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**YOJANA**

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YE-712/2017



New Horizon

Journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step. When the PM gave the call for building a New India by 2022 it energized a whole nation into taking the much needed step towards the new horizon. The call was made on completion of 75 years of the Quit India Movement launched in August 1942, which had, at that time, energized the nation into a mass movement against the British to quit India. The idea now, was to motivate the countrymen to once again rise to the occasion by launching a similar mass movement to quit various evils plaguing the country like corruption, poverty, communalism, casteism, et al. The whole nation took a pledge in one voice to work towards making India free from filth, poverty, corruption, terrorism, communalism and casteism and build a New India by 2022.

The concept of New India has many dimensions and requires efforts to be put in by both the government and the people to eliminate various evils plaguing India. If we analyse them one by one we find that many of them have been existing with us for years and some even centuries. For example, our culture tells us that cleanliness is next to godliness. Yet, we as nation are notorious for our unclean habits in public while we maintain a high degree of cleanliness inside our homes. But once we reach the streets, we get transformed magically. Open defecation, throwing our household waste on the streets etc. are all common sights. An unclean nation not only gives a bad impression to the outside world whose investments we seek and among whom we wish to find a place but also leads to diseases which take a toll on our economic prosperity. Hence Clean India.

Poverty, again stands in the way of progress as a big chunk of our population wallows in poverty especially in rural India. Corruption is scourge that has been plaguing our nation eating into its economic growth. Measures like demonetization, Direct Benefit transfer, Aadhar, Bhim App have been introduced to reduce corruption and ensure that the fruits of progress reach the genuine beneficiary. Yet a great deal more needs to be done in this direction. Hence, poverty free and corruption free India.

Terrorism is an international evil which is claiming lives world over. It is a dangerous disease which has affected the people both mentally and physically. Making people free from the fear of terrorism is essential for building a New India. Hence Terrorism free India.

The evil of casteism has been part of Indian culture since historical times. Untouchability, keeping the lower castes away from the national mainstream and denying them the benefits of education, health care and even a place in society has stunted the growth of an entire section of Indian population. Eradicating this evil and ensuring that the lower castes get the benefits of development is necessary to ensure the progress of a nation. Hence casteism free India. So also communalism. India is a country of diverse faiths and religions and we as a nation have always been proud of our traditions of unity in diversity. Yet, every once in a while, the evil of communalism bursts out and lives are lost and property destroyed. A society living in peace and harmony is necessary for the development of the nation. Hence, communalism free India.

Over and above these goals for New India, the government has sought to empower muslim women by bringing out the judgment against triple talaq. This unwritten rule of muslim law where a woman could be divorced by her husband simply by uttering the world talaq thrice, had ruined the lives of many muslim women. They had been agitating for a ban on this cruel custom which has finally been heard and action taken. "Champions of change" is yet another initiative to promote innovations and initiate a direct dialogue between the government and startups in order to get them in sync with the mission of a 'New India by 2022'.

The first step towards getting somewhere is to decide that we're not going to stay where we are. And that decision has already been taken and a fresh start has been made to make India economically prosperous and strong India by 2022.





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Creating a Clean India

Parameswaran Iyer



...the SBM has become an even stronger force through the country and is inspiring people to play their part in this transformational journey. It has captured the imagination of the country and is being owned by one and all. Lying dormant for seventy years after independence, Gandhiji's dream of a clean India is finally becoming a reality. It took courage and conviction for the Prime Minister to publically commit to make India open defecation free in a span of five years, a goal which many thought was impossible to achieve. There is still a fair way to go but, given the progress made so far, the acceleration expected over the coming 12-15 months and the active engagement of millions of people, the goal is definitely achievable

On August 15, 2014, the Hon'ble Prime Minister gave a clarion call to the nation from the ramparts of the Red Fort to wage a war against filth and open defecation, and achieve a clean and open defecation free India as Mahatma Gandhi had dreamed of, by October 2, 2019, the 150th birth anniversary of Gandhiji.

This was arguably the most ambitious and bold declaration by a head of state towards cleanliness and sanitation in the world. From the highest level, the discussion on sanitation was removed from the closet and put in the forefront of national policy and development. The age old practice of open defecation causes over 1 lakh preventable child deaths every year through diarrhoeal infections. A study by the World Bank estimates that nearly 40 per cent of India's children are stunted, primarily because of lack of sanitation. This has an adverse impact on their economic potential, and is estimated to cost India over 6 per cent of our GDP. Women's safety and dignity are often comprised due to open defecation. Our Prime Minister saw that there is a strong need for affirmative action on this, and that the issue needed to be addressed in a time bound manner in mission mode. A 21st century India on the path to becoming a global economic super power should have no place for filth

and open defecation. He decided to put his political capital behind sanitation and cleanliness and make it a national priority!

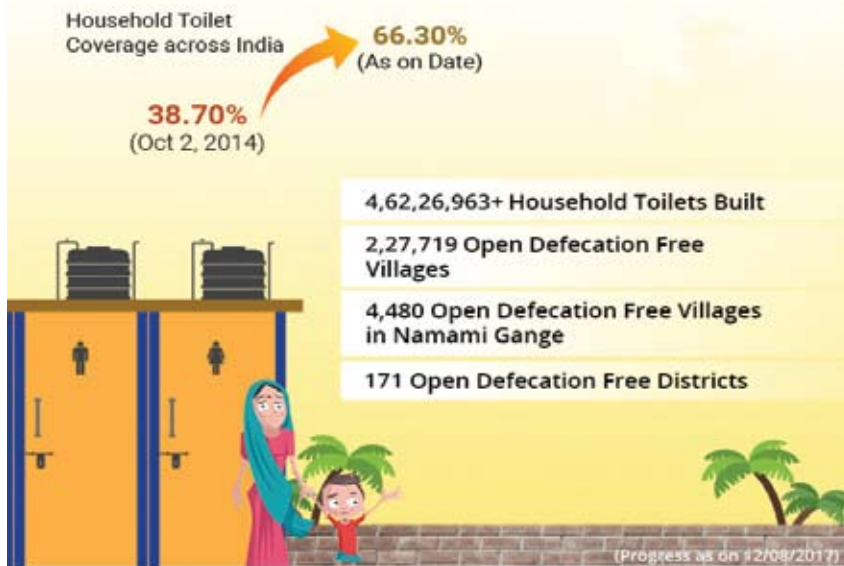
The Progress of SBM

The Swachh Bharat Mission (SBM) has almost completed three years. Overall, progress is very good, with some States performing better than others. Rural sanitation coverage has gone up from 39 per cent at the start of the mission to the current figure of 68 per cent. Over 230 million people in rural India have stopped defecating in the open, 193 districts and about 235,000 villages across the country have been declared as open defecation free (ODF). Five States – Sikkim, Himachal Pradesh, Kerala, Haryana and Uttarakhand have become ODF. One of the biggest achievements has been that all the 4000+ villages on the banks of the holy Ganga have become ODF!

How is SBM unique

The SBM is a globally unique programme, different in scope and scale from any other sanitation initiative in the world. Bringing 550 million rural Indians out of open defecation is unparalleled and carries a high degree of difficulty. It is one thing to build physical infrastructure like roads, bridges and power plants. Changing habits and getting millions

The author is Secretary, Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation, Government of India. He has vast experience in area of sanitation. He was earlier programme leader and lead water and sanitation specialist in the World Bank and has also been part of the World Bank's Water Anchor programme.



Water and Sanitation (MDWS) to scale these trainings up where a central trainer interacts with trainees across multiple locations on tools for effective community mobilization and behaviour change triggering. They work under an incentive-based system at village level to explain the importance of sanitation and trigger behaviour change by stimulating community-level demand for toilets. Currently there are over 150,000 Swachhagrahis across the country and this number is rapidly increasing. The SBM aims to have at least one Swachhagrahi per village in India.

The MDWS and States are attempting to involve locally elected representatives, grassroots-level organizations, NGOs, youth organizations, school students, corporates and civil society organizations in making the SBM a *janandolan*. Electronic and print mass media is being used to reinforce the sanitation messages and broaden its appeal. Bollywood stars and cricketers are also getting involved. Superstar Amitabh Bachchan is leading a “Darwaza Bandh” (on open defecation) campaign on TV, radio and outdoor hoardings across the country. Akshay Kumar has made a blockbuster Bollywood movie on the subject of open defecation – *Toilet-Ek Prem Katha* which has been the biggest hit of this year.

Once a village declares itself as ODF at a Gram Sabha, verification of the latter status becomes key. Currently verification of ODF villages stands at around 60 per cent, up from only 25 per cent a few months ago. The SBM-G guidelines provide for a 90-day window for third party verification of a village’s self-declared ODF status. Any gaps found need to be immediately identified and addressed by the community during verification. This focus on timely verification of ODF status is the second big difference between the SBM and previous sanitation programmes.

The programme also has a fairly robust system of verification at district

of people to voluntarily engage in a *janandolan* to fight the centuries-old practice of open defecation is quite another! SBM is about bringing changes in people’s minds and not about creating infrastructure, and that’s what makes it different from earlier sanitation programmes in many significant ways.

The first key differentiator is the genuine focus on behavior change through Information, Education and Communication (IEC), and shifting the focus from outputs (number of toilets built) to outcomes (ODF villages). The community is at the centre of the entire process. They

are leading the Swachhta revolution. Children, women, senior citizens and specially-abled citizens have emerged as the biggest Swachhta Champions. They are inspiring their communities to come together and fight the menace of open defecation together. The Hon’ble Prime Minister awarded 10 such inspirational women Swachhta Champions at a special event for nearly 6000 women Sarpanches on International Women’s Day.

Lakhs of sanitation motivators, called Swachhagrahis, are being trained in community approaches to sanitation. Virtual Classrooms are being run by the Ministry of Drinking





Women Swachhta Champions getting felicitated by Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi during the Swachh Shakti 2017 event.

most recent one, a national 140,000 household survey, carried out by the Quality Council of India during May-June 2017, found that usage of toilets across the country was an encouraging 91 per cent.

There have been instances in previous programmes where ODF declared villages witnessed some “slip back” into open defecation, as old habits are hard to break out of. Sustaining of ODF is no easy task and states, districts and villages will need to continue the focus on IEC to ensure that they remain ODF. Incentive mechanisms are being developed for sustaining ODF, including prioritizing ODF villages for centrally sponsored schemes like piped water supply. The MDWS has also issued sustainability guidelines to states and provided

and state level. At the national level, the MDWS, carries out separate checks as well as also third party sample surveys by independent organizations. The

Swachhta Hi Seva: An Unprecedented Nationwide Campaign on Swachhta

Responding to Prime Minister’s call a nationwide mega 15-day campaign **Swachhta Hi Seva (Cleanliness is Service)** has been launched from 15th September to 2nd October (Gandhi Jayanti). Under this campaign, the whole country is taking various sanitation initiatives, for over 15 days making **Swachh Bharat Mission a jan aandolan** (mass movement). This was being coordinated by the Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation, the convening Ministry for the Swachh Bharat Mission with participation of people from various walks of life and reaching out to the poor and marginalised and providing them with sustainable sanitation services being the hallmark of this campaign.

Under the campaign *Swachhta Hi Seva*, there was mobilisation of people from all walks of life to undertake *shramdaan* (voluntary labour) for cleanliness and construction of toilets and to make their environments free from open defecation. The objective of the campaign was to mobilise people and reinforce the “Jan Aandolan” for sanitation. The campaign targeted the cleaning of public and tourist places. The participation ranged from the President of India to the common citizen and involved Union Ministers, Governors, Chief Ministers, legislators, celebrities and top officials. Celebrities, faith leaders, eminent personalities from the corporate sector etc. were also involved the campaign in their respective areas of influence.

Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation had identified special dates during the campaign period. It included three Sundays, 17th, 24th September and 1st October when people were mobilised to do large scale *shramdaan* for toilet construction, cleaning of public places, bus stands, school and colleges, statues, hospitals and ponds in rural and urban areas. A special cleanliness drive is planned in 15 identified tourist places on 1st October 2017. Several media houses have voluntarily come out to mount special campaigns for Swachhta during the fortnight.

At the culminating event of the fortnight on October 2 Gandhi Jayanti, which is also the **Swachh Bharat Diwas** (Clean India Day), national awards for essays, films and paintings, and other Swachh Bharat awards will be presented to Swachhta Champions from across the country and all walks of life. The Ministry has created a special portal and web page on **MyGov.in** facilitating people to upload pre and post intervention (before and after) photos of their *shramdaan* and other interventions.



The President, Shri Ram Nath Kovind launching a nationwide sanitation campaign, ‘Swachhta hi Seva’, at Ishwariganj village in Kanpur, Uttar Pradesh on September 15, 2017. The Governor of Uttar Pradesh, Shri Ram Naik, the Union Minister for Drinking Water & Sanitation, Sushri Uma Bharti, the Chief Minister, Uttar Pradesh, Yogi Adityanath and other dignitaries are also seen.

a financial incentive framework to them for sustaining the ODF. Districts are also being ranked under *Swachhta Darpan* based on their performance, sustainability and transparency on SBM-G, spurring healthy competition between districts.

Another very important differentiator between the SBM-G and previous sanitation programs is the inclusive focus cleanliness through management of solid and liquid waste. In fact, waste is now being viewed as a resource, and the name has been re-christened to Solid and Liquid Resource Management (SLRM). Villages are self-ranking themselves on the Village Swachhta Index, with nearly 1.5 lakh villages having already completed this process. This helps them benchmark their present Swachhta levels with the desired state that they aspire to reach. Villages which are ODF and also have adequate SLRM are called ODF+.

SBM is Everyone's Business

As the Prime Minister has reiterated time and again, sanitation must become everyone's business and not the responsibility of one

Ministry or Department alone. A major step in this direction was taken when initiatives like the Swachh Iconic Places (SIP) and Swachhta Action Plans (SAP) were launched. The SIP has seen identification of 20 iconic places of historical and cultural significance and work is going on in full swing to make them islands of excellence with respect to Swachhta, a gold standard for other sites to aspire to achieve. 80 more sites will be taken up in subsequent phases. The SAP has successfully gotten all Ministries and Departments of the Government of India to pledge to take up Swachhta and sanitation related activities in their respective sectors, and have pledged a total of Rs. 12,000 crores for FY 17-18 from their existing budgets for these tasks. The SBM is probably the only government program which is being integrated with the works of the entire government machinery.

Even the private sector has been inspired to contribute to the SBM, not only by contributing money under CSR, but also leveraging their human and managerial resources to help in direct implementation of SBM. One of the biggest contributions

has come from the Tata Trusts who have hired and are sponsoring 600 young professionals to work in each district of India with the district administration, tasked singularly with taking their district towards ODF and good SLWM. These professionals, called the Zila Swachh Bharat Preraks, have infused the exuberance of youth into the implementation of the SBM-G and have been thoroughly appreciated by all State governments.

SBM becoming a *janandolan*

As the SBM nears its third anniversary, we are at a tipping point from where the mission can spiral into a massive *janandolan* provide given some higher impetus. Inspired by the Hon'ble Prime Minister's call of ushering in a New India, the SBM-G has launched a slew of new initiatives to engage the general public with the Swachhta revolution in India. The first of these is the *Swachhathon – the Swachh Bharat Hackathon* which invites innovative technology based solutions to some of the most challenging questions being faced by SBM-G. The questions being answered include how to measure

Swachh Sankalp Se Swachh Siddhi

The nationwide mega campaign *Swachhta Hi Seva* was preceded by another countrywide campaign *Swachh Sankalp Se Swachh Siddhi* in which Essay, Short Films and Painting competitions were organised for general public, with a special focus on school children from 16th August to 8th September, 2017.

Short Film Competition: In this, individuals were requested to make 2 to 3 minute films on the theme of Swachhta and show how they can contribute to the Swachh Bharat Mission. The Topic for the Film was '**My Contribution towards Making India Clean**'. The short film could be made in all major Indian language.

The awards will be provided under the two categories of Age : 0-18 years and, 18 and above. Three winners from each category will be awarded at the National Level and also at the State and District levels.

Essay Competition: Under this, individuals were invited to write essays of not more than 250 words on the theme of Swachhta and describe how they can personally contribute to the Swachh Bharat Mission. The Topic for the Essay was '**What can I do for a Clean India?**' The essay could be written in any of the major Indian languages.

Three winners will be awarded at the national level. Awards will also be given at the State and District levels. Senior citizens (above 60 years) and differently abled were encouraged to apply and will be given special recognition at the national awards.

Painting Competition: A Painting Competition was also organized as another major step in making Swachhta a *Jan Andolan (mass movement)*. The Topic for the Painting Competition was "**Clean India of my dreams**". This competition was only for Class 1 to 5 Schools students.

usage of toilets in a non-intrusive manner at scale, how to leverage technology to spark behaviour change at scale, frugal toilet technology designs for difficult terrains, ways to leverage technology to promote maintenance of school toilets, technological solutions for safe disposal of menstrual waste and technologies for early/instant decomposition of faecal matter. The Swachhathon has received over 3000 entries from across the country, and has contributed many innovative ideas which will help further the goals of the SBM-G.

Inspired by the Hon'ble Prime Minister's *Sankalp Se Siddhi* initiative, the SBM-G has launched the *Swachh Sankalp se Swachh Siddhi* Film, Essay and Painting Competition across India as another major step in making Swachhata a *janaandolan*. Various groups like school children, armed forces, youth organizations and the public at large are being engaged to participate in huge numbers and pen down through an essay or video record through a film, their experiences with and plans for Swachhata. We expect to get over 1 crore essays and over 50,000 films on Swachh Bharat, thereby integrating Swachhata into the consciousness of millions of citizens and generating even more public enthusiasm towards the Swachh Bharat Mission.

Probably the most ambitious of these initiatives was announced by the Hon'ble Prime Minister during his Mann Ki Baat address on August 27, where he made an appeal to the nation to get involved with a time-bound, nation-wide mass mobilization campaign to construct twin-pit toilets, clean-up public spots and spread awareness about the SBM through *shramdaan* between September 15 and October 2, 2017. He named this initiative *Swachhata Hi Seva*. The MDWS is engaging government leaders, PRI representatives, community organizations, youth groups, armed forces, corporates and citizens to get involved with this initiative. The Hon'ble President of India initiated the fortnight on 15th September at an event in Uttar Pradesh, with Swachh Bharat National Awards and Swachh Sankalp Se Swachh Siddhi Awards being presented on October 2, 2017.

With all of these initiatives picking up steam, the SBM has become an even stronger force through the country and is inspiring people to play their part in this transformational journey. It has captured the imagination of the country and is being owned by one and all. Lying dormant for seventy years after independence, Gandhiji's dream of a clean India is finally becoming a reality. It took courage and conviction for the Prime Minister to publically commit to make India open defecation free in a span of five years, a goal which many thought was impossible to achieve. There is still a fair way to go but, given the progress made so far, the acceleration expected over the coming 12-15 months and the active engagement of millions of people, the goal is definitely achievable. □

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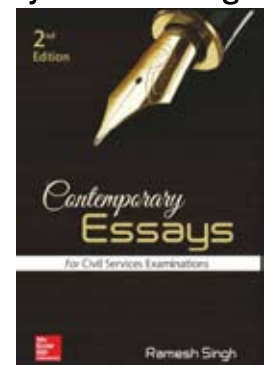
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YE-710/2017

Enabling Opportunities for Rural India

Amarjeet Sinha



Poverty free is seen as enabling social opportunities for deprived households to come out of their destitution. It is this convergent approach that is seen as Mission Antyodaya, a mission to address the multi-dimensionality of poverty

Hon'ble Prime Minister has given a call for Poverty Quit India on completion of the 75th year of the Quit India Movement 1942.

He has also given a call for a societal mission to do so by 2022. Given the fact that nearly 8.85 crore households in rural India reported either a deprivation or were automatically included, the challenge, in sheer numbers, is formidable. However, the efforts made over the last two and a half years, gives us the confidence that perhaps we are on the right track, when it comes to rural development programmes and tackling rural poverty.

The recent HSBC study pointing out that 69 per cent of rural households who own up to 1 hectare of land or are landless do not seem to have faced rural distress unlike the top 31 per cent, seen in terms of increasing real wages and reducing rural unskilled unemployment, also confirm that initiatives for the rural poor have worked even during a difficult period of drought and falling prices for agricultural commodities. The National Evaluation of the Deendayal Antyodaya National Rural Livelihood Mission (DAY-NRLM) by IRMA (2017) also brings out how incomes were 22 per cent higher in treated areas than in control areas and how greater investments in productive assets and

in education, health and nutrition, was seen wherever women Self Help Groups under DAYNRLM were active. The report is an affirmation that social capital matters and that diversification and development of livelihoods is the only way forward.

The Department of Rural Development is a major source of public programmes (employment, skills, social security, livelihood diversification, road construction, housing, water conservation, solid and liquid resource management, etc.). If convergent action in other related sectors of health, education, nutrition, skills could be made simultaneously, it is possible to improve the well-being of poor households in a short period of time. Poverty free is seen as enabling social opportunities for deprived households to come out of their destitution. Poverty free, therefore, connotes an ability to develop one's fullest human potential through education, health, skills, sanitation, clean drinking water, nutrition, food security, livelihood, housing, gender, and social equality and empowerment, connectivity, electricity, systems of sustainable resource use, waste management, and most of all, sustainable diversified economic activities for higher incomes. The challenge of poverty free Gram Panchayats is about exploring the

The author is currently Secretary, Department of Rural Development. He has over 34 years of experience in Government, largely in the social sector. He has played a major role in designing Sarva Siksha Abhiyan and the National Rural Health Mission. He has published seven books and a large number of articles in national news papers and Magazines. His latest book is "An India for Everyone – A Path to Inclusive Development".



potential for rural transformation by simultaneous interventions to address the multi-dimensionality of poverty. It is this convergent approach that is the thrust under a State led, Mission Antyodaya, a mission to address the multi-dimensionality of poverty.

While the Department of Rural Development has made concerted efforts in partnership with State and Local Governments to improve programme delivery and outcomes, it has also made some transformational interventions over the last two and a half years that have made us move closer to the convergent and saturation approach of Mission Antyodaya.

Intervening on Scale – Rural India has a very large number of rural households spread over a million habitations and villages. Clearly the interventions have to be to scale. There has been a very significant increase in the Central Government’s allocations and actual spend under the Department of Rural Development. With an allocation of Rs. 1.05 lakh crores in 2017-18, there is a doubling of allocation compared to 2012-13. Add to it the State shares (60-40 in non-Himalayan and 90-10 in Himalayan and NE States). Annual transfers under Fourteenth Finance Commission to Gram Panchayats have also been in the range of Rs. 25,000 crores to Rs. 35,000 crores during this period. Over

Rs. 70,000 crores has been leveraged as bank loans by Women SHGs in the 2015-17 period, a manifold increase compared to the previous years. The thrust on placement skills and self-employment skills have also facilitated larger economic activity in rural areas. The convergence for animal husbandry and livelihood diversification has also added additional incomes for households. NFSA’s annual subsidy to make rice and wheat available at cheap prices further adds to the food security of poor households. The resources, if used in convergence, and in a saturation mode and with minimum leakages, have the power to transform the lives of rural households. The dream of one crore beautiful homes for the poor under the Pradhan Mantri Awaas Yojana Gramin, connectivity for all eligible rural habitations with all-weather pucca road by March 2019, leveraging over Rs. 60,000 crores annually as bank loans for women SHGs (three times the loan in 2014-15) by 2018-19, is possible as resources are available to back the vision.

Thrust on Water Conservation and Livelihood Security – The hall mark of a prosperous village that has managed to ensure the well-being of the households is effective water conservation. It is for this reason that MGNREGS decided to ensure that at least 60 per cent expenditure under the programme is on agriculture and

allied activities. With the Hon’ble Prime Minister holding meetings with 13 Chief Ministers of drought affected States in May 2015 and urging the Chief Ministers to focus on water conservation, the stage was set for a State led thrust. With the Mukhyamantri Jal Swavalamban Abhiyan in Rajasthan, Neeru-Chettu in Andhra Pradesh, Mission Kakatiya in Telangana, Jalyukta Shivar and water conservation initiatives in Maharashtra, ‘Dobha’ farm pond construction in Jharkhand, and a range of State specific water conservation programmes across many states, MGNREGS provided the highest wage employment in 5 years, of more than 235 crore person days/year both in 2015-16 and 2016-17. The total expenditure too in these years have been the highest ever since the inception of MGNREGS. Thrust on individual beneficiary schemes for goat shed, poultry shed, dairy shed, IHHL, 90/95 days’ wage labour for housing, over 11 lakh completed farm ponds, all provided an unprecedented opportunity for augmenting incomes and improving the quality of life. The new Mission Water Conservation Guidelines in partnership with Ministry of Water Resources and Department of Land Resources, with a thrust on 2264 water distressed Blocks and with a focus on developing technologically sound and scientifically vetted water conservation plans along with capacity building of frontline workers and engineers, is going a long way in improving the quality of intervention and its impact.

Citizen’s Engagement – The Department focused on a citizen centric approach to improve accountability. Special efforts were made through Cluster and Panchayat Facilitation Teams in identified backward Blocks. The planning exercise under the Intensive Participatory Planning Exercise in 2569 Backward Blocks using SECC deprivation data and knocking on the doors of every deprived household and planning for its well-being, also strengthened the partnership with the poorest households. The use of citizen centric apps like the Meri Sadak app to get a feedback on roads and the



awaas soft app for uploading pictures of PMAY Gramin houses, also helped in connecting with households. To further the Public Information Campaign, the Department is organizing a Gram Samridhi and Swachchata fortnight from 1-15 October 2017 at every Gram Panchayat. During the period, the Gram Panchayat Office building will display for public scrutiny, all available records of programmes, beneficiaries, etc. A cell – phone based Janata Information System is also being launched whereby every programme in the village concerned can be seen by any villager to improve his/her scrutiny of the programme. Similarly, a cadre of Social Auditors is being developed from among the Women SHGs after proper training and certification on the social auditing standards that have been notified in consultation with the office of the CAG.

Transparency through IT/DBT and use of Adhaar – The Department has been a leader in use of transaction based MIS for IT/DBT transfers straight into Bank/Post Office accounts. 98 per cent wages under MGNREGS and 100 per cent payments under PMAY Gramin are on the IT/DBT platform. Over 5.9 crore MGNREGA labourers already have an Adhaar linked Bank account, with their consent. The availability of the Banking Correspondent or Post Office outlet with micro ATMs at fixed village locations on pre-determined dates, will unlock the power of easy digital transactions on a large scale. It will also ease the hardships for labourers, pensioners, etc. The Women SHG Community Resource Persons have offered to become Banking

Correspondents or Bank Sakhis and the experience so far is encouraging.

Effective Use of Space Technology-

The power of space technology in promoting transparency can be seen in the relentless efforts made to geo tag nearly 2 crore assets created under MGNREGS. An even more powerful use is in the final selection of beneficiaries under PMAY Gramin after 100 per cent geo tagging of beneficiaries before their old dwelling and for reporting progress of construction, with latitude/longitude details. All these geotagged assets are available in the public domain for anyone to see. This really facilitates transparency. In PMGSY, space technology has been used for monitoring the alignment of roads, the actual road construction distance, and its success in connecting habitation. It is also being used to check the success of road side plantations through MGNREGS on PMGSY roads. Our challenge is to now universalize this application on roads and to do a ‘before, during and after’ geo tagging of all MGNREGS assets.

Leveraging Bank Loans for SHG Women-

While The Deen Dayal Antyodaya Yojana – National Rural Livelihood Mission (DAY-NRLM) had demonstrated enormous social capital through community mobilization and group formation, the economic activity development and livelihood diversification needed a thrust. Thrust has been given to a detailed monitoring of bank linkage as ultimately, any poverty reduction effort will require access to institutional credit at reasonable rates for diversified economic activity. Having already

reached an annual bank linkage of over Rs. 43,000 crores, we are confident of crossing Rs. 60000 crore lending by 2018-19. By linking skill development integrally to SHGs, preparedness of households to utilize bank credit effectively is also being augmented.

Speeding up Connectivity – Road

connectivity is transformational in offering new livelihood opportunities to a rural village. Besides easing the access to markets, it also encourages mobility for wage labour. It is for this reason a sincere effort has been made to speed up the PMGSY road construction from 70 kilometres per day in 2011-14 period to 130 kilometres per day in 2016-17. Nearly 80 per cent eligible habitations have already been connected by all-weather roads and our effort is to reach 100 per cent by March 2019. The use of green and innovative technologies like use of waste plastic, fly ash, geo-textiles, cell-filled concrete, cold mix, etc. is also being significantly scaled up to ensure an environmentally appropriate strategy for roads. The successful maintenance system of Madhya Pradesh and the community maintenance experiment of Uttarakhand is also to be emulated in other States.

Need based Skill Upgradation

Skills for placement and self – employment is needed to tackle the large scale under – employment in rural areas. A large number of new rural enterprises in the form of retail business, farmer producer organizations, Custom Hiring Centres, rural transport systems, handicrafts and handlooms, craft, etc. is possible through a planned system of support and convergence. The Rural

Development Department has been trying to leverage the core strengths and programmes of concerned departments like Agriculture, Animal Husbandry, MSME, KVIC, Textiles, etc. to provide scalable opportunities for farm and non-farm employment. Special training programmes for Barefoot Technicians and Rural Masons aim to reduce over time, the pool of unskilled wage earning households in the country from the current over 5 crore. All these programmes are formally vetted by the Sector Skill Councils and provide for assessments and certification. The Department of Rural Development has brought all its placement based and self-employment skills programmes on to the Common Norms of the Ministry of Skills, to enable basic standards and protocols. DDUGKY and RSETIs programmes are being further improved to acquire excellence and even higher placement/settlement rates.

Promoting Innovations for Transformation – The Department of Rural Development has been very innovative in addressing the priorities of local communities and States. The Soil Resource Management

Programme in over 80 per cent villages of Tamil Nadu, the liquid resource management programme in Maharashtra, AP and Telengana and now to Bihar and Chhatisgarh through MGNREGS and DAY NRLM convergence, are all examples of innovation. The Aajeevika Grameen Express rural transport scheme, Mission Water Conservation and Rural Road Guidelines, Housing typology studies to develop region specific appropriate technologies and designs for rural housing, the Livelihood in Full Employment (LIFE) initiative under MGNREGS to promote skill development among the MGNREGA workers, are all examples of large scale innovations that have been attempted during this period.

Evidence based Monitoring,– Large scale programmes require systemic approach to monitoring and evaluation for effectiveness. Besides very strong and transparent transaction based MISs, use of geo-tagging to ascertain quality of assets, visit to 600 districts each year by institutional monitoring institutions to look at specific programme

implementation, a Common Review Mission to eight States twice a year to look at the quality of implementation, are some of the efforts improving monitoring. Besides these, National level Evaluation of Programmes like the IRMA Study of DAY-NRLM recently published are other efforts to evaluate interventions. Given the diversity of knowledge needs and cutting edge technologies, the Department has set up High Level Expert Groups on Human Resources for Results, Information Technology use and challenges, internal audit, market linkage and value chain, engaging the finest minds from and outside government, to steer the RD programmes effectively.

Implementation in Convergence Mode- Poverty free is seen as enabling social opportunities for deprived households to come out of their destitution. It is this convergent approach that is seen as Mission Antyodaya, a mission to address the multi-dimensionality of poverty. □

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Atal Pension Yojana (APY) surges ahead with 62 lakh enrolment

The Pension Fund Regulatory and Development Authority (PFRDA) through its 'One Nation One Pension' Mobilization Campaign has sourced approximately 3.07 lakh APY accounts which led to a total of 62 lakh enrolments under the Atal Pension Yojana (APY) as on date. This campaign was organized all over the country by PFRDA from 2nd August to 19th August 2017 in association with the APY Service Provider Banks. Increasing enrolment is attributed to financialization of assets and driving the people to pension products which has Govt of India implicit guarantee to give an assured pension to the subscriber, spouse and return of corpus to the nominee.

Under the campaign some of the largest banks in the country namely, State Bank of India helped source 51,000 APY accounts and other prominent banks like Canara Bank which has sourced 32,306 APY accounts, Andhra Bank at 29,057 APY accounts, in other private banks category, Karnataka Bank at 2641 APY accounts, in RRB's category, Allahabad UP Gramin Bank at 28,609 accounts followed by Madhya Bihar Gramin Bank at 5,056 APY accounts, Baroda Uttar Pradesh Gramin Bank at 3,013 APY accounts, Kashi Gomti Samyut Gramin Bank at 2,847 APY accounts & Punjab Gramin Bank at 2,194 APY accounts.

At a time when the interest rate on various financial instruments including Savings Bank is declining, Atal Pension Yojana as a pension scheme offers a guaranteed rate of 8 per cent assured return for the subscribers and also the opportunity of higher earnings in case the rate of return is higher than 8 per cent at the time of maturity, after staying invested in the scheme for 20-42 years.



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YE-728/2017

Creating Casteism Free India

Amarjit S Narang



Hope we Indians will rise to the occasion and contribute in building a nation based on values of freedom, equality, justice and fraternity leading to a society where all have appropriate access to livelihood, health care, education and opportunities to develop their personality.

That is the India the founding fathers of our Constitution envisaged and that we are still looking for after 70 years of independence

Casteism is one of the greatest social evils plaguing the socio-economic development of India as well as its unity. At a time when we are looking towards an India that is united, dignified and developed it is acting as a powerful social and political divisive force, causing social conflicts, effecting stability, peace and harmony, manipulating electoral outcomes and effecting sound legislative and executive decision making. The problem has become so severe that not only Hindus, with whom caste system is generally associated, all Indians whether Sikhs, Muslims, Jains, Buddhists even Christians carry some vestige of caste system. There is a general agreement among statesmen, policy makers, observers and meaningful political leaders that for making an India that is strong, self-reliant, free of poverty, illiteracy, and diseases, occupying a place of honour in world community, elimination of casteism is among the essential needs of the time. For that, first it is important to understand some misconceptions about caste system, reasons behind emergence and growth of casteism and its present role.

Caste System

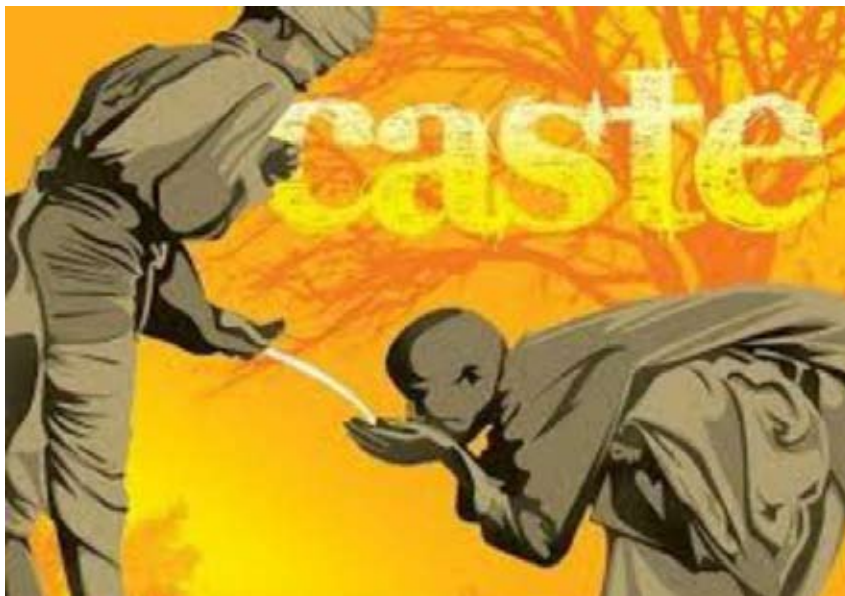
There are numerous differences among observers and scholars about the exact definition of caste system, its

origin and role in different periods. In its most general fundamental aspects it can be described as a scriptive system of status and hierarchy. It is a type of social stratification system based gradation of endogamous kinship group with certain considerations of ritual purity reflected in restrictions on commensality and pollution and associated with traditional occupational specialization. Though, at times caste system is linked with *Varana* system its origin is not traced to religious scriptures. Researchers trace the origin of caste system to about 2000 years back in economic, political and material processes of evolution. It has never been a fixed fact of Indian life but evolving in prevailing socio-political and historical milieus. Before British rule caste affiliations were loose and fluid.

Caste in Colonial Period

While caste has been a social reality, for quite long it was the British colonial rule that treated caste as the institutional key stone of Indian society. Beginning with the first decennial census of 1871, the census became the main instrument of gathering information about the caste system and classifying it. The measurement of caste and sub-castes, according to the numbers in census, Neerja Jayal (2006) points out contributed to the fixing of caste identities in ways hitherto

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universal adult franchise the need to mobilize illiterate and not so much politically conscious people who can understand politics in terms of economic programmes, performance or ideologies, caste, religion and such like community ties became relevant inputs. The caste system, therefore, began to play a significant role in determining the content and direction of political socialisation, mobilisation and institutionalisation within the framework of democracy. This in turn has given rise to what is known as casteism.

Casteism

The term casteism, in general means the tendency of caste or sub-caste groups to maximise economic, social and political advantages of its members to the detriment of the other caste members and society as a whole. It is also an ideology of political allegiance to a caste group as primary and decisive, leading to blind group loyalty towards one's own caste believing that social, economic and political interests will be fulfilled through that. At times it amounts to hatred of one caste by the other. As already mentioned, in the absence of well-developed political infrastructure of secondary groups the readymade primary caste groups emerged as the principal contenders for power and divisible benefits. Politicians in their bid to mobilize support have been exploiting the caste loyalties. Many of these are least concerned with development. They view democracy and elections merely as a way to gain power and control over state.

Apart from participating in and influencing elections, caste is being used also as a pressure group to receive due or undue benefits. An important aspect of this has been pressure for and against quotas. These, many a times, lead to violent protests causing loss of public property and diversion of resources towards maintenance of law and order instead of on welfare and development. In this sense politicisation of caste is creating a new cohesion which is making caste perform roles which are new and

unknown. Enumeration of population into rigid categories, particularly with 1901 and 1911 census resulted in hardening of caste identities.

British rulers themselves used caste system as one of the instruments of divide and rule. They enforced caste affiliations rigorously. They institutionalised caste into the working of governmental institutions. Some castes were treated preferentially for certain jobs, like in police and army, whereas some were branded as criminal. Some laws were also passed keeping in view caste affiliations and making those allies of the regime. The immediate effect of this, according to Srinivas, was that it increased caste consciousness and inter-caste competition, because now it was possible for caste relations to outgrow its regional constraints and develop caste associations to bargain some concessions from the British government. The arbiters of caste system as Jayal writes were, thus, no longer part of the ritual order, but rather external to it in politics and also in the national movement. The national leaders attempted to reduce the differences and subsume the social justice issues in national struggle but could not succeed much.

Caste in Independent India

As discussed above, during Colonial rule, caste groups had become

identity conscious and organised. At the time of independence some of them were quite vocal in their concerns and demands. The framers of the constitution were committed to the formation of an egalitarian, equitable, fraternal and just society. The 1950 Constitution, therefore, eliminated caste system, as instrument of discrimination, restrictions of any kind, particularly the practice of untouchability, through fundamental rights of equality, liberty and freedom. At the same time, in accordance with the need of positive actions to eliminate age old deprivation of some sections provisions for affirmative action for Scheduled Castes, Scheduled tribes and backward classes were also incorporated in the Constitution. It was expected that, in due course, with socio-economic development and transformation society will be socially integrated.

During seven decades of independence while the influence of caste has been decreasing in social and economic spheres it has been gaining a stranglehold over the field of politics. There has emerged new caste based organisations, growing polarisation on caste lines, violence and reservation conflicts. Caste has embedded itself firmly in the politico-economic fabric of the country. With the introduction of democracy with

secular. As Myron Weiner (2006) points out, paradoxically as caste has become somewhat less important in determining individual life chances, it has become more salient as a political identity and as an institutionalized element of civil society. There are now caste based educational institutions, hostels, housing societies etc. Yes, some of these are playing the important role of bringing the deprived into the mainstream and fulfil their aspirations. In general casteism is causing social disharmony. It is seriously effecting the task of socio-economic development and building of a new modern India.

Need for Elimination

As discussed above, casteism has been eating into the socio-economic and political fabric of our society. Yes, in social spheres caste is slowly dying. Modern conditions of life and work have rendered many rigid rituals, beliefs and practices obsolete. Inter-dining, even inter-caste marriages, are no more taboos, at least in most urban areas. In fact, among most educated people and educational institutions, particularly in metropolitan cities practices associated with caste system are ridiculed. Another positive aspect is that during the last few years in elections, particularly for Lok Sabha, caste has been put on a back seat. Parties are putting forward issues of development, corruption, performance, governance etc. as major concerns. Yet there are parties and groups for whom caste remains the main plank for mobilisation and campaign. They remain engaged in expanding and consolidating caste support. In a way, while issues of development and governance have entered elections in a big way the role of caste in politics has been reduced only in a limited way, particularly at state and lower levels. Therefore, task of elimination, or at least to begin with reduction, of casteism is the need of the hour.

The first step towards reducing casteism is Education. Education does not mean only formal literacy or school education. It includes generation and dissemination of awareness about myths associated with the caste system.

As said in the beginning, many a times caste is considered as part of religion or religious practices which is not correct. Voters need to be educated about how they are exploited by caste leaders without any developmental benefits either to a particular caste or society at large. In schools, teachers need to encourage students to eat and play together.

Removal of socio-cultural inequalities is essential to bring society out of primordial ties. Treating any caste as polluting or low provides a cause for leaders to mobilise them to rise against discrimination. In some cases social and economic inequalities coincide. Most Scheduled Castes, for instance are poor and deprived. In democracy this provides a legitimate reason to unite and participate in political process as such. When determined groups remain discriminated or unequal they have reason to act collectively, notwithstanding leaders using that for ulterior motives or vested interests.

Civil society has a great and significant role in social and political reforms. They have to create awareness and mobilise voters on non-caste, non-religion basis, inform them about the imperatives of development, abuse of caste and religion in elections, and negative effects of that on social disharmony and conflicts. Civil society can also play a useful role in encouraging and arranging inter-caste marriages, dining and other social interactions to highlight the myths of separation.

An important role is that of the Election Commission. As already mentioned, the most important cause of casteism is electoral politics. Election Commission will have to find ways to curb the use of caste. State funding of elections, strict imposition of code of conduct, voter's education etc. can be some means for that.

Most important is political will and consensus. While almost all political parties are critical of the use and exploitation of caste in elections, yet, at the time of giving tickets and mobilising voters they co-opt caste leaders. Recent

trends in elections suggest that voters are rising above caste and community considerations and giving importance to performances of governments, leadership, and developmental issues. This trend needs to be strengthened. Political parties should rise above politics of short term gains and think in terms of long term task of nation-building to which they claim to be committed. Democracy is not merely winning or losing elections. It is much more than that.

For meaningful working of democracy it is important that the participants including voters need to be rational individuals, whose self-appreciation depends on the assessment of his /her own individual merit and not on the merit of any social group to which he or she may belong. They must exercise their vote according to their free will and not muffled by caste, community or communal considerations or pressures. Hope we Indians will rise to the occasion and contribute in building a nation based on values of freedom, equality, justice and fraternity leading to a society where all have appropriate access to livelihood, health care, education and opportunities to develop their personality. That is the India the founding fathers of our Constitution envisaged and that we are still looking for after 70 years of independence.

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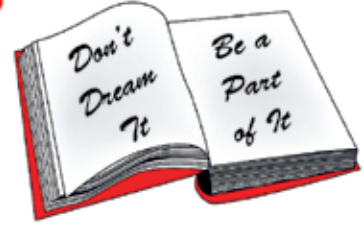
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Farmers' Welfare Holds the Key

Jagdeep Saxena



Government of India is striving to double farmers' income by 2022 through various reforms, policies and initiatives. Accordingly, the new vision aims to reduce agrarian distress and bring parity between income of farmers and those working in non-agricultural professions. Indian agriculture sector, in its revamped version, has now geared-up to realize the dream of New India

New India' is a grand and ambitious vision of Government of India which seeks to transform the country into a prosperous, healthy, educated and a clean and green nation. But to attain these goals in our predominantly agrarian economy, agriculture remains one of the core issues as it provides livelihood support to nearly 55 percent workforce and also contributes around 14 percent to national GDP. Realising the fact, the present Government accorded high priority to the agriculture sector and implemented a string of reforms during the last three years. As a further push-up, Government of India made a strong commitment for doubling farmers' income by 2022, the 75th anniversary of Indian independence. In order to adequately support and fund new schemes and initiatives, Government consistently increased budget allocation to agriculture and rural sector which now stands tall at Rs. 1.87 trillion during fiscal 2017-18, a significant 24 percent increase compared to the previous budget. Highest ever food production of nearly 274 million tons during 2016-17 is a testimony to the impact and success of new programmes and policies duly supported by our diligent farmers, innovative scientists, extension personnel and other stakeholders. Further, in comparison to 2011-14, fisheries production and milk production recorded a high growth of nearly 20 percent and 17 percent

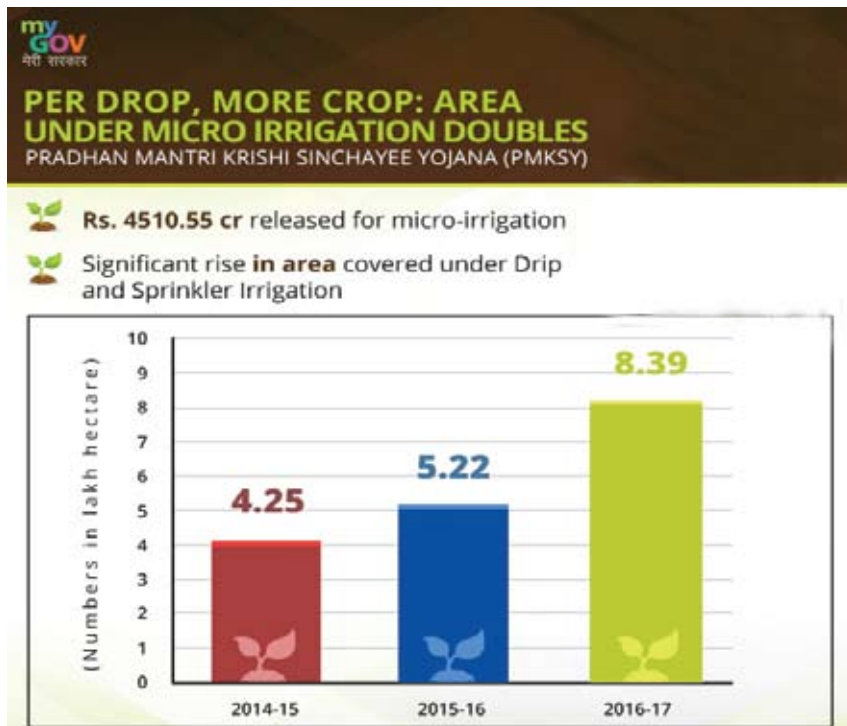
respectively during 2014-17. Overall growth rate of agriculture sector during 2016-17 was recorded as 4.4 percent which needs to be raised to 10.4 percent to meet the target of doubling farmers' income by 2022.

Strategic Moves through Novel Schemes

Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare has developed a seven-point strategic plan to realize the vision of New India by focusing on new agriculture and prosperity of farmers. Strategic plan is the part of a four-volume report submitted by an expert panel which deliberated extensively on the ways and means for doubling farmers' income. The strategic plan specifically aims to raise average incomes of agricultural households from Rs. 96,703 in 2015-16 to Rs. 193,400 in 2022-23. According to the report, India will need cumulative private and public investments of Rs. 1.486 trillion (at 2004-05 prices) during this period to attain the goal. The strategy broadly focuses on enhancing crop production, slashing cultivation costs and post-harvest losses and reform of agriculture markets. Value addition of agricultural produce by farm-gate processing facilities, risk mitigation through crop insurance and disaster relief and promotion of high value sectors, such as horticulture and dairy production, are other priority areas of intervention, the report stated.

The author is Former Chief Editor, Indian Council of Agricultural Research, New Delhi.

Government is striving to enhance water-use efficiency and access to irrigation facilities under the mission 'Per Drop, More Crop' which specifically targets expansion of irrigated areas through micro-irrigation techniques. Efforts made under *Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchayee Yojana* (PMKSY) have substantially increased the area under micro-irrigation from 4.3 lakh hectare in 2013-14 to 8.3 lakh hectare in 2016-17. Prime Minister in his Independence Day speech (2017) categorically announced completion of 30 projects under PMKSY and also stated that work is on for 50 more projects. Government's unique Soil Health Card Scheme is helping farmers to cut down cultivation costs as it ensures balanced use of chemical fertilizers and also enhances soil productivity on sustainable basis. So far, more than 7.1 crore soil health cards have been issued to farmers



Salient Points of the Three Year Roadmap (2017-19) of the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare for Doubling of Farmers' Income by 2022

- Seed Village Programme will be expanded from 30,000 villages to 60,000 villages and 500 Seed Production and Processing Units will be set up at Panchayat level.
- 1,000 mini laboratories for soil testing in countryside will be promoted through the local entrepreneurs.
- A dedicated corpus fund of Rs. 5,000 crore through NABARD will be operationalized and 4.8 million hectare will be brought under micro-irrigation.
- Cropping intensity will be increased by one million hectare per year through utilization of rice fallow areas for pulses and oilseeds to cover three million hectare by 2020.
- Five lakh MT cold storage, 1,000 pack houses and 150 ripening chambers will be set up to strengthen post-harvest infrastructure.
- Organic Farming will be promoted in 2.5 lakh hectare through 350 Farmer Producer Organizations.
- 585 agriculture markets will be onboard on e-NAM platform.
- Increased coverage of small and marginal farmers under short term credit from the present 43 percent to 50 percent by 2018-19.
- Coverage of gross cropped area under Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana and Weather Based Crop Insurance Scheme will be increased from current 30 percent to 40 percent and 50 percent by 2017-18 and 2018-19 respectively.
- Strengthening of milk procurement infrastructure by increasing bulk milk collection from 16,000 to 50,000 villages by March, 2018.
- Promotion of fisheries to sustain blue revolution.
- Creation of National Livestock Development Agency on the lines of National Dairy Development Board.
- R&D in genomics/gene editing technologies for breakthrough in yield levels and inducing multiple stress tolerance in crops.
- R&D in bio-fortification for nutrient rich food (protein, zinc, vitamin-A and anti-oxidants).
- Development of thermo-tolerant vaccines for animals.



wholesale price of commodities is increasing, and according to experts, a 13 percent raise in crop prices translates to 9.1 percent increase in farmers' income. However, a much larger scope exists to raise prices received by farmers and thus their income. But, these schemes and programmes need to be implemented in a time bound manner to get the desired impact on farmers' income.

Enhanced Productivity for Increased Profitability

Recently, NITI Aayog has brought out a policy paper on the theme 'Doubling Farmers' Income' which elaborates the action plan for ground level implementation. The Paper emphasizes the critical role of irrigation and new technologies in raising productivity per unit of land, and thus farmers' income from the same area of field. New and improved crop varieties with higher yield level are witnessing a surge in adoption by farmers due to more aggressive extension mechanisms and supply of seeds at affordable prices. The apex research body of the country, the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR),

based on massive farm level soil analysis exercises across the country. *Paramparagat Krishi Vikas Yojana* (PKVY) aims to expand the area under organic farming as it ensures higher income to farmers due to comparatively lower cost of cultivation and premium price of organic produce. Farmers are being mobilized for cluster formation to practice organic farming on commercial scale. So far, more than 9,100 clusters have been formed with the financial assistance of Government which also supports collection and transportation of organic produce to potential markets.

To ensure livelihood and sustainable income of farmers, *Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana* (PMFBY) is a flagship programme which provides insurance umbrella to all foodgrains, oilseeds and annual commercial crops on 'one season, one rate' basis at a very low premium. It covers all risks of crop cycle, beginning from preventive sowing to standing crops and post-harvest losses. Over 5.75 crore farmers have so far been covered and many more are likely to get coverage as the scheme aims to increase coverage of crop area from 30 percent in 2016-17 to 40 percent in 2017-18. As a bonus, the scheme is encouraging and attracting investments in agriculture. Realisation of better price in the market is one of the most critical prerequisites

for enhancing farmers' income. A novel initiative, E-NAM (National Agriculture Market) is addressing the issue by integrating over 410 mandis of 13 states on a common e-platform for trading and transactions. So far, tradable parameters are in place for 69 commodities and more than 45 lakh farmers have registered themselves on the e-NAM platforms. This reform has successfully enhanced farmers' income by avoiding distress sale and middlemen. As an additional impact,

Online Agri- Market yields Remarkable Results

- 455 Mandi's across 13 States are live on e-NAM
- 83.57 lakh tonnes of agricultural produce worth ₹ 19,802.98 crores transacted till 15th May 2017
- Registrations on e-NAM :

45,45,850 Farmers	89,934 Traders	46,411 Commission agents
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THE FOUNDATION OF NEW INDIA - DELIVERING ON PROMISES
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"A farmer serves Mother India by filling the godowns with grains. This is also nation's service. Filling the granary is the biggest nation's service that a farmer provides. That is why Jai Bahadur Shastri had given the slogan of 'Jai Jansan, Jai Kisan'"
- PM Narendra Modi on 15th August, 2014

- 83.57 Lakh tonnes of agricultural produce worth Rs. 19,802.98 Cr transacted till 15th May, 2017 under eNAM
- More than 9 Crore Soil Health Cards distributed
- 8.40 lakh hectare of land brought under micro irrigation in 2016-17 under PMKSY
- During Kharif 2016; 401.54 lakh farmers covered and 392.82 lakh hectares insured over the sum insured of Rs. 1,35,00,572.17 lakh under PMFBY

also promise attractive returns on investment which adds to the income of farmers.

Increasing crop intensity is another technologically sound option for raising income per unit of land. With the availability of irrigation facilities and new techniques, it has now become possible for farmers to raise short duration crops after the main cropping seasons (Kharif and Rabi). Similarly, Integrated Farming System Models have been developed for increasing profitability. Such models provide more stable incomes even during years of extreme weather events. Diversification towards high value crops (fruits, vegetables, fibres, condiments and spices, medicinal and aromatic plants) offers a great scope to improve farmers' income. Scope also exists to increase farmers' income by diversifying towards other allied enterprises, such as forestry, processing of agriculture produce etc. NITI Aayog policy paper has recommended shifting of workforce away from agriculture for improving their income and livelihood opportunities. The Government's recent initiative on skill development can play a substantial role in improving skills of farming community for better income in allied or non-farm sectors.

developed and released nearly 600 improved crop varieties during the last three years to push up the productivity at a new level. Besides, many new farming technologies need to be extensively propagated in fields for raising productivity. Precision farming, integrated farming, resource conservation technologies

and protected cultivation are just a few examples which hold great promise and potential. Similarly, new machinery such as laser land leveler, precision seeder and planter, and modern farming practices like SRI (System of Rice Intensification), direct seeded rice, zero tillage, raised bed plantation and ridge plantation

New Vision

In the past, the Government's vision and strategy mainly focused on increasing agricultural production for food security. Of late, policy planners realized the need to raise farmers' income and also promote farmers' welfare. As a first step, Government of India rechristened the Ministry of Agriculture as Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare in 2015. Since then, Government of India is striving to double farmers' income by 2022 through various reforms, policies and initiatives. Accordingly, the new vision aims to reduce agrarian distress and bring parity between income of farmers and those working in non-agricultural professions. Indian agriculture sector, in its revamped version, has now geared-up to realize the dream of New India. □

(E-mail: jgdsaxena@gmail.com)

my GOV
मेरी सरकार

Organic Farming gains momentum with pro-active measures

Paramparagat Krishi Vikas Yojana (PKVY)

- Every farmer of a cluster to be provided **financial assistance** of Rs. 50,000 per ha
- 10,000 organic clusters** of 20 ha to be developed covering 2 lakhs ha in total
- 9,186 clusters** formed so far
- Area under organic farming increased by **176% during 2014-17 as compared to 2011-14**

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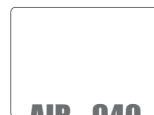
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Triple Talaq Verdict: A Victory for Muslim Women

RK Sinha



Significantly, there is neither any provision of Talaq in Quran nor in Hadees. Nevertheless, at a point in Quran it has been clearly stated that the various things disliked by Allah, Talaq comes at the top

The Supreme Court has delivered its historic judgement, which has liberated the Muslim women from the barbaric practice of Triple Talaq (a practice that allowed Muslim men to divorce their wives by uttering the word ‘talaq’ thrice at one go). The Apex Court’s judgement has also ordered the Centre to frame a law on Triple Talaq in the Parliament within six months besides imposing a ban on the practice during this period.

The five-judge bench of the Supreme Court, headed by Chief Justice JS Khehar (now retired) struck down triple talaq by 3-2 majority. The Supreme Court took a lesson from history when it had accepted the appeal of the petitioner in the 1986 Shah Bano case and rather than delivering a final judgement, it had left the issue (Triple Talaq) on the Parliament. However, the Apex Court had shown its intention.

Altogether, it is now evident that the nation is now free from the malpractices of Triple Talaq. There is also no need to remind that the Prime Minister, during his last year’s speech on Independence Day from the ramparts of the historic Red Fort, had assured the Muslim women by bringing a law to stop the inhuman practice of Triple Talaq.

Humanity Wins

It is also rightly said that ‘Justice is

Blind’ otherwise the Goddess of Justice wouldn’t have been depicted wearing a blindfold. Despite many fanatic Muslim organizations strongly advocating the continuance of Triple Talaq, the Supreme Court in its judgement gave a new life to Muslim women. Before this (Judgement), it was being said that the Supreme Court’s decision on the issue will determine whether humanity will win or communalism and barbarism will prevail.

Three out of the five judges of the Constitution bench – Justices Kurian Joseph, RF Nariman and UU Lalit held Triple Talaq as unconstitutional. On the other hand, Chief Justice J S Khehar and Justice S Abdul Nazeer were of the view that the practice was part of Muslim personal law and hence the court could not interfere. However, the three judges disagreed with the opinion of Justice Khehar and Justice Nazeer. The three judges termed Triple Talaq as violation of spirit of Article 14 (the Right to Equality) of the Constitution.

This decision means that the Court has held the practice of triple talaq unconstitutional striking it down with the majority. Further, mentioning the fact that several Islamic countries disallow triple talaq, the Court questioned why it should not be abolished in India? The Court also asked the Parliament to frame a law on the issue within six months.

The author is a member of the Rajya Sabha and Chairman of the Hindustan Samachar News Agency.



Triple Talaq is a 'Sin'

Terming Triple Talaq as the part of fundamental rights of Muslims, Chief Justice J S Khehar and Justice S Abdul Nazeer said Judiciary shouldn't interfere with it. However, both the judges also agreed that Triple Talaq is a sin and it is the government who should take a call on it through framing a law. Undoubtedly, the Central Government will now bring a strong law for empowering the Muslim women.

Who is the enemy of Muslim Women?

At the time when the campaign against Triple Talaq commenced to liberate the Muslim women from the brutality, many Muslim politicians,

who portrayed themselves as the well wishers of Muslims, started opposing it. Moreover, in various media discussions and debates, these politicians had threatened to give a befitting reply to the government for initiating a war

against Triple Talaq. Though the debates included a number of Mullahs and Ulemas, not a single woman was featured in it. Even in the present century, they (self-proclaimed Muslim leaders) wanted the Muslim women to follow the customs and traditions of medieval-era. Such politicians were opposing the progressive attitude of the government.

A the time when the matter was subjudice under the Supreme Court, I came across a member of the Muslim Personal Law board. I asked him a few questions. Firstly, a change in the Triple Talaq will empower your daughters and women, what a Hindu has to do with it?

Secondly, if Islam was not violated when all the Muslim nations terminated

Triple Talaq, why do you feel that banning such an outdated and ferocious custom here (India) will put Islam in danger or will snatch away the rights of Muslims? The person had no answers to my questions. If this community still resides in Dark Age, it is solely because of the so called Muslim leaders.

Significantly, there is neither any provision of Talaq in Quran nor in Hadees. Nevertheless, at a point in Quran it has been clearly stated that the various things disliked by Allah, Talaq comes at the top. Neither Rasool nor any Nabi divorced their wives. Yes, when some of them had differences of opinion on any issue, they just shifted their wives to a different place, providing all the facilities and taking good care of them.

Due to lack of a sound provision for marriage, divorce and alimony, most of the Muslim women suffer a worse life. Undoubtedly, the attitude of Muslim society towards their women has been very discriminatory. But, the situation will definitely change now. While most of the Muslim men were in favour of Triple Talaq, the women stood completely against it.

A survey carried out by the Bharatiya Muslim Mahila Andolan (BMMA) revealed that 92.1 percent of Muslim women in India were pushing hard to put an end to verbal and instant Talaq. After this historic judgement by the Apex Court, indeed their (Muslim women) wish has been accomplished. It however, they will still have to wait for a concrete law on it.

Now, abiding by the orders of the court, the government has to bring a stringent law in order to safeguard their rights, a law which results in the betterment of their life. And why should there be a wait for six-months period? The government should pass a bill in the upcoming winter session of Parliament, starting in November, to validate that the government is determined to provide equal status and rights to women. □

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Innovation Led Reforms for New India

Unnat Pandit



Both students and teachers will be a part of mentorship programs to create a greater impact of this initiative. This is just the beginning of a long journey to realize the dream of “Creative India – Innovative India” in its true sense to foster creativity and innovation and thereby, promote entrepreneurship and enhance socio-economic and cultural development

Re-energizing India as she is going to celebrate her 75th anniversary of Independence in 2022, and now it's time for change and to build a New India.

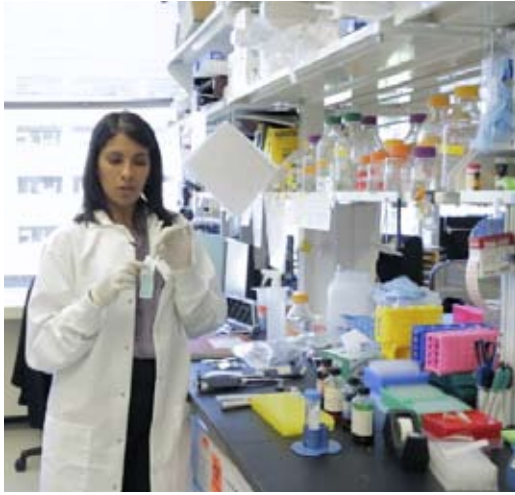
The “**New India**” that inspires, motivates, disrupts governance; empower to partner with the government and emphasizes on inclusive growth of country. *“Every citizen has something or the other to contribute in the journey of our nation’s growth”*: PM. The New India that provides opportunity to collaborate and serve the country. An incredible chance to deliver the real freedom, unity and perfection in an initiative for making of New India.

This is the first ever initiative taken by Central Government’s think tank NITI Aayog where the top brass of government has made it a reality through ‘**Champions of Change**’ -an attempt to bring entrepreneurs from varied industries in direct dialogue with the government and share their vision for the 'New India' of their dreams. The key decision-making team of the government listened to the presentations, and the points made in them will surely benefit effective governance as well as their policy-making, from a 360 degree view of the issues/challenges that is going to come up during the reform process.

The initiative is to facilitate more such creative and innovative technology platforms, systemic reforms to nurture the curiosity, creativity and imagination of youth of our country to achieve the dream of New India as per their desire.

Disrupt Governance Model: The government has taken an initiative for holistic societal growth of our country. In order to make governance effective for all citizens of our country, visible reforms were taken by government such as scraping the 1200 odd laws which were ineffective but were in existence, increasing the reach of banking and financial sector to the last man of the society through Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana (PMJDY), dismantling the procedures for governance and making is visible and transparent growth, provide an opportunity to partner and do business through *Government e-Marketplace (GeM)*. Efficient governance has fuelled energy for growth and positivity among all states. The states are motivated to do their best in serving the society. Stellar initiatives on gender parity, agriculture development, climate change, renewable energy, mobility, communication, digital transformation in financial sector, and many more have now poised to pave the way for the New India-the New India that is fulfilling the dream and ambition of the youth.

The author is an Intellectual Property and Innovation Professional. He carries over 15 years of professional experience in dealing with research, IP and Innovation. Currently, he is working with Atal Innovation Mission, NITI Aayog, Government of India.



India aims to ‘Cultivate One Million children and youth as the Innovators of tomorrow’. Innovation leads development in the same spirit as what Mahatma Gandhi did during the freedom struggle. He made everyone working for the nation feel special. He turned the freedom struggle into a mass movement and we saw the results. Similarly we need to make India’s development a mass movement. When we work together, we can solve every problem our country faces. We as a society are responsible to use our strengths to resolve the challenges to build the New India. The major initiatives of government such as, Atal Innovation Mission, National IPR Policy, Startup India, Make in India, NITI Aayog lead Champions of Change and Digital economy are going to fuel the development.

Atal Innovation Mission (AIM):

AIM is established with a mission to catalyze the growth of our country through innovation, entrepreneurship, disruption in the education system. “Children must be taught how to think, and now what to think”. However, we end up persuading them as “Be careful. Don’t go out. Don’t talk. Don’t climb this. Don’t get yourself dirty. Don’t do this and that. And the list goes on...” Well, we do agree that these directions are based on our experiences. Intermittently, this governs the thinking of the child, which makes them develop fear, bias and attitude lacking curiosity

and confidence. As a result, the child might end up making fewer friends, join fewer social groups and read fewer books. Such a child might be less receptive to inspiration, enthusiasm and may become less motivated.

By exerting these restrictions, we adults often forget that most of the lessons we learnt in our childhood were by experience and perseverance.

The greatest teachers provide their students with three essential mind-sets for optimal exploration of inherent skills: 1) Critical thinking power 2) Sense of safety and 3) The ability to think calmly in every situation. Irrespective of their hobbies and interests, children must be taught both by their parents and teachers to observe the right thing and in the right manner.

“The average child asks many simple and stupid questions a day, but by the time a child is getting accustomed with school at 10 or 12 years of age, he or she has figured out that it’s much more important to get right answers than to keep asking thoughtful questions.”

Nurture Big Ideas of Small Minds

Manual de-mining and probing of risky areas - inch by inch is a very slow, difficult, dangerous, and laborious process. Mine-ridden land must be stripped of all vegetation and searched with metal detectors. When a potentially dangerous object is found, it must be carefully unearthed and disarmed.

The students of Government Higher Secondary School, Hathbandh, Chhattisgarh were taught to improve their tinkering skills decided to address this problem and come up with a mine detection device that uses sound technology. The solution uses sensor technology that captures change in frequency of sound waves that give an

indication of the presence of a mine through an alarm. The device can be controlled by a remote device such as a smart phone or a bluetooth and is much faster than the current existing systems. The prototype device has power consumption of 9 Volt battery and the assemble time of less than 5 minutes.

Visually impaired people across the globe use a stick to check for any obstacles on their way to avoid accidents. However, it is not always a fool-proof method. Reliance on the movement is not always a sure way to avoid the accident. A simple yet effective technology based solution is needed which can help the visually impaired people and guide them effectively.

The students of Government High School, Uttarahalli, Bengaluru created a Wearable device for Blind using the Atal Tinkering Platform. It has a sensor which can detect the obstacles using ultrasonic waves. It notifies the user using vibrations and sounds to help them avoid accidents

The ATL Students felt empathetic on providing path breaking solutions for visually impaired and wanted to support them with a simple yet effective solution.

Currently, all offices and multiplex buildings have presence of bulky fire extinguishers in buildings and on time non-availability of fire services due to traffic congestion, narrow roads. There is a need for a low cost and effective scalable solution to address these challenges.

The students of Government Senior Secondary School, Sector 37 B, Chandigarh have made an attempt to develop remote control sound wave based fire extinguisher via their learning through Atal Tinkering Labs.

The students have designed a robot which can help extinguish fire using sound technology. The robot can be controlled by a remote from a distant place to extinguish fire. It uses low frequency waves (40-400



Hz) to extinguish fire. This innovative technology based solution is also light weight and easy to carry.

Water logging in streets is becoming critical issue, The Best High School, Ahmedabad students have faced many compulsory off days during the heavy rainfall days. The roads approaching to their schools are below the normal level so during rainfall, the water is getting logged on street roads. Sometimes the movement becomes impossible for citizens and traffic conjunction is added disadvantage.

The students through their Atal Tinkering Lab (ATL) experience have worked on a prototype which measures the amount of water logged in any area during rain/flood and sends the information to Municipal Corporation, and also the area supervisors, so that corrective measures can be taken on the same before it gets too late.

Similar problem has different approach by Students of Kendriya Vidyalaya Railwas Maligaon Assam wherein they have worked on a smart system to detect the water levels on roads and alerts the commuters via displays in various parts of the cities through mobile phone connectivity or SMS alert system so as to avoid traffic congestion. They have also worked on device to detect the location of Panthers walking into the colonies from nearby forest areas. An alert system can be put in place with the help of Forest authorities which is triggered the location from where the Panthers

have entered and also proactively alert the authority whenever a panther crosses over to the city from the forest. The authority gets an alert to take corrective measures before Panthers cause damage to citizens.

The solutions may be simple but are encouraging for technology driven approach in resolving societal issues. Dr APJ Abdul Kalam lived his life in transforming society through technology and has always believed in motivating and inspiring students and youth of our country. Every Indian has a lot more to learn from his life. During his life, Dr Kalam has always expressed his desire to be remembered as a teacher. He knew that student and youth of India can strengthen the foundation of our nation in the 21st Century. His speech has always motivated young children. The best way to enhance critical thinking in students and youth is by making them to think “out-of-the-box”, motivating them to observe their surrounding challenges and address the problems they observe or routinely face. Allow them to learn, “through their failure and facts, give them the opportunity to become a unique.” They shouldn’t refrain from speaking their thoughts based on these observations. Dr Kalam used to tell students and

youth that one must have great aims in life as aiming low is a crime! Hence, should be helped students to build a thought process to aim high and allow them to transform their ideas to resolve their problems which may in turn, lead to innovation. This will ignite them to discover new things and develop the capacity to share their discovery. Thereby, they will get the pleasure of joy for their own creation and reinforcement from that discovery to perfection. Let them learn the importance of Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths (STEM) towards addressing the grass route issues. This will in return develop their analytical skills to find the best solution for a given problem. In order to be successful one must continuously learn and work hard to acquire knowledge. Dr. Kalam used to ask students to become the ‘captain’ of the problems and to defeat them’. Even for teachers and parents it is important to understand that in order to grow and achieve their goals, they have think through to be lifelong a student. If they are happy with the knowledge they gained then they are actually going to atrophy.

Everyone, like a child, feels the pleasure of sharing their creating and discovery with fellow colleagues, classmates or teachers which is the biggest motivating factor. As social creatures we crave for positive motivation and recognition – the greatest reward for a child. When teachers and parents admire their work with positive comments and support, it further leads to build their respect and love for STEM. This encouragement could be in the form of comments



and praising in the classroom. Such an approval causes a massive boost of energy, encouragement and pride to sustain the student through further and newer challenges. This applies to adults also in their professional career. Steve Jobs, Bill Gates, Michael Dell, and so many other entrepreneurs weren't created overnight. Students will have to learn by experience that the expert in some area was a beginner at one point in time. It took them years to foster a personality revered by everyone. They all have not wasted their good mistakes but have learnt from them.

The objective of ATL is to foster curiosity, creativity and imagination in young minds. ATL will be a platform for our nation's budding talent to clearly and persuasively communicate their ideas and craft concepts addressing critical questions. The lab will provide a creative platform for young students that will be equipped with to do kind of kits on STEM education, Communication, Robotics and other experimental setups, through that they could learn and play from. The ATL will act as a podium for students to provide technological solutions to day-to-day problems and will exhort the youth to go for research and innovation in a big way. They will be given an exposure to tangible opportunities and incubators to groom them towards entrepreneurship. The Lab plans to use the concept of experiential learning to ignite their passion for creating and innovating by providing these tools and scientific instruments. ATL is currently deployed in 33 states and UTs of India schools with 941 approved schools covering 55 per cent districts of India, and has vision to expand to reach by adding 1300 more ATLs in the current year to expand its reach to all districts of India – all smart cities of India. They plan to cover the reach of ATL among entire next young generation irrespective of whether they are in a urban-rural town or villages.


Both students and teachers will be a part of mentorship programs to create a greater impact of this initiative. This is just the beginning of a long journey to realize the dream of “Creative India – Innovative India” in its true sense to foster creativity and innovation and thereby, promote entrepreneurship and enhance socio-economic and cultural development.

The students of future India design the India as the destination of greatness and pride for every Indian, leading the growth across the country, drive the radical structural reforms and in order to achieve the sustainable development to adopt the habit of never before initiatives by encouraging the innovation lead transformation.

Readings:

The visuals and PM's speech delivered during Two Champions of Change events organized by NITI Aayog.

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SRIRAM'S IAS

ADMISSION FORM

- Name (In Block Letters): ANMOL SHER SINGH BEDI
- Enrolment No.:
- Date Of Birth : 22/05/1994
- Address for Communication



Anandpur, Punjab
143001

- Contact No.(In Use): Parents Contact No.:
- E-mail :
- Father's name: Anmol Singh Father's occupation : Teaching
- Mother's name: Jaspal Kaur Mother's occupation : housewife

• Particulars of Examinations Passed

Examinations	Year	Subject	Name of the School/College/Institution
Class 12 th	2012		Spring Dale Senior School, Anandpur
Graduation	2016		BITS Pilani, Rajasthan
Post Graduation			



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Bedi
AIR-2
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YE-642/5/2017

Zero Tolerance to Corruption

V Srinivas



Several preventive vigilance measures have been introduced by the CVC. ...The Commission has sought to promote ethics through education of students and youth, observance of vigilance awareness weeks, process simplification to reduce discretion and interface with public servants, focus on training and skill development and awarding exemplary punishment in all cases of proven misconduct to create deterrence. ...An integrity index for organizations has been developed for enabling transparency, efficiency and citizen centric governance

In a recent visit to Jharkhand, the Prime Minister said “*corruption and black money have destroyed Indian democracy. The fight against corruption and black money will continue.*” The Prime Minister gave away a few smart phones to *sakhimandals* (self help groups) in Jharkhand and said he was surprised by the answers he got from the villagers about the usages of smart phones. Smart Governance has given the roadmap for India’s fight against corruption.

Zero Tolerance to Corruption Approach

India’s “*zero tolerance to corruption*” approach, as well as “*minimum government and maximum governance*” approach resulted in simplification of the governance model in recent years. Some of the steps included abolition of the system of attestation/ authentication by Government servants for submission of certificates, abolition of personal interviews for recruitments to lower level posts and weeding out inefficient public servants and those of doubtful integrity above the age of 50 years, prematurely. Further the Government demonetized high value currency to eliminate black money and corruption. A Special Investigation Team was constituted to fight black money. Government also conducted online auctions of coal blocks. The

Government sought international cooperation in G-20 meetings on ending tax havens in Europe and other countries. In bilateral meetings with Swiss authorities India has said combating the menace of black money and tax evasion was a “shared priority” for both the countries.

Frameworks to Fight Corruption

India’s fight against corruption is led by a robust and time tested institutional and legislative framework including the Prevention of Corruption Act, an independent Central Vigilance Commission, Comptroller and Auditor General, the Judges (Inquiry) Act, the Lok Pal and LokAyukta Act 2013, Whistle Blowers Protection Act 2011, Prevention of Money /Laundering Act, Benami Transactions (Prohibition) Act which cover a number of areas of criminalization and bribery. All civil servants are mandatorily required to declare their assets on an annual basis. The Elected Representatives are required to declare their assets every election cycle.

Making Governance Smarter

The Prime Minister in his Independence Day address on August 2014, announced the Pradhan Mantri Jan-Dhan Yojana as a National Mission on Financial Inclusion encompassing an integrated approach to bring about comprehensive financial inclusion of

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facilitates e-payments directly through banks, promoted the drive towards cashless transactions, enabling the user to instantly transfer money between the bank accounts of any two parties and can be used on all mobile devices.

Collectively, the Jan

DhanYojana, the Aadhaar Act and the BHIM Application have provided for a transparent government where subsidy flows reach the beneficiary in a timely and effective manner. The JAM (Jan Dhan-Aadhaar-Mobile) technology trinity enabled by payments through the Unified Payments Interface (UPI), has made mobile banking as simple as sending an email. Clearances using the National Electronics Transfer of Funds (NEFT), Real Time Gross Settlements (RTGS), Immediate Payment Service (IMPS) and Electronic Clearing System (ECS) are rapidly integrating into the mainstream banking sector activities.

Focus on Preventive Vigilance

The Central Vigilance Commission (CVC) traces its origins to the

recommendations of the Committee on Prevention of Corruption, headed by Shri K. Santhanam, Member of Parliament. The Santhanam committee identified 4 major causes of corruption namely, administrative delays, government taking upon themselves more than what they could manage by way of regulatory functions, scope for personal discretion in the exercise of powers by different public servants and cumbersome procedures. Based on the recommendations of the Santhanam committee, the Central Vigilance Commission was established in 1964 by a Government of India resolution as an apex body for prevention of corruption in Central Government Institutions. In 1997, following the directions given by the Supreme Court of India in the Jain Hawala Case, statutory status was conferred on the Vigilance Commission. The Central Vigilance Commission Act 2003 provides for constitution of a Central Vigilance Commission to inquire or to cause inquiries to be conducted into offences alleged to have been committed under the Prevention of Corruption Act, 1988 by public servants and corporations.

all the households of the country. He said that, *“the economic resources of the country should be utilized for the well-being of the poor. The change will commence from this point.”* India’s focus on *“making government smarter”* has been at the forefront of the Nation’s Fight against Corruption. The revolution in banking sector technology is a remarkable success story that has benefitted millions of Indians. The same quantum of subsidy could benefit, could be far more efficiently spent by a *“Smarter Governance Model”* than in a manual system.

The Jan DhanYojana provided universal and clear access to banking accounts with overdraft facility. The Jan Dhan Scheme provided the bankers with the necessary confidence to promote credit culture across the deprived population and resulted in significant increases in credit flows to the rural sector. In 2016, the Aadhaar Act was promulgated as a money bill to ensure targeted delivery of financial and other subsidies, benefits and services. The Act provided a legal backing to the Aadhaar-Unique Identification number project and provided for an efficient, transparent and targeted delivery of subsidies, benefits and services for all expenditures incurred from the consolidated fund of India to individuals, through assigning aadhaar identification numbers for matters connected therewith.

The third major step initiated by the Government in 2016 was the introduction of BHIM (Bharat Interface for Money) which is a mobile application developed by National Payments Corporation of India based on Unified Payment Interface (UPI). The BHIM application

Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) - Bringing transparency through Aadhaar

- Aadhaar to identify and remove fake and duplicate beneficiaries
- 82.9% DBT beneficiaries seeded with Aadhaar
- 34.53 crore beneficiaries seeded with Aadhaar
- ₹68,815 crore of funds transferred using Aadhaar Bridge Payment



shadow economy and black money, transfer pricing, accommodation bills etc. and the need to manage large volumes of digital information that will emerge from increasing automation of tax filing, assessment and recovery procedures.

Transparency in Governance

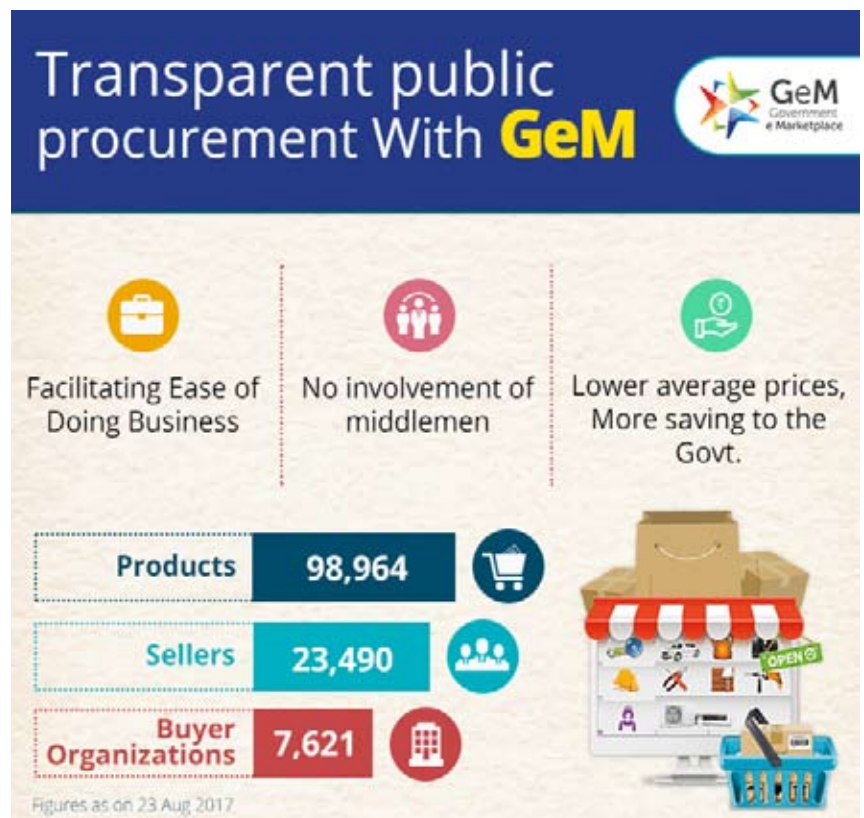
The Right to Information (RTI) Act 2005 is a rights based law that has deepened India's democracy and created a durable stake for citizens in the administration of the Nation. The Prime Minister has said that the implementation of the RTI Act should not be limited to a citizen's right to know but also cover the right to question. The process of accessing information should be transparent, timely and trouble free. After a decade of implementation, the power and usefulness of the RTI is being felt across the Nation. The RTI Act has led to improvements in governance. By sharing information, the citizens have become part of the decision making process, which leads to creation of trust between citizens and Government.

The CVC has endeavored to ensure transparency, objectivity and accountability into the public administration. Several preventive vigilance measures have been introduced by the CVC. Measures like Government E-Market (GEM) have helped improve the accountability and integrity in public procurement by encouraging e-tendering and e-procurement. The Commission has sought to promote ethics through education of students and youth, observance of vigilance awareness weeks, process simplification to reduce discretion and interface with public servants, focus on training and skill development and awarding exemplary punishment in all cases of proven misconduct to create deterrence. The CVC has sought to create a people's movement against corruption through an e-pledge to be voluntarily taken by the citizens and organizations. An integrity index for organizations has been developed for enabling transparency, efficiency and citizen centric governance.

Strengthening Audit and Accounting

The Comptroller and Auditor General of India is an important institution in India's fight against corruption. Since 2014, the C& AG adapted to the Government's reforms in financial governance in the organization's accounting and auditing practices. Some of the big changes introduced in financial governance are amalgamation of the Railways and General budgets, the merger of plan and non-plan expenditures, opening up of a number of sectors for foreign direct investment and the introduction

of Goods and Services Tax. The urban local bodies and Panchayati Raj Institutions that constitute the third tier of Government receive close to Rs. 14 lakh crores annually, but suffer from poor governance systems, weak financial management and poor accountability. Looking at the enormity of the flow of funds to urban and rural local bodies, their numbers and the geographic spread, the C& AG has identified their audit as a critical area that must be clearly understood from the perspective of materiality and risk and addressed accordingly. The C& AG has recognized the changing paradigms in revenue administration, including the challenges posed by



The Lok Pal and LokAyuka Act 2013

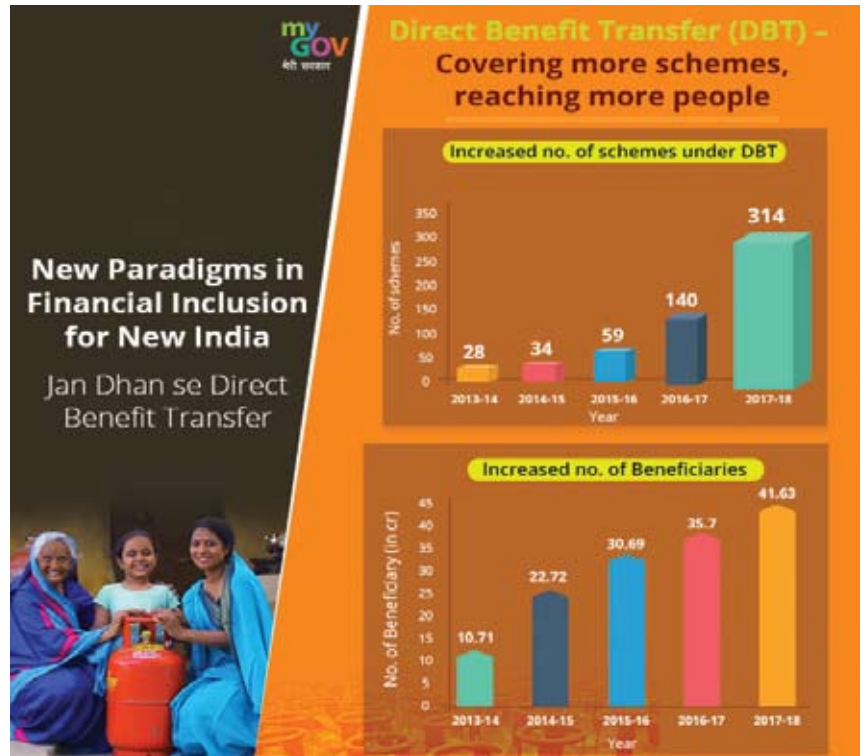
The Lokpal and LokAyukta Act 2013 amended some provisions of the CVC Act, 2003 wherein the Central Vigilance Commission was empowered to conduct preliminary enquiry into the complaints referred by Lokpal in respect of officers and officials of Group B, C and D, besides Group A officers for which a Directorate of Inquiry will be set up in the Commission. The preliminary inquiry reports in such matters referred by the Lokpal in respect of Group A and B officers are required to be sent to the Lokpal by the Commission. The Commission has also been mandated to cause further investigation into such Lokpal references in respect of Group C and D officials and decide on further course of action against them.

Prevention of Corruption

The Prevention of Corruption Act is an Act to consolidate and amend the law relating to the prevention of corruption. The law provides for punishments for taking gratification other than legal remuneration in respect of official acts. The investigative powers have been given to the CBI and State Police Authorities. Government has said that accountability standards for public servants have to be kept at realistic levels so that officers do not hesitate in taking honest decisions. Government has proposed an Amendment Bill to the Prevention of Corruption Act to replace the definition of criminal misconduct that requires the intention to acquire assets disproportionate to one's income also needs to be proved in addition to the possession of such assets, thereby raising the threshold to establish the offence of having disproportionate assets.

Safe Guards for Whistle Blowers

In order to give statutory protection to whistle blowers in the country, the Public Interest Disclosures and Protection to Persons making the



Disclosures Bill, 2011 was introduced in the Lok Sabha in August, 2010. The Bill was passed by the Lok Sabha, in December, 2011, as the Whistle Blowers Protection Bill, 2011 and was passed by the Rajya Sabha in February 2014. The Bill has received the assent of the President on May 9, 2014. Further amendments 21 were made to the Act in 2015. This was done with a view to incorporate necessary provisions aimed at strengthening safeguards against disclosures which may prejudicially affect the sovereignty and integrity of the country, security of the State, etc. The amendments addressed concerns relating to national security and strengthened the safeguards against disclosures which may prejudicially affect the sovereignty and integrity of the country.

Crackdown on Benami Transactions

Though the Benami Transactions (Prohibition) Act, 1988 has been on the statute book for 28 years, the same could not be made operational because of certain inherent defects. With a view to providing effective regime for prohibition of benami

transactions, the said Act was amended through the Benami Transactions (Prohibition) Amended Act, 2016. The amended law empowers the Income Tax authorities to provisionally attach benami properties which can eventually be confiscated. Besides, if a person is found guilty of offence of benami transaction by the competent court, he shall be punishable with rigorous imprisonment for a term not less than one year but which may extend to 7 years and shall also be liable to a fine which may extend to 25 per cent of the fair market value of the property. The Benami Transactions (Prohibition) Amendment Act, 2016 came into effect from November 1, 2016. Several benami transactions have been identified since the coming into effect of the amended law.

To conclude, it may be said that India continues the fight against corruption and black money. These efforts led by the focus on smart governance are yielding positive results. □

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YE-379/2/2017

Energising Youth through Skill Development

*Amit Kumar Dwivedi
Saravanan Velusamy*



...skilling has become the only way out to improve the entrepreneurship landscape of the country. Besides the need to create a skillful workforce in the near future, the government also has a mandate to address issues such as demand-supply mismatch, scalability and sustainability of the training programmes, providing for necessary facilities and infrastructure that large-scale training programmes require, recruiting and training good quality trainers etc.

Indian economy is one of the largest in the world with an average GDP growth rate of 7 per cent over the last two decades. Classified as a newly industrialized economy among the developing nations, the country is yet to reap the benefits of demographic dividend in view of its huge young population. The economy thrives in the wake of its growth in industrial production, urbanization and rural to urban migration for employment purposes. The service sector is the biggest contributor to the GDP of the country followed by industry and agriculture. Around half of our country's labour force is self-employed and around 93 per cent of them work in the unorganized sector. India's working age population is projected to touch 170 million by 2020 based on the rate of its population growth, increased work force participation and rising higher education enrolment, according to an ASSOCHAM-Though Arbitrage Study. Therefore, if we do not train our young workforce now, we run the risk of not only losing the fruits of our young and dynamic working-age population but are also turning our demographic dividend into a demographic disaster. Creation of employment opportunities and creation of employable

youth population should go hand in hand.

Skill Deficit

Lack of quality education has resulted in higher instances of employability deficit among youth. Scarcity of employment opportunities has increased competition in the job market. Absence of funds to promote vocational and skill training has led to the increase of unskilled work force, most of who are working in insecure work environments in the country. Continuing high drop-out rates in schools and colleges coupled with lack of entrepreneurial motivation and orientation have also caused widespread unemployment among the youth of the nation. The Government of India has pledged to create more job opportunities and promote entrepreneurship in the country. During his budget presentation, the Union Finance Minister said, "energising the youth through education, skills and jobs is one of the primary focus of the government". However, employment growth has been stagnant and interventions have often been unresponsive. Only 10 per cent of the total workforce receives some skill training, points out an Ernst and Young¹ study. Capacity building in existing systems of training, maintaining quality and relevance in training, creating institutional

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mechanism and financing these training initiatives are some of the challenges for skill development that the government has to face in the coming years, the report states.

To Create Employable Workforce

An ASSOCHAM-TISS study points out that India has not fared well on the rankings for patent and growth of new start-ups. Institutes of higher learning such as State and Central universities are starved of funds to establish research infrastructure and promote entrepreneurship, says the study². Thus, skilling has become the only way out to improve the entrepreneurship landscape of the country. Besides the need to create a skillful workforce in the near future, the government also has a mandate to address issues such as demand-supply mismatch, scalability and sustainability of the training programmes, providing for necessary facilities and infrastructure that large-scale training programmes require, recruiting and training good quality trainers etc. The report suggests that resources should be mobilized and vocational education and skill development platforms identified in order to synergize the efforts and expertise of various stakeholders to



create an employable workforce for the overall economy.

Skill India Programme

A new ministry has been formed by the Government of India for Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE). The National Policy on Skill Development envisions enhancing employability among the labour force of the country in the midst of technological advancement and labour market demands. It aspires to increase productivity in the economy and

strengthen the competitiveness of the country to raise the standard of living of the poor.

Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana (PMKVY) is a skill development programme that identifies industry-relevant skills required to acquire gainful employment for the youth. It is a flagship programme that intends to recognize the knowledge acquired and skills equipped by the participants by certification. Prior learning experience or skills will also be assessed and certified under Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL). Under the programme, short term training courses are conducted by PMKVY training centres. The target group for the Skill India constitute all those in the labour force including those who are entering the job market. It also included those who are in the organized and the unorganized sectors.

THE FOUNDATION OF NEW INDIA - DELIVERING ON PROMISES
Skill India to build New India

"If we have to promote the development of our country, then our mission has to be 'skill development' and 'skilled India'"
- PM Narendra Modi on 15th August, 2014

- 1.17 crore people trained under MSDE programs
- 4.82 lakh people brought into the organised sector through Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) under PMKVY
- 1381 new Industrial Training Institutes opened with 5 lakh+ seats
- 162 Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Kendras established

Schemes under PMKVY are implemented through National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC). Other institutes and organizations are also encouraged to build platforms for training in specialized areas such as entrepreneurship, soft skills, finance etc³. The National Institute for Entrepreneurship and Small Business Development was set up to offer training, consultancy, research, etc. in order to promote entrepreneurship

in the country. The institute conducts Entrepreneurship-cum-Skill Development courses, Training of Trainers and other Entrepreneurship Development Programmes.

Enabling Environment for Entrepreneurship

Universities are establishing incubation centres and appointing mentors to support student entrepreneurs in their start-up ventures⁴. Various state governments are turning not only their major cities but also tier 2 towns into start-up hubs to assist innovative business models and technology products. The Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship also attempts to connect the mentors, peers and incubators to establish a solid network of entrepreneurs and E-hubs. Therefore, governments are willing to support the spirit of entrepreneurship for economic progress.

A study conducted by ISEED found that 87 per cent of the students surveyed aspired to become entrepreneurs at a point in life and majority of them (90 per cent) believe that the country is full of entrepreneurial opportunities. Indeed the study reports entrepreneurial aspirations higher among economically weaker sections (49 per cent) compared to their economically stronger counterparts (Business Standard, 2013). We see a growing interest in entrepreneurship amongst our youth.

THE FOUNDATION OF NEW INDIA - DELIVERING ON PROMISES
'Starting-up' the Entrepreneurial Revolution

"I want to call upon the youth of the country, particularly the small people engaged in the industrial sector. I want to call upon the youth working in the field of technical education in the country"

- PM Narendra Modi on 15th August, 2014

Start-Up India:
2196 applications recognised as Start-ups

MUDRA Yojana- 8.63 Crore entrepreneurs funded with 3.72 lakh crores disbursed

7 new IIMs, 6 new IITs, 1 new IIITs, 2 IISERs, 1 NIT, 1 new Central University, 97 new KVs and 62 NVs established/sanctioned

Enterprising and entrepreneurship competencies are essential qualities to be acquired for new age business aspirants and innovators. The economy is also increasingly becoming knowledge based. The modern workplace culture demands new skills and attitudes among the potential employees. India's skill development and employment training programmes must include these advanced skill-set and progressive work attitudes in order to

develop human capital with increased competitiveness.

Employability Skills through Entrepreneurship Education

An entrepreneur is a person who scans environment for opportunities and mobilizes resources despite constraints and challenges in order to disrupt the market with innovative business products and strategies and bring new order in the society. They are independent minded who exercises their creative faculties to promote innovation and advance technology for the betterment of their society. They are filled with achievement motivation and entrepreneurial traits. They demonstrate competency in problem solving and team-building. Since enterprising and new business creation require persistent efforts and temerity, entrepreneurship capabilities in an individual provides for a package of skills required to survive a volatile market and a highly competitive business environment.



Thus, entrepreneurial skills are a bundle of integrated skill-set that includes; people skills such as networking and public relations; life skills such as goal-setting, career planning and personality development communication capabilities and other soft skills. Education with a clear purpose has to enhance entrepreneurial efficacy through providing them knowledge, skills and attitude to deal with complex situations arising out of any entrepreneurial venturing. The Entrepreneurship Development Institute of India, Ahmedabad which was established to provide comprehensive education and training in entrepreneurship to the country's⁵ youth also conducts for children in order to boost their confidence and entrepreneurship oriented motivation to tap their entrepreneurial instincts. This approach is to help children at very early stage of their life to acquire entrepreneurial traits such as risk-taking, creative thinking, conflict management, effective communication and teamwork through simulation games and exercises. With over 1.5 million schools and more than 315 million students⁶ enrolled, India has one of the largest school education systems in the world. If skills training and attitude orientation for enterprise creation and entrepreneurship could start from schools, students will become job creators in future.

‘Skill-preneurship’ Activities

Soft-Skills training for Entrepreneurs: Soft skills such as ability to work in a group, leadership qualities, language skills, personal habits etc are integral to development of entrepreneurial capability within an individual. Skills and competencies of an entrepreneur are transferable skills across diverse industrial sectors and portfolios. Therefore, every individual who aspires to set up a new enterprise has to undergo basic training in entrepreneurship and allied skills to be successful in the profession.

Tasks-based Training sessions

Sessions on Skill-Based Business Model Canvas Development, Business Plan Preparation, How to conduct Market Survey, How to document and present b-plan, How to promote Indigenous Innovations, Using IT to leverage and grow business and an applied Course on Accounting and Finance for Business are required for new enterprise creation and development. In addition to these trainings, young innovators, student entrepreneurs and other aspirants must take up professional workshop sessions and seminar sessions on focused topics to prepare themselves for a career in entrepreneurship.

Suggestions and Road-Ahead to create more Skill-Preneurs:

- Gender focus is important to advance women and transgender focused skill development initiatives and promote entrepreneurship among the discriminated genders. In order to eliminate regional imbalance and oversight and lack of attention paid to the lower caste groups and other marginalized communities, special focus on skill training should be mooted for them to ensure “inclusivity for all”.
- Lack of education and skills is a major impediment among the marginalized communities. It leads to lack of confidence to undertake responsibilities. Such lack of confidence and self-belief is seen particularly among women. Entrepreneurship motivation coupled with hands-on training can address these deficiencies.
- The training programmes must offer “diversified services portfolio” in order to cater to the diverse beneficiaries whose social, economic and day to day life experiences are different. For instance, flexible schedules, instruction in regional language, location specific examples will help students from diverse backgrounds to understand and relate to the programmes.
- Experts and scholars working in the field of entrepreneurship education and skill development should come together to develop a comprehensive and accessible “online assessment tools and training curriculum” for the benefit of other concerned institutes to develop and promote entrepreneurship and skill training within their campuses.
- They must also compile a discursive list of international standards prescribed for vocational education and skill training for securing gainful employment. There should be provisions for regular up-gradation of vocational education framework under National Skill Qualification Framework.
- Government and other institutional bodies must engage in impact evaluation of government schemes and incentives on entrepreneurship development programmes to reduce financial stress and promote partnerships with domestic skill-entrepreneurship development players for better institutional interaction. Studies can be administered to sense workable and employable capacities that can be deployed for further improvement.
- The support of knowledge partners with existing institutions for capacity building, handholding and mentoring pool to support upcoming start-ups. There is a need to connect industry with institutions and incubation centres for synergy effects. For this, we need to define the industry focus in all our skill development operations. The scope, objectives and limitations of the skill development employment training programmes (geographically and demographically) must be drawn and clearly stated.
- Funding-linked-training mechanism to encourage enterprise creation should be devised.
- Incubation and acceleration development programmes should

be facilitated to assist hi-tech entrepreneurs and skill-preneurs.

Conclusion:

In order to direct the course of skill-based new venture creation and Start-ups in New-India towards achieving its full potential, students who demonstrate skill-preneurship focus and entrepreneurial traits must be encouraged to undergo orientation and training to sharpen their entrepreneurial skills and enhance their ability to conceptualize their new business model, equip them with risk-bearing and uncertainty-bearing capacity and help them to overcome the unique hurdles they face especially during the beginning phase of new venture. In fact such an orientation soaked with achievement motivation and entrepreneurial stimulus can be offered at a young age preferable during their high school. In this way, Entrepreneurship schools, Management Institutes, Incubation centres, Government and other agencies can create an enabling entrepreneurship ecosystem and influence the markets to bring meaningful reforms in New-India.

Readings

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Endnotes

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5. Global Entrepreneurship Monitor (GEM) India Report 2015/16
6. Census 2011 data □

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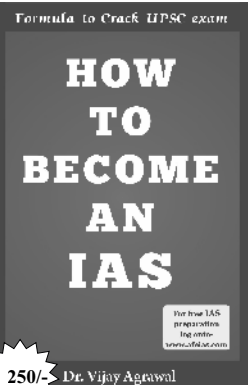
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Role of Women in New India by 2022

*Sasikala Puspa
B Ramaswamy*



We are sure the coming years will see a much better India—a new India a where gender equality will be norm rather than aberration. For this every individual, irrespective of one's responsibility or influence, has to stand up and make it happen. Just governments cannot do it; every citizen has to do it. The extension of women's rights is the basic principle of all social progress and for making New India by 2022, we will have to ensure the equality of status for one half of the population in our country

On 15 August, 2017, the Prime Minister unveiled his vision for New India from the ramparts of the historic Red Fort. In his fourth Independence Day speech, he urged the fellow citizens to come forward to build a New India by 2022. Outlining his vision, the Prime Minister explored the strengths of the Indian society and the successful journey of independent India in the last 70 years. Government has chosen 2022 as the target year as it marks the completion of 75 years of independence. The 'New India' initiative envisages that the poor shall have concrete houses, access to electricity, healthcare, sanitation and education, farmers' incomes shall be doubled, there must be ample opportunities for the youth and women, and India would be free of scourges such as communalism, casteism and terrorism by 2022. It is not a new program per se but the amalgamation of all the ongoing government programs and the achievement of the expected targets within five years. For this a new slogan has been given by the PM, "**Sankalp Se Siddhi**" which means "**Attainment through Resolve**".

Building a New India by 2022 is an ambitious vision. However, achieving the basic objectives of the initiative is not as remote as it appears to be. The New India initiative has put thrust on several key areas. The most important

areas on which government is putting thrust and has also been highlighted several times by the PM are Doubling Farmers' Income, Housing for All and Women Empowerment. Since the beginning, the Government has clearly shown its intentions of working for the welfare of the women, children and youth of the country. Accordingly, not only many new programs have been started for the development of women and children but several provisions have also been added to the ongoing programs for making them women friendly. For instance, Housing for All scheme has a provision according to which women of the household will be given preference in allocation of house under the *Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana*.

In the process of eradicating poverty and reducing rampant gender discrimination, the governments have been implementing various schemes and programs towards women development and empowerment. The constitution of India has given special attention to the needs of women and children to enable them to exercise their rights and to safeguard their interests. The Constitution guarantees all Indian women equality (Article 14), no discrimination by State (Article 15(1)), equality of opportunity (Article 16), and equal pay for equal work (Article 39(d)). In addition, it allows special provisions to be made by the

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State in favour of the women and children (Article 15(3)), renounces practices derogatory to the dignity of women (Article 51(A) (e)), and also allows for provisions to be made by the State for securing just and humane conditions of work and for maternity relief. (Article 42)

It was realized that constitutional guarantees of equality would be meaningless and unrealistic unless women's right to economic independence is acknowledged and improvements are made in their skill training so that they can improve their contribution to the family and the national economy. Drawing strength from the Constitution, the Government of India is engaged in committed and continuous endeavors towards ensuring all round well being, development and empowerment of women. Empowerment is about choices, and the ability to exercise women's choices will be limited unless they are more involved in policy-making. The 73rd and 74th Constitutional Amendment Acts of 1992 ensured reservation of one third of seats for women in all elected offices of local bodies, in rural and urban areas. In the rural areas, women have thus been brought to the centre-stage in the efforts to strengthen democratic institutions but the pendency of Women's Reservation Bill in the Parliament is not a very encouraging sign for ensuring gender equality at the national level.

As per Census 2011, the population of India is 1210.19 million comprising 586.47 million women which constitute



about half of the total population. The empowerment of women is fundamental for the progress of the country. The Ministry of Women and Child Development (MWCD) was carved out of Ministry of Human Resource Development as a separate Ministry on 30th January 2006. It is the nodal ministry for all matters pertaining to development of women and children in the country. The National Commission for Women was constituted as a national apex statutory body in 1992 for protecting and safeguarding the rights of women. India is also signatory to a number of International Conventions, primarily the Convention on Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), and has recently endorsed the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) which will further change the course of development by addressing key challenges including gender equity.

India's female workforce participation at 25.5 per cent is lower than even Somalia where 37 per cent of women are engaged in active workforce. Further, in India about 43 per cent of women of working age (15-59 years) only work at home for which they don't get any monetary remunerations. In the Union budget 2016-17, spending on women who comprise 48 per cent of India's 1.2 billion people has increased to Rs 90,624.76 crore from Rs 28,737 crore in 2006 when the gender-responsive budgeting was first started in India. This money is spent on a variety of centrally administered programs, which include saving girls from death, supporting rape victims, better health and nutrition for mothers and daughters, incentives to allow girls to be born and nurtured.

An allocation of Rs 22,095 crore has been made for the Ministry of Women and Child Development in the

Table1: The Budget Allocations (In crores of Rupees)

Scheme	Integrated Child Development Services	Beti Bachao Beti Padhao Campaign	Indira Gandhi Matritva Sahyog Yojna	National Nutrition Mission	Total Allocation to Women And Child development Ministry
Actual 2014-15	16552	34.84	342.51	NA	18539.47
Budget 2015-16	8245	97	433	----	10382.4
Revised 2015-16	15393	72.5	230.9	450	17351.0
Budget 2016-17	16579	100	634	850	17408.0
Budget 2017-18	20716	200	2700	1500	22095.0



Budget for the Financial Year 2017-18, showing an increase of 27 per cent over the year 2016-17 (BE). In similar manner, all other schemes of Women and child Development ministry have witnessed substantial increase in budget. This is a welcome step in right direction.

Gender Budget (GB) initiatives was started to analyze how governments raise and spend public money, with the aim of securing gender equality in decision making about public resource allocation; and gender equality in the distribution of the impact of government budgets, both in their benefits and in their burdens. The impact of government budgets on the most disadvantaged groups of women

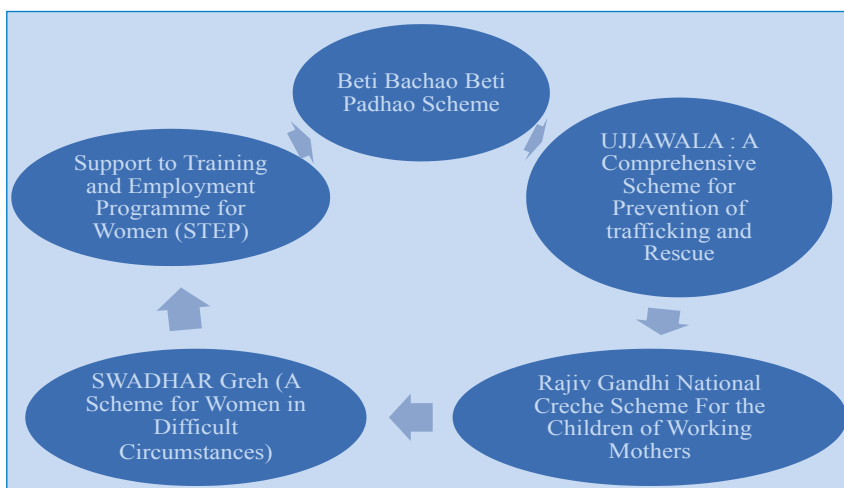
is a focus of special attention. However, the data available on various websites and government reports are implicating that there is the big difference in letter and spirit when it comes to actually executing the schemes for women development. The GB funds two types of government schemes. First, in schemes which have 100 per cent provision for women and secondly, schemes where the allocations for women constitute at least 30 per cent of the provision. India was ranked 87th in the Global Gender Gap Index 2016, according to the World Economic Forum, a jump of 21 places from 2015. In women's health, India ranked 142nd in the index, third from bottom, highlighting the need to increase

funding for improving it. Apart from the central government, 17 states have adopted Gender Budgeting. GB is positive and significant for education enrollment and health equality, and can potentially improve gender equality at large. The main focus of highlighting these data is to show that we may have made progress in policy papers but that advancement is not reflecting on ground yet.

The rationale for gender budgeting arises from recognition of the fact that national budgets impact men and women differently through the pattern of resource allocation. Women constitute 48 per cent of India's population, but they lag behind men on many social indicators like health, education, economic opportunities etc. Hence, they warrant special attention due to their vulnerability and lack of access to resources. The ministry is responsible for the implementation of major schemes, such as the *Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao* (Save the girl child, Educate the girl child), Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) and National Nutrition Mission (NNM). And for the proper monitoring and implementation of these schemes GB becomes imperative.

Education of the girls should be given priority and awareness needs to be generated regarding the necessity of educating girls so as to prepare them to contribute effectively to the

Fig: Some major Women Empowerment Schemes





There was a time when women were just kitchen keepers and housekeepers in the Indian society. Gradually women began to get educated, even highly educated and a stage came when some of them came out on the social and political field challenging the hitherto unchallenged area of dominance for the men. The freedom struggle of India was the opening up of the new horizon for the emancipation of woman in India. In modern India, women have adorned high offices including that of

Today, India is at an economic threshold and women are at the vanguard of this change. If we work efficiently for the next few years, we can change the lives of hundreds of millions of women who are in an atrocious pit of social and economic deprivation. The awareness amongst the women has grown considerably in the past decade and now they are asserting themselves emphatically for their rights. We are sure the coming years will see a much better India—a new India where gender equality will be a norm rather than an aberration. For this every individual, irrespective of one's responsibility or influence, has to stand up and make it happen. Just governments cannot do it; every citizen has to do it. The extension of women's rights is the basic principle of all social progress and for making New India by 2022, we will have to ensure the equality of status for one half of the population in our country. So, let us pledge to work shoulder to shoulder and dedicate ourselves towards creating a New India that will provide dignity to women and bring happiness to the lives of all. □

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socio-economic development of the country. There is a strong need to eliminate all forms of discrimination in employment, especially to eliminate wage differentials between men and women. Government should effectively secure participation of women in the decision-making process at National, State and Local levels. This would imply use of special measures for recruitment of women candidates

the President and Prime Minister. Once Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru had said, "You can tell the condition of a nation by looking at the status of women". In that regard, India has made considerable advancement in empowering women politically and socio-economically. However, their path is still full of roadblocks and we will have to travel a long way to bring them at parity with men.

Mahatma Gandhi
His Life & Message

Satyagraha

Publications Division
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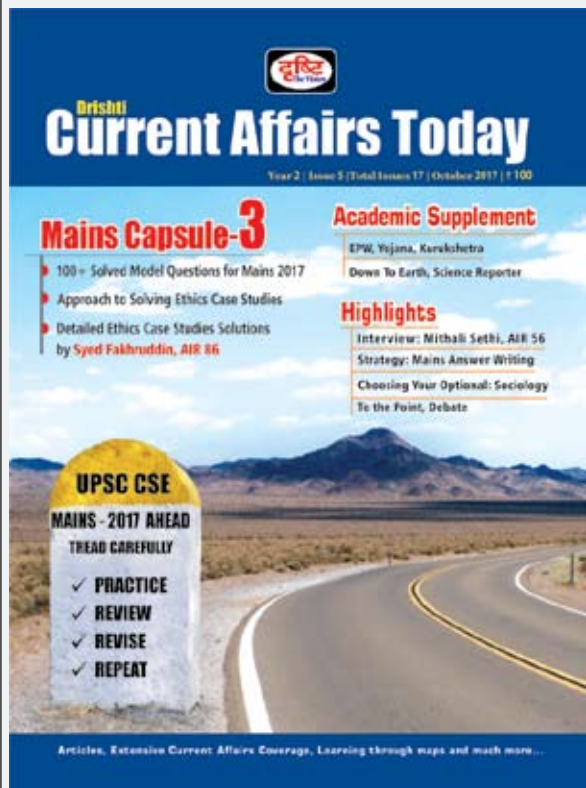
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NORTH EAST DIARY

NORTH EAST CALLING FESTIVAL

The two-day festival 'North East Calling' was organized by the Ministry of Development of North Eastern Region (DoNER) in New Delhi recently. The purpose was to promote North Eastern art, food, music and culture and also to enlighten Delhi people about the Sister States. The two-day event included showcase of rich culture of North East, including Music Festival for bands of North-East, Cultural Night for Dances of North-East, Handloom Demo Show presenting the clothes of North-East, Exhibitions of activities being undertaken in NE, stalls by various Central Government ministries showcasing the works being undertaken by them in the region, stalls by State Governments offering opportunities in their states, stalls for Sale of products of NERAMAC and NEHDC, variety of food stalls including sale of delicacies of NE, contests for all sections of young population to expose them to NE, B2B Summits on Food Processing, Tourism and Start-up opportunities in the North-East.



NORTHEAST VENTURE FUND FOR STARTUPS

Northeast Venture Fund offered by the Ministry of Development of North-Eastern Region (DoNER) is attracting young Start-Ups in more and more numbers and has generated huge enthusiasm among entrepreneurs looking for an opportunity in the North-Eastern region.

Stating this the Union Minister of State of the Ministry of Development of North Eastern Region (DoNER), Dr Jitendra Singh, said that hundreds of queries are pouring in each day with the DoNER Ministry and over 60 proposals are already in the pipeline for consideration.

Dr Jitendra Singh said the Northeast Venture Fund is the first dedicated venture capital fund for North-Eastern region and the initiative to set it up began in April this year. He said, Prime Minister's "Startup India, Standup India" is an incredible programme which includes unprecedented provisions and incentives like, for example, tax holiday in the early phase and an exit period of three months. Added to this, the Ministry of DoNER is offering an additional benefit of providing the initial Venture Capital Fund to any youngster who decides to set up an entrepreneurship in the North-Eastern region.

Dr Singh further explained that "North-East Venture Fund" has been set up by the North Eastern Development Finance Corporation Ltd (NEDFi), which already has the mandate to encourage entrepreneurship in the region primarily by offering support to the first-generation entrepreneurs. In addition, the NEDFi also performs the role of hand-holding and capacity building, he said.

FIRST MEETING OF JAPAN-INDIA COORDINATION FORUM (JICF) FOR DEVELOPMENT OF NORTH-EASTERN REGION

The first meeting of the Japan-India Coordination Forum (JICF) for Development of North-Eastern Region was held recently. Secretary, Ministry of Development of North-Eastern Region (DoNER), Shri Naveen Verma led the Indian side while the Japanese delegation was led by the Japanese Ambassador to India, Mr. Kenji Hiramatsu. The Japanese delegation included Mr. Kenko Sone, Minister, Economic Affairs, Embassy of Japan, besides representatives from the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), Japan External Trade Organization (JETRO), Japan National Tourism Organization (JNTO) and Japan Foundation.

Priority areas of cooperation identified by Indian side including Connectivity and Road Network Development, especially inter-State roads and major district roads; Disaster Management; Food Processing; Organic Farming and Tourism were discussed in the meeting.

Secretary, DoNER, Shri Verma said regular meetings of the Forum would not only enhance Assistance by JICA but also promote B2B and people to people contacts.

Publications Division's Participation at the 23rd Delhi Book Fair, 2017

Publications Division participated in the 23rd Delhi Book Fair, 2017 held at Pragati Maidan in New Delhi from August 26 to September 3, 2017, organized by Indian Trade Promotion Organization in association with Federation of Indian Publishers (FIP). The theme of the fair was "Padhe Bharat, Badhe Bharat" - "India Reads, India Grows". About 130 publishers took part in this book fair.

The book fair provided an opportunity to showcase Publications Division's books, e-books and magazines in Hindi, English and Regional languages to a large number of people, from children to senior citizens.



Publications Division Book Stall at the 23rd Delhi Book Fair, 2017 at Pragati Maidan, New Delhi.

The special segment of books on Freedom Struggle "Azaadi ki Kahani, Kitabon ki Zubani" which was created to commemorate of 75 years of Quit India movement, and completion of 70th year of Indian Independence were the major attractions of the Publications Division's stall which had people taking keen interest. Some noteworthy titles included 'Who's Who of Indian Martyrs, (Life Sketches of Unsung Heroes), 'From Raj to Swaraj', 'Bharat mein Angrezi Raj', 'Bharatiya Swatantrata Andolan ka Itihas', 'History of the Freedom Movement in India', 'India: Before and After the Mutiny', '1857: The Uprising', 'Remember us once in a while'. DPD also displayed 100 volume set of the monumental 'Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi', besides other important titles on Gandhiji like 'Mahatma' (in 8 volumes), 'Gandhi in Champaran', 'Romain Rolland and Gandhi-Correspondence', 'Satyagraha'. Various other titles from different genres like India's rich and diverse cultural heritage, biographies

of freedom fighters, national leaders, history, art and culture, land and people, other subjects of contemporary relevance and children's books in Hindi, English and the regional languages were also displayed. An e-kiosk was also put up at the stall for the visitors to have a look at Publications Division's digital library, having over 1000 digitized titles.



Visitors browsing through books at the Publications Division's stall.

Hon'ble Minister of State for Culture, Dr Mahesh Sharma,

Secretary DoPT, Shri Ajay Mittal, Chairman, IGNC, Shri Ram Bahadur Rai, Member Secretary, IGNC, Shri Sachidanand Joshi also visited Publications Division's stall besides several senior officers of government, writers and publishers.

Publications Division had a record sale of Rs.15.37 lakhs during the Book Fair through its various books and journals. Last year, the sale was to the tune of Rs. 10 lakh. This time, the Publications Division also installed mPOS machines to facilitate cash less transactions. Nearly 22 per cent of the total sales were done through cashless transactions.

Two Book Release events were also organized on August 26 and August 31, 2017 during which, a total of 17 titles on varied topics were released. The titles ranged from biography of the singer MannaDey, History of Indian Freedom Movement by noted Historian Tarachand , to Indian Costumes. Four volumes of 'Sanskrit Sahitya Ratnawali' which were co-published with Sasta Sahitya Mandal were also released.

A mobile app 'Saluting the Patriots' was also launched to provide short and inspiring narratives about India's glorious history of freedom struggle. This in-house app is bilingual.



Publications Division's official receiving the award for "Excellence in Book Production" from Hon'ble Minister of State for Culture and Tourism Dr Mahesh Sharma.

The Federation of Indian Publishers gives awards on excellence in book production every year in various categories during the Delhi Book Fair. This year, Publications Division bagged a total of

11 Awards and two Certificates of Merit for *Excellence in Book Production* in various categories in Hindi, English and Regional languages. The Hon'ble Minister of State for Culture and Tourism, Dr. Mahesh Sharma gave away the awards on August 31, 2017.



Publications Division officials receiving Gold Trophy for Excellence in Display by ITPO.

in-house artists. The award was given away by the Executive Director, ITPO at an award distribution ceremony held on September 3, 2017.

Publications Division's display in 23rd Delhi Book Fair was also awarded with *Gold Trophy for Excellence in Display* in Regional Languages, the design of which was prepared by

The Bullet Train Journey Begins in India

The Prime Minister of India and Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe jointly laid the foundation stone for India's first high speed rail project between Mumbai and Ahmedabad on 14th September 2017 in Ahmedabad. Speaking on the occasion, the Prime Minister spoke of the high ambition and willpower of "New India." He congratulated the people of India on the occasion, and said that the bullet train project will provide speed and progress, and deliver results quickly.

This Mumbai – Ahmedabad High Speed Rail (MAHSR) project (popularly known as the Ahmedabad-Mumbai bullet train) is a visionary project which will herald a new era of safety, speed and service for the people and help Indian Railways become an international leader in scale, speed and skill.

Low cost of the project

Major portions of large scale infrastructure projects are financed by debt, and the cost of debt is a significant portion of the total costs. As a part of cooperation agreement between India and Japan, Government of Japan will provide a soft loan of about Rs. 88,000 crore at miniscule interest rate of 0.1 per cent. The repayment period of the loan is 50 years. Repayment of loan is to begin after 15 years of receiving the loan, making it practically free since, this loan interest works out to roughly Rs. 7-8 crore per month

Generally, any such loan even from World Bank or such other agencies costs about 5-7 per cent with a repayment period of 25-35 years, thus India is getting loan for the High-Speed Rail Project at almost zero cost without putting any strain on existing financial resources available with the country, as more than 80 per cent of the project cost is being funded by Government of Japan. It is for the first time in the history of the country that an infrastructure project is being funded on such favourable terms.

Make in India

One of the prime objectives of the project is "Make in India", which is to be realized before commissioning of the project. As per the agreement between Governments, the MAHSR Project has "Make in India" & "Transfer of technology" objectives. Under the guidance of task force (DIPP and Japan External Trade Organisation -JETRO), action is being taken as per accepted concept paper guidelines. Four sub-groups with representatives from Indian industry, Japanese industry, DIPP, NHRCL and JETRO to identify potential items and sub-systems for make in India. Active interactions are already taking place between the industries of India and Japan. It is expected that many joint ventures will be formed in the time to come to take up manufacturing of various components including rolling stock. This will not only benefit the Indian Industry with new technology but will also create several job opportunities within the country. The Make in India objective will also ensure that most of the amount invested in this project would be spent and utilized within India.

The construction sector in India will also get a big boost not only in terms of investment but also with respect to new technology and work culture. This project is likely to generate employment for about 20,000 workers during the construction phase, who will be trained specially to take up construction of such projects in India. Some of the new areas where construction skills would be developed are ballast-less track, under sea tunnel etc. A dedicated High Speed Rail Training Institute is being developed at Vadodara. This institute will be fully equipped with equipment and facilities such as simulator etc. as are existing in the training institute at Japan. This institute will be functional by the end of 2020. The facilities at this institute will be utilized to train about 4,000 staff in next three years, who will then be utilised for operation and maintenance ensuring that this work is through skilled people in India rather than foreign dependent. They will also serve as a backbone for future development of other High Speed Corridors in India. In addition, 300 young officials of Indian Railways are being trained in Japan to give them exposure in high Speed Track Technology. Keeping in view the long-term plan for human resource development, Government of Japan has also offered 20 seats per year for Master's course from the universities of Japan, for serving Indian Railway officials. This programme is fully funded by Government of Japan.

Cutting edge versus catch up technology

Unlike other areas, for high speed, country is getting a cutting-edge technology in totality. The Shinkansen Technology is known for its reliability and safety and is proven for more than 50 years. The train delay record of Shinkansen is less than a minute with zero fatality.