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संपादकीय

Vaccine Century: पीएम मोदी की संकल्प शक्ति के आगे सारी गणनाएं फेल

'संकल्प से सिद्धि' तक की परिकल्पना प्रधानमंत्री नरेंद्र मोदी ने की और इसी मंत्र को अपनाते हुए उनके नेतृत्व में देश आज 100 करोड़ वैक्सीन का डोज़ पूरा कर चुका है और नित नए कीर्तिमान स्थापित कर रहा है. 100 करोड़ वैक्सीन के डोज़ का आंकड़ा सुनने में जितना बड़ा लक्ष्य लगता है उसे पूरा करना उतनी ही बड़ी चुनौती थी. और वह भी ऐसी महामारी के खिलाफ जिसके बारे में पूरी दुनिया अनजान थी. लेकिन देश ने इस चुनौती को स्वीकार किया. अगर इस वैक्सीनेशन के सफर को देखें तो सबसे बड़ी चुनौती वैक्सीन को बनाने की थी. वैक्सीन ऐसी बीमारी के खिलाफ जो निरंतर अपना रूप और स्वरूप बदल रहा था! लेकिन प्रधानमंत्री ने स्वदेशी वैक्सीन विकसित करने का लक्ष्य निर्धारित किया और इसे बनाने के लिए वैज्ञानिकों को प्रेरित किया. इसके साथ ही साथ सरकार ने वैक्सीन निर्माण को लेकर होने वाली लालफीताशाही को भी खत्म करने का फैसला लिया. यही कारण रहा कि 10 साल में विकसित की जाने वाली सामान्य वैक्सीन 10 महीने में बन करके तैयार हो गई.

27 मार्च 2020 को पीएम केयर्स फंड बनाया गया और इस फंड में भारत के प्रधानमंत्री, रक्षा मंत्री, गृह मंत्री और वित्तमंत्री मुख्य ट्रस्टी के तौर पर शामिल किया गया. इसी पीएम केयर्स फंड से 100 करोड़ रुपये वैक्सीन रिसर्च के लिए दिए गए और यहीं से शुरू होता है वैक्सीन रिसर्च का सिलसिला. प्रधानमंत्री ने वैक्सीन निर्माण को खुद मॉनिटर किया और ट्रायल प्रोसेस में तेजी लाने के लिए अहम फैसले लिए. साथ ही साथ महामारी की भयावहता को देखते हुए वैक्सीन के इमरजेंसी यूज़ की भी इजाजत दिलवाई. हालांकि इस प्रक्रिया में पूरी तरह से वैज्ञानिक दृष्टिकोण को अपनाया गया.

वैक्सीन निर्माण के साथ-साथ इसे लोगों तक पहुंचाना और वैक्सीन के प्रति लोगों में विश्वास बनाना भी एक बड़ी चुनौती थी. लेकिन दृढ़ निश्चय और राष्ट्रीय संकल्प के कारण वैक्सीनेशन प्रक्रिया शुरू हुई. CoWIN ऐप के माध्यम से लक्षित व्यक्ति तक वैक्सीन पहुंचाई गई साथ ही साथ इसकी कालाबाजारी को भी खत्म किया गया. वैक्सीन प्रक्रिया में वीआईपी कल्चर को भी खत्म किया और सभी की पाली आने पर ही उन्हें वैक्सीन दी गई. 16 जनवरी को जब वैक्सीनेशन की प्रक्रिया देशभर में शुरू हुई तब सबसे पहले हेल्थ वर्कर और फ्रंटलाइन वर्कर को ही वैक्सीन दी गई. प्रधानमंत्री ने स्वयं 1 मार्च 2021 को वैक्सीन की पहली डोज़ ली. वह भी तब जब उनकी पाली आई.

हालांकि बीच में कई राज्यों ने सीधे वैक्सीन खरीदने और अपनी प्रक्रिया से लगवाने की पहल की, लेकिन जब वह इस कार्य में असफल हो गए तो पूरी जिम्मेदारी केंद्र ने उठाई. भारत जैसे विकासशील देश में सभी व्यक्तियों को वैक्सीन मिले इसके लिए सरकारी अस्पतालों में मुफ्त वैक्सीनेशन की व्यवस्था की गई. देश के लिए लोगों को सुरक्षित रखने के साथ-साथ अर्थव्यवस्था को बचाए रखना भी महत्वपूर्ण था. अर्थव्यवस्था को बचाने के लिए 2 लाख करोड़ रुपये से अधिक के आर्थिक पैकेज की घोषणा की. साथ ही लोगों को बचाने के लिए सही समय पर लॉकडाउन, मेडिकल सुविधा उपलब्ध कराना, गरीब कल्याण अन्न योजना आदि को लागू किया. इन सभी चुनौतियों के साथ देश में जिस तरह से 100 करोड़ कोरोना वैक्सीन की डोज़ के लक्ष्य को हासिल किया गया है, ये प्रधानमंत्री के नेतृत्व और देश के मजबूत इरादे को दर्शाता है.

साल के इस समय भारत में त्योहारों की धूम रहती है. पहले नवरात्रि, दुर्गापूजा, दशहरा फिर दीपावली, छठ जैसे पावन पर्व भारत वर्ष के कोने कोने में धूमधाम से मनाए जाते हैं. संस्कृति परम्परा के लिहाज से भी अर्थव्यवस्था के लिहाज से भी



ये काफी महत्वपूर्ण समय होता है. बाजारों में रौनक होती है. सभी कम्पनियां अपने कैम्पेन के माध्यम से ग्राहकों को लुभाने का प्रयत्न करती रहती हैं. कुछ विज्ञापन तो जान बूझ कर विवादित बनाये जाते हैं ताकि सस्ती लोकप्रियता हासिल हो सके. हर साल त्योहार आते ही कोई न कोई ऐसा विज्ञापन जरूर आता है जिससे हिंदू भावनाएं आहत होती हैं. जैसे पिछले दिनों एक कम्पनी ने दीपावली को एक नया नाम "जश्र ए रिवाज़" देने का प्रयास किया. थोड़े से पैसे में भरपूर नाम केवल विवादों वाले विज्ञापनों से ही होता है और आजकल यह प्रक्रिया खूब फल-फूल रही है. बाद में आकर कम्पनी के लोग माफी मांग लेते हैं और मामला समाप्त हो जाता है. परंतु प्रश्न यहां ये उत्पन्न होता है कि आवश्यकता क्या है विज्ञापन के साथ सांस्कृतिक भाषाई और पारंपरिक मिश्रण की?

अगर कोई ईद मनाएगा तो ईद के वास्तविक रूप में मनाएगा. अपने रीति रिवाज से मनाएगा नाकि उसमें अन्य उपासना पद्धति का प्रयोग करेगा ना ही उसका कोई अन्य नाम देगा. ठीक उसी प्रकार क्रिसमस यदि कोई मनाता है तो उसी तरह मनाएगा जैसे उसका तरीका है. ठीक इसी प्रकार से जब कोई हिन्दू धर्म से संबंधित त्योहार आता है तो सब की यही इच्छा होती है उसे उसी वास्तविक स्वरूप में मनाया जाए. अनावश्यक त्योहारों के नाम व मनाने के तरीकों से छेड़छाड़ करने से बचना चाहिए. तथाकथित सुधार के नाम पर हिन्दू भावनाओं को आहत करना ये कहीं से भी उचित नहीं है. दीवाली हर बार विवादों में होती है कभी विज्ञापनों को लेकर तो कभी प्रदूषण को लेकर. दीवाली पर पटाखों पर बैन रहता है. बाकी समय वही पटाखे क्या प्रदूषण का कारक नहीं बनते ? चलिए हमें कोई आपत्ति नहीं पर्यावरण को जरा भी क्षति पहुँचे तो हर उस चीज़ को बैन किया जाए. लेकिन प्रश्न फिर एक खड़ा होता है कि क्या सिर्फ पटाखे ही प्रदूषण फैला रहे हैं? या बाकी अन्य कारक भी और यदि अन्य कारक भी है तो उस दिशा में क्या आवाज़ उठ रही है? क्या उसे नियंत्रित किया जा रहा है? ये विचारणीय बिंदु है. देश के लोगों को सबके प्रति समभाव, समालोचक व समदर्शी होना होगा. वरना प्रोपेगैंडा करने वाले ऐसे ही किसी न किसी बहाने कोई न कोई विवाद उत्पन्न करते रहेंगे. और देश की एकता अखंडता को कमजोर करने का कुत्सित प्रयत्न भी करेंगे. हमें इन सब से बच के रहना है और 21 शताब्दी के आत्मनिर्भर भारत की तरफ कदम बढ़ाने हैं.



Vaccines, India and the Promise of Fighting Against All Odds

India's vaccination drive started on 16 January. Since then, it has become the second country, only after China, to administer more than a billion doses - a feat achieved in 278 days. As of now, more than 30% of the eligible population has been successfully vaccinated with at least two doses of the vaccine. When the plan was first laid out, critics across the world were skeptical of India's ability to design an effective response to the deadly pandemic and scale its vaccination program. Today, the country has developed expertise to inoculate more than 25 million people in a single day, which equals the entire population of Australia and five times the population of New Zealand.

As the second-most populous country in

the world, such a colossal plan and response is a template for world leaders to dwell on. The instrumental success in not only procurement but also distribution set India on a steep curve of seropositivity - one that was mastered by quickly and effectively responding to the real-time data being received by the Government. India established self-sufficiency in vaccine procurement quite early. First, by means of manufacturing the Covishield vaccine inside the country, made possible by the Serum Institute of India, the largest vaccine manufacturer in the world. Second, by developing Covaxin, India's first indigenous vaccine to fight COVID-19 given by Bharat Biotech. This remarkable achievement can be attributed to a wide-ranging set of policy decisions

and public support. One of the many successes has been the synergies between different ministries of the Government from facilitating vaccine development to the establishment of grassroots accessibility. The logistics and supply-chain management have been marvelous, permitting the delivery and administration of vaccines to the remotest areas of the country. The creation of the CoWIN platform is another defining feature of India's immunization campaign. It allowed for the vaccine drive to remain equitable, scalable, trackable and transparent. It provided a centralized, systematic framework for assuring documentation while also allowing for flexibility and ease during the process. In accredited centers around the country, the





Image credit: Trsakaoe

people-centric application removed information asymmetry while also ensuring vaccine administration legitimacy. Coupled with 'hardware' like AADHAR as one of the many weapons in India's digital arsenal today, delivery of quality services at scale has been made very easy.

“It also ensured that a poor worker could take the first dose in his village and the second dose of the same vaccine in the city where he works, after the required time interval” remarked the Prime Minister on the CoWIN platform, aiding the vaccine administration to the huge migrant population in our country. To further enable equitable distribution, the Government made all vaccines available at zero cost. High price points have historically been a huge barrier to accessibility and such a move promised to not discriminate against anyone on the basis of their income status.

Policy decisions were also cautiously taken, relying on evidence and science. This provided confidence not only to the government officials but also to the medical professionals guiding the process and implementing the drive. Separately, such decisions also boast of the country's developing vaccine-manufacturing ecosystem and the intensive push in R&D. However, the most remarkable thing

about India's COVID-19 immunization drive is the unique collaboration between the Government and the industry. Domestic Vaccine Manufacturers have praised the government's openness and assistance throughout this endeavour, praising regulatory improvements, streamlined procedures, prompt approvals, and the government's openness and cooperation. This goes a long way to establish the strength in India's resolve for better relationships with the private sector in the country; it is a strategy that is at the heart of India's economic policy. While multiple such policy measures aided the success, it is necessary to realize that the onset of the vaccination drive was marked with multiple challenges that made an effective rollout difficult. One of these challenges included systematic hesitance towards the vaccines. This reluctance was overcome through a consistent effort from the frontline health workers, especially ASHA workers and PHC doctors in the rural areas of the country. The strength and resilience of the Indian people are evident through India's impressive vaccination rate which is significantly better than the global averages. Community engagement and interpersonal communication to address 'vaccine denialists' as well as the misinformation and irrational fear towards the vaccines have been extremely

essential for reaching these ambitious immunization targets. In September, the average daily dose delivered climbed from 2 million in May to 7.8 million. At the same time, days taken to administer 10 crore vaccine shots have more than halved since January.

Despite such a herculean task at hand, India continued to lead by example in an effort to make vaccines more accessible at a global level. In October

2020, it jointly proposed to the World Trade Organisation (WTO) with South Africa a waiver that would allow countries to not enforce their intellectual property rights related to COVID-19 in a bid to democratize drugs, vaccines, diagnostics and any such information that could be helpful in achieving herd immunity.

In fact, it is in this spirit of Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam (World as One Family), the Government of India stepped up and distributed more than 60 million doses of COVID-19 vaccines to 95 countries and also joined hands with the COVID-19 Vaccines Global Access, COVAX. Above all, India's success story is unique because it happened against all odds - peak vaccine hesitancy, huge population with little organized data and an overburdened healthcare system among other reasons. India's story is evidence that strong political will can equip a country to traverse any and all adversities. It is a telling tale of Prime Minister Modi's Bharat, establishing a powerful image at home and abroad.

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Modi Sarkar: Transforming Lives, Ensuring Dignity



To say that the Modi-led government has been a revelation since its inception would be an understatement. The amount of impact it has had on people's lives goes beyond mere figures and statistics. While the country as a whole has been reaping the benefits of good governance under the Modi-led government, I'd like to focus on the North-East in this article by highlighting a few notable developments.

For so many decades, it seemed as though there was a sort of an 'Iron Curtain' between the North-East and "mainland India." I say this because, while there was a semblance of development in the region, it always seemed cold, forced, and many a time, patronizing. The North-East was more like a buffer zone: a strategic area to

counter and keep external forces at bay. This statement is buttressed by the fact that Dr. Manmohan Singh never visited Nagaland in his two terms as the Prime Minister of India. Of course, he would happily visit Congress-ruled states. Inclusivity has never been the strongest feature of the INC. With the coming of the Modi-led government at the centre, the winds of change have been blowing across the North-East. Every now and then, you have Union Ministers visiting the region as a result of which emotional integration with the rest of India is also taking place rapidly. Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi ji himself has been to Nagaland. Most importantly, the region is witnessing unprecedented development. With Prime Minister Modi ji emphasizing

on Act East Policy with special focus on the North-East, the region is experiencing massive tectonic shifts and it is expected that things will only get better and better.

A lot of firsts are taking place in the North-East. Connectivity had always been an issue in the region but one can now confidently state that this particular problem is being mitigated. While efforts are being made to bring the North-East under the railway map of India, I must also state that air connectivity is rapidly being ramped up. Air routes have been increased with cities and capitals of the region being connected to major cities across the country. Regional air connectivity has also been given a boost, thanks to the UDAN Scheme. Ten to fifteen years ago, one could never have imagined Dimapur being connected to Imphal or Shillong to Dibrugarh via air. The sky is now no longer the exclusive realm of the high and the mighty. The common man, too, has a place. It also goes without saying that roads are also being constructed and upgraded on a massive scale. With North-East being the gateway to South-East Asia and projected to become the growth engine of the country in a matter of years, it is indeed no surprise to see the region and its people being accorded top priority. As Hon'ble PM Modi ji has rightly pointed out time and again, India progresses only when the North-East progresses.

Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana is another initiative of the Modi-led government which has ensured a dignified and respectable living standard of the people, especially that of women. Nagaland is one of the major beneficiaries of this particular scheme. I must also point out to the various fruits, vegetables and agricultural produce from the North-East



ARTICLE

being provided with GI Tags, subsequently resulting in farmers' incomes being elevated. For the first time in the history of Nagaland, the world famous King Chilli (Raja Mircha) was exported to the UK. If this was not a recognition of the potential of Nagaland's farmers, I don't know what is. Another life-changing initiative of the Modi-led government is the Jal Jeevan Mission which ensures tap water connection to every rural home. This has particularly been beneficial for women as they now need not walk kilometres on foot to fetch water. A silent revolution of sorts – with one simple tap water connection, lives have been transformed. All this has been possible due to the far-sightedness and vision of Hon'ble PM Modi ji. Perhaps, the most important contribution of Hon'ble PM Modi ji in the transformation and development of the North-East is his commitment towards ending insurgency and armed movements in the region. North-East being a restive region where even a small spark can lead to massive fires, Hon'ble PM Modi ji has done exceptionally well to bring peace and tranquillity. No other Prime Minister has been able to achieve what he has achieved in this short period of time. It is his conviction and duty towards the nation that drives him. There is certainly no

doubting his credentials. Be it the Bodo Peace Accord or the Karbi Peace Accord, Prime Minister Modi ji has emphasized peace as a prerequisite for development and progress of the region. The protracted Naga political issue has also been handed a new lease of life after the Modi-led government came to power; with the GoI and the NSCN-IM signing the Framework Agreement in 2015, and the GoI and the NNPGs signing the Agreed Position in 2017. It is expected that an honourable solution to the decades-long political issue will soon be arrived at. What the Congress couldn't achieve in its decades of (mis)rule since independence, Prime Minister Modi was able to do so within a few years of coming to power, which goes to show his dedication and commitment towards enduring peace and a stable India. He has often expressed his keen desire to herald a new dawn of hope, peace and development in the North-East and the people of the region have strong faith in him to deliver on his promise. The people of India recognize Modi ji as a strong and decisive leader for whom national interest is supreme. It is only natural that they pin their hopes on him. It is also with this hope that the BJP Nagaland Unit is working tirelessly in its endeavour to reach out to the people and selflessly serve society.

Long neglected, ignored and given a step-motherly treatment, the North-East is now receiving proper care, attention and respect under the Modi-led government. The pace at which emotional integration is occurring is simply phenomenal. I can boldly proclaim that the people of the region for the first time feel as though they're also truly Indians without any inhibitions. If you ask me what the greatest achievement of the Modi-led government is vis-à-vis the North-East, I will gladly point to that fact.

Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi ji is a class above the rest. He does not subscribe to the old bureaucratic method of solving problems and that is what makes him unique. There is a humane element to the way he approaches and tackles problems. His hands-on approach is the most outstanding feature of his leadership. It is our prayer and hope that he will continue to lead India for many more years to come. Under his dynamic and visionary leadership, India is rapidly transforming and it won't be too long before the North-East actually progresses and develops along the same wavelength as the rest of India.

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New India's Growth Story-Women led Development



Image credit: Natanael Natanael Alfredo Nemanita Ginting

There is a very interesting quote by G D Anderson which reads, “feminism isn't about making women stronger. Its about changing the way the world perceives that strength- it is so much more than you would ever expect.” The quote well encapsulates Prime Minister Narendra Modi ji's women centric government model. The governance under Prime Minister Modi has seen transformation from women's development to women led development. In such grand vision the position of women has been seen as a nucleus for the growth of not only women per se but also entire nation. Unlike the prior perception of women to be the passive recipient of the yield of development, the governance under Prime Minister Modi ji has reimagined the position of women as architects of India's progress and development. “On the occasion of International Women's Day on March 2020, Prime Minister Narendra Modi ji had invoked indomitable spirit of Nari

Shakti by reaffirming how India fully endorse the motto regarding women empowerment of United Nations- think equal, build smart, innovate for change.”

In this regard, Modi ji has implemented multi sectoral schemes that recognized the true potential of the women of India, empower and emancipate them and provide them with a platform from where they could contribute to the development of the country. On 15th August, 2020, he gave an opportunity to the women to get permanent employment in the Indian Army and Navy, that earlier was not imaginable. The aim of sustainable development Goal 5: Gender Equality also facilitated the realization of other SDGs that ensured multi-prolonged holistic development. For this he emphasised upon capacity building in sectors such as health, education, nutrition etc. Year 2017 saw the initiation of the Pradhan Mantri Matri Vandana Yojana (PMMVY) wherein the pregnant and lactating mothers were given direct

benefit transfer (DBT) to meet the enhanced nutritional requirement and to compensate for the loss in wage. The scheme in 2019-20 set a milestone by reaching out to the one crore beneficiaries.

Likewise, there has been a high impact on the improvisation of the women's health and access to sanitation. Earlier women used to cover some distance to openly defecate. It was not only unhealthy but also the women did not feel safe. Swatch Bharat Mission Gramin tried to resolve this pertinent issue. The mission aimed at an increment from 39 percent in the year 2014 to 100 percent in the year 2019. Under the scheme 10 crore toilets have been built since 2014. As per the UNICEF study on Access to Toilets and Safety, Convenience and Self Respect of Women in Rural India published in February, 2020 highlighted how the Swatch Bharat Mission Gramin not only saved time of the women but also safeguarded their





respect by constructing toilets. Other than this scheme the government is also committed to promote the health and well-being of the pregnant ladies and the feeding mothers. Under the Prime Ministership of Narendra Modi ji the maternal mortality rate saw a steep decline from 167 in the year 2011-2013 to 114 in the year 2016-2018.

In the field of education, Sukanya Samridhi Yojana was launched as a part of Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao so as to impart free education to the girl child. This yojana has already benefited more than three crore young women. The scheme has led to the visibilization of women in the higher education. “For instance, there has been an increase in PhD enrolment of women to 43.82 percent in 2018 from 40 percent in 2013-14 because of various measures taken by the government, such as women candidates being allowed a relaxation of one year for M.Phil and two years for PhD in the maximum duration, i.e. two to six years respectively as per the University Grants Commission (UGC), in 2016.”

The Prime Minister has also taken measures to empower women financially. Under the Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana scheme over 18 crore women in

rural and urban sectors have now access to the formal banking and avail other financial services. By enabling them financially the government intends to build a healthy society and family. Through the Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana, the Government of India tried to enhance and build capacity of more than 73 lakh women and trained them to reach the standardisation of the skill of the women. Under the Support to Training and Employment Programme for Women (STEP) scheme an initiation was taken to train and skill the women so that they are enabled to find employment for themselves. Also, the Prime Minister has taken ample steps for adequate social security benefits for women workers. Maternity Benefit (Amendment) Bill, 2017, Occupational Safety, Health and Working Conditions Code, 2020 are few schemes floated to protect the rights of the working women.

“From defining the nation's first menstrual hygiene protocol, amending the Medical Termination Pregnancy Act of 1971, giving women reproductive rights over their bodies and increasing the fetal gestation period from 20 to 24 weeks, welcoming more women recruits in the NCC, which will now be extended

to border and coastal areas, to criminalising the inhuman and unconstitutional practice of instant Triple Talaq, and setting up a committee to explore an increase in marriageable age from 18 to 21 years for women, the Modi government has truly exhibited a bold, women-friendly approach which is both mature and modern, and something which no other government in post-Independent India can dare boast of.”

Thus, to sum up one can easily agree that the government's initiative under the Prime Minister Narendra Modi ji has been a pathbreaking. Modi ji's continuous efforts to strengthen women's agency and build socio economic capacities has had a great share of contribution to the women led development. It is because of such efforts that women have become an integral part of nation's security and defence architecture. New India's growth story today focusses upon progressive legislation, skill building, universal education and many more. All this is possible only because of the revolutionary vision of Prime Minister Narendra Modi ji. He has converted the position of women into a leading force in the nation building.

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1. <https://www.thecovaproject.com/cova-conversations/tag/g.d+anderson> accessed as on 27th October, 2021.

2. <https://www.dnaindia.com/analysis/report-being-a-woman-in-modi-s-new-india-2837977> accessed as on 27th October, 2021

3. *Ibid*

4. <https://www.dnaindia.com/analysis/report-being-a-woman-in-modi-s-new-india-2837977> accessed as on 28th October, 2021.

नामांतरण : सांस्कृतिक विरासत को फिर से प्राप्त करने की कोशिश



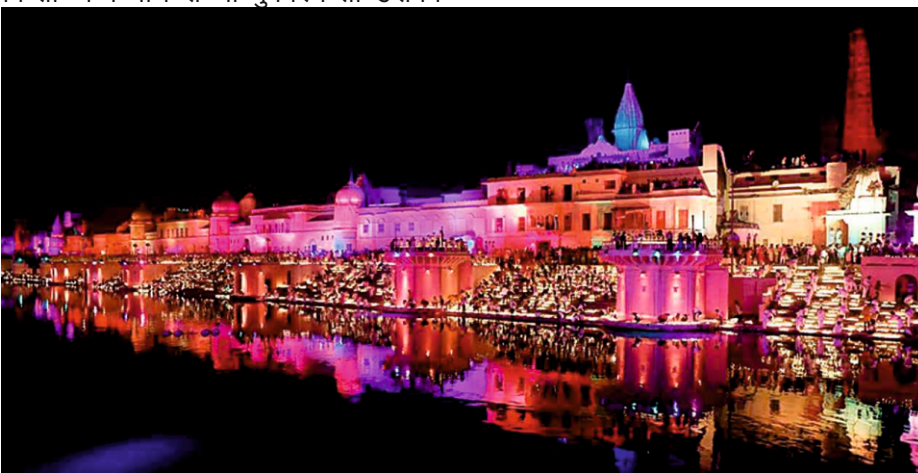
चाहे इलाहाबाद शहर का नाम प्रयागराज करना हो, मुगलसराय रेलवे स्टेशन का नामांतरण पं. दीन दयाल उपाध्याय के नाम पर करना हो या फिर फैजाबाद स्टेशन का अयोध्या, इन प्रयासों का एक वर्ग हमेशा-हमेशा से विरोध करता आया है कि इसका औचित्य क्या है? तो आइये इसके औचित्य को समझते हैं कि क्यों सांस्कृतिक विरासत की रक्षा के लिये ऐसा करना अनिवार्य ही है। अंततः यह संस्कृति ही है, जिसमें राष्ट्र का प्राण बसता है।

“नाम में क्या रखा है। अगर हम गुलाब को किसी अन्य नाम से भी पुकारेंगे तो उसकी

खुशबू कम नहीं होगी।” जूलियट के हवाले से कही गई शेक्सपियर की यह बात उस संदर्भ में तो ठीक प्रतीत होती है जब गुण के सामने नाम के महत्त्व को गौण करने का औचित्य सिद्ध करना हो, लेकिन यह उक्ति अपनी पहचान में रूढ़ हो चुके किसी नाम के ऐतिहासिक संदर्भ की अवहेलना भी करता है। खासकर यह नाम किसी शहर का हो तो उस नाम का अपना एक ऐतिहासिक सांस्कृतिक संदर्भ होता है जिससे विलग उसकी पहचान नहीं की जा सकती। और यह ऐतिहासिक सांस्कृतिक संदर्भ एक प्रतीक के रूप में राजनीतिक महत्त्व भी रखता है। दरअसल, शहर भौतिक उपस्थितियों का

समुच्चय भर नहीं होता बल्कि यह उस विशिष्ट संस्कृति का द्योतक भी होता है जो समय के साथ वहाँ विकसित होती है। इस प्रकार एक शहर की पहचान उसके सभ्यताई विकास और सांस्कृतिक विशेषता, दोनों के साथ रूढ़ हो जाती है, और यही वजह है कि जैसे ही किसी शहर का नाम हम सुनते हैं तो उसकी एक स्पष्ट तस्वीर हमारे आँखों के सामने उभर आती है। मसलन, नालंदा का नाम सुनते ही शिक्षा के एक केंद्र के रूप में उसकी पहचान उभर जाती है तो बनारसी शब्द एक मनमौजी संस्कृति को निरूपित करता है। ऐसे ही अन्य शहरों या प्रतिष्ठानों के साथ भी होता है, लेकिन क्या हो अगर अगर किसी राष्ट्र को उसकी ऐतिहासिकता से विलग कर दिया जाए? उसके सांस्कृतिक पहचान को शिथिल करने की कोशिश की जाए? या फिर उसे नई पहचान के साथ गढ़ने की कोशिश की जाए? इन सभी प्रयासों का एक ही परिणाम होगा कि नागरिक चेतना सांस्कृतिक निरंतरता से भिन्न हो जाएगी। ऐसा ना हो इसलिए आवश्यक है कि ऐसे प्रतीकों के संरक्षण का प्रयास हो। नामांतरण की कोशिश को भी इसी सन्दर्भ में देखने की ज़रूरत है।

वस्तुतः अतीत के 'अन्याय' को समाप्त कर या यूँ कहें कि इस अन्याय को आधार मानकर वर्तमान में प्राचीन-ऐतिहासिक स्मृतियों के निर्माण की प्रवृत्ति वैश्विक है। अक्सर देश या शहरों के नाम ऐसे ही अन्यायपूर्ण स्मृतियों को जताते हैं जिन्हें वर्तमान सरकार (पढ़ें जनदबाव) द्वारा बदलकर ऐतिहासिक गलतियों को ठीक करने की कोशिश की जाती है। ऐतिहासिक अन्याय की निर्मिती के पीछे कई वजहें हैं। जब किसी देश पर लंबे समय तक औपनिवेशिक सत्ता कायम रहती है तो वह स्थानीय पहचान और अस्मिता को दरकिनार



करते हुए देश/शहरों पर अपने अनुकूल नाम थोप देती है। इसी प्रकार यदि शासक वर्ग और शासित वर्ग के बीच धार्मिक अंतर मज़बूत हो और यह धार्मिक अंतर शासन को आधार भी प्रदान करता हो तो कालांतर में शासित वर्ग द्वारा उस दौर की घटनाओं को धार्मिक अन्याय के रूप में चिह्नित किया जाने लगता है। फिर कई जगहों पर देशज जातियों को समाप्त कर दिया जाता है तो उसके विरुद्ध भी प्रतिक्रिया होती है। दुनियाभर में इन्हीं आधारों पर ऐतिहासिक अन्याय को दूर करने का प्रयास किया जाता है।

औपनिवेशिक गलतियों को ठीक करने की कोशिशों को देखें तो भारत में ही बॉम्बे, कलकत्ता और मद्रास जैसे नामों को बदला गया। इसी प्रकार आज़ादी के पूर्व जिम्बाबे देश का नाम रोडे़शिया था जो ब्रिटिश साउथ अफ्रीका कंपनी के 'सेसिल रोड्स' के नाम पर रखा गया था। औपनिवेशिक शासन से मुक्ति पाते ही जिम्बाबे ने औपनिवेशिक नाम भी बदल लिया। सीलोन से श्रीलंका, वर्मा से म्यांमार, सियाम से थाईलैंड इत्यादि ऐसे ही

परिवर्तित नाम हैं, जो औपनिवेशिक पहचान त्यागने के उद्देश्य से बदले गए। कुछ नाम इसलिये बदले गए क्योंकि वे स्थानीय संस्कृति को ठीक प्रतिनिधित्व नहीं करते थे। उदाहरण के लिये तुर्की का 'कुस्तुनतुनिया' शहर जो एक ईसाई 'कॉन्स्टेनटाइन' के नाम पर था उसे इस्लामी चरित्र के अनुरूप बदलकर इस्ताम्बुल कर दिया गया। बॉयटॉन (Bytown) और यॉर्क (York) से परिवर्तित होकर क्रमशः ओटावा और टोरंटो बने कनाडाई शहरों के पीछे भी यही धारणा थी कि पुराने नाम देशज संस्कृतियों का सही प्रतिनिधित्व नहीं करते थे। कुछ देशों में वैचारिक क्रांति के कारण भी नाम बदले जाते हैं। उदाहरण के लिये, रूस में साम्यवादी क्रांति संपन्न होने के बाद साम्यवादी नेताओं के नाम पर लेनिनग्राद और स्टालिनग्राद जैसे शहर बनाए किंतु 1990 के दशक में जब सोवियत संघ का पतन हुआ तो पुनः लेनिनग्राद को सेंट पीटर्सबर्ग और स्टालिनग्राद को वोल्गोग्राद कर दिया गया। सिर्फ शहरों ही नहीं बल्कि सड़क, हवाई अड्डे, पहाड़ इत्यादि के भी नाम भी बदले जाते रहे हैं। दक्षिण अफ्रीका में तो बाकायदा 'दक्षिण

अफ्रीका ज्योग्राफिकल नेम काउंसिल' नामक आयोग ही बना है जो नामकरण को सांस्थानिक रूप प्रदान करता है।

ऐसे अलग-अलग उदाहरणों के उल्लेख का एकमात्र उद्देश्य यह स्पष्ट करना था कि नामकरण की प्रवृत्ति किसी एकल प्रक्रिया का उत्पाद न होकर अलग-अलग ऐतिहासिक कृत्यों के विरुद्ध प्रतिक्रिया है। परंतु इन सबके मूल में जो एक बात रेखांकित करने वाली है वह यह कि लगभग हर मामले में राष्ट्रीय भावना तथा सांस्कृतिक अनुराग इन परिवर्तनों के सबसे प्रभावी कारकों में रहा है। जब कोई राष्ट्र सचेत रूप से यह महसूस करने लगता है कि अतीत के किसी हिस्से में बाह्य हस्तक्षेप के द्वारा उसकी ऐतिहासिक सांस्कृतिक निरंतरता भंग हुई थी तो वह निश्चित ही उसे दुबारा पाने की कोशिश करता है। भारतीय संदर्भ में भी नामांतरण के पीछे यही तत्त्व सर्वाधिक प्रभावी है। खासकर जब से केंद्र में वर्तमान सरकार अस्तित्व में आई है ऐसे प्रतीकों के प्रति सजगता बढ़ी है और उत्तर प्रदेश के मुख्यमंत्री तो पूरे नैतिक बल के साथ ऐसे बदलाव को मूर्त रूप प्रदान कर रहे हैं। नामांतरण के महत्व को इस बात से भी समझा जा सकता है आज भी देश के कई हिस्सों में शहरों/रेलवे स्टेशनों आदि के नाम उन आक्राताओं के नाम पर हैं जिसने वहाँ के वैभव को नष्ट करने का काम किया था। बिहार के 'बख्तियारपुर' से अच्छा उदाहरण और क्या होगा! जिस बख्तियार खिलजी ने नालंदा विश्वविद्यालय को जला दिया था उसके नाम पर आज वह जगह जानी जाती है। आखिर इससे हम संस्कृति और इतिहास के किस पक्ष को लेकर आगे बढ़ना चाहते हैं। ऐसी कोशिशों का एक साफ मकसद दिखाई देता है कि एक पराजित राष्ट्र की स्मृति को इस तरह वैधता देना कि नागरिक बोध स्वयं ही 'नई ऐतिहासिकता' को स्वीकार करने के लिए तैयार हो जाए। यह कोशिश सफल न हो इसके लिए जरूरी है कि हम अपनी विरासत, अपनी संस्कृति की ओर लौटें। इन्हें फिर से पाने के हरसंभव प्रयास करें। नामांतरण ऐसा ही एक प्रयास है। ऐसे और प्रयास करने होंगे।



लेखक: सत्री कुमार, इतिहास के अध्येता हैं

Online Education: An Opportunity



Image credit: Iuliia Timchenko

Restrictions imposed by the Covid-19 pandemic caused a wholesale shift in the medium of delivery of education across the country. We had parents, students, and teachers glued to the screens during this period. No doubt, a large number of students who were otherwise attending schools and colleges in person were unable to access the education due to many factors. IIT Bombay set an example by collecting donations of nearly 5 Crore Rs. exclusively to enable its students to participate in online education. However, I am hopeful that these hurdles for a larger population will be overcome in the future as the internet and smartphones become more accessible. I was involved in assisting professors to deliver online lectures to the students during the

pandemic affected semester. My own participation in this process made me think about the possibilities that the online delivery of education may have for us.

Unbundling of education

It will be useful to look at the concept of unbundling before going ahead. Unbundling refers to breaking apart a service into smaller parts. In the current system of education, a student pays for 6-8 semesters of learning at a single place from a single set of teachers. If a teacher at some other college in the same city is teaching a particular subject better than others, students cannot simply go to that other college. If a university is offering some advanced level courses which your own university is not offering, you cannot simply change the university. Unbundling exactly tries to overcome this

shortcoming of the existing system of delivery of education. Unbundling was not possible in the past when the means of communication were not available widely, but the falling prices of internet services have made communication technology available to many more people. In an online mode of delivery of education, it is possible (at least in theory) that you are able to study courses from 5-6 different universities over the course of a UG degree in any discipline. It is even possible to study courses from different disciplines under this model. Account of student listing all such credits obtained from different places may be maintained online. Unbundling will encourage competition among colleges and teachers to do better to attract students. Currently, few online degree programs are available. Quick search on EdX shows the cost of



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about 10,000 USD for a fully-online MS in Analytics from Georgia Tech, USA. Same degree costs 50 to 100% more if one decides to study on campus of Georgia Tech. However, only US citizens may apply for this online degree for now. Costs may go down further in future once we encourage competition among institutes and teachers. Such programs, if designed by premier institutes from our own country, may create another revenue stream for those institutes.

This competition will not affect only costs. Such a competition will push for innovation and creativity among teachers. It will demand that the teachers also become content creators. Teachers will be creating videos, images, GIFs, interactive videos, texts etc. to make learning more interesting for the participants. Such competition will contribute towards improving the quality of education.

Better late than never

The online delivery of education also has a potential to allow people to continue learning even when they are employed or could not continue with their education because of economic reasons. Adding new skills to remain updated with

changing times is another feature that a person employed will find in online education.

MS-CIT, an introductory course in IT launched by MKCIL (Maharashtra Knowledge Corporation Ltd.), is a relevant case to discuss. The course was launched in 2001 when computers were appearing in offices, but still were not so common in homes. When I completed secondary school certificate exam in 2007, the course was popular among the students. Many were learning computer for the first time. They had not got the training of operating one in their school and neither they had computers at their homes. Formally, about 1.35 crore people have completed MS-CIT course so far. The beauty of this 3 months long course is that it is taught through a tiny private computer centers spread across the state. Even many adults got their lessons in using computer through such private computer centers.

Some steps in this direction are already being taken by different players. E&ICT academy of IIT Guwahati, continuing education programs of IIT Bombay and IISc Bangalore, a fully online BSc Data

Science degree of IIT Madras are some prominent examples from technical education. After studying the situation during pandemic, UGC too has taken some steps by proposing a hybrid mode of learning. Predictably, this move of UGC has attracted protests from teachers' organizations. The organizations are right in saying that a move to online mode of education will reduce the number of teaching posts. However, the improvement in the quality of education and convenience to students will be far greater. It is time to look at the education sector beyond an employment scheme for fresh graduates.

Citizens who are eager to learn all the time are an asset to the country. Learning need not be looked through a narrow purpose of climbing professional ladders. Education empowers people to stand up for themselves and make an informed opinion on important issues. It is time that government takes some quick steps to enable a faster growth of online education in our country.

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Image credit: alexdndz



The Rise of an Indian Defense Industrial Complex

The second NDA government under Prime Minister Narendra Modi has many achievements to its credit, but perhaps its jewel in the crown is the creation of a permanent and deep Defense Industrial Base (DIB) in India.

I would submit, that for a country to be considered a “Great power” it needs a deep and significant DIB with the following characteristics, namely (a) the capability to manufacture entire platforms (ships, aircraft, tanks, submarines etc) as opposed to systems (like software) or small arms (assault rifles, grenades etc), (b) ability to design and innovate new weapons and systems , (c) backward and forward linkage with the civilian sector. At present only four or five countries have this kind of deep DIB (US, Russia, China, maybe France and UK).

In India the growth of DIB has been impeded by a lethal mix of ideology, inertia and corruption.

The liberals and left have been traditionally hostile to the very idea of the DIB. This is because they fear that somehow a strong defense industry will collude with the military hierarchy to promote militarism and aggression. The term for this alleged nexus is the Military Industrial Complex (MIC). With this one

can add a general distrust of the military itself (what if there is a coup?) and the private sector (socialism), that has stymied reforms in the military as well as the defense industry. However it seems to me that those that subscribe to this view misjudge the strength of our democracy and the integrity of our armed forces. I shall also add that these people also somehow fail to see the escalating military buildup of Pakistan and China.

For those of us who believe in national power and prestige, a strong DIB is a “positive good”, to be desired.

I would point out that DIB is in fact essential for four good strategic reasons:-

Firstly, availability of local military supplies in sufficient quantities reduces the logistical constraints of the forces and allows them to fight longer and reliably (increased battle readiness). In modern wars there will be no opportunity to mobilize civilian assets to military use, so a peacetime war production infrastructure is required.

Secondly, a strong DIB allows a nation to become a security provider from a consumer. It enhances the Comprehensive National Power of the State

Thirdly, the DIB is a source of value for the nation's shareholders, jobs for the workers and tax for the Government.

Finally the military is a prime consumer of disruptive technologies that subsequently, revolutionize various civilian sectors. The Internet, GPS and even computers are products of the US DIB. . It enhances the country's position in the Global Innovation Index.

India had taken some early steps to set up a DIB. The DRDO was established in 1958, the Defense PSUs came into existence between the 1960s-1980s. The Ordnance Factory Board goes back almost 200 years, in some form or the other.

Unfortunately the successive Congress Governments that ruled the country since the 1980s paid only lip service to self-reliance. The development of indigenous products through DRDO and DPSUs (Arjun tank, LCA Aircraft, etc) proceeded like an academic exercise - without any input from the military, any direction from political executives, or any timeline for product induction.

All major purchases were made from foreign vendors, and they often involved massive levels of corruption involving middlemen.

The Vajpayee Government (1999-2004) sought to break this template. It allowed the private sector entry in defense production (2001) and created dedicated structures like the Defense Acquisition Agency.

Unfortunately in 2004 the Congress was back in power, and so was inertia and left/liberal ideological baggage.

Mr .A K Anthony in his eight year tenure as the Raksha Mantri failed to make any meaningful reforms in the acquisition procedure, or the defense industry and left behind almost 100 billion dollars' worth of military hardware purchase pending, degrading the capacity of our armed forces. From 2006 to 2014 India became from the sixth largest, to the largest importer of arms in the world (approx. 70%) (SIPRI, Trends in International Arms Transfer 2020).

Prime Minister Modi and his team in 2014



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therefore had an uphill task.

The main challenge that the Government faced was integrating private players in the defense acquisition infrastructure, because the public sector, by its own, has proved inadequate.

The NDA Government, incrementally introduced the layered “preference model”. There are five kinds of participation with different levels of priority (introduced through DPP 2016). The first in priority lists lie the Indigenously Designed, Developed and Manufactured (IDDM) category, involving products that was indigenously designed with 40% Indian content or 60% Indian content (on cost basis). The next level of priority is given Make in India I & II products. The difference between the two is that under the former the Government provides 90% of the development costs, while in the case of the latter, who mostly targets prototypes, no development cost is provided. The Strategic Partnership Model envisages cooperation between Indian entities and foreign Original Equipment Manufacturers (OEMs) involving technology transfers to set up domestic manufacturing infrastructure and supply chains. Finally there is the Buy Global model whereby procurement is made from a foreign manufacturer with around 30% offsets (contractual amounts outsourced to Indian suppliers). There are specific reservations for MSMEs under the 'Make' procedure.

This was backed by liberal issuance of industrial license to private companies (539 to 333 companies).

A negative list of 209 items have been introduced that must compulsorily be procured from domestic manufacturers.

The Government gave high priority to startups and innovation, having set up the iDEX scheme for fostering a defense startup ecosystem. In 2021 1000 crore has been dedicated to it. Presently there are some 194 start-ups in the defense-tech

space. (<https://pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=1739049>)

Three takeaways from these reforms.

First the Government has diametrically reversed the Congress policy of excluding the private sector and is now hand-holding it. At the same time there is no discrimination against DPSUs that still garner majority of the defense capital expenditure.

Second DIB is no longer being seen through an ideological lens but as another sunrise sector of the economy. It is now integrated with wider industrial initiatives in “Make in India”, “Atmanirbhar Bharat Initiative” and the PLI scheme. Third the Government has backed up its “policies” with authentic projects.

The contract for inducting 83 Tejas aircraft in the Indian air force was finally completed in January 2021 (project pending since 2001). This is India's first big ticket IDDM project. The project P-75 I submarine contract was concluded in July, 2021 (pending since 2008). The project is under the Strategic Partnership Model. Presently two Defense Industrial Corridors are being constructed in Uttar Pradesh and Tamil Nadu. They have already drawn substantial investment from DPSUs and the private sector.

The Government acted as an enabler to India's defense exports that grew during 2015-20 at a CAGR of 35 per cent—from around Rs 2,000 crore to Rs 9,000 crore. The MoD's target for the year 2020 is around Rs 35000 crore (around USD 5 billion). The State facilitated this process through Export Promotion Cell (EPC) in the Department of Defense Production (DDP), Defense Attachés in Embassies, and Certification of Fitness to firms and liberal industrial licensing. (Samuel C Rajiv, <https://idsa.in/idsacomments/promoting-defence-exports-ssrajiv-310321>).

In September 2021 the OFB itself was corporatized and restructured into 7 public sector companies. Corporatization

is expected to enhance corporate governance and efficiency in the organization.

The domestic initiatives have been supported by diplomatic push towards Strategic Partnerships, like the Defense Technology and Trade Initiative (DTTI) (August 2018), with the US. Under DTTI, the US has commitments to supply high technology and dual use items to India. Thus we have a technology pipeline from the established players, unlike, say China that often has to resort to IPR theft and industrial espionage.

The increase in the FDI level in the defense industry to 74% has facilitated joint development and other technology cooperation (e.g. the Tata-Boeing JV that builds fuselage for the Apache helicopters). The industry level reforms have been followed up by wider reforms in the defense acquisition bureaucracy.

The Defense Acquisition Procedure 2020 streamlines the acquisition procedures. The stress is on simplification, delegation, reduced timelines and making the process as Industry friendly as possible. The creations of the office of Chief of Defense Staff and Department of Military Affairs have significant indirect effects. These measures rationalize the military decision making, and in effect frees up the Department of Defense under the Defense Secretary, to concentrate on capital acquisitions rather than military housekeeping and operational matters. It is to be noted that for the past seven years the country has been immune from defense corruption scandals.

Thus through small and firm steps and not flash and thunder, the NDA-II has set up the firm foundations of a capable and broad-based DIB in India. Considering India's past track record, this is an achievement no less than Bhagirath bringing the Ganga on Earth.

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समृद्ध भविष्य की बुनियाद रखती मोदी सरकार



मोदी सरकार के आलोचकों के पास नकली नैरेटिव गढ़ने के अलावा बुनियादी विरोध का कोई खास आधार नहीं है। हाल ही में प्रशांत किशोर जैसे चुनावी रणनीतिकार ने बड़ा बाजिव सवाल उठाया है। उन्होंने भाजपा की अगले 40 साल भारत की संसदीय राजनीति में स्थायी ताकत का जिक्र करते हुए विपक्ष को दिशाहीन बताया है। असल में नरेंद्र मोदी के नेतृत्व वाली केंद्र सरकार न केवल जनकल्याण के क्षेत्र में बेहतर काम कर रही है बल्कि राष्ट्रवाद से जुड़े पक्षों पर भी अपने समर्थक मतदाता वर्ग की पहली पसंद बनी हुई है। अर्थव्यवस्था के क्षेत्र में लोकप्रिय राजनीति से डरने वाले नेतृत्व की जगह मोदी सरकार दृढ़ता के साथ बुनियादी निर्णय लेने में पीछे नहीं रहती है। एक तरफ उदार आर्थिक नीतियों के बल पर भारत कोरोना के बाद दुनिया भर के निवेशकों को लुभा रहा है, वहीं 80 करोड़ से अधिक गरीबों के साथ इस सरकार ने सीधा संपर्क स्थापित किया है। खासकर जनधन, उज्ज्वला, पीएम आवास, जलजीवन, किसान कल्याण और पीएम अनाज जैसी फ्लैगशिप योजनाओं के माध्यम से सरकार का बड़ा लोक-कल्याणकारी चेहरा इस दौरान स्थापित हुआ है। कृषि कानूनों के साथ कतिपय विपक्ष का रवैया नागरिकता कानून जैसा ही प्रतीत

होता है जो न सर्वव्यापी है न सर्वस्पर्शी। विरोध के लिए विरोध की विपक्ष की राजनीति को देश की जनता 2019 के चुनावों में सिरे से खारिज कर चुकी है। बावजूद इसके देश की मुख्य विपक्षी पार्टियाँ कांग्रेस और अन्य दल

सबक सीखने या जनता के मिजाज को समझने के लिए तैयार नहीं हैं। पिछले एक वर्ष से ज्यादा हो गया जब कृषि कानून को लेकर देश के विमर्श को एकतरफा सरकार के विरुद्ध खड़ा करने की कोशिशें हो रही हैं। हकीकत यह है कि पिछले सात वर्षों में मोदी सरकार की नीतियों से पहली बार खेती किसानों की सूरत बदलनी शुरू हुई है।

कृषि में जीडीपी की तेज वृद्धि

देश के कृषि क्षेत्र में लगातार जीडीपी बढ़ने के लिए कृषि क्षेत्र की तीन बड़ी अनुकूलताएं महत्वपूर्ण भूमिका निभाती दिखाई दे रही हैं। एक, बढ़ता खाद्यान्न उत्पादन और बढ़ता कृषि निर्यात। दो, देश के छोटे किसानों को मजबूत बनाने के प्रयास। तीन, दलहन और तिलहन उत्पादन को तेजी से बढ़ाने के नए प्रोत्साहन। निःसंदेह इस समय कृषि क्षेत्र की जीडीपी के लगातार बढ़ने का कारण किसानों के अथक परिश्रम, वैज्ञानिकों की कुशलता और भारत सरकार की कृषि एवं किसान हितैषी नीतियां हैं। हाल ही के वर्षों में जिस तरह छोटे किसानों को हरसंभव तरीके से प्रोत्साहन दिए गए, उससे भी कृषि के क्षेत्र में जीडीपी बढ़ी है।

सरकार के द्वारा जारी किए गए चालू वित्तीय

वर्ष 2021-22 की पहली तिमाही यानी अप्रैल से जून में सकल घरेलू उत्पाद (जीडीपी) में 20.1 फीसदी की रिकॉर्ड वृद्धि दर्ज की गई है। कृषि ही एकमात्र ऐसा क्षेत्र पाया गया है, जिसमें तीन वर्षों की पहली तिमाहियों में लगातार विकास दर बढ़ी है। जहां कृषि में चालू वित्त वर्ष 2021-22 की पहली तिमाही में 4.5 प्रतिशत की मजबूत वृद्धि दर्ज की गई है। वहीं पिछले वर्ष 2020-21 की पहली तिमाही में इस क्षेत्र में 3.5 प्रतिशत वृद्धि हुई थी तथा 2019-20 की समान अवधि में 3.3 फीसदी की वृद्धि हुई थी।

भारत सरकार की कृषि एवं किसान हितैषी नीतियों के कारण देश में रिकॉर्ड खाद्यान्न उत्पादन एवं खाद्यान्न निर्यात के नए अध्याय लिखे जा रहे हैं। वर्ष 2020-21 में खाद्यान्न उत्पादन करीब 30.86 करोड़ टन की रिकॉर्ड ऊंचाई पर दिखाई दे रहा है। जो पिछले वर्ष की तुलना में 1.11 करोड़ टन अधिक है। भारत विश्व स्तर पर कई कृषि और संबंधित उत्पादों का प्रमुख उत्पादक देश है। देश में दलहन और तिलहन उत्पादन के लिए विभिन्न प्रोत्साहनों से छोटे किसानों ने इसकी उपज को भी बढ़ाया है। वर्ष 2020-21 के दौरान देश में कुल तिलहन उत्पादन रिकॉर्ड 36.10 मिलियन टन अनुमानित है, जो वर्ष 2019-20 के उत्पादन की तुलना में 2.88 मिलियन टन अधिक है। इसी तरह वर्ष 2020-21 में दालों का उत्पादन 2 करोड़ 57 लाख टन रह सकता है। यह पिछले साल के मुकाबले करीब 36 लाख टन ज्यादा है।

मोदी सरकार ने जिस तरह छोटे किसानों को हरसंभव तरीके से प्रोत्साहन दिए गए, उससे भी कृषि के क्षेत्र में जीडीपी बढ़ी है। कृषि मंत्री नरेंद्र सिंह तोमर के मुताबिक फसल बीमा योजना में सुधार, न्यूनतम समर्थन मूल्य



(एमएसपी) को डेढ़ गुना करने, किसान क्रेडिट कार्ड से सस्ते दर से बैंक से कर्ज मिलने की व्यवस्था, एक लाख करोड़ रुपये का एग्रीकल्चर इंफ्रास्ट्रक्चर फंड, सोलर पावर से जुड़ी योजनाएं खेत तक पहुंचाने, 10 हजार नए किसान उत्पादन संगठन, देश के 70 से ज्यादा रेल रूटों पर किसान रेल के माध्यम से छोटे किसानों के कृषि उत्पाद कम ट्रांसपोर्टेशन के खर्च पर देश के दूरदराज के इलाकों तक पहुंचना तथा छोटे किसानों को अच्छा बाजार मिलने से उनकी उपज का अच्छा मूल्य मिलने से जीडीपी में वृद्धि हुई है। इस समय अनेक कृषि उत्पाद दुनिया के विभिन्न देशों में भेजे जा रहे हैं। यह कोई छोटी बात नहीं है कि मोदी सरकार से पहले सालाना कृषि बजट लगभग 22 हजार करोड़ रुपये का होता था, वहीं वर्ष 2021-22 में इसे लगभग 5.5 गुना बढ़ाकर 1.23 लाख करोड़ रुपये कर दिया गया है। ऐसे कदमों से छोटे किसानों की ताकत बढ़ रही है।

यद्यपि देश गेहूं, चावल और चीनी के क्षेत्र में आत्मनिर्भर है, लेकिन अब देश में दलहन और तिलहन उत्पादन तेजी से बढ़ाने की जरूरत है। इस दलहन और तिलहन उत्पादन के लिए और अधिक प्रोत्साहन जरूरी हैं। खाद्य तेल के आयात को कम करने और खाद्य तेल में आत्मनिर्भरता हेतु घोषित किए गए राष्ट्रीय खाद्य तेल मिशन को सफल बनाने के लिए भी मोदी सरकार ने ठोस पहल की हैं। ज्ञात हो कि विगत 18 अगस्त को सरकार ने पाम के तेल के लिए 11,040 करोड़ रुपये के वित्तीय परिव्यय के साथ राष्ट्रीय खाद्य तेल-पाम ऑयल मिशन (एनएमईओ-ओपी) की मंजूरी दी है। इसका उद्देश्य देश में ही खाद्य तेलों के उत्पादन में तेजी लाना और इस क्षेत्र में आत्मनिर्भरता प्राप्त करना है।

चूंकि खाद्य तेलों का घरेलू उत्पादन जरूरत की पूर्ति के लिए केवल 30 फीसदी है, इसलिए यह अपर्याप्त तिलहन उत्पादन बाजार में खाद्य तेल के मूल्य को नियंत्रित नहीं कर पाता। परिणामस्वरूप खाद्य तेल का अंतरराष्ट्रीय बाजार देश में खाद्य तेल के दाम को प्रभावित करता है। खाद्य तेल के अंतरराष्ट्रीय बाजार में कीमतों में बदलाव का असर खाद्य तेल की

घरेलू कीमत पर तेजी से पड़ता है। इस वर्ष 2021 में खाद्य तेल के घरेलू बाजार पर वैश्विक खाद्य तेल बाजार की बढ़ी हुई कीमतों का काफी अधिक असर गिरते हुए दिखाई दे रहा है। स्थिति यह है कि कृषि प्रधान देश होने के बावजूद भारत को सालाना करीब 65,000 से 70,000 करोड़ रुपये का खाद्य तेल आयात करना पड़ रहा है। भारत खाद्य तेलों का आयात करने वाला दुनिया का सबसे बड़ा देश बन गया है। इसी सिलसिले में केंद्र सरकार का बीज मिनी किट कार्यक्रम दलहन व तिलहन की नई किस्मों के अच्छी गुणवत्ता वाले बीजों की आपूर्ति करके बीज प्रतिस्थापन अनुपात को बढ़ाने के लिए एक प्रमुख कार्यक्रम है।

हम उम्मीद करें कि देश में चालू वित्त वर्ष 2021-22 की आगामी तीन तिमाहियों में कृषि विकास दर और अधिक बढ़ाने के लिए सरकार के द्वारा छोटे किसान, कृषि विकास और खाद्यान्न उत्पादन बढ़ाने की जो योजनाएं लागू की हैं उनके पूर्ण और कारगर क्रियान्वयन पर अधिकतम प्राथमिकता से ध्यान दिया जाएगा। इससे खाद्यान्न उत्पादन और निर्यात अधिक ऊंचाई पर पहुंचेगा। इससे किसानों की आमदनी व ग्रामीण रोजगार में वृद्धि होने से ग्रामीण क्षेत्र की समृद्धि में भी वृद्धि होगी। परिणामस्वरूप कृषि क्षेत्र की जीडीपी चमकीली होते हुए दिखाई दे सकेगी।

भारतीय अर्थव्यवस्था में विशेषकर पिछले सात वर्षों में तेजी से बदलाव हो रहे हैं और इन्हें परिवर्तनकारी कहा जा सकता है। भारत को कमजोर समाजवाद से दूर और भारतीय लोकाचार व परम्पराओं के अनुरूप मुक्त बाजार अर्थव्यवस्था की ओर ले जाना बड़ा कार्य है। समाजवाद, खासकर लाइसेंस-कोटा राज ने भारत के उद्यमियों के लिए विभिन्न प्रकार की बाधाएं पैदा कर दीं। उनकी संपत्ति और उनके संसाधन धीरे-धीरे नष्ट होते गए। इससे निराशा का वातावरण पैदा हुआ। यद्यपि हमारी अर्थव्यवस्था का उदारीकरण 1991 में शुरू हुआ था, लेकिन कई आवश्यक सहायक कार्य पूरे नहीं किए जा सके। इस कारण अर्थव्यवस्था पर उदारीकरण का सकारात्मक प्रभाव कम हो गया। एक दशक बाद कुछ

प्रयास शुरू हुए, लेकिन जल्द ही सरकार बदल गई। दुर्भाग्य से उस अल्प-अवधि के बाद जो हुआ, उसे एक खोया हुआ दशक कहा जा सकता है, जिसने हमें इतनी बुरी तरह से पीछे कर दिया कि हमें पांच कमजोर अर्थव्यवस्थाओं में से एक की संज्ञा दी गई।

वर्ष 2014 में जब नई सरकार का गठन हुआ, तो प्रधानमंत्री नरेंद्र मोदी ने एक नए भारत के निर्माण का संकल्प किया। उन्हें मुख्यमंत्री के रूप में लगातार तीन कार्यकाल का अनुभव था। जनसांख्यिकीय लाभांश ने एक विशाल बाजार प्रदान किया। युवा, उद्यमी के रूप में सेवा देने के लिए तैयार हो रहे थे। उनके नवाचारों को मान्यता नहीं मिल रही थी, भले ही वे घर से दूर रहकर विभिन्न अर्थव्यवस्थाओं में योगदान दे रहे थे। युवा प्रौद्योगिकी और डिजिटलीकरण दक्षता ला सकते हैं। न्यू इंडिया में सभी की मूलभूत जरूरतें, जैसे पानी, स्वच्छता, आवास और स्वास्थ्य आदि पूरी करने का लक्ष्य रखा। न्यू इंडिया की नीतियां में लोगों को सशक्त बनाने पर ध्यान दिया गया है।

हाल ही में डे सोटो प्रभाव पर निरंजन राजाध्वक्ष ने लिखा है कि छोटे अनौपचारिक उद्यमों की कमजोर कार्य-व्यवस्था, औपचारिक ऋण प्रणाली से प्रभावी रूप से दूर हो जाती है। स्पष्ट संपत्ति अधिकारों की कमी के कारण यह मुश्किल हो जाता है कि वे बैंकों को गिरवी के रूप में अपनी जमीन की संपत्ति की पेशकश कर सकें। स्वमित्र योजना में ड्रोन तकनीक का उपयोग करके भूमि की माप करना और ग्राम भूमि-मकान मालिकों के अधिकारों का रेकॉर्ड प्रदान करने की परिकल्पना की गई है। इस योजना के माध्यम से ऋण उपलब्धता की कमी के कारण होने वाले गरीबी के दुष्क्र को तोड़ा जा सकता है। तीन अन्य योजनाएं-स्वनिधि, मुद्रा और स्टैंड-अप का उद्देश्य छोटे उद्यमों के लिए गिरवी मुक्त ऋण उपलब्ध कराना है। ये योजनाएं, गरीबों के जीवन को उनकी गरिमा के साथ बेहतर बना रही हैं। यह और अन्य कई चीजें संभव हैं, क्योंकि नेतृत्व, आम लोगों और अपने आदर्श वाक्य- सबका साथ से जुड़ा हुआ है।

लेखक: डॉ अजय खेमरिया, वरिष्ठ स्तंभकार हैं



Is China's Dream Fading? An Analysis

The challenges before China will have a 'collateral effect' on its quest for the China Dream.

In the last one decade, China has been largely known for anything but the bad reasons on various fronts. Be it economic cooperation and trade relations with others, weakening of multilateralism, more belligerent naval outreach, diplomacy or relations with the neighborhood, suppressing of domestic dissent and rising centralization of power, the general perception across the globe is largely of Chinese state turning more 'bridle and hostile' to the genuine interests of others in a hurry to what they call as realization of 'China dream'.

If one has to speak with much clarity and understanding, the change of power in China which began with the 18th Party Congress of the Communist party of China (CPC) in November, 2012 brought the new leadership in China, led by the newly elected President Xi Jinping. While the power transition that happened was much progressed and realized in line with the party precedent as established in China, since the post Mao years. But the larger question, which comes to mind, is something, which relates to the

competing conflicts, continuing unpredictability and implicit iniquity within Chinese politics. One example of this can be of recent lockdowns in China, at the time when the world is coming out and is settling with the post corona economic growth and social stability.

At the very outset of the Corona crisis, from the very beginning till now, the Chinese state remained always tight-lipped and unanswerable, looking to cover up serious questions on lab leak theory, number of casualties and poor vaccination supply. To put it more precisely, a better and well-informed scientific community with valid statistics and data on the Coronavirus origin would have been able to save humanity from this tragic loss and pain. To add more on this front, in recent years the crippling Chinese economy and the challenges of 'New Normal' growth is raising the question on the efficacy and ability of the Chinese state to realize the China dream.

In contemporary global politics, the nature of geo-politics and diplomacy demands every other country to act in

valid pursuit of their national interests in harmony and compatibility with the global peace, order and growth. The unilateral perusal of 'aggressive diplomatic posturing' on many issues serves no purpose for the Chinese state, which is looking for a more center-stage role in global politics. A more belligerent China is more likely to face resistance from other major powers given the present geo-politics trends.

As the reading suggests, I would like to throw some light on three specific external, economic and political reasons, which have not only dented the image of China as 'responsible stakeholder' in regional and global politics rather have raised alarming questions on the efficacy of Chinese economy and party-state to survive these challenges in the long-run. With new questions blooming up on the diplomatic and economic fronts for China, the leadership is expected to act with a more 'prudent approach' and flexible political choices, if they wish to realize what they call the 'China Dream'.

Firstly, in the last decades the bilateral



China's Dream of
PROSPERITY
is **FADING**



relationship between India and China has witnessed considerable ascendance on various fronts. Under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi India pushed for wider economic engagements with China in setting of industrial parks, highways and railways, infrastructural and skill development, solar energy, fostering a model for 'developmental partnership' with China. However, the recent border clash with Indian forces Galwan valley and consistent Chinese attempts to 'change the status quo' on ground in violation to the agreed border agreements has severely affected the bilateral relations. The unwarranted Chinese endeavors at the border has not only widened the 'bilateral trust deficit' but has also turned the regional security more hostile and vulnerable. The same happens to Chinese aggressive posturing in South China Sea turning the relationship much hostile with its coastal neighboring states including Japan. The desultory confidence of the Chinese military is diminishing the spirit of China's dream and is in no way serving the purpose of global peace, stability and growth.

Secondly, ever since China gave the call for 'New Normal' seeking long-term solutions to its economic demands and

necessities. The situation does look better either on domestic or external fronts. Much recently, there has been a stricter crackdown on power consumption in China, which is largely driven by rising demand for electricity and surging coal and gas prices. As the data suggests, China is facing its worst 'power crunch' in the post reform era. The post Covid economic recovery is boosting demands from households, businesses, enterprise and manufacturing sectors. Given strains in the production chain and weak links in coal supply links, the Chinese state is coming up with strict regulations to face the situation.

Interestingly, while the restrictions are raising questions from civil society on the ability of the Chinese state to deliver on power supply, it is also badly affecting China's huge manufacturing industrial base, textile production, food processing and steel industries. The leading industrial and economic hubs of China like Jiangsu, Zhejiang and Guangdong are worst affected, which account for nearly a third of China's economy. With new curbs on factory and industry systems, the over shadow of Evergrande's real estate crisis and global call to cut carbon emission levels, the Chinese state finds itself in a hugely complex and challenging

situation, which also owes its origins to the policy choices made in Beijing. The situation well predicts the shrinking of China's economy having a related effect on its global influence and ability. Thirdly, in the last one decade the 'centralisation of power' has witnessed an upward trend in China. Under the rule of President Xi, the long practised system of 'Collective leadership' in modern China has come to an end. Backed by new constitutional

amendments and with the promulgation of a series of news laws to strengthen 'new security framework' in China, the state has largely been laying off and charging many high level party and military officials, some business and state owned enterprises (SOEs) heads on account of corruption. This new set of 'power consolidation' under the existing establishment is also giving way to 'simmering voices' from different sections of Chinese elites. It appears clearly from this that the Chinese party state is surrounding itself with challenges from domestic competitive party politics.

To sum it up, China has preferably been engaged in a kind of 'competing partnership' on various levels with major world powers. However, if China continues pushing with its 'wolf warrior diplomacy', without genuinely addressing these concerns on domestic and external fronts, it will certainly have a 'collateral effect' on quest for China Dream by the party state.

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It's Raining Reforms in 2021

India soon will be celebrating 75 years of independence. India stands at a crucial juncture in the emerging new global order. 21st century is dubbed as the Asian century. The path undertaken by India at this crossroads would significantly determine the scale and speed at which India progresses. The past year has exposed some underlying fault lines in our economy and the urgent need to do away with old and rigid structures and embrace the flexible and reformed architectures which would lay the foundation of India of 21st century India. The government in the recent past has undertaken bold and dynamic reforms which have marked a paradigm shift from the policies of yesteryears.

Opening up to the Private Sector

2021 marks 30 years of the industrial reforms carried on in 1991 when India was on the verge of the Balance of Payments crisis. The initial years witnessed tokenistic disinvestment and the private sector didn't have any substantial role to play in the economy. Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee government with its clear vision and reformist attitude successfully started strategic sale of sick

PSUs to unleash the energy of the private sector in the 2000s. However, things took a U-turn in the period of 2004-14 due to the coalition concerns of some socialistic parties. With the arrival of the bold and energetic Narendra Modi government in 2014, the hopes of the country got reinvigorated with regards to strong and transformational policymaking. The government had tried for strategic sale in the initial years however there was a lack of an institutional framework for the same. The Budget 2021 and the policy announcements set the right tone in this regard by formulating an institutionalized framework for strategic disinvestment of PSUs.

Central PSEs were initially created to fill gaps in the economy where the private sector was not willing to invest. Given that the prevailing business environment in India is largely characterized by a dynamic market economy and vibrant private sector, this approach may no longer be required. Thus, the lead taken by the Centre to implement its agenda of privatization/disinvestment at this juncture is both appropriate and welcome. The government has "no business to be in

business" lends further credence to that intent, and evokes the hope that a new era is emerging in which the private sector is lauded for its role in nation building. The policy's objective is to minimise the public sector's role and create new investment space for the private sector, in the hope that the infusion of private capital, technology and management practices will contribute to growth and new jobs. The proceeds from the sale of these firms would finance various government-run social sector and developmental programmes. The government capital and management bandwidth would be put to a better use resulting in more bang for buck spent.

The recently concluded successful disinvestment of Air India at such challenging times reflects the single-minded efforts of the government and will pave the way for disinvestment of bigger public sector enterprises. The new disinvestment template is significantly simpler and faster, and better aligns stakeholder incentives and goals. Disinvestment from this point onwards should be much faster than the Air India transaction that can be regarded as early in the learning curve of the current round of disinvestment.

Asset monetisation and value creation

Every unutilized asset is an opportunity foregone to make something bigger and better for our country. Public assets such as roads, railways, airports, shipping terminals, pipelines, mobile towers and other land and building, financial assets are spread throughout the country. They are controlled by departments of Central Government, Public sector units or the respective State Government where the asset lies geographically. Many of these public assets are sub-optimally utilized or are unutilized; which simply means that it is not using its maximum potential which could have been gained by exploiting it



Image credit: ar130405





commercially at a market valuation. Government is targeting to unlock optimal value from these public sector assets which have not yielded potential return. This process of converting assets into economic value is termed as Asset Monetization.

Now here's where the government initiative of National Monetisation Pipeline (NMP) comes in. NMP is envisaged to serve as a medium-term roadmap for identifying potential monetisation ready projects across various infrastructure sectors. It is designed to unlock value in brownfield public sector projects by tapping private sector capital and efficiencies, transferring to them revenue rights but not ownership in the projects, and using the funds so generated for greenfield infrastructure creation in the country.

There are a plethora of benefits that can be harnessed by virtue of NMP. Firstly, it reduces the government's fiscal burden and provides flexibility to use funds for exclusive focus on greenfield and high priority projects. It also improves the efficiency of the PSUs by optimal utilisation of the assets and trims the

market borrowings by PSUs. Secondly, it encourages private sector participation in brownfield core assets that have stable revenue streams. It also creates a deep pool of private investor and attracts long term institutional investors. Thirdly, on the economic front, it leads to asset price discovery and improves quality of assets. It also furthers the agenda of balanced regional development and long term economic growth.

Are Disinvestment and Asset monetisation akin to selling goose that lays the golden egg?

Critics argue that these reformist ideas come at the cost of selling the 'family gold' of the government. However, these criticisms don't stand much substance and credibility as the NMP entails monetisation of rights for a fixed time duration and not the ownership of assets. The ownership of these assets will still be with the government and the assets would be duly returned to the government after subsequent value creation by the private sector. When it comes to strategic disinvestment, the government is aiming to unleash the animal spirits of the market economy by establishing only bare

minimum presence in the four strategic sectors and totally exiting from the non-strategic sectors. This will enable the government to effectively rationalise its expenditure and focus on productive investments and quality value creation for various social initiatives. The public exchequer money would be fruitfully utilised rather than for recapitalisation of sick public sector units. This creative destruction of capital will help in catalysing the animal spirits of the young workforce to put India on the path of \$5 trillion economy.

Good economics is also good politics. There has been clear and bold political economy messaging by the government when it comes to reforms. The government has undertaken reforms by convictions and incentives taking into account the interests of all the stakeholders. The ball is now in the court of the private sector to fully capitalise on the opportunities and work closely with government to achieve the vision of 'Amrit Kaal' of the Prime Minister.

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Bharat of 21st Century - Collectivist by Spirit, Atmanirbhar by outlook



The central role that a family plays in our Indian or other Asian cultures - whether it be the Japanese, the Korean or the Chinese - cannot be under-emphasized. Growing up in an Indian household, you become congenial to collaborative decision-making on matters of not only shared but also personal consequence. But times have been changing and so are the influences upon a traditionally collectivist culture like ours.

The uptrend in globalization and market economy over the past three decades has brought about a noticeable difference between the perspectives of the older generation and the millennials/ Gen Z. For a generation that naturally prefers staying in a 'world without borders' of Twitter and Instagram, the meaning of 'self' and 'other' alters significantly. Those who are 'their

very own' for the older generation are becoming the 'other' for us, while what constitutes the 'other' for them is valued by us as our near and dear ones.

With a change in priorities of individuals in an aspirational country like ours, more people have moved out of traditional groups based on kinship, wherever needed, and concocted exclusive relations based on their values and perspective on life. In a nutshell, we are observing a gradual shift in India from a highly group-oriented societal framework to an individualistic one. A society where without value judgements importance is laid on personal autonomy, space, and privacy over maintaining immutable blood relations.

So, does that make our society highly individual-oriented like the United States? Or is India still a highly

collectivist society? What is better for the 21st century Bharat? Interestingly, India of 2021 is co-opting individualism with collectivism. It is oscillating between the two and learning to manage a cleavage created by advent of individualism in a traditionally collectivist culture.

You may wonder, "Why should I care?". Well, research suggests that the individualism-collectivism cultural dimension has robust social, economic, and institutional effects. An individual's behaviour like propensity to save, willingness to contribute to their society, and interest in innovation, which eventually affects the long term growth of a country, depends on their conception of 'self'.

Gerard Hofstede - a notable Dutch social psychologist who has pioneered research



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on cross-cultural groups and organizations analyzed the culture of various countries based on six factors. One of these six factors is the 'index of individualism'. It measures the degree to which people in any society look after themselves and their direct families only.

As per the index, the Americans stand out as self-centered individualists with a score of 91, whereas, the Chinese with a score of 20 prefer loyalty to defined groups in exchange for protection. Meanwhile, we Indians, with an intermediate score of 48, show both individualistic and collectivistic traits.

One one hand, as a kid raised in an Indian family, you're most likely to have learnt the philosophy of karma yoga - to take ownership and responsibility for your actions and decisions. But at the same time, in the most crucial decisions of your life, your own dear ones might dissuade you from being atma-nirbhar and instead weigh you at the altar of public opinion. There are dozens of such instances in our everyday life which make us realise how independent we are, and yet so interdependent. In fact, we witness this hybridity even in our political system. It's

neither federal nor unitary -- it is quasi-federal.

But the important question is, how can India possibly benefit out of this hybridity - a collectivist spirit but an individualist outlook? Or can it at all? The answer lies in our recent experiences as a nation.

As the world was disrupted by the coronavirus, we observed how the United States struggled to keep its citizens inside their homes while anti-lockdown protests erupted in America in the name of freedom and human rights. At the same time, the Chinese citizens were shunned by the social vigilantes working on behalf of the Chinese Communist Party to question their own government on the origins of the virus. But between the two was India. Here the collectivist culture extended the much needed social conformity to the government decision of imposing nationwide lockdown as well as the individualist tendencies ensured that people take proper precautions like wearing masks to public gatherings or sanitizing hands after a handshake without worrying about 'what people would say'!

But just like anything, both individualism

and collectivism are two-edged swords. Many youngsters today also resort to narcotics every year in the name of individual freedom while many others practice social vigilantism in the name of collective responsibility.

Evidently, neither individualism or collectivism is good or bad in itself. Misinterpretation and excess of anything is dangerous. Therefore, what India makes of this amalgam of individualism and collectivism eventually depends on how the youth of our country endeavours to make the best of both the worlds.



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Image credit: Chinnapong



Visionary Benchmarks to expect from the Nep, 2020



National Education Policy

Image credit: Mohani

There has been a significant amount of academic discussion about the long-term effects of the National Education Policy, 2019. It is safe to assume that the NEP, 2020, would have a considerable impact in the coming years. It is also a welcome step and shows the government's willingness to work on this much-needed area that long needed to be addressed. There have been various concerns, or rather challenges, which the average Indian student has to face in their academic life. Whether it is the dilemma of taking extra classes post-school hours to enhance their skills which are usually non-academic or choosing one of the three streams (sciences, humanities/arts or commerce) that are offered after completing middle school, which limits

the scope and potential of any student of the areas they want to pursue and the career choices they would pursue going ahead. With limited choice, a policy to emphasise learning rather than rote learning and holistic development was needed. The NEP has tried and addressed some of these challenges. This article will cover the NEP's vision and how it would impact the students as we advance.

As mentioned in the NEP draft 2019, Education in ancient India wasn't viewed as something to be "attained or "achieved" but was viewed as a means for preparation for life beyond schooling and, at large, to face the hurdles life offers. Ancient India had a favourable research ecosystem; it should not be forgotten the notable contributions the Indian scholars such as

Panini, Charaka and Sushuruta, Chanakya and several others have had on the world knowledge in a wide array of disciplines right from mathematics to politics. But this natural advantage that India held concerning the culture promoting holistic and life-long Education was somewhere lost going forward and especially deteriorated during colonisation. The NEP is different from the previous policies introduced by the government. The previous policies focused primarily on accessibility and equity, and the issue of quality of Education was neglected or not given the due attention it deserved. The focus on quality education also perfectly aligns with the sustainable development goal 4 (SDG4) of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.



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SDG4 seeks to "ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all" by 2030 and what the NEP draft, 2019 proposes is that equity and accessibility and quality of Education are dimensions that shouldn't be viewed separately; rather, both the concepts are inter-related and have to be looked at collectively.

Interconnectedness is a keyword highlighted in the NEP draft policy. It seeks to propose that through early childhood care and Education, multiple entries and exit options at various levels in the higher education level. The policy recognises the importance of early childhood education as stated in the NEP draft policy, 2019, the document states that the "Evidence from neuroscience shows that over 85% of a child's cumulative brain development occurs before the age of 6, indicating the critical importance of developmentally appropriate care and stimulation of the brain in a child's early years to promote sustained and healthy brain development and growth." A study titled "Early Childhood Education Impact" undertaken by Ambedkar University, Delhi, in 2017, showed that a significant proportion of children in India who completed pre-primary Education, public or private, did not have the needed school readiness competencies when they joined the primary school. The NEP, 2020 has envisaged targeting this very concern at the grass-root level itself. A pedagogic framework has been envisioned under the NEP, 2020 where a 5+3+3+4 design, consisting of the Foundational Stage (in two parts, that is, three years of Anganwadi/pre-school + 2 years in primary school in Grades 1-2; both together covering ages 3-8), Preparatory Stage (Grades 3-5, covering ages 8-11), Middle Stage (Grades 6-8, covering ages 11-14), and Secondary Stage (Grades 9-12 in two phases, i.e., 9 and 10 in the first and 11 and 12 in the second, covering ages 14-18). This restructuring of the framework educational attainment is one

to adapt to the student's changing needs in today's day and age. The developmental concerns in each stage require special attention, and such a framework would introduce a change in this direction. A notable feature of secondary Education that the NEP 2020 hopes to achieve is to shift from the strict compartmentalisation of disciplines going forward. The hierarchical preferences attached to different streams would be shunned away by increasing the flexibility of choosing subjects of the student's interests and motivations. Another impediment that was faced, especially later on in higher Education and even while working, is the emphasis on gaining a certain level of competency in the English language is kept.

In contrast, the other languages are just an additional requirement, but this, as discussed widely in editorials and debates, NEP has introduced the mandate of the medium of instruction to be in the mother tongue of a particular region at least till grade 5. This would promote multilingualism and a sense of identity among the children and de-stigmatising the notion of English being the superior language. When we look at countries like Germany, France, China, or Japan, the national identity and the pride they hold through their language is an inspiration and an example of how English is not a measurement of how "developed" a nation is. With the new developments taking place daily, the skills required ten years back are very different from the skills required today; in this regard, the curriculum would be designed in such a fashion that contemporary subjects such as Artificial Intelligence, Design Thinking, Holistic Health, Organic Living, Environmental Education, Global Citizenship Education, etc. would be introduced at relevant stages. This initiative would help the student gain skills that would follow today's industrial needs. As we advance towards higher Education and focus particularly on

research, the introduction of the National Research Foundation under the NEP is a welcomed initiative given the fact that only less than 1% of the country's approximately 40,000 higher education institutions engage in research has also been highlighted in the NRF draft policy. The NEP 2020's main objective regarding higher Education is to end the fragmentation of higher Education by transforming higher education institutions into large multidisciplinary universities, colleges, and HEI clusters/Knowledge Hubs, which is a requirement given the concerns that the soviet faces cannot be put into strict disciplines and would require an interdisciplinary approach for the research to be implanted at the societal level. Another dimension which has also been addressed is the universality of standardisation of teacher's Education with the introduction of four-year undergraduate programmes with a specialisation in Education along with a degree from a particular discipline, particularly B.A., B.Com & BSc along with Education would be introduced after 12th, this would help in only those students as we advance with teaching who genuinely have a passion for the profession rather than merely looking at teaching as means of attaining security.

The scope and the potentiality of the NEP on the educational attainment and development of the young demography of the country will be unprecedented and given the fact that by 2030-2032 India would be the third-largest economy at over ten trillion. To sustain this growth, it would be imperative to look at the knowledge ecosystem as a key driver in furthering the country's growth.

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