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POLITY AND GOVERNANCE

PIB,NOV8,2022

Union Minister Dr Jitendra Singh chairs the first ever Joint Society Meeting of Autonomous Institutes (IITM, INCOIS, NCESS, NCPOR, and NIOT) of Ministry of Earth Sciences (MoES) in New Delhi

“Marine Surveillance” to get a facelift with support from Space applications for sharing valuable inputs with the Security Agencies

Completion of all testing to proceed for shallow water testing of manned submersible MATSYA 6000 during the first quarter of 2024

Oceansat will be launched on 26th of November, 2022

Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) Science & Technology; Minister of State (Independent Charge) Earth Sciences, Dr Jitendra Singh today convened the first ever Joint Society Meeting of Autonomous Institutes (IITM, INCOIS, NCESS, NCPOR, NIOT) of Ministry of Earth Sciences (MoES) and called for breaking the "silos" to work with integration and "whole of government" approach. All the five autonomous bodies Societies, that is, Indian Institute of Tropical Meteorology (IITM), Indian National Centre for Ocean Information Services (INCOIS), National Centre for Earth Science Studies (NCESS), National Centre for Polar and Ocean Research (NCPOR) and National Institute of Ocean Technology (NIOT) have been merged into a single Society of MoES.

Dr Jitendra Singh said that the move is in tune with Prime Minister Narendra Modi's directive to avoid duplication and working in silos and to aim for greater integration to achieve the maximum output. He said, PM Modi not only has a natural predilection for science but is also forthcoming in supporting and promoting science and technology based initiatives and projects in the last 7-8 years. Apart from Dr Jitendra Singh, who is the President of the Society, Members, Dr. M. Ravichandran, Secretary, Ministry of Earth Sciences, Shri S. Somanath, Secretary, Department of Space, Dr. N Kalaiselvi, DG, CSIR and Secretary DSIR, Dr. K. Radhakrishnan, Former Chairman, ISRO, Bengaluru, Dr. P. S. Goel, Former Secretary, MoES, Dr. Harsh K Gupta, Former Secretary, DOD/MoES, Dr. Shailesh Nayak, Former Secretary, MoES & Director, NIAS, Bengaluru, Dr. GA Ramadass, Director, NIOT, Dr. T Srinivasa Kumar, Director, INCOIS, Dr. R. Krishnan, Director, IITM, Prof.

Jyotiranjana S Ray, Director, NCESS, Dr. Thamban Meloth, Director, NCPOR took part in today's deliberations. Dr Jitendra Singh said, Ministry of Earth Sciences has taken the notion of "Marine Surveillance" to a new level, where Space applications are also being deployed to share the valuable inputs with the Security Agencies. The Minister informed that Oceansat will be launched on 26th of November, 2022 and installation of a NASA-ISRO Radar System is at an advanced stage. He also informed greater use of Global Navigation Satellite System, GNSS, as one of the key sources of position information, alongside radio navigation systems, which exchange information with nearby ships and land-based vessel traffic services (VTS) on a vessel's position, course and speed. Taking a review of the Design and Development of Manned Submersible – MATSYA 6000, Dr Jitendra Singh said, completion of all testing to proceed for shallow water testing of manned submersible during the first quarter of 2024 using the NIOT-MoES research vessel ORV Sagar Nidhi. He informed that based on the ongoing progress, it is expected that all the long lead components shall get realised by the third quarter of 2023 to proceed for the subcomponent integration and testing by following due DNV approved interface procedures.

Dr Jitendra Singh said, for the benefit of ocean scientific community, under the Deep Ocean Mission's SAMUDRAYAAN program of Ministry of Earth Sciences (MoES), the deep-water human submersible MATSYA 6000 is designed and developed indigenously by National Institute of Ocean Technology, an autonomous institute under MoES. The battery-powered submersible MATSYA 6000 shall have the capability to carry three persons upto 6000 m water depth and perform scientific exploration with a normal endurance period of 12h and emergency support for 96 hours. Manned submersible have the advantages of carrying scientists to deep sea areas for research on life in extreme environments by biological sampling, habitat analysis and in situ experiments for ocean mineral exploration. Secretary, MoES, Dr M Ravichandra said that considering the complexity in the depth rated component custom design, realisation and testing of other subsystems; contract were signed for the long lead items with national and international agencies for the subcomponents realization. Titanium Alloy personnel sphere for 6000 m operation capability is under progress with VSSC-ISRO. A design document is submitted to DNV for approval and ingot material processing is being carried out at MIDHANI and forging is planned at L&T. Electron Beam Welding facility augmentation is being completed at LPSC-ISRO.

ECONOMIC TIMES, NOV 8, 2022

Amit Shah highlights PM Modi's efforts to boost irrigation, drinking water supply in Gujarat

Home Minister Amit Shah on Tuesday shared a short video to highlight Prime Minister Narendra Modi's efforts to augment water supply in Gujarat, saying the state suffered from water crisis 21 years ago, but every household is now receiving it through taps. Every countryman, especially the young generation in Gujarat, must watch the video that highlights Modi's "foresight and hardwork" in dealing with the state's water crisis, he said on Twitter. The video says the water table in the state had plummeted to 200 metre in 2001, the year Modi took over as its chief minister, from 30 metre in 1975, with its dry and arid area increasing. Through various schemes, the then state government under Modi built a network of canals spanning across 1,126 km and supplied piped water to households while height of the Narmada dam was raised to 138.68 metre, it says.

Modi was Gujarat chief minister from 2001-14 before becoming the prime minister. Assembly polls in the state are scheduled to be held on December 1 and 5, and the BJP is pulling out all the stops to maintain its winning streak since 1995. The Congress has been its traditional rival in the state, while the Aam Aadmi Party is also running a high-decibel campaign to make a mark.

TELEGRAPH,NOV8,2022

Hindutva's Dalit card

Large sections of Dalits are still attached to Hindu religious traditions and overwhelmingly participate in various local rituals

Harish S. Wankhede

There is a general perception that the Bhartiya Janata Party has become 'inclusive' by reaching closer to the other backward classes. In Uttar Pradesh, the BJP's social engineering initiatives are aimed at the inclusion of non-Yadav OBCs (Kurmis, Jats, Sainis, Mauryas). Similar tactics are also being employed to mobilise certain groups within the scheduled castes by arguing that large chunks of non-Jatav Dalits are disillusioned with the Dalit movement. Further, the BJP suggests that there is a greater representation of Dalits in the party organisation on account of its cultural initiatives and the Centre's economic welfare initiatives.

The Opposition, however, lacks an alternative model to impress Dalit-OBC groups even though the majority of the latter still survive under degraded socio-economic conditions. The Dalits emerged as a radical political class in the 1990s, imagining the 'bahujan' as the new upholder of power on account of the Bahujan Samaj Party's assertive interventions. The social engineering of Kanshi Ram, the founder of the BSP, which led to the forming of social and political alliances amongst Dalits and OBCs, was an impressive innovation in Indian democracy. Mayavati, consequently, became chief minister of UP several times and initiated a new era of the politics of social justice. However, the BSP's strategies fizzled out in a short period of time and it has now been relegated to an insignificant force. The BJP exploited the changed political condition and offered Dalits effective social and cultural strategies to portray itself as an 'inclusive' party.

Large sections of Dalits are still attached to Hindu religious traditions and overwhelmingly participate in various local rituals. The Hindutva brigade has manipulated these local traditions to foment communal clashes with Muslims. Local Dalit deities (Savari, Eklavya), folk heroes (Suheldev, Nishadraj), village traditions and cultural artefacts have been used to build a bond with Hindutva politics. The BJP has also exploited the anxieties of disadvantaged Dalit castes towards the politically mobile Jatavs. The right-wing consciously manipulated the quotidian social differences among caste and communities to generate social and political rivalries. During the elections, especially in SC constituencies, a strong rhetoric against the BSP's Jatav candidates helped build an alliance among the non-Jatav Dalits, OBCs and social elites.

In recent times, the BJP has impressed aspirational Dalits by promoting organisations like the Dalit Indian Chamber of Commerce and Industry and by announcing economic welfare initiatives (like the PM Mudra scheme) and other social support programmes. The BJP also claims that it honours B.R. Ambedkar, often utilising his images in its campaigns, and promises not to disturb the reservation policy. Hindutva's Dalit agenda is impressive. It has helped the BJP transcend its 'Brahmin Bania' credentials to appear as a party of subaltern castes. However, the recent rise in cases of caste atrocities, rapes and murders against Dalits suggests that the BJP is not interested in bringing dynamic social reforms. The right-wing lacks effective strategies to deal with the claims of social injustices, caste conflicts and atrocities. It focuses on exploiting emotive cultural values to consolidate its conservative social base. The Opposition (including the BSP) lacks a committed cultural agenda to challenge Hindutva's hegemonic cultural politics. Mobilising lower caste groups on issues of class exploitation and caste discrimination is essential. But it is insufficient to dislodge the BJP from its pedestal. The emotive social concerns and cultural sensibilities of the subaltern communities must be harnessed to the politics of social justice to challenge Hindutva's grip on Dalits.

PIB,NOV10,2022

Ministry of Rural Development signs MoU to support effective governance systems under DAY- NRLM

Ministry of Rural Development (MoRD) has signed an MoU with Gurugram-based Veddis Foundation to support setting up of effective governance systems under the Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana - National Rural Livelihood Mission (DAY-NRLM), strengthen State capacities, establish innovative models and implement the national strategy for Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRI) and SHG convergence. The partnership with MoRD and Veddis Foundation is for three years and is non-financial in nature. The MoU was signed by Joint Secretary, Rural Livelihoods, Ms. Nita Kejrewal from MoRD and Mr Murugan Vasudevan, CEO, Veddis Foundation in a meeting chaired by Secretary, Rural Development, Shri Nagendra Nath Sinha.

Speaking on the occasion, Joint Secretary, Rural Livelihoods, Ms. Nita Kejrewal said “Keeping in view the scale of works under DAY-NRLM, particularly in the areas of strengthening federations, specifically the cluster level Federations, it is important to have partnerships with various stakeholders with aligned vision. We are confident that this partnership with the Veddis Foundation, which has a very good experience in such areas of work, will help MoRD in furthering its agenda in a more effective manner and also ensure much needed technical assistance to SRLMs, including improvement in the governance systems of the states”. Mr. Murugan Vasudevan, CEO, Veddis Foundation, said on the occasion “Our work with States on the rural livelihoods mission over the last five years has shown that building state capacity is the most important factor in enabling sustainable and effective governance of large multi-stakeholder programs like the DAY-NRLM. We look forward to our partnership with MoRD to establish replicable governance model at scale for such programs”. As per the MoU, Veddis Foundation will establish a PMU in the Rural Livelihood (RL) Division of Ministry of Rural Development for the next five years. Taking a paradigm shift from universal access to quality of access, the partnership will hinge on data driven governance as a lever for effective and efficient utilisation of public funds. Veddis Foundation, which has put in place PMUs in the State Rural Livelihoods Missions (SRLMs) of Haryana, Himachal Pradesh and Manipur, and in the past in Rajasthan, will be working on a 360-degree approach - building field insights into policy action as well as effective implementation of government’s top level priorities. It will be a strategic technical partner for extending policy support, embedding improved processes and enabling systems strengthening for effective implementation of DAY-NRLM along with training and capacity building support for state partners.

One of the initial focuses as part of the MoU is an annual report on the State of SRLMs in which various SRLMs are expected to be evaluated on the basis of a ‘Governance index’. The DAY-NRLM is the flagship program of the Government of India towards creating institutional platforms for the rural poor, mainly women, enabling them to increase household income through sustainable livelihood enhancements and improved access to financial services in addition to increased access to rights, entitlements, and public services. With an annual budget outlay of over Rs. 13,000 crores, the program is spread across 7.15 lakh villages in 723 districts of 34 States and Union Territories, and has brought more than 8.6 crore rural households under its fold.

TELEGRAPH,NOV11,2022

Regressive thought

India is on its way to becoming an anti-knowledge polity

G.N. Devy

One of the recurring themes in the Bharatiya Janata Party-led government’s discourse is that of making India ‘vishwaguru’. The government’s policy for education, its restructuring of the higher education regulators, its wishful depiction of ancient India, and its cultural politics are all oriented towards claiming for India the status of a ‘knowledge-country’. On the face of it, the idea sounds alluring. But it cannot be accomplished through patting one’s back or through propaganda. Unless the deep incompatibility between the Sanskrit universe of knowledge and the ‘universal knowledge’ by which the world lives is understood, all adventurist steps taken are likely to result in the exact opposite of what is being desired. In the process, India may be pushed into becoming an anti-knowledge nation. Throughout human history, man has attempted to understand the universe by using various ingenious methods of encrypting its formal and material features. From the ancient Egyptian hieroglyphs and Greek trigonometry to medieval Europe’s magical code languages, these methods had essentially aimed at storing human experiences in ways that would make them ‘transferable’— giving them life beyond their natural life. The desire to represent, store, transact and pass on to the succeeding generations what humans ‘know’ culminated in the conceptualisation by the 17th century German thinker, Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz, of a ‘pure language’, a language of signs that do not have meaning in themselves but have the ability to represent constant and entirely non-subjective meanings. During the historical phase of transition from the use of Latin to that of the modern European languages for intellectual and

imaginative expression, the obsessive attraction for inventing a symbolic method for ‘stating knowledge’ made it possible for European scholars to arrive at sorting ideas in terms of what came to be accepted as ‘universal science’. Earlier, in 1582, Giordano Bruno had come up with the idea that combining ‘associations of ideas’ in manageable symbolic strings would help hold a vast amount of knowledge in a relatively small band of human memory. A century later, in 1675, Leibniz proposed his celebrated ‘logical calculi’, stated in the aphorism, ‘*existere nihil aliud esse quam harmonicum esse*’ — ‘to exist is nothing other than to be harmonious’. In that span of a century and a half, from Bruno to Leibniz, Europe had discovered the ability of the human mind to reduce diverse perceptions to a ‘harmonised understanding’, capable of being stated in abstract terms. This ability is what is described in philosophical terms as ‘rationality.’ If René Descartes (1596–1650) gave to Europe the philosophical basis for its rationality, often highlighted through his claim, ‘*Je pense, donc je suis*’ (‘I think, therefore I am’), Bruno, Leibniz and their contemporaries gave Europe the ‘method’ of stabilising knowledge on the bedrock of rationality.

The history of ‘sorting out and storing ideas’ in Europe should be of interest to India as well for in the process memory started getting transmuted from being just a commonly shared heritage of human societies to a higher order platform for commanding and canonising the cerebral acts of humans, resulting in the idea of a ‘universal knowledge’, which is the real business of universities. These historical factors would not be of relevance to the analysis of the trajectory of ‘knowledge’ in India had it not been for the fact that they clearly point to the use of memory for encrypting and classifying knowledge. In Indian traditions of learning, memory had been a central interest from the earliest times. In fact, what was worth learning was described with the term, ‘smriti’ (‘remembering’ as well as ‘the remembered’). The Bhagavad Gita states rather categorically that the weakening of smriti leads to the destruction of the intellect: *smriti-branshat buddhi-nash*. In ancient literature and theoretical compositions, special care was taken to aid and facilitate easy remembering of the text by introducing various accessible mnemonic tools, quite akin to the Ciceronian use of memory. Rarely has another civilisation in the world focused on developing natural memory as the central tool of learning as India did for millennia.

However, the fundamental difference between the turn that the 17th-century use of memory took in Europe and the fixation with memory in India was that the idea of a ‘science of knowledge or a universal knowledge’ did not find favour with those who were expected to cultivate knowledge. The idea of knowledge as ‘knowing’, bringing in a subjective intuition as the horizon of intellect together with the seasoned use of memory for a flawless reproduction of the texts from the past, had resulted in ‘guru-parmapara’ and ‘apprenticeship’ becoming the privileged mode of education in India. This was a challenge. It became even more menacing when combined with the stringent gender and caste segregation that besieged Indian society

more than two thousand years ago. The gender-exclusionary and clan or caste-based apprenticeship mode of knowledge transmission became a formidable hindrance to producing any genuinely ‘universal science’. While a high-accuracy memorisation continued to be the tool for storing developments in ideas, the access to such memorisation was restricted by the caste origin of the learners. During pre-colonial times, two broad streams of memory-based knowledge emerged in India without the possibility for mutual exchange and cross-fertilisation: one, the memory traditions of those with access to abstract symbols, including writing; and, two, the memory traditions of those who were denied symbolic abstractions. The latter continued as ‘knowledge-workers’ within their limited confines. The possibility of India devising a grand scheme of classifying ‘all that was known’ in the diverse knowledge traditions with the help of a single and unified symbolic grid ‘all memory’ did not take shape.

It is with the wound of a deeply divided ‘memory field’ that India has been trying to internalise the idea of a ‘universal knowledge’ over the last two centuries. The 19th-century attempts to modernise society had to launch upon the project of creating access to a shared band of abstract signs the transition to new fields of knowledge that qualified to be ‘universal’ science. Similar, but far more difficult, was the struggle to get girls into formal education. After a century and a half of that difficult struggle, the BJP education policy is trying to prioritise and privilege the ‘sanatan vidyas’ and coaxing scientists to revisit long-forgotten theories in preference over what is described in the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh’s terminology as ‘the pollution caused by Western knowledge’. Sheepish vice-chancellors and Boards of Studies are propagating the mood in order to safeguard their funding. If the project succeeds, we may soon find ourselves becoming an anti-knowledge nation. If the education policy imposed on universities asks for unquestioning acceptance of all that was ancient, the result will be a fatal loss of the ability to ask meaningful questions, the main task for which universities exist.

G.N. Devy is Chair, The People’s Linguistic Survey of India

TELEGRAPH,NOV13,2022

Parsing populism

Populist is a useless term that needs to be retired

Mukul Kesavan

‘Populist’ is a useless term that needs to be retired. Over the past twenty years, it has been pressed into service to describe utterly dissimilar political figures and their movements. Bernie Sanders, Donald Trump, Recep Tayyip Erdogan, Rodrigo Duterte, Lula da Silva, Jair Bolsonaro, Viktor Orbán, Giorgia Meloni, Marine Le Pen and Narendra Modi are routinely described as populists as if they had some quality in common that was so defining that it made their obvious differences unimportant. We don’t have to be pundits or political scientists to see that Lula da Silva and Narendra Modi proceed from unlike political premises. Lula came to power and ruled as a politician committed to raising the living standards of Brazil’s poor through the redistribution of wealth generated by Brazil’s commodities boom. Narendra Modi came to power at the head of a Hindu supremacist party backed by a family of Hindu supremacist organisations.

All ruling parties and leaders are similar in that they discharge similar functions — law and order, welfare, taxation, foreign affairs — but it isn’t hard to discern their principal ideological motivations if only because they trumpet them so loudly. Lula’s redistributionist message has remained the same through two terms in office and, more recently, during his successful campaign for a third term as president. Modi, his party and its affiliated front organisations have been consistently hostile to Muslims and explicitly communal in their rhetoric and their use of the State to further their goal of a Hindu rashtra. To find an editorial or academic perch from which Lula and Modi (or Trump and Sanders) appear as two instances of a single tendency, two peas in a single categorical pod, suggests — a) a disabling distance from real life b) a commitment to definitions so abstract as to make ideology invisible or c) a mandarin centrism that makes the lumping together of campaigning redistributionists on the one hand and crusading supremacists on the other ideologically convenient.

The conventional definition of populism, a political position that invokes the People against a corrupt elite, is meaningless in the context in which it is most often used, namely electoral democracy. From Eisenhower to Biden, from Nehru to Modi, from Attlee to Sunak, from de Gaulle to Macron, it’s hard to think of a single political leader who did not claim to represent the People or didn’t promise to make distant political institutions more responsive to the aforementioned People. ‘Populist’ is almost never a term of self-description. Nigel Farage isn’t going to put his hand on his heart and say, ‘I’m a populist.’ It’s always used to describe someone else and it’s always a pejorative description even when it’s dressed up as a disinterested academic term. Basically it’s a way of describing an argument or policy position that falls outside whatever passes as the consensus of that time, the common sense of the moment.

Tamil Nadu's mid-day meal scheme was unanimously condemned as 'populist' by the gatekeepers of economic orthodoxy when it was first introduced. It was seen as a vulgar bid to buy votes with public money, ignoring the prudent nostrums of expert economists. As the discipline of welfare economics evolved, the midday meal scheme was redesignated as a pioneering policy intervention. More recently, the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Economic Guarantee Act was described by its critics as an extravagant populist scheme that would unbalance the labour market and break the national budget. It's most vocal critic was Narendra Modi. Not only has it survived into his second term as prime minister but it is also seen as an important way of shoring up rural purchasing power at a time of agricultural stagnation. We should describe these two initiatives accurately: they are forms of redistributive welfarism. Even if you disagree with them, it's important to call them by their proper name instead of fastidiously dismissing them as that undefinable thing: populism.

The challenge to what passed as the secular consensus in India by the Ram Janmabhoomi campaign of the 1980s can be glibly described as populist. According to its leaders, it was directed against a deracinated elite, out of touch with the pulse of the Hindu public, who were, in this construction, India's constitutive People. The presiding ideology of the Ram Temple movement was Hindutva or Hindu nationalism which, after eight years of BJP rule, is the de facto orthodoxy of the Indian State. But the fact that it was once an ideological outlier and is now, increasingly, the common sense of Indian politics doesn't change its proper description: it was a majoritarian movement led by a Hindu supremacist party. The sangh parivar, both in power and out of it, is a majoritarian formation committed to Hindu supremacy. To describe this very specific ideological disposition as 'populist' is meaningless and dangerously misleading.

'Populism' is an obfuscatory term used by centrist gatekeepers to conflate the ideological positions they disapprove of and disagree with. When Bolsonaro was elected president, The Economist tweeted out an article on his political agenda. The tweet went: "Jair Bolsonaro is a dangerous populist, with some good ideas." The article the tweet was advertising was a near-perfect example of the centrist deployment of 'populism' as an ideological gambit.

According to the article, Bolsonaro was a militarist thug in league with torturers and his government was likely to wreck the environment, human rights and education but if he followed up on his enthusiasm for neoliberal ideas, he'd be really good for Brazil. More recently, when Lula was re-elected, the same magazine published an article warning Lula that he had to jettison his populist economic ideas if Brazil was to prosper. In the hands of The Economist's leader writers, 'populist' does a lot of

work. It takes the racist, homophobic, violent authoritarianism that defines Bolsonaro on the one hand and the redistributive, welfarist platform that defines Lula and makes them both the same 'ism' — populism. As the overlapping crises of the last fifteen years — economic, environmental, medical and military — unravel globalisation and threaten the economy and the ecology of the world in existential ways, the Davos establishment that failed to anticipate, understand or stabilise these crises has taken an increasingly scattergun approach to describing political positions that don't fit its failing prescriptions. All of them, no matter how different, are described as populist. The narcissism of neoliberals is so complete that the views of the rest of the world are dissolved into one kind of white noise: populism.

This is a problem because nearly all the names listed at the start of this column with the exception of Lula and Sanders can be precisely categorised: they are majoritarians who use sexual, religious and racial categories to demonise and harass minorities. They are ethnic supremacists who constitute the single largest threat to liberal democracy in the modern world. A term that clubs them together with unlike figures isn't fit for purpose because it distracts us from the necessary task of naming the world.

INDIAN EXPRESS, NOV 13, 2022

P Chidambaram writes: Blessed are the poor (but not all)

P Chidambaram writes: To create a new reservation for the poor will advance economic justice. But to exclude the poor among the SC, ST and OBC (constituting approximately 81.5 per cent of the total poor) from the reservation will deny equality and justice to the poorest among the poor

P Chidambaram

The subject of this column is at the intersection of law, politics, concept of equality and the idea of social justice.

I have a fairly well-formed position on what is social justice in contemporary India and the way forward. I also have a strong sense of how unequal Indian society is and the hundred things that we have to do to make Indian society more equal. At the intersection of social justice and equality, at times, social justice has suffered and, at other times, equality has been sacrificed.

Laws are made by the legislature which is an assembly, overwhelmingly, of politicians. Laws are administered and applied by judges who are removed from politics. Rulers must fear judges, judges must not fear the rulers. The outcome of the

intersection of law and politics is the true measure of whether a country is governed by law or not. The judgment of the Supreme Court in Janhit Abhiyan delivered on November 7, 2022 is a fine example of the dilemmas that are encountered at the intersection of law, politics, social justice and equality. The judgment was delivered in a batch of cases that challenged the validity of the 103rd Amendment to the Constitution, popularly called the ‘EWS reservation case’. EWS stands for Economically Weaker Sections. For this column, I prefer to call them ‘poor’. I have decided to hold back my view on the judgment and use this column to lay out the issues and request the reader to take a view.

The Fundamental Issues

There are many kinds of reservations today in educational institutions and government employment. These reservations are for the “socially and educationally backward classes” which mean the scheduled castes (SC), scheduled tribes (ST) and other backward classes (OBC). There are historical — and incontrovertible — reasons why these sections of the people are socially and educationally backward. Reservation was considered an instrument of ‘affirmative action’ and reservations for SC, ST and OBC have acquired legitimacy and approval. These reservations are presumed to have caused ‘angst’ among sections of the people who do not enjoy any reservation, notably, citizens who are not SC, ST or OBC. The idea was born that the poor among these citizens suffer similar disadvantages in education and employment; so, can a new reservation be carved out for the poor? The idea was conceptually fair but there were obstacles:

Can the poor be considered “socially and educationally backward” which is the only category recognised by the Constitution of India for providing reservation? Will reservation for the poor to advance economic justice violate the ‘basic structure’ of the Constitution? Since, by judge-made law, all reservations together cannot exceed 50 per cent of the ‘seats’ or ‘jobs’, will not a new reservation of 10 per cent breach that ceiling?

The doctrine of ‘basic structure’ and the principle of a ‘50 per cent ceiling’ are traceable to judgments that interpreted the Constitution. Once the Honourable Judges decided to shed the inhibitions created by judge-made law, the path forward was clear. All five Honourable Judges agreed that economic justice is on the same plane as social justice and that a new reservation based on economic criteria would not violate the basic structure of the Constitution. They also agreed that exceeding the ceiling of 50 per cent in this case was not unconstitutional. They unanimously upheld reservation based on economic criteria and the quantum of 10 per cent. Criticism of this part of the judgment is muted. The issue that has divided opinion is whether the reservation can exclude the poor among the SC, ST and OBC?

Poverty is the main cause of deficiencies in nutrition, nurturing and early learning. These deficiencies limit or deny access to education and employment. The question that arises is, Who are the poor? The 103rd Constitutional amendment had left it to the states to notify the poor based on “family income and other indicators of economic disadvantage”. The minority judgment cited the Sinho Commission (July 2010) which had concluded that 31.7 crore people were below the poverty line (BPL). Of these, the SC population was 7.74 crore, ST population was 4.25 crore and OBC population was 13.86 crore, totaling 25.85 crore or 81.5 per cent of the BPL population. These proportions among the BPL population could not have changed significantly since 2010. The crucial question is, whether Article 15(6) and Article 16(6) that exclude the poor among the SC, ST and OBC from the new reservation are Constitutionally valid? On this issue, the Honourable Judges were divided 3:2. Mr Justice Ravindra Bhat wrote a powerful dissent in which Chief Justice Lalit concurred. His words, “Our Constitution does not speak the language of exclusion” will reverberate in the court halls of the Supreme Court for many years. In my view, the dissent is “an appeal to the brooding spirit of the law, to the intelligence of a future day, when a later decision may possibly correct the error” (per Chief Justice Charles Evans Hughes).

Reflect on these possible conclusions: To create a new reservation for the poor will advance economic justice. But to exclude the poor among the SC, ST and OBC (constituting approximately 81.5 per cent of the total poor) from the reservation will deny equality and justice to the poorest among the poor.

ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

ECONOMIC TIMES,NOV8,2022

India says Russia oil deals advantageous as Janet Yellen visits Delhi

India will continue buying Russian oil because it benefits the country, India's foreign minister said on Tuesday after meeting his Russian counterpart for the fifth time this year, adding that the two countries were expanding their trade ties.

Subrahmanyam Jaishankar is visiting Moscow for the first time since Russia invaded Ukraine in February. His trip comes as U.S. Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen visits New Delhi this week to hold talks with Indian officials, including possibly on capping Russian oil prices. India has become Russia's largest oil customer after China, as its refiners snap up discounted cargoes shunned by Western buyers. Russia's share of India's oil imports surged to an all-time high of 23% in September, from just about 2% before the invasion. Jaishankar was accompanied by senior officials in charge of agriculture, petroleum and natural gas, ports and shipping, finance, chemicals and fertiliser, and trade - which he said showed the importance of ties with Russia. Both sides are keen to expand their rupee-rouble trade given Russia's problems with the dollar.

"Russia has been a steady and time-tested partner. Any objective evaluation of our relationship over many decades would confirm that it has actually served both our countries very, very well," Jaishankar said in a joint news conference with his Russian counterpart Sergei Lavrov. Asked about a Group of Seven plan to cap the price of Russian oil, Jaishankar said that as the world's third-largest consumer of oil and gas where the levels of income were not high, India had to look after its own interests. "And in that respect, quite honestly, we have seen that the India-Russia relationship has worked to our advantage," he said. "So, if it works to my advantage, I would like to keep that going."

Reuters reported on Monday that India's Oil and Natural Gas Corp had applied to the new Russian operator of the Sakhalin-1, following the exit of ExxonMobil, to retain its stake in the oil and gas project in the Far East. India has not condemned Moscow's invasion, but has called for peace and dialogue and Jaishankar reiterated India would "be supportive of any initiative that de-risks the global economy and stabilises global order". Russia has been India's biggest supplier of military equipment for decades and it is the fourth-biggest market for Indian pharmaceutical products. Jaishankar said India needed to boost its exports to Russia to balance bilateral trade that is now tilted towards Russia.

TELEGRAPH,NOV8,2022

Clearer vision

The Thin Edge | The Republic is a work in progress

Ruchir Joshi

I recently attended a kind of symposium — a series of talks and discussions around a subject of my interest. It wasn't a field that one automatically associates with politics, though often in the past, and increasingly now, the political is unavoidably and deeply woven into the areas of activity we were discussing. Across two days, various practitioners from marginalised or beleaguered groups from different parts of the world made their presentations around the subject, followed by question-answer sessions, the whole thing concluding with a general discussion between all the presenters and the attending audience. Over the two days, some patterns emerged.

Many of the people presenting came from groups with long histories of suffered oppression, economic exploitation, marginalisation, and the silencing and the dismemberment of their traditions. A lot of their work in the area we were discussing attempts to address these dark and painful histories and current realities. One of the results of forging these new articulations is that the work produced often does not meet the older, classically established, criteria of the field and completely bypasses them. Looking at the challenges in exploring alternative processes and presenting the output, one understands that the old rules of evaluation, dated ideas of rigour, and the fraying matrices of discussion have to be put aside if one is to properly engage with what is going on.

However, there is something else that also seems to be getting thrown up, and it is far from new, radical or in any way freeing. Of the marginal practitioners presenting at the event, the ones from the subcontinent all fell into the traps of stridency, oversimplification and extreme sensitivity to perceived slights and labels. Time and again, we heard sweeping statements that privileged the dramatic and the shocking over any nuanced truth. Repeatedly there were elisions and the papering over of difficult questions, hiding behind a kind of droning self-righteousness powered by un-interrogated cliches.

The reader might find it annoying that I am not naming or specifying the area that was being discussed. The reason for this is that my argument is a broader one, and the specifics of the particular practices and the exchanges that ensue from them would create a distraction from examining what I think is a larger problem. For example, there would be a general assertion — unarguably true — that the rights of such and such a marginal group had been trampled upon by various powers, from the British colonial authorities to the Central government of newly-independent India (or of a post-colonial neighbouring country) to the politicians, bureaucrats and police working at a district or state level. However, the maps, graph or photographs used to illustrate this would be from way back in the past and, sometimes, only tangentially connected to the community under focus; the visual implication being that the history of oppression had remained unchanging since the end of the 19th century. Similarly, a statement would be made: ‘my people were enslaved for labour and they continue to be enslaved today.’ And you found yourself thinking, ‘Hang on, but no. The labourers in that sector of industry are unionised, they have some spread of education, and they have long been able to mobilise to make demands for statehood for their cluster of ethnicities.’

The words, ‘slave’ and ‘slavery’, have specific meanings which are different from, say, ‘exploited labour’, or an indigenous, ethnic or religious group facing ‘economic oppression’, ‘structural deprivation’ or ‘economic apartheid’. Likewise, while watching out hawk-like for derogatory and patronising labellings and language-assumptions, the people presenting might repeatedly and unhesitatingly release their own: ‘the casteist-Brahmanical nation state hasn’t worked for us and we need to get rid of it!’ Hearing this, one is immediately reminded of the slogans of the sangh-falangists claiming that ‘the Nehru-Gandhi pseudo-secular cabal has done nothing for the country for 70 years!’

While one might understand and agree that the current models of the nation state all have a sell-by date that is increasingly visible and approaching rapidly, both the history and the possible future of the subcontinent are not that easily separated from complexity and nuance. One wants to ask both the Hindutva fanatic and the crypto-Stalinist-Maoist: what do you think would have happened had there been no Gandhi, no Nehru-Patel government and no secular and democratic Constitution of India when the British scarpered? How long would you have given the motley patchwork of statelets before it was submerged into a multi-cornered civil war and then re-swallowed in some way by the big powers? Yes, the Republic of India is a heavily flawed work in progress, and, yes, perhaps the goal of the work is not a super-power à la one of the 20th-century ‘developed’ nation states, but a new model of human organisation that genuinely benefits and protects the most deprived people living in this Himalayan and sub-Himalayan geography. But neither the grotesque fallacies authored by Servilekar-Golmalkar nor the analyses of hack Marxism, the defecations from a great height by tourist-historians such as Perry Anderson, will help us.

These wrenchings and twistings of history, whether they come from the far-Right or the far-Left will harm us, damage us, destroy us.

In contrast to the marker-pen assertions of the local presenters, what a young practitioner from a not-sonear-by country said and the way she said it gave me much more hope. Coming from a country that was lacerated by long-term racial oppression by the State, a place that is still extremely volatile with violence stemming from huge historical inequality, the young woman spoke about approaching her work with great mindfulness. She wasn't always sure where she was going, she said, but she was sure she had to try and arrive at new ways of doing things. Of course, she stumbles and, occasionally, falls but then she picks herself up, learns from the tripping, and continues, knowing she has to keep developing a new language in the field in which she is engaged. In the eloquence of her doubts and search for nuance, I saw a clarity that we in the subcontinent very much need.

TRIBUNE,NOV8,2022

India to begin outperforming world peers in a decade: Morgan Stanley

Has forecast that India will be the third-largest economy by 2027

Sandeep Dikshit

Over the next decade, while the US and China will remain just as important to global investors, we think the ascendancy of India's economy will mean it will feature more prominently on their radars, Chief Asia Economist at Morgan Stanley, Chetan Ahya, has written.

The key, he said, lies in the size and scale of India's opportunity set.

Morgan Stanley has forecast that India will be the third-largest economy by 2027, with its GDP more than doubling from the current \$ 3.4 trillion to \$8.5 trillion over the next 10 years. Incrementally, India will add more than \$ 400 billion to its GDP every year, a scale that is only surpassed by the US and China. These projections are underpinned by a confluence of favourable domestic and global forces. The most important change domestically is the shift in policy approach away from redistribution and towards boosting investment and job creation. This was evident in the introduction of the GST which creates a unified domestic market; corporate tax cuts; and production-linked schemes to incentivise investment. Overlaying this is the

emergence of a multipolar world where companies are diversifying their supply chains, with India emerging as a destination of choice. These forces will integrate India's fast-growing workforce into the global economy, says Morgan Stanley.

India is now making concerted efforts to attract investment to boost manufacturing exports. These new factories and offices of the world will draw more employment into the formal sector and more crucially raise productivity growth, creating a virtuous cycle of sustained growth. Indeed, the shift in India's policy approach is moving it closer to the East Asian model of leveraging exports, raising saving and recycling it for investment. Against this backdrop, India is entering a phase where incomes will be compounding at a fast rate on a high base. India's real GDP growth will average 6.5 per cent over the coming decade while China's will average 3.6 per cent. "We estimate India is set to drive a fifth of global growth in the coming decade. We think this offers a compelling opportunity for multinationals and global investors in a world starved of growth," said Ahya.

TELEGRAPH, NOV 9, 2022

Vicious cycle

A system without any steering control

Prabhat Patnaik

An essential characteristic of modern capitalism is that the living conditions of millions of people are determined by the whims and caprices of a handful of financial speculators; indeed, that is what 'leaving things to the market' really entails. Consider what is happening in India today. There is a massive outflow of finance from the country because of which the rupee is depreciating vis-à-vis the dollar. It has already fallen by more than 10% since February even though the Reserve Bank of India has spent over \$100 billion, almost a sixth of the country's foreign exchange reserves, to prevent such a fall, and even though it has been raising the interest rate almost in tandem with the rise in the United States of America to discourage such an outflow. The depreciation of the rupee is exacerbating the inflationary process by raising the cost of imported goods, including essential goods like oil; inflation, in turn, is creating expectations of a further depreciation of the exchange rate that become self-fulfilling: they encourage a further outflow of finance and cause a further depreciation of the rupee. So the spiral of depreciation-inflation-depreciation goes on, fed by the rush of speculators away from the rupee.

This latest financial outflow began with the rise in the US interest rates effected by the Federal Reserve Board from the beginning of March. The financial outflow was not only from India but from almost the entire capitalist world, barring one notable exception. That exception, ironically, was Russia, against whom sanctions were imposed by the Western powers led by the US with the avowed objective of ‘reducing the rouble to rubble’; and yet, after an initial fall, the rouble has recovered dramatically to reach a level vis-à-vis the dollar that has not been seen in years, aided no doubt by Russia’s insistence on being paid for its oil and gas in terms of roubles. The currencies of other capitalist countries, including India, by contrast are falling despite increases in their interest rates.

It may be thought that this financial outflow is occurring from India only because the rise in Indian interest rates has not yet matched the increase in US interest rates, that it would automatically come to an end when this matching is fully achieved; and, indeed, it is true that while the increase in the US federal funds rate between March 1 and October 31 has been 3%, the increase in the RBI’s repo rate has been around 2%. But the RBI is all set to raise the repo rate further, and will keep on doing so since it is about the only instrument available to it to entice financial flows under a neoliberal regime. It is not, therefore, some calculation of the interest rate differential that encourages the outflow of finance, but a general sense of a change in conjuncture, an abrupt loss of ‘confidence’ on the part of speculators in non-dollar currencies, a loss that is fed by the depreciation-inflation-depreciation spiral mentioned above. The worldwide rise in interest rates will increase unemployment everywhere. In heavily indebted third world countries, it will in addition make debt servicing even more difficult, leading to even more draconian measures of ‘austerity’. The worst victims of the rise in interest rates, therefore, will be the working people of the third world who count as the poorest in the world. Their living standards are thus being determined by the whims and caprices of speculators who are engaged in a flight to the dollar; and therein lies the viciousness and utter irrationality of capitalism.

John Maynard Keynes was aware of this irrationality. A thorough anti-communist, he thought capitalism could be saved by removing this irrationality and his panacea was ‘socialisation of investment’. Social ownership of the means of production, he thought, could be avoided, and the capitalist world spared the fate that had befallen Russia, by effecting socialisation of investment, that is, by bringing in the State as the agency that ensured perpetual full employment no matter what the level of private investment may be. The State, in short, was to be given charge of steering the system. The post-war period saw the

emergence of dirigiste regimes in the advanced capitalist world as well as in the third world where the State did steer the system to avoid demand constraints; indeed, the international monetary arrangement worked out at the Bretton Woods conference allowed member countries to impose controls on both trade and capital flows so that the State in each country could have the elbow room to play such a steering role. But this hybrid capitalism could not last.

Finance capital got strengthened, initially through a steady outpouring of dollars owing to US fiscal deficits that got accumulated in European and American banks and, later, after the oil shocks of the Seventies through an immense increase in OPEC oil revenues deposited with the same banks. It effected a new international arrangement, the neoliberal one, which meant a removal of the trade and capital controls that had existed earlier and, hence, the institution of relatively unrestricted flows of commodities and capital across country-borders. It meant, in short, a revival of the pre-1930s capitalism that not only the Bolsheviks but even liberal economists like Keynes had ‘despised’.

It again meant leaving the fates of millions to the whims of finance. The common people, who had seen growing hunger and poverty even when finance was flowing into the country, are now going to be hit hard when finance has started flowing out.

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MINT,NOV9,2022

Economic weakness is a tricky basis for a quota

The Supreme Court has judged it valid under our Constitution to reserve a tenth of all government jobs and educational seats for applicants from households at an economic disadvantage but ineligible for any caste quota. Such a policy was unveiled by India’s political leadership back in 2019. It extended affirmative action beyond redressal of social discrimination, its classic role in a caste-riven country, and sparked a post-Mandal quota debate. Given an upsurge of identity claims, we may eventually need our slice-up of jobs and seats to fully reflect Indian diversity. A financial status check for eligibility, however, pushes our reservation policy into a new realm, one that classifies citizens into ‘economically weaker sections’ (EWS) and must reckon with what constitutes such weakness. This is an exercise that can’t avoid arbitrary cut-offs. What riddles it with further complexity is the fact that economic status is a dynamic variable in an economy with fast growth and high inflation. This makes it hard to target its benefits accurately.

So, what qualifies a candidate for EWS selection? Identity-wise, one should not be eligible for a job or seat kept aside for any caste group or class with a separate quota. After that, to qualify as economically weak, the gross income of one's family over the past fiscal year should be below ₹8 lakh. While the asset ceilings include family ownership of farm land (must be less than 5 acres), an apartment (under 1,000 square feet) and a residential plot (either under 100 or 200 square yards depending on its location), the earnings part continues to baffle. The EWS inclusion limit happens to be the exclusion level for India's Other Backward Class (OBC) quota, the rationale offered for which (three decades ago) was a need to exclude a 'creamy layer' of better-off OBC families. Today, yearly income of ₹8 lakh per home serves as an official marker of general deprivation, going by the new policy. The OBC cut-off, meanwhile, is up for another upward revision to account for inflation.

With the rupee losing its real value over time, cream can go sour quickly. Who's well-off or badly-off shows very little stability. While monthly earnings of ₹66,000 may have spelt comfort two decades ago, it has now been deemed so low as to qualify for special help. A decade hence, it could possibly be taken as a pittance. Yet, our income tax policy, which aims to spare all but the better-off, has not kept pace. For non-elderly earners, tax liability kicks in as soon as one earns an annual sum of over ₹2.5 lakh. Even for a double-income household, that's below the EWS cap. Such a home is weak, it seems, but not too weak to be taxed. The cap doesn't square with other data sets either. A recent survey by People Research on India's Consumer Economy, for example, clubbed homes into brackets by distinct patterns of consumption and identified India's 'middle class' as homes with annual incomes in a range of ₹5 lakh to ₹30 lakh (at 2020-21 prices). Estimated at 30% of all homes last year, many of these count as weak in terms of income. So would 'aspirers', a bracket of households that earn ₹1.25 lakh to ₹5 lakh and make up 52% of our total, and also 'destitutes' that earn less and have a 15% share (as found by that study). While a big chunk of our weak-earning families are likely to be covered by pre-2019 caste-based quotas, it's evident that the EWS quota's filters have been set to let a large proportion of the rest through. The irony, then, is how little such a wide gate does to improve their odds of success.

PIB, NOV 10, 2022

Department of Pension & Pensioners' Welfare, Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions, Government of India has launched a nation-wide campaign for promotion of Digital Life Certificate for Central Government pensioners

The Department of Pension & Pensioners' Welfare, Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions, Government of India has launched a nation-wide campaign for promotion of Digital Life Certificate for Central Government pensioners. In November 2021, Dr. Jitendra Singh, the Minister of State (PP) had launched the milestone Face Authentication Technique of submitting Life Certificate through any Android Mobile Phone. Now the department is launching a special nation- wide campaign for promoting the Life certificate through Digital mode and popularizes the Face Authentication technique. All the registered Pensioners Associations, Pension Disbursing Banks, Ministries of Government of India and CGHS Wellness Centres have been directed to promote the Digital Life Certificate/Face Authentication Technique for submitting Life Certificate by organising special camps for 'Ease of Living' of pensioners. In this series, a Central Government team led by Sh. Deepak Gupta, Under Secretary, Department of Pension & Pensioners' Welfare shall be visiting Prayagraj where this campaign shall be organised on November 11,2022 for Central Government pensioners at SBI, Bamrauli Branch, Prayagraj, Uttar Pradesh. All pensioners can visit the Centre for submitting their Life Certificates through Digital means.

DLC figures from 1.10.22 till today are: Total DLC - 29,29,986, Total DLC through Face Authentication - 1,52,172, Total DLC CGOV - 11,95,594, and, Total DLC of CGOV through Face Authentication - 96,099.

Earlier, life certificates had to be submitted in physical form and for this old pensioners were forced to stand in queue outside banks for hours. Now, it has become possible at the click of a button from the comfort of their homes. In the process of submission of Life Certificate through Face Authentication by mobile, the details regarding Aadhaar Number, Mobile Number for OTP, PPO Number, Account Number with Bank/Post Office are required for the first time. This facility is also available to the employees of the State Government and the disbursing authority in the form of the Treasury Office of the State.

The central team has urged all the pensioners to visit the center to submit their life certificates through digital medium.

TELEGRAPH,NOV11,2022

For an equal India

As per the World Social Protection Report, only 24.4% of the country's population is covered by at least one social protection benefit

Sachi Satapathy

At a time when India is debating free welfare schemes, inadequate investment on a basic, universal social protection system is making millions of lives vulnerable and unequal. In its latest World Social Protection Report, 2020-2022, the International Labour Organization has listed a few areas of concern for countries lagging in investments in social protection to its needy population.

As per this ILO report, only 24.4% of India's population is covered by at least one social protection benefit as against more than 70% coverage in neighbouring East Asian countries. In India, the low social protection coverage for children (24.1%), mothers with newborns (41.5%), person with severe disabilities (5.6%), older people (42.5%) and labour force benefiting pension scheme (15.5%) are a few areas that stand against the building of an inclusive, equal society. Unfortunately, there is no social protection scheme for unemployed young people either. The Centre for Monitoring Indian Economy data suggest that 53 million people are unemployed in India. This is largely due to the decline of 8 million jobs in rural India on the back of a sluggish monsoon followed by a loss of 2.5 million salaried jobs. Failing to generate jobs for its young people and not implementing any social protection scheme for this vast population would have a devastating impact on India's progress. The National Crime Records Bureau says that 1,64,033 people claimed their lives in 2021; most of these deaths were related to employment.

The ILO report further says that public employment programmes, such as the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee schemes, can offer a degree of protection for informal sector workers, but coverage is usually limited and workers can only rely on benefits for up to 100 days. The need for expanding the safety net programme to increase rural demand notwithstanding, the Centre's budgetary allocation for this flagship rural jobs scheme in 2022-23 was cut by 25% compared to last year's expenditure. During the first Covid-19 lockdown, the scheme provided a critical lifeline for a record 110 million workers in rural areas. The government should have increased its allocation to enhance the social safety net of people desperately looking for such temporary jobs scheme for sustenance.

Next is the issue of injuries reported among workers. Only 3.7% of workers recovered in case of an injury (Employees' State Insurance Corporation reported injuries among 24.1 million workers in 2016-17 while 32 million were injured in 2017-18). In countries where a large proportion of health services are provided by the private sector, considerable effort should be deployed to ensure that the population is adequately protected financially. The ILO report says that evidence from Bangladesh, India and Nigeria indicates that dominant private-sector provisions without appropriate social health protection mechanisms contribute to high out-of-pocket expenditure on health. Owing to the relatively low investment in social protection, the amounts transferred under non-contributory benefits are usually too low to provide adequate protection. For instance, India's and Bangladesh's disability benefits are equivalent to only about 5% of GDP per capita and non-contributory old-age pensions in India, Thailand and Sri Lanka are even lower. Even though social assistance programmes targeted at poor or vulnerable individuals can provide some relief in case of loss of employment, the benefit levels are usually too low to ensure minimally adequate living conditions for the beneficiaries. Moreover, registration and qualification for these programmes can be slow or only available at specific times, leaving many workers unprotected. These gaps in the existing programmes must be examined to strengthen India's social protection system.

Until the country includes every single citizen in its social protection system (from the current 24%), ending free welfare schemes will be counter-productive and stand as a big hindrance to building an equal India.

(Sachi Satapathy works as Director, AF Development Care, New Delhi)

ECONOMIC TIMES, NOV 13, 2022

PM Narendra Modi launches infra projects worth Rs 15,233 cr in Andhra Pradesh

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday dedicated to the nation the Rs 2,917 crore U-field Onshore Deepwater Block project of ONGC in Andhra Pradesh. It is the deepest gas discovery project with a production potential of about three million metric standard cubic metres per day (MMSCMD). On the second day of his two-day tour of the state, the Prime Minister in all launched nine projects worth Rs 15,233 crore in virtual mode from the Andhra University Engineering College grounds and unveiled a plaque. Andhra Pradesh Governor Biswabhusan Harichandan, Chief Minister Y S Jagan Mohan Reddy, Union Railways and IT Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw, state ministers, MPs and legislators attended the event.

Modi dedicated the 39-km Narasannapeta to Pathapatnam section of NH-326A built at a cost of Rs 211 crore as part of the Srikakulam-Gajapati Corridor. The project would provide better connectivity to the backward areas of AP and Odisha. Modi laid foundation stone for the AP section of six-lane 100-km access-controlled greenfield Raipur- Visakhapatnam Economic Corridor of NH-130CD that will be built at a cost of Rs 3,778 crore. The Economic Corridor will provide faster connectivity between various industrial nodes of Chhattisgarh and Odisha to Visakhapatnam Port and Chennai - Kolkata National Highway. It will also improve connectivity to tribal and backward areas of AP and Odisha. The project is expected to be completed by October 2024, with a provision for expansion to 10-lane in future. Among others, the PM laid the foundation stone for a dedicated Port road from Convent Junction to Sheela Nagar Junction in Visakhapatnam. The Rs 566 crore project will serve as a dedicated freight corridor for Visakhapatnam Port traffic and ease traffic congestion in the city.

The road will be completed by March 2025. The Rs 2,650 crore 745-km Srikakulam Angul Natural Gas Pipeline Project of GAIL, for which he laid the foundation, will have a capacity of around 6.65 MMSCMD. A part of the Natural Gas Grid (NGG), the new pipeline will create vital infrastructure for supply of natural gas to households, industries, commercial units and automobile sector in AP and Odisha. The pipeline will supply natural gas to the City Gas Distribution Network in Srikakulam and Vizianagaram districts of AP. The long-delayed modernisation of the Visakhapatnam Fishing Harbour will finally take-off as the Prime Minister laid the foundation for the Rs 152 crore project. The upgradation and modernisation will double the handling capacity from 150 to 300 tonnes per day and provide safe landing and berthing. The Prime Minister virtually inaugurated the Grass Root petroleum depot at Guntakal built by the Union Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas at a cost of Rs 385 crore. He also dedicated the Vijayawada -Gudivada-Bhimavaram, Gudivada-Machilipatnam-Bhimavaram-Narasapuram railway lines doubling and electrification project to the nation. The project was completed last month at a cost of Rs 4,106 crore.

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

PIB,NOV7,2022

Indo-German Week of the Young Researchers 2022 inaugurated to foster collaboration among researchers

The Indo-German Week of the Young Researchers 2022, which was inaugurated today, brought young researchers from the two countries together to share their research interests and build long-term research partnerships. “Germany, with its long history of collaboration with India, is among the country’s top research collaborators in science, and Indian research students and young scientists visiting Germany has increased four times in the last decade,” Dr. Akhilesh Gupta, Secretary Science and Engineering Research Board (SERB) and Senior Advisor, Department of Science and Technology (DST) pointed out while inaugurating the week-long programme.

During the programme, an initiative jointly organised by the SERB, India, and German Research Foundation (DFG), 30 promising young researchers from India and Germany will discuss and interact closely on various contemporary matters in chemical sciences. The interaction will be the first of its kind among the researchers of two countries in the post-pandemic world. Each participant would deliver a research lecture and get an opportunity to interact closely with other participants. The main goal of the conclave is to foster collaboration among early and mid-career researchers and scientists who will be setting the agenda of scientific cooperation in the near future. The conclave is led by Prof Vinod K Singh from IIT Kanpur and Prof Burkhard König from University of Regensburg, Germany. The event was also addressed by Prof Vinod K Singh from IIT Kanpur and Prof Burkhard König from University of Regensburg, and an overview was given by Dr. Praveenkumar Somasundaram from DST / SERB and Dr. Daniel Pursche from DFG.

INDIAN TECHNOLOGY,NOV9,2022

India’s first private launch vehicle all set for maiden flight

Marking the beginning of private sector launches, the mission named ‘Prarambh’ will see Vikram-S carry three customer satellites in a sub-orbital flight.

Anonna Dutt

India's first privately developed launch vehicle – Hyderabad-based Skyroot's Vikram-S – is all set to make its maiden flight from the country's only spaceport in Sriharikota between November 12 and 16. Marking the beginning of private sector launches, the mission named 'Prarambh' will see Vikram-S carry three customer satellites in a sub-orbital flight.

The final launch date will be decided based on weather conditions. "The Vikram-S rocket is a single-stage sub-orbital launch vehicle which will carry three customer payloads and help test and validate technologies in the Vikram series space launch vehicles," said Naga Bharath Daka, COO and co-founder of the company. Sub-orbital flight, just like the ones undertaken by Jeff Bezos and Richard Branson, are those vehicles which are travelling slower than the orbital velocity – meaning it is fast enough to reach outer space but not fast enough to stay in an orbit around the Earth. The company is designing three Vikram rockets that will use various solid and cryogenic fuels to carry between 290 kg and 560 kg payloads to sun-synchronous polar orbits. In comparison, India's workhorse PSLV can carry up to 1,750kg to such an orbit while the newly-developed small satellite launch vehicle – meant for carrying smaller commercial satellites – can carry up to 300 kg to sun-synchronous orbit.

"We could build and get our Vikram-S rocket mission ready in such a short time only because of the invaluable support we received from ISRO and IN-SPACe (Indian National Space Promotion and Authorisation Centre), and the technology talent that we inherently possess. We are proud to announce our path-breaking mission 'Prarambh' dedicated to the Indian private space sector, which has hugely benefited from the reforms and vision of the Government of India," said Pawan Kumar Chandna, CEO and co-founder of Skyroot.

Although Skyroot will be the first private company to launch its rocket, others are not far behind. Take for example Agnikul Cosmos, whose semi-cryogenic Agnilet engine was test-fired for 15 seconds on Tuesday at Indian Space Research Organisation's (ISRO's) vertical testing facility at Thumba Equatorial Rocket Launching Station (TERLS), Thiruvananthapuram. ISRO's Small Satellite Launch Vehicles (SSLV) are also likely to be manufactured and operated by private players soon.

As for private satellite missions, ISRO's heaviest launch vehicle Mark III launched 36 OneWeb satellites (India's Bharti is a stakeholder). The space agency will be launching another fleet of 36 satellites for the company as well. Other than that, the space agency has also launched at least four satellites made by students.

PIB,NOV10,2022

Union Minister Dr Jitendra Singh dedicates to the nation, India's first national repository for life science data-'Indian Biological Data Center' (IBDC) at Faridabad, Haryana

IBDC has accumulated over 200 billion bases from 2, 08, 055 submissions from more than 50 research labs across India. IBDC dashboard provides customized data submission, access, data analysis services, and real-time SARS-CoV-2 variant monitoring across India. IBDC is mandated to archive all life science data generated from publicly-funded research in India

Users can contact the data center by submitting their requests at support@ibdc.rcb.res.in. Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) Ministry of Science and Technology; Minister of State (Independent Charge) Ministry of Earth Science; MoS PMO, Personnel, Public Grievances, Pensions, Space and Atomic Energy, Dr Jitendra Singh dedicated to the nation India's first national repository for life science data-'Indian Biological Data Center' (IBDC) at Faridabad, Haryana. Speaking on the occasion, Dr Jitendra Singh said, as per the BIOTECH-PRIDE guidelines of the Government of India, IBDC is mandated to archive all life science data generated from publicly-funded research in India.



Supported by the Department of Biotechnology (DBT), it has been established at Regional Centre of Biotechnology (RCB), Faridabad with a data 'Disaster Recovery' site at National Informatics Centre (NIC), Bhubaneswar.

It has a data storage capacity of about 4 petabytes and houses the ‘Brahm’ High Performance Computing (HPC) facility. The computational infrastructure at IBDC is also made available for researchers interested in performing computational-intensive analysis. Users can contact the data center by submitting their requests at support@ibdc.rcb.res.in

Dr Jitendra Singh informed that IBDC has started nucleotide data submission services via two data portals viz. the ‘Indian Nucleotide Data Archive (INDA)’ and ‘Indian Nucleotide Data Archive - Controlled Access (INDA-CA)’ and has accumulated over 200 billion bases from 2,08,055 submissions from more than 50 research labs across India. It also hosts an online ‘Dashboard’ for the genomic surveillance data generated by the INSACOG labs (<https://inda.rcb.ac.in/insacog/statisticsinsacog>). The dashboard provides customized data submission, access, data analysis services, and real-time SARS-CoV-2 variant monitoring across India. Data submission and access portals for other data types are under development and would be launched shortly. Fundamentally, IBDC is committed to the spirit of data sharing as per FAIR (Findable, Accessible, Interoperable, and Reusable) principles. IBDC is being developed in a modular fashion wherein different sections would typically deal with particular type/s of life science data.

The computational infrastructure at IBDC is also made available for researchers interested in performing computational intensive analysis. Users can contact the data center by submitting their requests at support@ibdc.rcb.res.in. Further, IBDC conducts regular workshops and orientations (<https://ibdc.rcb.res.in/news-and-announcement/>) to assist users in submitting the data. Video tutorials for data submission to IBDC are also available at the data center website. The data center team can also be contacted at support@ibdc.rcb.res.in for scheduling of any workshop on data submission/analysis.

STATESMAN, NOV 11, 2022

India’s growing technology talent pool is attracting global companies

To make the most of this tech potential, both multinationals and Indian firms are already ramping up their recruitment plans, aiming to hire about 200,000 employees from India by the end of 2022-23 to lead their teams.

Madhav Nair

India has become synonymous with tech innovation in the past few years. The progress is attributed to the country's growing startup ecosystem and the government's robust push toward digitization through initiatives such as Digital India. To make the most of this tech potential, both multinationals and Indian firms are already ramping up their recruitment plans, aiming to hire about 200,000 employees from India by the end of 2022-23 to lead their teams. In this article, we explore four critical drivers that make India the richest source of tech talent for global companies.

Robust Government Support

The Indian government has termed the current 2020s decade as the “techade” (a decade of technology). With this mindset, it has constantly promoted numerous initiatives such as the Accessible India Campaign and Mobile App, BHIM (Bharat Interface For Money), Agrimarket App, CERT-IN, and DigiLocker, among others, under the Digital India mission. This has enabled people to maximize their access to emerging digital tools and technologies in the country. The government has also taken many laudable initiatives to boost the startup ecosystem and promote a culture of entrepreneurship in the country. To begin with, Make in India was the first such initiative launched in 2014, aiming to attract local and global investments, transforming India into a global manufacturing hub.

Startup India and Stand Up India are specific initiatives designed to boost entrepreneurship and job creation at the grassroots level, including financial assistance and technical training for underprivileged masses. These moves demonstrate how the government is striving to create a tech-driven economy for the youth, preparing them to compete at a global level.

Growing Startup Ecosystem

Being home to the fastest-growing unicorns, India has emerged as the world's third-largest startup ecosystem. The Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade recognized 61,400 startups in 2022 alone, a testament to the country's startup boom. With tech at the core of these companies, they offer lucrative growth opportunities to graduates through jobs in the information technology (IT) domain. Working with startups enables young professionals to acquire new skills and adapt to

the changing work environment. The startup culture pushes the tech talent to develop into highly agile and competitive professionals best suited for global IT giants.

World-class Engineering Education

Over the years, India has emerged as a global hub for engineering talent, producing more than 15 lakhs engineering graduates annually. This is attributed to the country's unmatched education infrastructure, including top institutions like IITs, NITs, and IIITs that create the best tech talent who have the potential to get recognized globally for their exceptional contributions to the industry. Leading technocrats like Yamini Rangan (CEO, HubSpot), Roshni Nadar (CEO, HCL), Satya Nadella (CEO, Microsoft), Shantanu Narayen (CEO, Adobe), and Rajeev Suri (CEO, Nokia) are testaments to India's world-class education ecosystem. They inspire many young engineers and tech aspirants to scale their careers to new heights, hence India is poised to create more successful technocrats in the years to come.

English-speaking Population

India is home to the second largest English-speaking population in the world, after China. Indians' ability to speak English fluently makes them exceptional communicators. Another major factor behind their excellent communication skills is the multi-linguistic culture they grow up in. India has a total of 22 different languages and thousands of dialects. From childhood to adulthood, people learn or at least develop familiarity with multiple languages, further strengthening their communication skills and making them more confident and influential speakers. From the U.S. to Europe, most global companies have expanded their business to India to leverage the country's soaring tech talent. This commendable progress indicates that India is generating some of the best tech talents in the world, and will continue to do so in the future.

(Madhav Nair is Senior Vice President of Engineering at ZoomInfo)

ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE

PIB,NOV7,2022

Union Minister for Environment Forest and Climate Change Shri Bhupender Yadav speaks at the Middle East Green Initiative Summit 2022 at COP 27 Egypt

Highlights:

Saudi Arabia led initiative to plant 50 billion trees across the Middle East applauded.

The Green fuel production of Egypt in the pursuit of net-zero shipping appreciated

National Hydrogen Mission signifies India's commitment to clean and green energy

International Solar Alliance, a testimony to India's vision to bring clean and affordable energy

Countries across the globe invited to join Lead IT and CDRI

7th November 2022, Sharm El-Sheikh

Speaking at the Middle East Green Initiative Summit 2022 on the sidelines of COP 27, Sharm El-Sheikh, the Union Minister for Environment Forest and Climate change Shri Bhupender Yadav said:

“I would like to compliment Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and Arab Republic of Egypt for hosting the Middle East Green Initiative Summit 2022 on the sidelines of COP 27 which brings the nations from around the world together under one roof, and seeks to create infrastructure needed to reduce emissions and protect the environment. I had the opportunity to deliver a statement during the Middle Eastern Green Initiative Summit 2021 held at Riyadh. The theme of the initiative was “Succeeding the Transition to Green Economies: The Role of Sustainable Finance”. I had spoken on the issues of common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities, India's steps to mainstream Sustainable Development Goals and the issue of climate finance.

It has been a year since the last meet at Riyadh. India has, in the meantime, highlighted the role of people on this planet to achieve the goals of combating climate change. India has come to COP 27 with hopes and expectations for speedy and effective implementations of enhanced commitments of the nations to make tangible differences in the lives of the most vulnerable people. I understand, various initiatives undertaken by the Middle East Green Initiative, relate directly to encouraging sustainable consumption practices like planting of 50 billion trees across the Middle East that lead to employment opportunities and strengthening the resilience of countries.

In October 2021, Saudi Arabia's Ministry of Energy announced the goal of becoming the world's largest Hydrogen Producer. The kingdom's vast hydrocarbon resources, existing industrial capacities and business expertise makes it an attractive supplier to energy import-dependent countries. The Arab Republic of Egypt is developing a Green Ammonia facility to be used as bunker fuel to serve the Suez Canal Maritime traffic. The efforts of Egyptian Governments in establishing green fuel production in the country in the pursuit of net-zero shipping is worth appreciating.

Excellencies,

India is committed towards clean and green energy source and National Hydrogen Mission is a leap in that direction. On the environment friendly energy source and target of Net Zero, Prime Minister Narendra Modi has mentioned and I quote

“Through the National Hydrogen Mission, India has moved towards an environment-friendly energy source. This will help India and many countries of the world to achieve their goal of net zero. India has become a prime example of how progress and nature can go hand in hand. Now that India has also become the fifth largest economy in the world, our forest area is also increasing and the number of wildlife is also increasing.”

As part of the United Nations Decade of Action for attainment of SDGs, India has initiated several measures for promoting Resource Efficiency and Circular Economy, including for prevention and management of waste.

Excellencies,

India has also initiated a number of coalitions such as International Solar Alliance, which is Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi's vision to bring clean and affordable energy within reach of all and I am glad to mention that both Egypt and Saudi Arabia are part of it. I would also like to mention that India has also initiated Leadership group in Industry transition (Lead IT) track along with Sweden with focus on hard to abate industrial sectors; and Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure for easy and faster mobilization of technology, finance and necessary information for Small Island Developing States. Excellencies, I invite you to join these coalitions to achieve the goals related to climate change which we have assigned to ourselves. Towards the end, I would like to mention to this august gathering that, we have inaugurated our India Pavilion at COP 27 on the theme of LiFE – Lifestyle for Environment which not only focuses on Global Mission LiFE but also effectively elaborates on various initiatives across different sectors taken by India to tackle Climate Change.

I wish great success for the goals of the Middle Eastern Green Initiative.”

PIB, NOV 7, 2022

Union Minister for Environment Forest and Climate Change Shri Bhupender Yadav speaks at the UN Secretary General High Level Round Table

. Round Table to launch the early warnings for all executive action Plan.. India fully supports Secretary General's agenda to achieve Early Warnings for All which helps us collectively toward reducing vulnerabilities, ensuring preparedness and swift and timely response to natural hazards.. India's Web-DCRA (Dynamic composite Risk Atlas) enables swift and advanced action on early warnings.

. India spearheaded the Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure (CDRI) which is working towards developing applications of climate forecast and early warning for reducing infrastructure losses and disruption in basic services.

nion Minister for Environment Forest and Climate Change Shri Bhupender Yadav spoke at the UN Secretary-General-High-Level Round Table to launch the Early Warnings for All Executive Action Plan, today, at the World leaders' Summit, COP 27, Sharm El-Sheikh.

Speaking at the event Shri Yadav said:

“We fully support the Secretary General’s agenda to achieve Early Warnings for All. The global pace of climate mitigation is not enough to contain the rate of climate change. There is an urgent need for the world to acknowledge the cascading natural hazards that cause substantial losses around the world. But these issues focus our minds for a moment and then soon lose attention as the countries most able to do something about it are the least affected. They are also the biggest contributors to climate change. The most vulnerable regions are located between the tropics of Cancer and Capricorn. Much of the developing world, including India, lies between these tropics. Public expenditures and loss of revenues following the onset of external disasters have already begun to rise in this region with the least coping capacity.

The intensification of tropical cyclones in the Pacific and Caribbean means that some small tropical states have lost 200% of their national income in a few hours. Instances such as these could have devastating consequences in countries that do not have sufficient means to cope with them. With climate finance still scarce, climate adaptation in the form of early warning dissemination is key in safeguarding lives, and livelihoods. Early Warnings For All play a part in not just containing the immediate physical impacts, but also mitigating the far-reaching long-term socio-economics implications that follow.

India has been working on strengthening end-to-end early warning systems for all hydro-meteorological hazards. This has led to concrete results: We have reduced mortality from cyclones by up to 90% over the last 15 years. On both east and west coasts, we have nearly 100% coverage of early warning systems for cyclones. Similarly for other hazards – such as Heat waves – we are making swift progress, leading to much greater resilience of our communities.

Over the last few years, we have made concerted efforts towards making early warning impact-based as well as more easily understandable and actionable by communities. We have integrated hazard, vulnerability and exposure information to develop Web – DCRA (Dynamic composite Risk Atlas) to enable swift and advanced action on early warnings.

The Cyclone Warning Division (CWD) at IMD, New Delhi also acts as a multilateral Regional Specialised Meteorological Centre for monitoring, predicting and issuing warning services on tropical cyclones developing over the north Indian Ocean (one of the six centres in the World) along with 13 countries in Bay of Bengal and Arabian Sea region. The collaboration helped in the exchange of meteorological data from the Bay of Bengal (BoB) and Arabian Sea countries to IMD and improved monitoring and forecast.

Moreover, the meteorological data of satellite & radar, and model guidance from IMD along with Tropical Cyclone Advisory Bulletins helped the countries to minimize losses of lives. As an example, the number of lives lost has been minimised, being limited to 100 due to tropical cyclones during the last 10 years, not only in India but also in all the countries in the Bay of Bengal and Arabian Sea region for which IMD provides tropical cyclone forecast and advisories. We would now like to maximize the full potential of Early Warning Systems for not just reducing the loss of lives but also livelihoods and national development gains. India has spearheaded the Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure (CDRI) which is working towards developing applications of climate forecast and early warning for reducing infrastructure losses and disruption in basic services. The Prime Minister of India, Shri. Narendra Modi at the IRIS (Infrastructure for Resilient Island States) launch in Glasgow at COP26 highlighted the importance of IRIS for human welfare. The Prime Minister said, and I quote

“IRIS gives hope, belief and a great sense of fulfilment to the most vulnerable nations. I congratulate CDRI for this. IRIS and CDRI are just not about infrastructure but about responsibility of human welfare. It is the collective responsibility of all of us towards mankind. I consider the launch of IRIS very important. Through IRIS, it will be easy for SIDS to mobilize technology, finance and necessary information faster. Promotion of quality infrastructure in Small Island States will benefit both lives and livelihoods there.”

India has created and is nurturing the CDRI. It has been making concerted efforts to engage various stakeholder institutions and individuals to promote innovation and resilience in infrastructure. One such initiative is the “DRI Connect” which will be a web-based platform for stakeholders engaged in infrastructure sectors. The platform is envisaged to harness collective intelligence of Coalition membership towards creation of new knowledge and actionable solutions to address challenges in resilient infrastructure and foster an environment of action-based learning and innovation on disaster resilient infrastructure.

Currently, CDRI’s Membership has expanded to include 31 countries and eight member organizations. There is growing footprint in Africa region. South Sudan and European Investment Bank are the latest members endorsing the Charter. CDRI’s strategic initiatives, expanding programme, and membership engagement is enabling it to progress towards the achievement of its goal. Climate finance is still a mirage, and effective climate adaptation such as Early Warnings For All helps us collectively in our region toward reducing vulnerabilities and ensuring preparedness and swift and timely response to natural hazards.”

PIB, NOV 8, 2022

MNRE and MoP host International Conference on “Citizen-centric energy transition: Empowering citizens with Mission LiFE in Egypt

- The Indian Pavillion at COP 27 showcases visionary citizen-centric energy access, transition, security and justice-related initiatives
- The Conference to hold discussion on ways to accelerate the deployment of energy efficient and low carbon technologies as well as market investment to facilitate and strengthen the global energy transition

The Ministry of New and Renewable Energy and the Ministry of Power, Government of India, in partnership with Indian Renewable Energy Development Agency (IREDA), Solar Energy Corporation of India (SECI) and the Council on Energy,

Environment and Water (CEEW), are hosting an International Conference on “Citizen-centric energy transition: Empowering citizens with Mission LiFE (Lifestyles for Environment)” today at the India Pavilion at the ongoing COP-27 at Sharm-El-Sheikh in Egypt.

Chaired by Secretary, MNRE Mr Bhupinder Singh Bhalla, this special event showcases some of the visionary citizen-centric energy access, transition, security and justice-related initiatives that have bettered the lives of millions of people while embodying Mission LiFE’s Principles of nudging behaviours, enabling markets and influencing policies. The Conference is holding discussion on ways to accelerate the deployment of energy efficient and low carbon technologies as well as market investment to facilitate and strengthen the global energy transition.

The session featured Dr Gauri Singh, Deputy Director General of IRENA and Dr Ajay Mathur, Director General, International Solar Alliance (ISA), and chief executives of Indian Industry.

MINT,NOV9,2022

Why this is the age of mega threats for the world

Nouriel Roubini

At least, four dangerous revisionist powers (China, Russia, Iran and North Korea) are challenging the economic, financial, security and geopolitical order

We face a similar confluence of factors that led to disaster a century ago in addition to new perils we’re failing to contain.

A variety of mega-threats is imperilling our future. Not just jobs, incomes, wealth and the global economy, but also the relative peace, prosperity and progress achieved over the past 75 years. For four decades after World War II, climate change and job-displacing artificial intelligence (AI) was not on anyone’s mind, and terms like ‘deglobalization’ and ‘trade war’ were on nobody’s lips. Global pandemics weren’t even an afterthought; the last major one was in 1918. After the 1970s détente

between the US and the Soviet Union and the opening of the US to China, the already low risk of a conventional or nuclear war between great powers fizzled out.

Growth was robust, economic cycles were contained and recessions were short and shallow, except for during the stagflationary 1970s; and even then, there were no debt crises in advanced economies, because private and public debt ratios were low. There was no implicit debt from pensions and healthcare systems as the supply of young workers was growing while ageing was moderate. Sound regulation and capital controls subdued boom-bust cycles and kept major financial crises at bay. Major economies were strong liberal democracies that were free of extreme partisan polarization. Populism and authoritarianism were confined to a benighted cohort of poorer countries. Fast-forward to late 2022, and you will notice that we are awash in new mega-threats. The world has entered what I call a geopolitical depression, with (at least) four dangerous revisionist powers (China, Russia, Iran and North Korea) challenging the economic, financial, security and geopolitical order that the US and its allies created after WWII.

There is a sharply rising risk not only of war among great powers, but of a nuclear conflict. In the coming year, Russia's war of aggression in Ukraine could escalate into an unconventional conflict that directly involves Nato. And Israel (and perhaps the US) may decide to launch strikes against Iran, which is on its way to building a nuclear bomb. With Chinese President Xi Jinping further consolidating his authoritarian rule, and with the US tightening its trade restrictions against China, the new Sino-American cold war is becoming colder by the day. Worse, it could all too easily turn hot over the status of Taiwan, which Xi is committed to reuniting with the mainland, and which US President Joe Biden appears committed to defending. Meanwhile, nuclear-armed North Korea has once again been seeking attention by firing rockets over Japan and South Korea.

Even discounting the threat of a nuclear conflict, the risk of an environmental apocalypse in the future is becoming increasingly serious, especially given that most of the talk about net-zero and ESG investing is just greenwashing—or greenwishing. Greenflation is already in full swing, because it turns out that amassing the metals needed for the energy transition requires a lot of expensive energy.

There is also a growing risk of new pandemics, owing to the link between environmental destruction and zoonotic diseases. Wildlife that carry dangerous pathogens are coming into closer and more frequent contact with humans and livestock. That is why we have already experienced more frequent and virulent pandemics and epidemics since the early 1980s. The problem will worsen in the future. The economic situation is no better. For the first time since the 1970s, we are facing high inflation and the prospect of a recession: or stagflation. And when it comes, the recession will not be short and shallow but long and severe, because we may also be facing the mother of all debt crises, owing to soaring private and public debt ratios over the last few decades. Low debt ratios spared us from that in the 1970s. And though we had debt crises in the Great Recession, we also had deflation. It was a demand shock and credit crunch that could be met with massive monetary, fiscal and credit easing.

Today, we are experiencing the worst elements of both the 1970s and 2008. Multiple persistent negative supply shocks have coincided with debt ratios that are even higher than they were during the Great Recession. As inflationary pressures force central banks to tighten monetary policy even though a recession looms, debt service costs will skyrocket. And ageing also implies massive unfunded public-sector liabilities. Everyone should be preparing for what may come to be remembered as the Great Stagflationary Debt Crisis.

Then again, while central banks sound more hawkish, we should be sceptical of their professed willingness to fight inflation at any cost. Once they find themselves in a debt trap, they will have to blink. With debt ratios so high, fighting inflation will cause an economic and financial crash that will be deemed politically unacceptable. Major central banks will feel as though they have no choice but to back-pedal. So inflation, currency debasement, boom-bust cycles and financial crises will become more severe and frequent.

At the same time, geopolitical conflicts and national-security concerns will continue to fuel trade, financial and tech wars, accelerating the deglobalization process. Protectionism and Sino-American decoupling will leave the global economy, supply chains and markets more fragmented, making a wide range of goods and services more expensive. ‘Friend-shoring’ has begun. Over time, advances in AI and automation will destroy more and more jobs, even if policymakers build higher protectionist walls in an effort to fight the last war. By restricting immigration and demanding more local production, ageing advanced economies will create a big incentive for companies to adopt labour-saving technologies, which can increasingly perform not just routine but also cognitive and creative work.

These mega-threats will contribute further to income and wealth inequality, which has already been fuelling the rise of radical and aggressive populist regimes around the world. Part of the reason we have come to this dangerous point is that we have long kept our heads in the sand. Now, we need to make up for lost time. Without decisive government and private-sector action both domestically and globally, the period ahead will be less like the four decades after World War II than like the three decades between 1914 and 1945. What started with World War I and the influenza pandemic gave way to the Great Depression, massive trade and currency wars, inflation (even hyperinflation) and deflation, and to financial and debt crises that led to massive meltdowns and defaults. Ultimately, authoritarian regimes emerged, culminating in World War II and the Holocaust. If we are not poised for a similar sequence, it may be because it’s already begun. ©2022/Project Syndicate

Nouriel Roubini is professor emeritus of economics at New York University’s Stern School of Business and the author of ‘MegaThreats: Ten Dangerous Trends That Imperil Our Future, and How to Survive Them’.

PIB, NOV 10, 2022

Rebuttal to the news item published in Rajasthan Patrika dated 09.11.2022 titled as “Bharat Baghon ki taskari ka gadh”

This news item on Tiger mortality is based on incorrect and misleading information

A news item titled “Bharat baghon ki taskari ka gadh” has been published in Rajasthan Patrika on 9th November, 2022. The said news report is based on incorrect facts, figures and misleading information published with the sole intention of creating

sensational news. It further relies on certain reports which make unrealistic assumptions like reported seizure data is correct and the seized tiger parts are genuine for deriving tiger mortality numbers. These assumptions are flawed for the simple reason that there are certain communities in India that specialize in making fake tiger claws using the bones of livestock. Counting seized materials like claws as that of tiger without verifying the genuineness using DNA based techniques will often lead to inflated number of tiger deaths. Such reports are published with half-baked information by the vested interests to malign the efforts of Government of India for tiger conservation.

The systematic data of tiger mortality is being maintained by the National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA) from the year 2012 onwards only and any report quoting tiger mortality details prior to 2012 has to invariably depend upon on unverifiable facts/ assumptions and anecdotal evidences. For the period 2017-2021, NTCA has recorded 547 tiger mortality instances out of which 393 tigers were due to natural causes, 154 cases pertain to poisoning (25), snaring (9), shooting/elimination (7) with seizures (55), electrocution (22) and cases recorded as poaching (33). The actual number of tiger deaths which can be attributed to poaching for illegal body parts and wildlife trade in the strictest sense are 88 which accounts for 16% of total number of tiger mortality events recorded during the last 5 years.

The All India Tiger Estimation, a science based monitoring program for tiger, co-predators and their prey base which is under implementation since 2006 has estimated the growth rate of Indian tigers at 6% per annum. This natural growth rate of tiger population offsets the tiger mortality due to various causes including poaching. Moreover, high tiger density areas record higher deaths as obvious natural processes are prevalent. For recording tiger death, the NTCA has established stringent standards and probably the only tiger range country in the world to do so. A Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) has been developed for disposal of tiger carcass which includes constitution of a committee to oversee the post mortem and subsequent disposal of carcass by burning. The visceral organs are preserved for forensic examination. Based on the detailed final report, supporting evidences/ documents submitted by the Tiger Reserves/ Tiger Range States, the cause of tiger death is ascertained at NTCA and the mortality case is recorded closed accordingly.

The Project Tiger Division and NTCA under Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change are committed towards protecting tiger, India's iconic species, through law enforcement, enhanced protection of tiger reserves using advanced technological tools.

PIB,NOV12,2022

IndianOil's sustainable initiatives detailed at India Pavilion at COP 27, Egypt

Indian Oil Corporation Limited, a Central Public Sector Undertaking, held a session today as a part of side events at the Indian Pavilion at COP 27, Sharm El-Sheikh, Egypt. The session covered IndianOil's initiatives on biofuels, sustainable solar based cooking, carbon efficient refinery technologies and its initiatives in energy transition. The Indian Oil Corporation Limited elaborated on its goals and pathways to achieve Net-Zero by 2046. The corporation also discussed India's efforts in enhancing the Biofuels portfolio vis-a-vis Ethanol, Compressed Biogas (Biomethane), Biodiesel, Sustainable Aviation Fuel, and the recently launched 'Surya Nutan' solar cookstove. Energy consumption reduction initiatives of Indian Oil's Refineries which resulted in carbon emissions reduction were also detailed.

Indian Oil Corporation Limited, India's national oil company has been at the forefront of Country's energy transition to clean fuels and reducing emissions from its process. IndianOil has recently announced its goals to achieve Net Zero Scope 1&2 emissions by 2046. IndianOil's mission to achieve Net-Zero by 2046 is guided by the Panchamrit Plan of Prime Minister Modi announced at COP 26 at Glasgow and PM Modi's Mission LiFE, the theme of India Pavilion at COP 27, Sharm El-Sheikh.

TRIBUNE,NOV13,2022

Climate finance

Developed nations need to walk the talk on funding

During the COP27 summit in Egypt, India has rightly put the onus on rich countries to substantially enhance the quantum of climate finance to developing countries, while observing unsparingly that the commitment of \$100 billion made over a decade

ago by developed nations is ‘not only minuscule, given the scale of needs, but has also not been achieved yet.’ It was at COP15 in 2009 that developed countries had committed to jointly mobilise \$100 billion per year by 2020 to help developing nations withstand the impact of climate change. The flow of funds, however, has been erratic and inadequate over the years. Rich countries mobilised \$52.5 billion in 2013 and \$44.6 billion in 2015; the figure reached \$80.4 billion in 2019 and rose to \$83.3 billion in the succeeding year.

India and other developing countries are insisting that the wealthy nations should agree to a new global climate finance target, which ought to be in trillions instead of billions, considering that the costs of adapting to climate change have grown exponentially. According to estimates, resources in the range of \$6-11 trillion are needed till 2030 to meet the targets set by developing countries in their Nationally Determined Contributions and Needs Determination Reports.

The World Bank, which uses money from affluent nations to offer loans and grants to poorer countries, has a major role to play in facilitating climate-linked funding. The World Bank Group gave \$31.7 billion in climate finance to various countries in 2021-22, but it continues to face criticism over not doing enough to help developing nations make the shift to clean energy. Though climate adaptation is now globally considered to be as important as mitigation, international funding to enable countries to acclimatise themselves to climate chaos is only a small fraction of the requirement. While developed nations must be held accountable for brazenly polluting the planet to make huge profits and half-heartedly fulfilling their climate finance commitments, the menace of greenwashing — making misleading claims on net-zero emissions — needs to be dealt with strictly. Unscrupulous entities, including corporates and investors, should also be taken to task for undermining the fight against global warming.

CURRENT EVENTS

PIB,NOV7,2022

President's greetings on the eve of birthday of Guru Nanak Dev ji

The President of India, Smt. Droupadi Murmu has greeted fellow-citizens on the eve of birthday of Guru Nanak Dev Ji. In a message, the President has said, "On the sacred occasion of birth anniversary of Guru Nanak Dev Ji, I extend my heartiest greetings to all fellow citizens and Indian settled abroad, especially the brothers and sisters of Sikh community. Guru Nanak Dev Ji spread the message of 'Ek Omkar' which means that God is one and is present everywhere. He inspired us to practise love, unity and brotherhood. We should adopt eternal values like truth, sacrifice and moral conduct from the teachings of 'Japji Sahib'. The messages of 'Kirat Karo' and 'Vand Chhako' inspire us to live with honesty and share the available resources with others. Guru Nanak Dev Ji also gave the message of humility and service of mankind. His teachings will guide us towards peace & prosperity. On this auspicious occasion let us adopt his teachings and move forward with spirit of well-being of the mankind".

PIB,NOV8,2022

Unveiling of The Logo, Theme and Website of India's G20 Presidency

Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi unveiled the Logo, Theme and Website of India's G20 Presidency today.

The logo and theme, unveiled by the Prime Minister in virtual mode, are as below:



भारत 2023 INDIA

वसुधैव कुटुम्बकम्

ONE EARTH • ONE FAMILY • ONE FUTURE

Logo and Theme Explanation

The G20 Logo draws inspiration from the vibrant colours of India's national flag – saffron, white and green, and blue. It juxtaposes planet Earth with the lotus, India's national flower that reflects growth amid challenges. The Earth reflects India's pro-planet approach to life, one in perfect harmony with nature. Below the G20 logo is “Bharat”, written in the Devanagari script.

The logo draws upon elements contained in various entries received during an open competition for the logo design. The contest organized on MyGov portal received an enthusiastic response with over 2000 submissions. This is in line with Prime Minister's vision of Jan Bhagidari during India's G20 Presidency. The theme of India's G20 Presidency - “Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam” or “One Earth One Family One Future” - is drawn from the ancient Sanskrit text of the Maha Upanishad. Essentially, the theme affirms the value of all life – human, animal, plant, and microorganisms – and their interconnectedness on the planet Earth and in the wider universe. The theme also spotlights LiFE (Lifestyle for Environment), with its associated, environmentally sustainable and responsible choices, both at the level of individual lifestyles as well as national development, leading to globally transformative actions resulting in a cleaner, greener and bluer future. The logo and the theme together convey a powerful message of India's G20 Presidency, which is of striving for just and equitable growth for all in the world, as we navigate through these turbulent times, in a sustainable, holistic, responsible, and inclusive manner. They represent a uniquely Indian approach to our G20 Presidency, of living in harmony with the surrounding ecosystem.

For India, the G20 Presidency also marks the beginning of “Amritkaal”, the 25-year period beginning from the 75th anniversary of its independence on 15 August 2022, leading up to the centenary of its independence, towards a futuristic, prosperous, inclusive and developed society, distinguished by a human-centric approach at its core.

G20 Website

The website of India's G20 Presidency www.g20.in was also launched by the Prime Minister. The website will seamlessly migrate to the G20 Presidency website www.g20.org on 1 December 2022, the day India takes over the G20 Presidency. In

addition to substantive information about G20 and logistics arrangements, the website would also be used to build and serve as a repository of information on G20. The website includes a section for citizens to submit their suggestions.

G20 App

In addition to the website, a mobile app "G20 India" has been released on both Android and iOS platforms.

PIB,NOV11,2022

PM inaugurates Terminal 2 of Kempegowda International Airport at Bengaluru

The Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi inaugurated Terminal 2 of Kempegowda International Airport at Bengaluru today. The Prime Minister also interacted with airport authorities where he was briefed on the model of the Terminal 2 building. The Prime Minister also inspected the facilities at the experience centre and took a walkthrough of Terminal 2 of the Kempegowda International Airport. The Prime Minister also witnessed a short film about Terminal 2.

The Prime Minister tweeted;

“Terminal 2 of the Kempegowda International Airport, Bengaluru will add capacity and further convenience. It is a part of our efforts aimed at providing top class infrastructure to our urban centres. The Terminal is beautiful and passenger friendly! Glad to have inaugurated it.”

Background

Terminal 2 of Kempegowda International Airport in Bengaluru is built at a cost of around Rs. 5000 crores. The terminal will double the passenger handling capacity of the airport to 5-6 crore passengers per annum, from the current capacity of about 2.5 crores.

Terminal 2 is designed as a tribute to the Garden city of Bengaluru and the passenger experience is meant to be a “walk in the garden”. Passengers will travel through 10,000+ square metres of green walls, hanging gardens and outdoor gardens. The Airport has already established a benchmark in sustainability with 100% usage of renewable energy across the campus. Terminal 2 has been created with sustainability principles woven into the design. Based on the sustainability initiatives, Terminal 2 will be the largest terminal in the world to be pre-certified platinum rating by US GBC (green building council) prior to commencing operations. The theme of ‘Naurasa’ unites all the commissioned artworks for Terminal 2. The artworks reflect the heritage and culture of Karnataka as well as the broader Indian ethos.

Overall, the design and architecture of Terminal 2 have been influenced by four guiding principles: Terminal in a garden, sustainability, technology and art & culture. All these facets showcase T2 as a terminal that is modern yet rooted in nature and offers a memorable ‘destination’ experience to all travellers. The Prime Minister was accompanied by the Chief Minister of Karnataka, Shri Basavaraj Bommai, the Governor of Karnataka, Shri Thawar Chand Gehlot and Union Minister Prahlaad Joshi.

PIB, NOV 12, 2022

PM lays foundation stone & dedicates to the nation multiple projects worth over Rs 9500 crores at Ramagundam, Telangana
Dedicates Fertilizer plant at Ramagundam

“Experts around the world are upbeat about the growth trajectory of Indian economy”

“A new India presents itself to the world with self-confidence and aspirations of development ”

“Fertilizer sector is proof of the honest efforts of the central government”

“No proposal for privatization of SCCL is under consideration with the central government”

“The Government of Telangana holds 51% stake in SCCL, while the Central Government holds 49%. The Central Government cannot take any decision related to the privatization of SCCL at its own level”

The Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi laid the foundation stone and dedicated to the nation multiple projects worth over Rs 9500 crores in Ramagundam, Telangana today. Earlier today, the Prime Minister paid a visit to the Ramagundam Fertilizers and Chemicals Limited (RFCL) plant

Addressing the gathering, the Prime Minister said projects launched and for which foundation stones were laid today will promote both agriculture and agricultural growth. The Prime Minister pointed out that on one hand, the entire world is dealing with the corona pandemic and is getting affected by strenuous situations of war and military actions. “But among all of this”, the Prime Minister said, “experts are predicting that India is moving in the direction of becoming the third largest economy.” Experts, the Prime Minister said, are also saying that growth equivalent to 30 years from the 90s will take place in the coming few years. “The chief reason for this perception is the change that has taken place in the country during the last 8 years. India has changed its approach to doing work in the last 8 years. In these 8 years thinking as well as the approach of governance has undergone a transformation”, he said. This can be seen in infrastructure, government processes, ease of doing business, and transformations which are being inspired by the aspirational society of India, he added.

“A new India presents itself to the world with self-confidence and aspirations of development ”, he said. The Prime Minister said that development is a continuous mission that runs in the country 365 days a year. He further added that when a dedication of a project is carried out, work on new projects begins simultaneously. The Prime Minister also emphasized that efforts are made to pace up the development of projects whose foundation stones are laid and the Ramagundam project is a clear example of this. The foundation stone for Ramagundam Project was laid by the Prime Minister on 7th August 2016.

The Prime Minister pointed out that the India of the 21st century can move forward by realizing ambitious targets. “When the aim is ambitious, we have to come up with new methodologies and create new facilities”, the Prime Minister remarked. Shri Modi said that the fertilizer sector is proof of the honest efforts of the central government. Recalling the time when India used to depend on foreign countries to meet the demands of fertilizers, the Prime Minister pointed out that many fertilizer plants that were set up earlier were forced to shut down due to obsolete technologies, including Ramagundam Plant. He further added that urea which was imported at exorbitant rates was black-marketed for other purposes instead of reaching the farmers.

Measures for improving fertilizer availability

100% Neem Coating of Urea.

Opening of 5 big plants which were lying closed, more than 60 lakh tonnes of urea will be produced

Nano Urea push

Single Pan-India brand ‘Bharat Brand’

9.5 lakh crore spent in 8 years to keep fertilizers affordable

More than 2.5 lakh crore spent this year

International price of Urea bag is Rs 2000, farmers pay Rs 270

Every DAP fertilizer bag gets 2500 subsidy

Soil Health card for informed fertilizer decision

2.25lakh crore rupees transferred under PM Kisan Samman Nidhi

After 2014, one of the first steps taken by the central government was ensuring 100% Neem Coating of Urea and stopping black-marketing. He further added that the soil health card campaign ensured the knowledge among farmers about the optimum needs of their fields. Five big fertilizer plants that were lying closed for years are being restarted. The Gorakhpur plant in Uttar Pradesh has started production, and the Ramagundam plant has been dedicated to the nation. When these five plants are fully functional, the country will get 60 lakh tonnes of urea which will lead to huge savings on imports and ease of availability of urea. Ramagundam Fertilizer plant will serve farmers in Telangana, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Chhattisgarh and Maharashtra, he informed. The Plant will spur the economy of the surrounding areas and will give a push to logistics-related businesses in the area. “6000 crore rupees invested by the central government will give several thousand rupees benefit to the youth of Telangana”, he said. The Prime Minister also talked about the technological strides in the fertilizer field and said Nano Urea will bring a massive change in the field. The Prime Minister stressed the importance of *aatmnirbharta* and mentioned how the global price rise of fertilizer due to the pandemic and war was not transferred to the farmers. A 2000 rs bag of Urea is made available for 270 rupees to the farmer. Similarly, a bag of DAP priced at Rs 4000 in the international market is subsidized to the tune of 2500 rs per bag.

“In the last 8 years”, the Prime Minister informed, “the central government has already spent approximately Rs 10 lakh crores so that farmers are not burdened for fertilizers.” He further added that the central government has spent 2.5 lakh crores so far this year to make cheap fertilizers available for the farmers of India. The Prime Minister informed that the central government has transferred approximately 2.25 lakh crores in the bank accounts of farmers under the PM Kisan Samman Nidhi. The Prime Minister also threw light on the multitude of brands of fertilizers that were available in the market which had become a cause for concern for the farmers for decades. “Urea will now have only one brand in India and it is called Bharat brand. Its quality and price are already determined”, he remarked. This is a clear example of how the government is reforming the sector, especially for small farmers.

The Prime Minister also touched upon the challenge of the connectivity infrastructure. The government is working to meet this challenge by providing every state with modern highways, airports, waterways, railways and internet highways. This is getting new energy from PM Gatishakti National Master plan. The coordination and informed working style is eliminating the possibility of projects hanging for a long time, he said. He said that the railway line connecting Bhadradi Kothagudem district and Khammam was prepared in 4 years and will greatly benefit the local population. Similarly, the three highways on which work started today, will benefit the industrial belt, sugarcane and turmeric growers.

Throwing light on the rumour mill that arises when the development works in the country picks up pace, the Prime Minister said that some forces create obstacles for political gains. He pointed out that similar rumours are currently being spread in Telangana regarding 'Singareni Collieries Company Limited-SCCL' and various coal mines. “The Government of Telangana holds 51% stake in SCCL, while the Central Government holds 49%. The Central Government cannot take any decision related to the privatization of SCCL at its own level”, the Prime Minister clarified and reiterated that no proposal for privatization of SCCL is under consideration with the central government.

The Prime Minister recalled the numerous scams of thousands of crores of rupees that have plagued the country regarding coal mines. He informed that the country as well as the workers, the poor and the areas where these mines were located suffered heavy losses. He further added that coal mines are being auctioned with complete transparency keeping in view the increasing need for coal in the country. “Our government has also created DMF i.e. District Mineral Fund to give benefits to the people living in the area where the minerals are extracted. Thousands of crores of rupees have been released to the states under this fund”, he added.

Concluding the address, the Prime Minister said “We want to take Telangana forward by following the mantra of 'Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas, Sabka Vishwas and Sabka Prayas'.

Governor of Telangana, Dr Tamilisai Soundararajan, Union Minister G Kishan Reddy, Members of Parliament and Members of Legislative Assembly were those present on occasion. Farmers from 70 Constituency seats were connected with the event.

Background

The Prime Minister dedicated Fertilizer plant at Ramagundam to the nation whose foundation stone for Ramagundam Project was also laid by the Prime Minister on 7th August 2016. The driving force behind the revival of the Fertilizer Plant is the vision of the Prime Minister to achieve self-sufficiency in production of urea. The Ramagundam Plant will make available 12.7 LMT per annum of indigenous neem-coated Urea production.

The project has been set up under the aegis of Ramagundam Fertilizers and Chemicals Limited (RFCL) which is a Joint Venture Company of National Fertilizers Limited (NFL), Engineers India Ltd (EIL) and Fertilizer Corporation of India Limited (FCIL). RFCL was entrusted with the responsibility of setting up the New Ammonia-Urea Plant with an investment of more than Rs 6300 crores. Gas to RFCL Plant will be supplied through Jagdishpur – Phulpur- Haldia Pipeline.

The plant would ensure adequate and timely supply of urea fertilizer to the farmers in the state of Telangana as well as in Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Chattisgarh and Maharashtra. The plant would not only improve the availability of fertilizer but will also boost overall economic development in the region including the development of infrastructures like roads, railways, ancillary industry etc. Apart from this, the region will benefit from the development of MSME vendors for supply of various goods for the factory. RFCL's 'Bharat Urea' will provide a tremendous boost to the economy by not only reducing imports but also by giving an impetus to the local farmers through a timely supply of fertilizers and extension services.

The Prime Minister also dedicated the Bhadrachalam Road- Sattupalli rail line to the nation, which has been built at a cost of around Rs 1000 crores. He also laid the foundation stone of various road projects worth over Rs 2200 crores, namely the Medak-Siddipet-Elkathurthy section of NH-765DG; Bodhan-Basar-Bhainsa section of NH-161BB; Sironcha to Mahadevpur Section of NH-353C.

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PM lays foundation stone and dedicates to the nation multiple projects worth over Rs 10,500 crores in Visakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh“People of Andhra Pradesh have made a prominent name for themselves in every field”

“The path to development is multidimensional. It focuses on the needs and necessities of the common citizen and presents a roadmap for advanced infrastructure”“Our vision is of inclusive growth and inclusive development”

“PM Gati Shakti National Master Plan has not only accelerated the pace of infrastructure construction but has also reduced the cost of projects”“Blue economy has become such a big priority for the first time”

The Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi laid the foundation stone and dedicated to the nation multiple projects worth over Rs. 10,500 crores in Visakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh today.

The Prime Minister began his address by recalling the time when he got the opportunity to visit Andhra Pradesh on the 125th birth anniversary of Viplav Veerudu Alluru Sitaramraju. The Prime Minister remarked that Visakhapatnam is a very special city with an extremely rich tradition of trade and business. He pointed out that Visakhapatnam being an important port in ancient India was part of the trade route to West Asia and Rome thousands of years ago, and it still remains the central point of India’s trade in today’s day and age. The Prime Minister said that the projects worth Rs 10,500 crores that are being dedicated and whose foundation stones are laid today will serve as a medium to achieve the hopes and aspirations of Visakhapatnam and Andhra Pradesh by opening up new dimensions in infrastructure, ease of living and Atmanirbhar Bharat. The Prime Minister also made a special mention of the Ex-Vice President of India, Shri M Venkaiah Naidu and said that his love and dedication toward Andhra Pradesh remain unparalleled.

Be it education or entrepreneurship, technology or medical profession, the Prime Minister said that the people of Andhra Pradesh have made a prominent name for themselves in every field. He further added that this recognition is not only a result of professional qualities but also the outgoing and jovial nature of the people of Andhra Pradesh. The Prime Minister expressed delight at the projects that are being dedicated and whose foundation stones are laid today and said that it will further the pace of development in the state.

“In this Amrit Kaal”, the Prime Minister said, “the country is moving forward rapidly on the path of development with the objective of a developed India.” Remarking that the path to development is multidimensional, the Prime Minister said that it focuses on the needs and necessities of the common citizen and presents a roadmap for advanced infrastructure. He highlighted the government’s vision of inclusive growth. The Prime Minister lamented the isolated approach to infrastructure development by the previous governments which resulted in higher logistics expenses and created a dent in the supply chain. He informed that the government adopted a new approach to infrastructure development as supply chain and logistics depend on multi-modal connectivity while focussing on an integrated view of development. Giving an example of the integrated view of development from today’s projects, the Prime Minister listed out the 6-lane roads in the proposed economic corridor project, a separate road for port connectivity, the beautification of Visakhapatnam railway station and the construction of the state-of-the-art fishing harbour. The Prime Minister credited this integrated view of development to PM Gati Shakti National Master Plan and remarked that it has not only accelerated the pace of infrastructure construction but has also reduced the cost of projects. “Multi-modal transport system is the future of every city and Visakhapatnam has taken a step in this direction”, he added. He said that Andhra Pradesh and its coastal regions will move ahead in this race of development with new momentum and energy.

The Prime Minister referred to the troubled global climate and touched upon the supply chain disruption for critical products and energy needs. However, the Prime Minister said, India wrote a new chapter of development in these difficult times. The world has acknowledged this as experts are praising India’s achievements and “India has become the centre of hope for the entire world”, he said. This is made possible only because of the fact that “India is working while keeping the aspiration and needs of its citizens. Every policy and decision is for making the life of the common citizen better.” The Prime Minister

referred to the PLI scheme, GST, IBC, and National Infrastructure pipeline as the cause of increased investment in India. At the same time, he said, schemes for the welfare of the poor are being expanded. “Today in this journey of development, the areas that were earlier marginalised. Have also been included. Even in the most backward districts development schemes are being run through the Aspirational Districts Program”, he said. The Prime Minister also listed many steps like free ration to people for the last two and half years, 6 thousand rupees every year in the account of every farmer, and easing of drone, gaming and start-up related rules.

Emphasising the importance of clear goals, the Prime Minister gave the example of the extraction of deep water energy through modern technology in Andhra Pradesh. He also underlined the government’s focus on the Blue Economy. “Blue economy has become such a big priority for the first time”, he added. He mentioned measures like Kisan Credit Cards for fishermen and the modernisation of Visakhapatnam fishing harbour that started today. The Prime Minister highlighted that for centuries, the sea has been a source of prosperity for India and our seashores have acted as a gateway to this prosperity. He emphasised that the projects worth thousands of crores which are going on for port lead development in the country will get a further expansion after today. Concluding the address, the Prime Minister said, “The India of the 21st century is bringing the holistic thought of development to the ground.” He expressed the belief that Andhra Pradesh will continue to play a pivotal role in this development drive of the country.

Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh, Shri Y S R Jagan Reddy, Governor of Andhra Pradesh, Shri Biswa Bhushan Harichandan, Union Minister Ashvini Vaishnaw, Members of Parliament and Members of the Legislative Council of Andhra Pradesh were those present on occasion.

Background

The Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi laid the foundation stone for the redevelopment of Visakhapatnam Railway Station, to be done at a cost of around Rs 450 crores. The redeveloped station would cater to 75,000 passengers per day and will

improve the passenger experience by providing modern amenities. The Prime Minister also laid the foundation stone for the modernisation and upgradation of Visakhapatnam Fishing Harbour. The total cost of the project is around Rs. 150 crores. The fishing harbour, after its upgradation and modernisation, will double the handling capacity from 150 Tons per day to about 300 tons per day, provide safe landing and berthing and other modern infrastructure facilities reduce turnaround time in the jetty, reduce wastage and help improve price realisation.

He also laid the foundation stone of Andhra Pradesh section of the six-lane Greenfield Raipur- Visakhapatnam Economic Corridor. It will be built at a cost of more than Rs 3750 crore. The Economic Corridor will provide faster connectivity between the Industrial Nodes of Chhattisgarh & Odisha to Visakhapatnam Port & Chennai - Kolkata National Highway. It will also improve connectivity to tribal and backward areas of Andhra Pradesh and Odisha. The Prime Minister also laid the foundation stone of a dedicated Port Road from Convent Junction to Sheela Nagar Junction in Visakhapatnam. It will ease traffic congestion in Visakhapatnam City by segregating local and port-bound goods traffic. He also dedicated to the nation, Narasannapeta to Pathapatnam section of NH-326A built at a cost of more than Rs 200 crore as a part of the Srikakulam-Gajapati Corridor. The project would provide better connectivity in the region.

The Prime Minister dedicated to the nation, the U-field Onshore Deepwater block project of ONGC in Andhra Pradesh, developed at a cost of more than Rs. 2900 crores. It is the deepest Gas discovery of the project with a gas production potential of about 3 million metric standard cubic metres per day (MMSCMD). He will lay the foundation stone of the Srikakulam Angul Natural Gas Pipeline Project of GAIL with a capacity of around 6.65 MMSCMD. This 745 km long pipeline will be built at a total cost of more than Rs 2650 crores. Being a part of the Natural Gas Grid (NGG), the pipeline will create the vital infrastructure to supply Natural Gas to domestic households, industries, commercial units and Automobile sectors in various districts of Andhra Pradesh and Odisha. The pipeline will supply natural gas to the City Gas Distribution Network in Srikakulam and Vizianagaram districts of Andhra Pradesh.