but the local authorities should be empowered to curb other activities if they pose a high health risk. The government must also prepare a working programme for farmers and keep a steady watch on our monsoon. Another failed monsoon may trigger a food inflation hike. A heavier investment is also required in forestation, coastal mangroves, and other nature-based solutions to make our nation and lives more climate-resilient. □□

The writer is an independent agri-policy expert and writer. He was the former director - policy and outreach, NSAI. Views expressed in the above piece are personal and solely those of the author. They do not necessarily reflect Firstpost's views.

<https://www.firstpost.com/opinion/climate-emergency-in-india-impact-of-heatwave-on-agriculture-and-inflation-13778017.html>

Mewar as Focus of Guhila State (Part-XXIII)

They claim a rank superior of the Bhils. Thus Bhils the process of state formation in Mewar highlights the process of state formation in Mewar highlights the process of differentiation within an egalitarian tribe on coming in contact with a stratified society. Morton H. Fried makes a similar observation in the context of tribal social formation in general. The Bhilâlâs such as the Solamki-Bhils of Oghna-Panarwa demonstrate the emergence of an elite section among the Bhils as a result of their close interaction with state- society over a long period of time.

Perhaps the case of the Solamki-Bhils of Oghna-Panarwa is one of the best illustrations of the social aspect of the process of state formation. It is relevant to reiterate Chattopadhyaya's observations in the context of Solamki Bhils of Oghna.

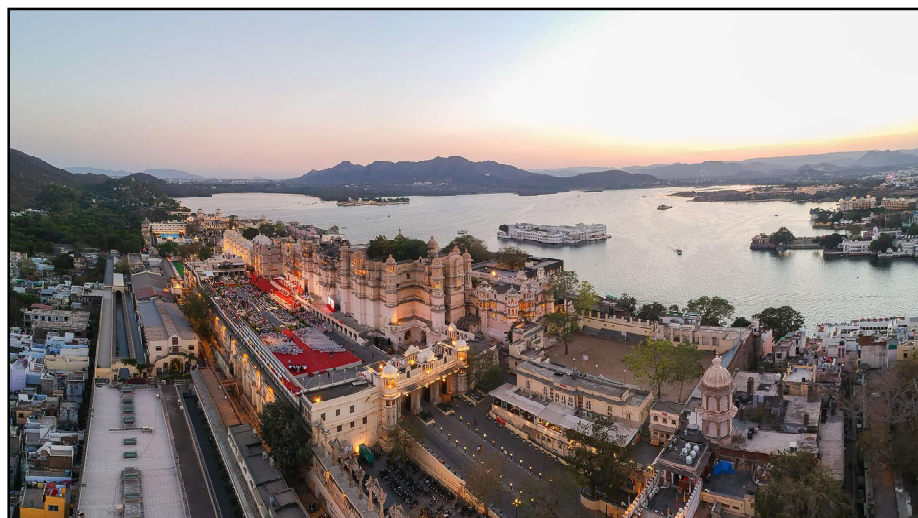
The process of caste formation remained the essence of the social processes which drew widely dispersed and originally outlying groups into a structure which allowed them in a large measure to retain their original character, except that this character was defined with reference to the structure...

For the Oghna Bhils of the fifteenth-century royal authority was represented by the local Solamki chiefs. Therefore, for the Solamki Bhils chiefs of Oghna-Panarwa of the fifteenth-century titled rãôâ, the following observations can be partially held true, 'Some of these tribal princes found themselves similarly involved in the process of Hinduization and rose to become tributary princes (samtanta) in the course of further development, while others in their turn could preserve their autonomy for centuries. The study of even the core-area Bhils in Mewar demonstrates that despite their formal integration into the political structure, and beginnings of 'Rajputization', as well as their recurring revolts, we can-



The Guhilas attempted to create buffer zones and political allies in their immediate north.

Prof. Nandini Kapur Sinha



not definitely locate them as samantas before the fifteenth century.

Social Alliances and Relations with Contemporary powers

Social relations of the Guhilas with the Cahamanas of Suvarnagiri (Songira) or Jalor can be seen in the context of the Gujarat-Delhi Sultanate imbroglio. The Achalesvara Inscription significantly states that Samarasimha (son of Tejasimha) lifted the deeply sunk Gurjara land high out of the Turu^oka sea. The continuing south-western expansion of the Delhi Sultanate with its recurrent inroads into Mewar was a part of its attempt to control Gujarat is attested by the Chiravā inscription recording the battle of Bhûtâlâ near Nâgdrahapura (between Jaitrasimha and Iltutmish). It is also interesting that none of the Persian sources mentions Iltutmish's ventures into Mewar indicating Iltutmish's possible failure to secure the routes to Gujarat through Mewar. The sultanate's interests in Mewar are evident from the following: Jayasimha Sûri's Hammiramadamardana referring to the burning of Medapâa in the context of the raids conducted by Milâcchikâra Suratrâôa, etc., in Bhâghelâ King Viradhavala's (Gujarat) reign and referring to Jaitrasimha as Medapataparth vilâtam mandalam Jayatalam, the claim by Chiravā inscription that the rulers of Gurjara, Mâlava, Jangal (present state of Bikaner in Thar desert and northern part of Mewar) could not humble his pride, similar claims by an unpublished inscription from Ghaghsha (near Chittaurgarh), the Achalesvara inscription crediting Jaitrasimha with victory over the army of the Turuskas and defence of Mewar, and Jinaprabhasûri's

Tîrthakalpa referring to Samarasimha's clash with Ulugh Khan, younger brother of Sultan Alauddin. In response, the Guhilas attempted to create buffer zones and political allies in their immediate north. Contemporary references to Jaitrasimha as the 'uprooter of Nadûla power' and control over Abu-Sirohi locality for the first time in the late thirteenth century, point to Guhila attempts to control their north-western frontiers. The Cahamânas of Suvarnagiri (Songira) were won over as political allies in central Rajasthan through the marriage of the Songira Princess Rupâdevi, daughter of Cahamâna Câcigadeva and sister of Cahamâna Samantasimha, with Guhila King Tejasimha. She was the mother of Guhila Prince Ksetrasimha.

The Khalji-Tughlaq interregnum in Chittaurgarh in the first half of the fourteenth century is mentioned in records dating to the reigns of Alauddin Khalji and Muhammad Tughlaq, and in seventeenth-century Guhila references to the legendary Padmini (the Alauddin-Padmini episode, more bardic lore than historic truth also testifies to the fall of the Guhilas at Chittaurgarh). However, there are references to Songira presence at Chittaurgarh, perhaps as the subordinates of the Tughlaqs, in a record of Songirâ Prince Vanavira dated AD 1338. It is strange that historians such as M.S. Ahluwalia in his Muslim Expansion in Rajasthan: The Relations of Delhi Sultanate with Rajasthan 1206-1526, ignore contemporary evidence on the Songirâs at Chittaurgarh as Nainsi too mentions the Songiras at Chittaur.

The Guhila-Songira marriage recorded in the bardic traditions

of Mewar highlights the importance of the Songirâs for the Guhilas. Rânâ Hammira is stated to have married Songirâ Vanavira's sister, a Songira Cahamâna princess. Badvâdevidân Khyât names a Songira queen of the legendary Râôâ Hammira, and Nainsi mentions a Songirâ mother of Hammira. The political importance of such a marriage for the early princes of the Râôa branch is obvious in view of the eclipse of Guhila power at Chittaurgarh in the fourteenth century and the rise of the Songira Cahamânas at Chittaur, with their territorial hold over the Godwar region. Political alliances of the Guhilas and the Songirâs seem to have been maintained as the traditions record the marriage of a Sisodia (Râôâ Guhilas) Princess Subâlî with a Songira chief Râo Samantasimha, and the induction of Songira Prince Vanavira into the royal services of Mewar. Although none of the fifteenth-century Guhila records refers to any Guhila-Songira matrimonial alliance, the presence of the Songirâs at Chittaurgarh points towards possibilities of Guhila social linkages with the Songira Cahamânas.

Social linkages of the Guhilas with contemporary Rajputs such as the Baghelâs and Yadavas of Gujarat and Khicis of Gagraun in the fifteenth century need to be seen in view of the rise of Gujarat and Malwa as sultanates and the ensuing problems of defending the western and south-eastern frontiers. Even before the rise of the sultanate of Gujarat, there was a Guhila-Baghela clash at the western frontier of Mewar leading to the Guhila capture of a local fortress, Kottadaka (modern Kotra).

(to be continued...)

Budget 2024: Economists Call For Fiscal Prudence, Employment Boost, Through Welfare Spend



Economists have urged the government to maintain fiscal prudence, increase allocations to welfare schemes, and boost employment during the initial week of pre-budget meetings between the Union Finance Ministry and stakeholders.

The Bharatiya Janata Party-led National Democratic Alliance government is preparing to present its inaugural full budget in July. Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, who previously presented an interim budget in February before the Lok Sabha elections, attended alongside other ministry officials.

Ashwani Mahajan, national co-convener of the Swadeshi Jagaran Manch, told reporters that the discussions centred on the economy's growth momentum, fiscal prudence, capital expenditure, and government spending.

"The government has indicated it will reduce the fiscal deficit in the upcoming budget," Mahajan said. "Simultaneously, enhancing employment remains a critical priority."

Mahajan emphasised the need for welfare policies that stimulate employment, noting a rise in rural consumption but no corresponding increase in urban areas.

Nagesh Kumar, director and chief executive of the Institute for Studies in Industrial Development, contributed to the discussions by proposing measures to bolster the manufacturing sector and introduce production-linked incentives for labour-intensive industries such as leather goods.

<https://www.ndtvprofit.com/budget/budget-2024-economists-call-for-fiscal-prudence-employment-boost-throughwelfarespend>

RSS Sarsanghchalak Late KS Sudarshan Birth Anniversary: Committed to swadeshi and economic self-reliance

KS Sudarshan was directly associated with Swadeshi Jagran Manch (SJM) as Marg-darshak for about 7 years before taking up the responsibility of Sarsanghachalak. After the formation of SJM by Dattopant Thengadi in 1991, Swadeshi movement took off only after its national convention of 1993 in Delhi. With the support from karyakartas of Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS), two national level campaigns were successfully conducted and the Manch appeared as a force against the menace of globalisation and multinational companies. It is around that time that Sudarshanji associated with the SJM as Margdarshak and his dignified presence in SJM's meetings started. Despite his busy schedule, he always tried to remain present in SJM's meetings and programmes. I don't remember a meeting in those days without Sudarshan's presence. The Manch was in its childhood in those days, but effective direction and encourage-



ment from Sudarshan, programmes and campaigns organised by SJM were a grand success. Shri Dattopant Thengadi on the one side, and Sudarshan on the other, this duo was something like a divine gift to SJM, and the Manch could organise and achieve success in Matsya Yatra (a yatra on the complete costal line of India) against the deep sea fishing by foreign trawlers, Namak Andolan (a campaign and protest against the ban on common salt and compulsory iodisation of salt) and numerous other protests.

Sudarshan's presence in SJM meetings used to be extraordinary and exemplary. His sharp vision and nature of taking tough decisions in the national interest helped the SJM get its due role in the national scene. When the government of the day, was taking decisions

against the nation in general and people of the country in particular and nation was into clutches of the foreign companies and law of the land was being amended to suit foreign interests; at that time, the direction of Dattopant Thengadi and Sudarshan helped SJM to take its fight on with government(s) of those times on the one hand and the foreign powers on the other.

Swadeshi karyakartas were naturally attracted to him due to his simple nature and effective direction. His unmatched intellect and affectionate direction helped SJM to not only go on the right path, but also achieve success. His simple nature used to make the subjects under discussion live. Swadeshi Jagran Manch once decided to prepare a document on the subject of Swadeshi concept of development. In the preparation of this document, Dr Mahesh Sharma, ex-chairman of KVIC and many other karyakartas were involved. After a series of discussion, meetings, a final draft was prepared and placed before the national executive of SJM. This subject was very dear to Sudarshan and he always used to elaborate on this subject in one or the other form in his speeches. I remember that Sudarshan's comments on overall spectrum of developmental issues, their implications on India and his active guidance helped this document take its natural shape. Later, this document ultimately became the focal point of debate on developmental issues.

Sudarshan had already taken up the responsibility of Sarsanghachalak and his headquarter was naturally shifted to Nagpur. One day, I received a phone call from Sudarshan and he informed me about a programme organised by Vandana Shiva and told me that he is unable to attend the programme because of his predecided engagements and instructed me to attend the same as the issue was of importance for the country. Vandana Shiva is a renowned expert on the issue of globalisation, Swadeshi seeds and environment and host of such experts used to enjoy direct access to Sudarshanji and he used to discuss such issues with them.

In March 2012, Dr. Ashwani Mahajan visited Nagpur to attend Akhil Bharatiya Pratinidhi Sabha. Sudarshan was taking his lunch in the queue next to mine. After the lunch, I went to wish him and he was very delighted to see me and took me to his room. We discussed various issues including swadeshi. He told me that he has been reading my articles and discussed some issues relating to those. Though he knew various languages of India, he had a natural love for Hindi. He used to talk about inappropriateness of

English for Indian people, as he believed that we could express ourselves in our mother tongue in very apt manner. He used to talk about English and its problems with humorous satire. He also expressed his unhappiness over the use of English words and phrases in some of the Hindi newspapers of the day.

<https://organiser.org/2024/06/18/114348/bharat/ris-sarsanghachalak-late-ks-sudarshan-birth-anniversary-committed-to-swadeshi-and-economic-self-reliance/>

Youth need to be entrepreneurial for success: Prof. Renu Vig VC PU

The Department of Youth Welfare Panjab University, Chandigarh has organized a 7-day Youth Leadership and Training Camp from June 19-25. The fourth day of this camp on Saturday was graced by the esteemed presence of Prof. Renu Vig Vice Chancellor Panjab University, Kashmiri Lal National Organizing Secretary Swadeshi Jagran Manch and Dr. Rohit Kumar Sharma Director Youth Welfare Department.

Dr. Sharma warmly welcomed the Vice Chancellor and Sh. Lal with a token of gratitude. Following the lamp lighting ceremony, both Prof. Renu Vig and Sh. Kashmiri Lal Ji delivered inspiring and growth-oriented speeches. In her address to the participants, Prof. Vig instilled a sense of patriotism, highlighted the youth's contribution to society, elaborated on the goals of the camp, and encouraged students to pursue entrepreneurship. Prof. Vig shed light on the difficulties faced by Indian universities, particularly the trend of students going abroad rather than staying in India to develop new companies or work facilities. Sh. Kashmiri Lal encouraged students to embrace entrepreneurship, emphasizing its importance for national development. The session was met with great enthusiasm from the students, who interacted actively with the speakers. It was an incredibly inspirational and encouraging experience for all attendees.

The seven-day camp graced by esteemed personalities and attended by nearly 100 students from 27 colleges and institutions affiliated to Panjab University, promises a transformative experience for young leaders. The participating students are exposed to informative sessions, hands on training workshops on artificial intelligence, entrepreneurship, yoga, meditation, theatre, fine arts, communications, personality development and other topics related to leadership during the camp.

<https://www.cityairnews.com/content/youth-need-to-be-entrepreneurial-for-success-prof-renu-vig-vc-pu>

RBI moves 100 tonnes gold from UK to its vaults in India



Reserve Bank of India has moved a little over 100 tonnes of gold from the UK to its vaults in the country, marking the first time at least since early 1991, when precious metal at this scale has been added to the stock held locally. A similar quantity of gold may be headed into the country again in the coming months with official sources telling TOI that the transfer to locations within the country was for logistical reasons as also for diversified storage. According to the latest data, at the end of March, RBI had 822.1 tonnes of gold, of which 413.8 tonnes was overseas. It is among central banks that bought gold in recent years, with 27.5 tonnes added during the last financial year. For a large number of central banks, Bank of England has traditionally been the storehouse and India is no different with some of the yellow metal stocks lying in London from pre-Independence days.

“RBI started purchasing gold a few years ago and decided to undertake a review of where it wants to store it, something that is done from time to time. Since stock was building up overseas, it was decided to get some of the gold to India,” an official said.

For most Indians, gold has been an emotional issue, especially after the Chandra Shekhar govt pledged the precious metal to tackle the balance of payments crisis in 1991. While RBI bought 200 tonnes of gold from the International Monetary Fund around 15 years ago, over the last few years, a steady build up in stocks has taken place through purchases by the Indian central bank.

“It shows the strength of the economy and the confidence, which is in sharp contrast to the situation in 1991,” said a source. But getting 100 tonnes of gold, which is almost a fourth of the stock in the country at the end of March, was a massive logistical exercise, requiring months of planning and precise execution. It involved close coordination between the

finance ministry, RBI and several other wings of govt, including local authorities.

To begin with, RBI got a customs duty exemption to ship the metal into the country with the Centre “foregoing revenue” on what is a sovereign asset. But there was no exemption from integrated GST, which is levied on imports, as the tax is shared with the states.

It also took a special aircraft to fly the large quantities of gold with detailed security arrangements put in place. The move will also help RBI save on some of the storage cost, which is paid to Bank of England, although the amount is not significant. Within the country, gold is held in vaults in RBI’s old office building on Mumbai’s Mint Road as well as Nagpur.

<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/business/india-business/rbi-moves-100-tonnes-gold-from-uk-to-its-vaults-in-india/articleshow/110574276.cms>

Desi co launches world’s 1st rocket with one-piece 3D-printed engine

In a big boost for India’s private space industry, Agnikul Cosmos, an IIT-Madras-incubated startup, successfully launched on Thursday the world’s first rocket with a single-piece 3D-printed engine.

The single-stage rocket, called ‘Agnibaan - Sub-Orbital Technology Demonstrator (SOOrTeD)’, lifted off from India’s first private launchpad, Dhanush, at Sriharikota at 7.15am, marking the country’s first semi-cryogenic engine-powered rocket launch. It was powered by Agnikul’s Agnilet engine. In the past two months, the startup had to call off the mission minutes before the scheduled lift-off twice — on April 7 and May 28. Agnikul’s inaugural flight, demonstrated indigenous technologies, gathered crucial flight data and ensured optimal functioning of systems for their orbital launch vehicle, ‘Agnibaan’, in the future.

Agnikul co-founder and CEO Srinath Ravichandran called it the culmination of the team’s thousands of hours of reviews and hard work. Co-founder and COO Moin SPM said the project owes its success to the unwavering support of the firm’s advisors, investors, vendors, customers and well-wishers. Unlike traditional-sounding rockets that launch from guidrails, SOOrTeD lifted off vertically and followed a predetermined trajectory while performing a precisely orchestrated set of manoeuvres during flight.

Isro chairman S Somanath said: “The Department of Space and Isro congratulate Agnikul. The success involved many firsts, including a 3D printed

semi-cryogenic engine, flight-control systems demonstrating the prowess of indigenous design and innovation. It motivates Isro to support space startups and non-governmental entities for innovation to create a vibrant space ecosystem in the country.”

The Agnikul team, consisting of more than 200 engineers, is guided by 45 former Isro scientists. Satyanarayanan R Chakravarthy of IITMadras (IITM), Agnikul’s founding advisor, said the firm was proud to present India’s first semi-cryo rocket engine, which is also the world’s most integrated single-shot 3D-printed piece. “It signals the ability to rapidly assemble rockets that is unparalleled.”

IITM director V Kamakoti noted the sky was no longer the limit for startups. “Very innovative, first time in the world, deep-core technology demonstrated today by Agnikul – a great inspiration for all young students to boldly take the entrepreneurship route and become employers,” Kamakoti said.

The success takes Agnikul a step closer to test-flying its flagship launch vehicle Agnibaan, a two-stage rocket designed to be highly customisable. “It is compatible with the mobile launchpad Dhanush, allowing for launch flexibility regardless of location and accommodating payloads ranging from 30kg to 300kg,” Agnikul said. The firm has plans for an orbital mission towards the end of the financial year 2024-25 and regular customer flights from 2025.

Aside from showcasing the country’s first semi-cryogenic engine-powered rocket launch and utilising the first single-piece 3D-printed engine, SOrTeD had another first — Dhanush, established at the Satish Dhawan Space Centre, Isro’s spaceport in Sriharikota, on Nov 25, 2022.

Conceived and built as a product that enables the process of launching to be reliable and repeatable with consistency, Dhanush has two sections: The Agnikul Launch Pad (ALP) and the Agnikul mission control centre (AMCC). Critical systems connecting these two sections, which are 4km from each other, are designed to ensure 100% operationality during countdown.

IN-SPACE chairman Pawan Goenka said: “The successful launch of SOrTeD is not just a milestone for Agnikul but marks a significant moment for private players contributing to growing India’s space sector... At IN-SPACE, we are committed to support all young pioneers as they help propel India to a leadership position in the global space arena.”

<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/desi-so-launches-worlds-1st-rocket-with-one-piece-3d-printed-engine/articleshow/110575268.cms>

India says rising solar cell output will curb imports from China

India expects a surge in domestic solar cell-making capacity in the coming months, which will help reduce its dependence on imported materials from China to manufacture solar panels, the country’s top renewable energy official said. The nation’s cells capacity is set to jump five-fold to about 30 gigawatts a year by March 2025, Renewable Energy Secretary Bhupinder Singh Bhalla said in an interview in New Delhi. This will allow the government to widen import restrictions aimed at boosting local adoption of solar power hardware and achieving Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s goal of increasing self-sufficiency in the sector. In a bid to wean itself off Chinese imports, India has levied taxes on some solar components and introduced a so-called approved list of models and manufacturers, a non-tariff trade barrier that’s essentially meant to keep foreign shipments out.

US and European officials have also complained that a flood of new supply from Chinese solar companies has overwhelmed global demand and is stymieing efforts to develop their own supply chains. The Biden administration last month issued a suite of rules strengthening tariffs against Chinese solar equipment. But while India’s domestic module output has already picked up thanks to existing import curbs, manufacturers continue to rely on China for other back-end products that go into making solar panels.

Cells, another component, will be the next item to be restricted, though the government will be more cautious this time around, according to Bhalla.

“We plan to give the industry around two years time to prepare so that we have ample domestic capacity,” Bhalla said. “It should be a firm, forward-looking policy.” The government had to temporarily withdraw the non-tariff import restriction on modules last year after the local industry complained that tightening supplies were disrupting projects.

Manufacturers are also hoping for higher domestic demand before committing to new capacities, according to Rohit Gadre, a BloombergNEF analyst based in Mumbai. “In absence of adequate local demand, manufacturers will be looking out for strong growth in the export markets for cells and modules made in India,” Gadre said. □□

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/renewables/india-says-rising-solar-cell-output-will-curb-imports-from-china/printarticle/111251864.cms>

Swadeshi Activities

Book Release Ceremony

Pictorial Glimpses



Swai Madhopur, Rajasthan



SBA Meeting at Guwahati, Assam



Prantiya Vichar Varga, Malva Prant

Swadeshi Activities

Swavlambi Bharat Abhiyan

Meetings

Pictorial Glimpses



Goalpara, Assam



Sindhudurg, Kokan



Imphal, Manipur



Buldana, Maharashtra



Mohali, Punjab

