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Nordic Summit: Everyone
wants to be friend with India

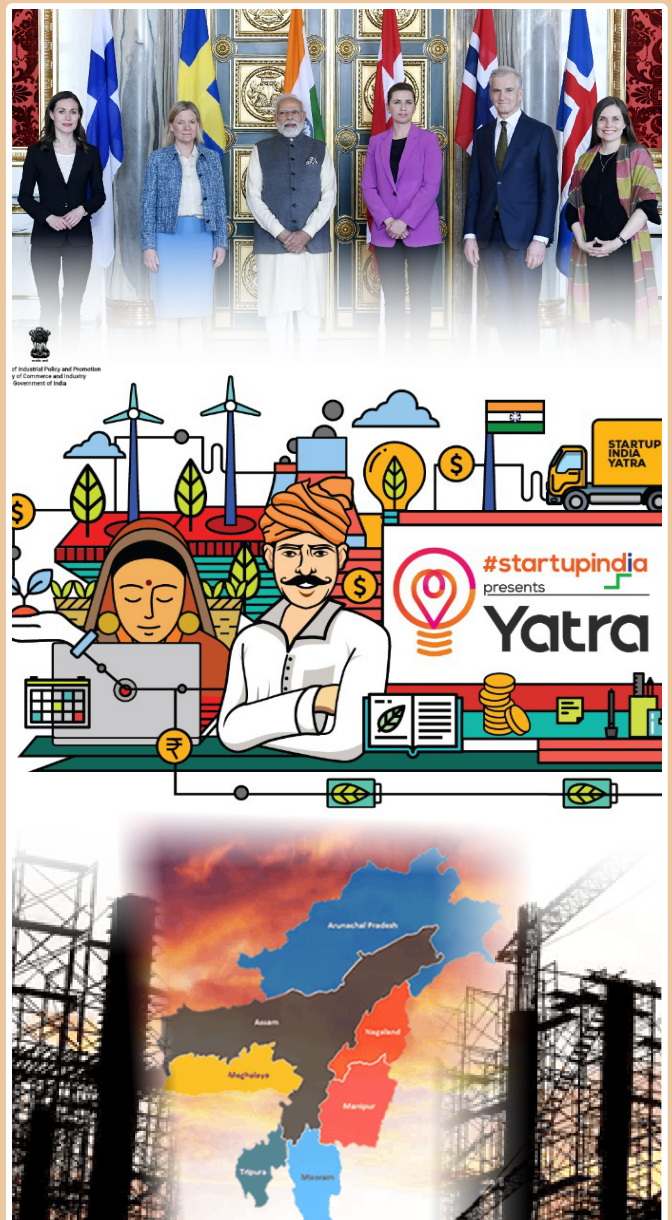
Uttam Kumar Sinha

India's Transformational
Reforms Under Modi
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Startup Ecosystem
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Northeast India & Its Rapid
Revolutionary Transformation

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पद्म पुरस्कारों को आम आदमी से
जोड़ने में कामयाब रही मोदी सरकार
रमेश कुमार दुबे





**The
Nationalist**

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CONTENT

EDITORIAL

- ✱ Dissolution of Entitled Narrative
- *Dr. Anirban Ganguly*

COVER STORY

- ✱ Nordic Summit: Everyone wants to be friend with India - **Uttam Kumar Sinha**

POLICY NOTE

- ✱ India's Transformational Reforms Under Modi Government and How it Helped Build a Thriving Startup Ecosystem - **Pathikrit Payne**

POLICY OPINION

- ✱ Northeast India & Its Rapid Revolutionary Transformation - **Mita Nath Bora**

POLICY ANALYSIS

- ✱ पद्म पुरस्कारों को आम आदमी से जोड़ने में कामयाब रही मोदी सरकार
- **रमेश कुमार दुबे**

POLICY ROUNDUP

- ✱ यूरोप में वसुधैव कुटुम्बकम् - डॉ दिलीप अग्निहोत्री
- ✱ मोदी सरकार की गरीब कल्याण योजनाओं से कम हो रही गरीबी - पीयूष द्विवेदी

EVENT@SPMRF

- ✱ Discussion on book "SIYASAT KA SABAK" (Jogendra Nath Mandal) on 26 March 2022
- ✱ Discussion on "PM Narendra Modi's address on Amrit Kaal Mandate" on 13 March 2022
- ✱ Discussion on "Institutionalised Violence in West Bengal: Diagnosis & Cure" at Banaras Hindu University (BHU), Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh on 03 March 2022



Dr. Anirban Ganguly

Dissolution of Entitled Narrative

which all revolutionary elements abroad revolved.”

The British government of India had then noted that Shyamji's political views were “avowedly very extreme and anti-British” and “his influence over those in India who held similar views was very considerable.” An exasperated HH Risley, then Home Secretary, exclaimed that the “operations of the professional sedition-mongers were far more widespread, far better organised and far more advanced than those of the professional criminals” and that “after the success of the propaganda of Shyamji the range of activities of the Indian revolutionaries encompassed ‘England, America and Paris’...” Shyamji also succeeded in enlisting the sympathies and support of the Irish and Egyptian nationalists in his struggle against the British and was “the first of the most prominent Indian leaders to publicly demand absolute independence” and to declare “that as nothing short of this ideal could be the political aim of a nation, especially of India, she could never come to her own, never win political freedom without embarking on a relentless war, having recourse to force.”

Early in January 1905”, wrote historian AC Bose, in his opus ‘Indian Revolutionaries Abroad’, “a journal with a rather unfamiliar name, ‘The Indian Sociologist’ made its first appearance in London. Few Londoners would have taken any notice of it, but to its editor and publisher Shyamji Krishnavarma and his associates it meant the beginning of a fresh campaign for India's independence.” A perusal of Krishnavarma's writings in ‘The Indian Sociologist’ reveals his core political stance which was that “if the use of force appeared to be the only effective means of achieving freedom it would be neither immoral nor repugnant to him”.

It was through this journal, subtitled ‘An organ of freedom and political, social and religious’, argues historian TS Sareen, that Shyamji “pleaded for full self-government for India which differed from the Congress aim of securing more seats in the Councils and more posts in Government service.” Sareen describes how, in a span of two years, Shyamji “succeeded not only in initiating a powerful anti-British movement abroad, but also established close links with extremists in India” and “became a pivot around

Yet for over 50 years after independence, those who led India and passed themselves off as the sole inheritors of the legacy of her freedom struggle, forgot all about the formidable Krishnavarma's last wish of seeing his ashes interred in a free India. That wish lay unfilled, unattended for over five decades until 2003, when Narendra Modi, then in his second year as Chief Minister of Gujarat, made an epic effort to repatriate the revolutionary's ashes. Krishnavarma's ashes were taken around across Gujarat, it was a befitting home-coming for one, who had popularised and embedded the aspiration for India's freedom in some of the leading minds and movement in the West and had imparted to India's struggle for freedom intellectual heft and political theory.

Modi did not rest with simply repatriating Krishnavarma's ashes, a grand memorial was planned, designed and erected in Krishnavarma's ancestral village in Mandvi, Kutch. In December 2010, Narendra Modi inaugurated the grand memorial to Krishnavarma. In a sense, this was the first landmark in giving India's revolutionary nationalists their due, in recognising their undeterred contribution to achieving independence and to their vision of a free India. The Shyamji Krishnavarma Memorial – Kranti Teerth – and the whole effort to repatriate his ashes,

became a model, a pointer on how the narrative of India's freedom struggle ought to be recalibrated, revisited and restated. That effort by Narendra Modi as Chief Minister of Gujarat, assumes greater significance today, when India is commemorating the 75th anniversary of independence. If Gujarat was Modi's primary field of experimenting with creative governance, straddling various fields and dimensions, then the Shyamji Krishnavarma memorial and repatriation effort was a deeply significant one. It indicated his vision and belief in how omitted, marginalised and forgotten episodes and personalities, who have contributed to the creation of the India narrative, ought to be reinstated in the India story and India dream that he was shaping in those early years in office.

The unbiased scholars and history aficionados who have followed Prime Minister Narendra Modi's trajectory of achievements would have noted his interest in preserving the various dimensions, especially the forgotten or marginalised ones, of our freedom movement and of the overall Indian narrative, both civilisational and modern. The iconic statue dedicated to Sardar Patel, the relaying and consecration of the Samadhi of Adi Shankaracharya, the epochally creative face-lift and creation of the Kashi Vishwanath Corridor, the National Salt Satyagraha Monument at Dandi, the renovated Jallianwala Bagh Memorial, the Gandhi Museum at the Alfred High School in Rajkot, the Biplabi Bharat Gallery in Kolkata dedicated to revolutionary nationalists and forgotten freedom fighters, the INA Museum in the Red Fort and the latest, Pradhan Mantri Sangrahalaya (Prime Minister's Museum), in Delhi dedicated to all Prime Ministers of India and to their achievements are in line with that core fundamental interest and imagination that Modi nursed for restating the essence and truth of India's journey for independence and from independence.

Those who have visited the Salt Satyagraha monument years ago, for instance, can now discern the difference. A nondescript, perfunctory memorial that meekly stood out amidst that historic landscape has now been converted into an inspiring, aesthetically moving, technology friendly, futuristic and organically artistic monument with space for

recreation and reflection. What strikes one is also how the names of each of those Satyagrahis who had marched with the Mahatma to Dandi has also been literally carved in stone for posterity, never before was this done in this manner.

The latest addition to this series of narrative recalibrating edifices, the Pradhan Mantri Sangrahalaya – its appealing tech-savvy and friendly set up, its inviting, creative and futuristic design, its narrative, its amalgamation of the past as well as of the future which will very spontaneously attract and captivate the interests of the masses – should also be seen and understood under this rubric. Narendra Modi is the only Prime Minister who has displayed the magnanimity and sagaciousness of speaking of the contribution of all Prime Ministers since independence. He has referred to this from the ramparts of the Red Fort. The usual practice was to obliterate the names of other Prime Ministers, that is, all those who were not products of the Congress dynasty. At the inauguration of the Prime Ministers' Museum PM Modi referred, once again, to how “each government formed in independent India has contributed in taking the country to the height it is at today.” He also indicated one of the core messages of the museum, which was to radiate confidence among the youth of the “country that even a person born into an ordinary family can reach the highest position in the democratic system of India.”

In fact, each of these museums, monuments, commemorative spots and centres that have come up or have been redone since 2014, possess and broadcast fundamental messages. In the making of a new India, in the shaping of India's Swaraj towards its centenary, it is essential that lasting tribute is paid to all those who have fundamentally altered or shaped India's trajectory towards freedom and beyond it. That tribute and commemoration is now breaking out of the confines of one family and the control of its committed ideologues and chroniclers.

The Prime Ministers' Museum, like so many of PM Modi's such initiatives, has also broken, once for all, the sense of entitlement that infected and drove the shaping of the narrative of post-independent India's history. That is its principal symbolism.

Nordic Summit: Everyone wants to be friend with India



Uttam Kumar Sinha

P rime Minister Narendra Modi attended the 2nd India-Nordic Summit along with Prime Ministers Mette Frederiksen of Denmark, Katrín Jakobsdóttir of Iceland, Jonas Gahr Støre of Norway, Magdalena Andersson of Sweden, and Sanna Marin of Finland. Interestingly, four of the five heads of states were women who apart from their progressive politics and gender oriented policies have worked tirelessly on mobilising actions on climate change.

What seems to have emerged since 2018, when the first India-Nordic Summit took place in Stockholm, is an emergence of committed climate leaders with solution-driven and problem-solving approaches, whether it is the priority of achieving SDGs by 2030 or renewable energy and clean technology. These leaders acknowledge the universal nature of climate change and global efforts and responsibilities in keeping temperatures below 1.5 degrees Celsius. The principal aim of such leadership is not only to advance political cooperation but to expand economic relations and green growth.

India is only the second country after the US to have a summit-level meeting with the five Nordic countries. It proves the growing

salience of India and its expanding footprint in global affairs. In more practical terms, India's IT-services companies like Tech Mahindra, Wipro, HCL Technologies and Infosys have made sizeable presence in the Nordic region. An increasingly 'skilled and trained' India with high quality workforce finds in the Nordic countries a destination of aspiration and acceptance. Moreover, the Nordic countries rank among the most business-friendly nations in the world. The World Happiness Report consistently puts the five Nordic countries in the top ten annual ranking. Clearly, the Nordics are getting it right when it comes to the level of average life evaluations.

Over the years there has been an upward swing in the relations between India and the Nordic countries or what can be described as a principle and pragmatic convergence. With Denmark at a bilateral level there is the 'green strategic partnership'. A 'joint action plan' exists with Sweden. Norway has a '2030 strategic vision' with India, while with Finland there is cooperation on post-pandemic recovery and with Iceland emphasis has been put on geothermal energy. The total bilateral trade and services between India and the Nordic Countries is currently USD 13 billion.

The summit while taking stock of the progress since 2018 significantly focused on multilateral cooperation in post-pandemic economic recovery, climate change, sustainable development, innovation, digitalization, and green and clean growth. Not limiting the scope, the leaders also drew

attention to the global security and discussed cooperation in maritime sector with an emphasis on sustainable ocean management and cooperation in the Arctic region. Seizing the opportunity and outlining the value of cooperation, Prime Minister Modi invited Nordic companies for investing in the Blue Economy sector, especially in India's Sagarmala project which aims to promote industrial port-led development. A total of 14 coastal economic zones are planned.

Modi soon after the meeting tweeted, "The India-Nordic Summit will go a long way in boosting India's ties with the region. Together, there is much that our nations can achieve and contribute to global prosperity and sustainable development." The following day, a Denmark leading newspaper Politiken ran a headline, Hele verden vil være venner med Indien (Everyone wants to be friend with India).

Nordics exceptionalism and India's activism

The Nordic region has been a zone of peace and stability with a rich tradition in conflict resolution. Peace trademark distinctly outlines the Nordic countries. Collectively the Nordics have established a vision to make the region the world's most sustainable and integrated by 2030. In terms of economic development, innovation and green solutions, the Nordics performance have been well above the EU average. Intra-regional trade and economic integration has been high. While the GDP of the Nordics declined due to pandemic situation in 2020, it is expected to grow again in 2021-2022 between three to four percent. South Asian countries need to learn from the Nordics experience on economic integration. Only 5 percent of South Asia trade is within the

India is only the second country after the US to have a summit-level meeting with the five Nordic countries. It proves the growing salience of India and its expanding footprint in global affairs. In more practical terms, India's IT-services companies like Tech Mahindra, Wipro, HCL Technologies and Infosys have made sizeable presence in the Nordic region.

region and consequently remains the least integrated region in the world. It has, however, the potential to increase by an estimated USD 44 billion, which would mean, according to some calculation, national income can increase by as much as 7.6 percent for India and 16.6 percent for Bangladesh.

Like the Nordics, India too solidly believes in peace and negotiations. Modi's leadership in framing new climate mitigation and adaptation mechanisms has a global appreciation, for example, setting up the International Solar Alliance (ISA). Such leadership is not only an expression of India's standing to fight climate change through cost-effective renewable energy but equally a positioning of its global power status that is benign, rule-based and creates opportunities for wider diplomatic engagement on crucial development issues. Similarly, India has taken a strong lead in reaffirming its commitment to the cause of Disaster Risk Reduction.

The Nordic countries have a long tradition in setting ambitious climate actions and consider energy and climate policy together when deciding socio-economic objectives. Looking ahead, Norway has set 2030 to be carbon neutral or net-zero emission; Finland 2035; Iceland 2040; Sweden 2045; and

Denmark 2050. India would achieve carbon neutrality by 2070. Again India's renewable energy path catches attention. It aims to attain 175 GW by 2022 – 100 GW from solar, 60 GW from wind, 10 GW from biomass and 5 GW from hydro. By 2030 India hopes to achieve 500 MW. The principal objective is to advance economic development by using sustainable energy and at the same time ensuring access to affordable and reliable energy for its people.

As part of its commitment to the Paris Climate Agreement (2015), India plans to reduce its carbon emission intensity (emission per unit of GDP) by 33-35 per cent from 2005 levels over the next 15 years. Simultaneously it has set a target of producing 40 per cent of its installed electricity capacity from non-fossil fuels by 2030. The renewable energy targets will play a significant role in the energy transition from coal-based power generation. Resultantly, India has positioned itself as the foremost country offering favourable renewable and clean energy markets.

Arctic: A new front of cooperation

The Arctic region will add a new thrust to the strategic partnership with Nordic countries. All the Nordic countries are members of the Arctic Council along with Russia, Canada and the US. In March 2022, India released its Arctic Policy with the tagline 'Building a Partnership for Sustainable Development'. The policy has six pillars:

- Strengthening India's scientific research and cooperation;
- Climate and environmental protection;
- Economic and human development, transportation and connectivity;
- Governance and international

cooperation;

- National capacity building in the Arctic region

Overall the policy will help formulate implications of climate change and ice melting (Arctic is warming three times faster than the rest of the world) on India's economic, military, and strategic interests related to global shipping routes, energy security, and exploitation of mineral wealth. But more specifically mitigating the impact of climate change on the agro-climatic conditions of India, whose food security depends significantly on ecosystem stability.

A new Arctic partnership with the Nordic countries will need to have both a scientific-climate emphasis and an economic and commercial approach. For example, India is the third-largest energy-consuming country in the world, the third-largest oil importer (83 per cent) and the fourth-largest importer of gas. India's gas mix in the energy basket amounts to only 6 per cent, which is among the lowest in the world. This is expected to increase to 15 per cent by 2030. The Arctic region can, therefore, potentially address India's energy security needs.

What hitherto remained an uncharted territory; the Nordic-India cooperation is poised to chart a new political and economic path. The Nordic states together have an economy of USD 1.6 trillion. India is now the third largest global economy and the fastest growing major economy. It makes eminent sense to build on what has been achieved and determine solidly the future outcomes.

(The author works at the Manohar Parrikar Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses, New Delhi)

India's Transformational Reforms Under Modi Government and How it Helped Build a Thriving Startup Ecosystem



Pathikrit Payne

First a rejoinder. In spite of major challenges across the world, including a devastating war between Russia and Ukraine, a cataclysmic pandemic situation that rocked the world and massively disrupted global supply chains, in spite of major challenges along the northern borders and collapsing economies in the neighborhood, India under Prime Minister Modi not only just remained resilient but emerged stronger.

Having administered more than 1.8 billion covid vaccines to eligible Indian population and providing additional free rations to more than 80 crore people for more than a year, India not only emerged out of the covid pandemic as a more resilient nation, but broke its own past records of exports for the financial year ended 2021-22. It clocked a record \$420 billion of merchandise export and around \$250 billion of services export. In total, India's export for the FY-2021-22 was \$670 billion. Also, in the calendar year of 2021, India received \$ 74 billion of FDI.

A Special Round of Applause for India's Startups

While Indian industry and services sector deserve major credit for India's iconic economic turnaround, a special round of applause has to be there for India's startup ecosystem which scripted history in many ways including the fact that not only India's start-ups survived the onslaught of Covid related challenges and market disruptions but also emerged stronger with a firm footing. At every step India's startups played a critical role through their nimble footed innovations in logistics, supply chain and medical applications, even during the peak of covid pandemic.

Interestingly, even during the peak of Covid second wave that battered the world, Indian startups mopped up a record \$24.1 billion in series fundings as per NASSCOM, a vindication of the resilience of India's startup ecosystem and the level of confidence that global venture funds have in them.

Post economic liberalization of 1991, India found an unprecedented realm of entrepreneurial success in the IT sector that catapulted India's contribution to IT industry from nowhere to a more than \$200 billion sector by FY 2021-22. India's IT sector's iconic rise did inspire a generation of young Indians to plunge into the space of entrepreneurship. Some did succeed but many felt the need for institutional support from the state that India still lacked. While Industry did its part magnificently in terms of providing

The impact of Startup India Initiative can be gauged from the fact that India now has more than 60,000 startups recognized by Government of India of which a whopping 14,000 startups were recognized in 2021-22 alone, up from a mere 733 in 2016-17. Interestingly, up till March 2022, India has logged 94 unicorns, meaning startups with more than a billion-dollar valuation, a vindication of India's thriving startup ecosystem and its ability to churn out success stories.

handholding, and creating incubation centres, the initiatives from the state especially in terms of recognizing the importance of start-ups and their potential contribution to the economy was yet to be formalized.

How Startup India Initiative of Modi Government Made a Difference

It was only in 2016 that Prime Minister Modi took the novel initiative through the setting up of Startup India Initiative. As the Startup India website explains,

Startup India is a flagship initiative of the Government of India, intended to build a strong eco-system for nurturing innovation and Startups in the country that will drive sustainable economic growth and generate large scale employment opportunities. The Government through this initiative aims to empower Startups to grow through innovation and design

What makes Startup India campaign stand out is that it not only focuses on IT sector related ventures but also encompasses in its endeavors

the entire gamut of entrepreneurial activities happening across sectors including agriculture, manufacturing, social sector, healthcare and education to name a few.

Also, instead of restricting itself into tier-1 cities, Startup India initiative spread its wings to recognize and handhold ventures across tier-2 and tier-3 cities of India as well as sub-urban and rural parts of India.

In fact, Startup India is not just another campaign or a mere portal for registration of startups. It is much more than that. From self-certification based regulatory compliance, creation of single point of contact for the startup ecosystem, creating an enabling environment for startups to become financially viable, creation of a lifecycle based assistance and mentoring architecture to enable the startups obtain feasibility testing, business structuring advisory, enhancement of marketing skills, technology commercialization and management evaluation, from mobile application based interactive architecture for communication with Government and Regulatory Institutions for enabling on-the-go accessibility for registration, compliance updation, collaboration with other startup ecosystem partners, to provision of legal support and low cost patent examination architecture, it addressed some of the teething problems that startups often faced in India.

Also, relaxing of norms for enhanced procurement by public enterprises and institutions from startups, to creating an enabling environment for seamless exit of startups, developing a fund of funds for startup funding, developing credit guarantee funds for startups, to provision of tax exemption on startups both on profits and capital gains, to tax exemptions on investments above Fair Market Value (FMV), went a long way in terms of making the Indian

startup ecosystem much more appealing for the entrepreneurs and investors.

Acknowledging the Importance of Indian Startups in India's Quest to become a \$10 trillion Economy.

The most important aspect of what has been accomplished by Modi Government for India's startup ecosystem has been its mainstreaming and through it, the acknowledgement that if India has to become a \$10 trillion economy by 2032, then the Indian startups would have a major role to play in it in terms of developing innovative solutions in the realm of cost-effective technology and last mile delivery of goods and services, in addition to creating jobs and economic value for the country. Startups are no more perceived by authorities as part time indulgence of young generation but as serious business propositions that can create the next generation of iconic business enterprises for India.

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success stories.

One important aspect of acknowledging the importance of startups and creating an institutional ecosystem for them to evolve and eventually flourish, is that it is in sync with the stated policy of Prime Minister Narendra Modi of maximum governance and minimum government. Modi Government has also been successful in shedding the archetypal socialistic rhetoric made prevalent since the Nehruvian era that it is the job of the Government to create jobs, which is absolutely a fake notion bound to fail time and again. Beyond a point, governments cannot create jobs. Productive jobs can only be created by commercially thriving business organizations. If more jobs are to be created then more organizations are needed, and an enabling environment is to be created where employees of today aspire to be employers of tomorrow. If more jobs are to be created then seeds of entrepreneurship has to be sowed among students to aspire to become job providers rather than mere job seekers.

Startup Success Stories No More Limited to IT Sector Alone

In fact, one major fundamental change that can be witnessed over the last half a decade is that of a large number of startups that have emerged in India in diversified sectors beyond the IT sector. Even though most of such startups do use IT applications as an enabling medium, its spread across the spectrum of healthcare products, agrotech, edtech, microfinance, electric vehicle, defence product manufacturing, and cosmetics, to name a few, is an extremely welcome development.

The Electric Vehicle Push

Interestingly Modi Government's push for electric vehicle has given shape to a large number of Indian startups ready with their

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products and confident to counter competition even from established automobile companies in the Indian market.

The Impact of the Liberalised Drone Policy

In the same league, India's liberalised drone policy under Drone Rules 2021, is also paving way for a major transformation, both in the realm of drone manufacturing and drone-based service delivery in India, both of which are showing immense potential in terms of harnessing the capabilities of young Indians to develop applications as well as products.

From last mile delivery of goods to mining survey, from spraying of fertilizers in agriculture fields, to surveillance activities by law enforcement agencies, from fast-track emergency response to geospatial mapping, from city-based revenue surveys and construction auditing, to film production, from defence applications to unmanned combat, India's drone sector is witnessing the rise of a large number of startups that have the potential of transforming India's new age manufacturing as well as service delivery landscape.

Space Sector Liberalization Creating a New Generation of Space Startups

Another major policy reform by Modi

Government that is opening up considerable opportunities for India's startup sector is that of the liberalization of the space sector. From development of satellites to launch vehicles to development of space grade materials, the space sector liberalization may witness same kind of revolutionary innovations that India's IT sector witnessed. Already there are some promising startups in the space sector that have been creating ripples.

That day may not be far when India's startups in conjunction with established private sector majors would be building India's new generation of micro and mini satellites as well as develop own satellite launching vehicles while ISRO would focus on deep space explorations and development of space stations.

The Geospatial Revolution

In February 2021, Modi Government also allowed private sector to use India's geospatial data and services, which has far reaching positive impacts in terms of creating customized data for infrastructure projects, weather forecasting for renewable energy companies, as well as charting most authentic GIS solutions for ecommerce and logistics companies. Needless this is also creating a new generation of startups ready to unleash India's geospatial potential.

The Defence Startups- Startups Making India Atmanirbhar

This apart, one major area where policies of Modi Government are bringing in transformational change so far as involving India's private sector and proliferation of technology-based startups are concerned, is the Atmanirbhar Bharat initiative in the sphere of defence procurement in India.

The policy of Modi Government to manufacture the entire spectrum of defence

products and sub-systems in India as well as approval of the central government scheme to promote innovation in defence through Innovation for Defence Excellence (iDEX) can potentially be a game changer.

Also, some very critical defence deals in the realm of drones have been given to Indian startups by Ministry of Defence, which is a very positive sign for the sector as a whole.

Startup Ecosystem as a Cross Border Outreach Tool

Given India's success story under Modi Government in terms of creating a thriving startup ecosystem and the manner in which India's private sector along with Government agencies have played a stellar role in providing the incubation system and handholding throughout the startup evolution stage to several such enterprises, India with its experience, and depth of its industrial and services sector, can certainly extend an institutional helping hand to budding entrepreneurs of neighboring states like Bangladesh, Sri Lanka or Nepal.

Take the example of Bangladesh. Bangladesh over the years has become known as one of the best performing emerging economies of the world. With a GDP of around \$400 billion, Bangladesh has shown how a nation can pull itself up from destitution to prosperity with the help of its industrious people and innovative entrepreneurs. It would thus not be surprising that the youth of Bangladesh too have similar entrepreneurial quest for building start-ups and get their names imprinted in the global start-up arena.

While India and Bangladesh share a considerable number of things including common cultural heritage and civilizational connect, there is immense potential for India to collaborate with Bangladesh in the start-

up sphere. India's journey and experience in building the startup ecosystem with the help of academic institutions, industry and venture funds, can surely help Bangladesh in developing similar ecosystem and incubation centres in some of its best-known institutions, which can then act as catalysts to trigger a startup revolution in Bangladesh as well.

Integrating the start-up ecosystem of India and neighboring friendly countries like Bangladesh can pave way for major economic opportunities that can be created in both the countries and can always help in developing South Asia as the world's most successful startup hub. Just as India has deep connects with US due to the shared future that India and US have in the realm of startups, India can also forge strong ties with Bangladesh by institutionalizing some amount of funding and assistance in setting up of incubation centres in some of the best-known technological institutions of Bangladesh.

There is immense potential for India to institutionalize a mechanism to fund at least a few Bangladeshi start-ups every year as well as assist in setting up the startup accelerator centres in Bangladesh.

If this model becomes successful, India can truly become a South Asian magnet to attract brightest minds with ideas to harness their potential here. That would go a long way in truly making India a global economic hub. If eventually that happens someday in the future, much of the credit would go to not just India's intrinsic entrepreneurial zeal, the success of its enterprise but also the role of Modi Government in mainstreaming startups and giving them the importance, they truly deserved for long.

(Pathikrit Payne is a New Delhi based geopolitical analyst. Views expressed are his own)

Northeast India & Its Rapid Revolutionary Transformation



Mita Nath Bora

Why northeast India is a huge focus area of the Modi Govt and how BJP is transforming northeast..from improving connectivity, building roads, bridges, infrastructure to hospital, higher institutions of learning and more.

NorthEast which meant “Non- Existent” for almost all ruling parties since independence, having faced a step-motherly treatment, is surprisingly a priority for the current ruling dispensation, the BJP government. This government defines NorthEast (NE) as the “New Engine”, the devINE new engine of India, and has prioritised its focus towards investing, developing and advancing northeast, it to set it at par with the rest of the country.

Considering how NE has always been neglected in the past, this is indeed a blessed change, paving the way for a revolutionary transformation of the region that will definitely have its multiplier ripple effect and play a big role on how India gets shaped- from relations to revenue generation. As NE is the one and only link to all Southeast and East Asia countries it serves as a natural bridge, a gateway for connectivity. It not only has an advantageous strategic location in terms of economic significance, trade and tourism potential, but also opens up an array of newer scope in multiple areas, like education and medical tourism. Significantly,

NE also has an ancient cultural connect. The region has similarity in traditional indigenous enterprises, geographical landscape, ethnicity and lifestyle with many of these SE Asian countries and thus, opens a new horizon of exploring different relationships. The development of NE is therefore significant not only for business but also for bonding. The more developed this region the better is India’s reach and relation with the SE Asia. And in addition, also serves to balance the aggressive expansionist policy of China to control the region via loans and debt that ultimately poses a threat to the safety, security and independence of many of these countries.

With a double engine BJP government, both at the centre and in many NE states, focus on NE, what we are witnessing is revolutionary transformation of the region and so it is not far that the Act East Policy will finally see the light at the other end of the tunnel. Under the rightly named PM-devINE (development initiative for NE), investment for speedy development of the NE has seen the Modi government raising the budget allocation every year, this year (2022-23) to Rs 77,540 crores from the (2014-15) budget of Rs 36,107 crores. In the last eight years, this government spent Rs 265766.67 crores in the NE region. The result, as we see, are one after another historic steps being taken.

The recent inauguration of 7 cancer hospitals on 28th April, 2022 in Dibrugarh, Kokrajhar, Barpeta, Darrang, Tezpur, Lakhimpur, and Jorhat district of Assam and the foundation laying of another 7 more cancer centres that will be established in Sivasagar, Dhubri, Tinsukia, Goalpara, Golaghat, Nagaon and Nalbari districts of Assam is a new

historic event. The foresightedness to address this issue that has long been neglected in spite of the fact that northeast has the highest cancer incidence rates and a continuous high percentage of patients travel to other parts of the country for treatment, enduring tremendous difficulties.

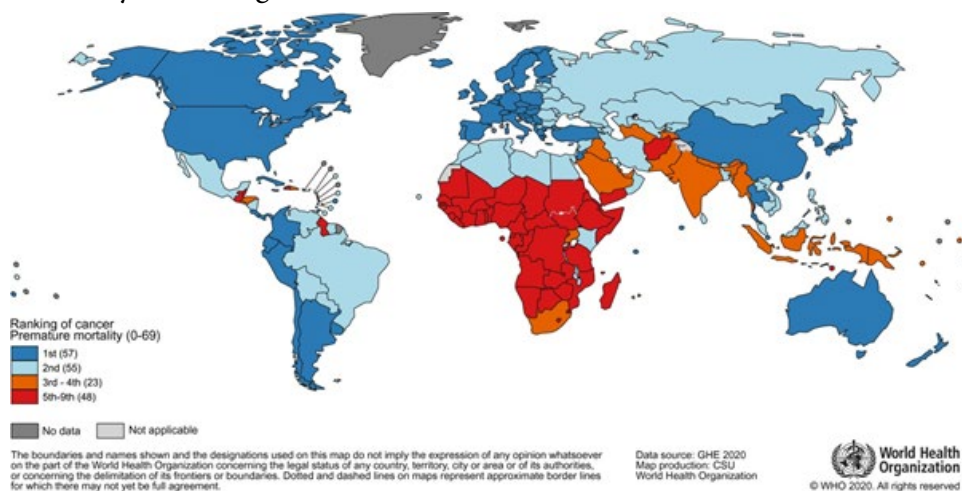
According to data released by the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR), NE has the highest incidence of cancer in India and the number of cancer cases is projected to increase in the region by 13.5% by 2025. The region is witnessing an alarming rise in the number of cancer patients and a corresponding high fatality rate in recent years. Cancer cases in Assam have also increased rapidly and around 32,949 people are affected with cancer every year. As the available infrastructure for cancer care is inadequate, patients are compelled to seek treatment outside the NE. For example, a good proportion of people from the region visit Mumbai's Tata Memorial Hospital (TMH) every year for diagnosis and treatment of cancer. Study shows that nearly 4% of the cancer cases detected in TMH are in patients from the NE. Travelling for medical treatment involves a burden of challenges, from huge cash requirement, supportive caregivers and their time, affecting work and roles at home, in many cases, loss of working days for the earning members of the family. The opening of cancer care centres in the region is not only a blessing to citizens that

shall help reduce many of the associated problems, but will also help our neighbouring countries, like Nepal, Bhutan, Myanmar, Bangladesh, etc. to quicker and easier access to NE for world class medical treatment at lesser expenses¹.

Apart from these, an AllMS at Changsari, Indian Agricultural Research Institute, Assam Campus at Gogamukh (Dhemaji) and a Multi-Modal Logistic Park at Jogighopa are on pipeline to be set up.

Another historic event for the entire Northeast was the first Janshatabdi express train connecting Manipur and Tripura via Assam that started its journey on 8th January 2022. During the same month (29th January 2022), for the first time in NE, a first leased Parcel Cargo Express Train (PCET) was commenced from Azara near Guwahati in Assam connecting to Vasco - da - Gama in Goa, covering a distance of 3358 km (one way) with loading/unloading facilities.

Similarly, the 2018 Advantage Assam summit was the first global investors' meet in the region that saw Bhutan's Prime Minister Tshering Tobgay, ambassadors and high commissioners of 16 countries being present. India's top corporates and industrialist from the Tata Group, Reliance Industries, Sun Pharma, Patanjali, ONGC, OIL, Spicejet, ITC Limited, etc. participated in the summit and 176 MoUs with 160 companies



amounting to ₹65,186 crore was signed. Prime Minister Narendra Modi attending this biggest-ever investment promotion and facilitation initiative stated that the region is at the heart of India's Act East policy.

For a region, which has suffered from a lack of connectivity and amenities for decades, the concoction of infrastructure projects and welfare under the BJP government in centre in the last 7+ years is significant and tangible, from thousands of kilometres of roads to big bridges, medical colleges, hospitals and other complexes.

If we talk of Assam, which has, like much of the NE, suffered from political, social discrimination and neglect since ages, today has India's longest rail-cum-road bridge, the Bogibeel bridge, which was inaugurated in 2018 by PM Modi, which though sanctioned in 1997-98 by the United Front government never saw the light of the day under any of the previous government. The bridge today is a prominent landmark and significant because it helps connect the southern bank of the Brahmaputra river in Dibrugarh to Silapathar in Dhemaji, bordering Arunachal Pradesh. Before that, the Dhola-Sadiya bridge across river Lohit, construction of which started in 2011 when the Congress was in power at both the Centre and state, never managed to happen but was ultimately speeded up and completed by the Modi government and was inaugurated in 2017.

This has been a big gift to the people of Assam as it helped reduce the commuting time for people on both banks of the river by at least eight hours. Close to 4,000 km of national highways have been constructed in the state. These highways include around over 21 two-lane projects. Under the State BJP government, about 1,000 wooden bridges were replaced by RCC bridges under schemes dedicated in the name of Mahabir Lachit and Bishwabir Chilarai, 26000 kilometers of roads

were black-topped, a total of 841 timber bridges have been sanctioned for conversion to RCC (reinforced cement concrete) of which around 475 have been completed.

Medical colleges and hospitals, education institutes and other big projects have been the party's focus. New universities have been set up exclusively for sports, culture and skill development. Assam Judicial Academy and National Law School has been constructed in Amingaon, there are new engineering colleges that have come up in different parts of the state, including Nirala and Karimganj.

Taking the negative perception of NE being land locked and a border state under enormous security threat that need not be developed, head on, the current BJP government since 2014 has been aggressively pushing for advancement of NE and overcoming all challenges. What we see today is NE coming up as a safe secure tourism hotspot, with promotion of indigenous culture, historical, religious sites, quality infrastructure and the imbibing of respect and harmony for the region.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi once said that unless the Northeast is developed, the whole country would not develop. And hence the story of NE's success will also define India's success.

(The Writer is a Researcher on Policy and Governance, Entrepreneurship and Livelihood Clusters of NE. She is also a member of the Assam Youth Commission. The views expressed are her own.)

i. Cancer is one of the most dreaded diseases in today's time. It ranks as a leading cause of death and is an important barrier to increasing life expectancy in every country of the world. According to the International Agency for Research on Cancer, worldwide, an estimated 19.3 million new cancer cases and almost 10.0 million cancer deaths occurred in 2020. The global cancer burden is expected to be 28.4 million cases in 2040, a 47% rise from 2020 and in order to control global cancer, efforts to build a sustainable infrastructure for the dissemination of cancer prevention measures and provision of cancer is critical and necessity of the time.

पद्म पुरस्कारों को आम आदमी से जोड़ने में कामयाब रही मोदी सरकार



रमेश कुमार दुबे

य स बैंक के सह संस्थापक राणा कपूर के आरोपों से एक बार फिर साबित हो गया कि “कांग्रेस का हाथ भ्रष्टाचार के साथ” का नारा केवल चुनावी जुमला नहीं है। उल्लेखनीय है कि राणा कपूर ने प्रवर्तन निदेशालय (ईडी) के समक्ष दिए बयान में कहा कि कांग्रेस नेता प्रियंका गांधी वाड्रा ने एमएफ हुसैन की एक पेंटिंग को दो करोड़ रुपये में खरीदने के लिए मजबूर किया था। इस पेंटिंग की बिक्री से मिलने वाले धन का उपयोग गांधी परिवार ने सोनिया गांधी के न्यूयॉर्क में हुए इलाज में किया। इतना ही नहीं राणा कपूर को प्रलोभन दिया गया कि यदि वे पेंटिंग खरीदने हैं तो उन्हें पद्म भूषण पुरस्कार दिया जाएगा। स्पष्ट है कांग्रेसी सरकारें भ्रष्टाचार, देश की सुरक्षा से खिलवाड़, जबरन वसूली में ही नहीं देश के नागरिक सम्मान को भी बेचने में लिप्त रही हैं। आजादी के बाद से ही कांग्रेसी सरकारें पद्म सम्मानों का अपने निजी हित में और वोट बैंक की राजनीति के लिए इस्तेमाल करती रहीं हैं। इन पुरस्कारों से जुड़े विवाद को देखते हुए जनता पार्टी की सरकार ने 1977-80 के बीच इन पुरस्कारों को बंद कर दिया। 1980 के लोक सभा चुनाव में मिली जीत के बाद इन्हें फिर शुरू किया गया। दुर्भाग्यवश एक बार फिर चाटुकार संस्कृति हावी हो गई। वोट बैंक को ध्यान में रखकर नागरिक सम्मान दिए जाने लगे। कला-संस्कृति के नाम पर ऐसे लोगों को पुरस्कार दिए जाने लगे जिनका कला-संस्कृति से दूर-दूर तक कोई नाता नहीं था।

आगे चलकर गठबंधन राजनीति के दौर में सरकार को समर्थन देने वाले दल अपनी पसंद के लोगों को यह पुरस्कार दिलवा देते थे। इससे यह होता था कि अपात्र लोगों को यह पुरस्कार मिल जाते थे लेकिन जिन लोगों ने अपना सारा जीवन

देश या अपने विषय से संबंधित सेवा में लगा दिया उन्हें ये पुरस्कार नहीं दिए जाते थे। राष्ट्रीय सम्मानों को चाटुकार संस्कृति और वोट बैंक की राजनीति से दूर रखने के लिए मोदी सरकार ने पुरस्कारों के लिए नामांकन प्रक्रिया शुरू किया। मोदी सरकार का जोर ऐसे लोगों को चुनने पर है जिन पर उनके असाधारण योगदान के बावजूद अब तक ध्यान नहीं दिया गया हो। इसके लिए केंद्र सरकार ने सभी राज्यों से ऐसे प्रतिभाशाली लोगों का पता लगाने के लिए स्पेशल सर्वे कमेटी बनाने के लिए कहा है। महिलाओं, समाज के कमजोर वर्गों, अनुसूचित जातियों, जनजातियों, दिव्यांगों में से ऐसे प्रतिभाशाली लोगों की पहचान की जाने लगी जो पुरस्कार के काबिल हैं। इसी का नतीजा है कि पद्म पुरस्कारों की सूची में जन सरोकारों से जुड़े लोगों शामिल होने लगे। इसे कुछ उदाहरणों से समझा जा सकता है। लंगर बाबा के नाम से प्रसिद्ध चंडीगढ़ के जगदीश आहूजा ने अपना पूरा जीवन रोगियों व उनके तीमारदारों को भोजन खिलाने में लगा दिया। जम्मू के जवेद अहमद ने खुद ट्राई साइकिल पर चलते हुए दिव्यांगों के जीवन में बहार लाने का काम किया। दिव्यांगों के पुनर्वास कार्य में आजीवन जुड़े रहने वाले एस राधाकृष्ण। भोपाल गैस त्रासदी से पीड़ित लोगों के हक के लिए 30 साल तक संघर्ष करने वाले अब्दुल जब्बारा। कर्नाटक की तुलसी गौड़ा जिन्होंने पेड़-पौधों के साथ औषधि ज्ञान को जोड़ने का बड़ा काम किया। गरीब बच्चों को पढ़ाने का जुनून रखने वाले सब्जी विक्रेता हारेकला जहब्बा। हाथियों के अब्दुत डाक्टर कहे जाने वाले कुशल कुंवर वर्मा। लावारिस शवों के अंतिम संस्कार करने वाले मोहम्मद शरीफ। जमीन से जुड़े ऐसे लोगों को सम्मान मिलने से पद्म सम्मान की भी आभा बढ़ी। नियमों के सरलीकरण और आम आदमी को प्राथमिकता देने के कारण पहले जहां पद्म पुरस्कारों के लिए हर साल 2000 आवेदन आते थे वहीं अब आवेदनों की संख्या 50,000 तक पहुंच गई है। समग्रतः मोदी सरकार सीधे आम आदमी से जुड़कर उसकी बेहतरी के लिए काम कर रही है। इस सरकार में बिचौलियों, दलालों, लाबिस्टों की कोई जगह नहीं है।

(लेखक केन्द्रीय सचिवालय में अधिकारी हैं। वरिष्ठ टिप्पणीकार हैं। प्रस्तुत विचार उनके निजी हैं।)

यूरोप में वसुधैव कुटुंबकम्



डॉ दिलीप अग्निहोत्री

प्रधानमंत्री नरेंद्र मोदी अपनी विदेश यात्राओं के माध्यम से राष्ट्रीय हितों का संरक्षण व संरक्षण करते हैं। इसके साथ ही वह भारतीय संस्कृति के मनवतावादी विचार से दुनिया को परिचित कराते हैं। रूस यूक्रेन संघर्ष ने दुनिया में भारतीय चिंतन की प्रासंगिकता बढ़ा दी है। इसके अलावा आतंकवाद व सभ्यताओं के संघर्ष भी चलता रहता है। अन्य सभ्यताओं के पास इस समस्या का कोई समाधान नहीं है। जबकि भारत ने सदैव मानव कल्याण की कामना की है। नरेंद्र मोदी ने जर्मनी के बाद स्वीडन में भी भारतीय चिंतन के अनुरूप विचार व्यक्त किये। उन्होंने महोपनिषद की सूक्ति का उल्लेख किया-

बन्धुर्यं नेति गणना लघुचेतसाम् उदारचरितानां तु वसुधैव कुटुम्बकम् ॥

अर्थात् यह मेरा है और यह नहीं है, इस तरह की गणना छोटे चित्त वाले लोग करते हैं। उदार हृदय वाले लोगों की तो धरती ही परिवार है।

भारत द्वारा कोरोना वैक्सीन का निर्माण इसका उदाहरण है। नरेन्द्र मोदी ने संयुक्त रूप से डेनमार्क की प्रधानमंत्री मेटे फ्रेडरिकसन और डेनमार्क के क्राउन प्रिंस फ्रेडरिक डेनमार्क उद्योग परिसंघ में भारत डेनमार्क व्यापार मंच में भागीदारी की। दोनों अर्थव्यवस्थाओं के पूरक कौशल पर जोर दिया और डेनिश कंपनियों को हरित प्रौद्योगिकियों, कोल्ड चेन, कचरे से धन, शिपिंग और बंदरगाहों जैसे क्षेत्रों में भारत में उपलब्ध विशाल अवसरों का लाभ उठाने के लिए आमंत्रित किया। हरित प्रौद्योगिकी, नवाचार और डिजिटलीकरण, ऊर्जा स्वतंत्रता और नवीकरणीय ऊर्जा, जल, पर्यावरण और कृषि, बुनियादी ढांचा, परिवहन और सेवाएं क्षेत्र सहयोग बढ़ाया जाएगा। दोनों देशों के बीच हुए करारों से जुड़े दस्तावेजों का आदान प्रदान किया गया। दोनों देशों के बीच स्वच्छ जल, शिपिंग, पशुपालन व डेयरी, संस्कृति, कौशल विकास, तकनीकी निवेश और वाणिज्य से जुड़े क्षेत्रों में करार हुए हैं। भारत और यूरोपीय संघ के रिश्तों,

हिन्द प्रशांत और यूक्रेन सहित क्षेत्रीय तथा वैश्विक विषयों पर विचार विमर्श किया गया। दोनों देशों ने मुक्त, खुले, समावेशी एवं नियम आधारित हिन्द-प्रशांत क्षेत्र सुनिश्चित करने पर जोर दिया है। दो सौ से अधिक डेनिश कंपनियां भारत में पवन ऊर्जा, शिपिंग, कंसलटेंसी, खाद्य प्रसंस्करण और इंजीनियरिंग के क्षेत्र में काम कर रही हैं। भारत में बढ़ते 'इज ऑफ डूइंग बिजनेस' और व्यापक आर्थिक रिफॉर्म का इन कंपनियों को लाभ मिल रहा है। भारत के इंफ्रास्ट्रक्चर और ग्रीन उद्योग क्षेत्र में डेनिश कंपनियों और डेनिश पेंशन फंड के लिए निवेश के अवसर हैं। दोनों देशों की एक मजबूत हरित रणनीतिक साझेदारी के नतीजे सामने आने लगे हैं। डेनमार्क भारत को फॉसिल फ्यूल का विकल्प हासिल करने में सहायता कर रहा है। दोनों देशों के बीच इसके बाद प्रतिनिधिमंडल स्तर की वार्ता भी हुई। प्रधानमंत्री नरेंद्र मोदी अपनी यूरोप यात्रा के दौरान राष्ट्रीय हितों का संरक्षण संवर्धन करने में सफल रहे। उनकी यह यात्रा संवेदनशील परिस्थितियों में हुई। यूक्रेन रूस के बीच युद्ध चल रहा है। नाटो के सदस्य देश रूस के खिलाफ है। इनमें अमेरिका व यूरोप के देश शामिल हैं। दूसरी तरफ भारत व रूस के बीच आपसी सहयोग जारी है। इस समय नरेंद्र मोदी यूरोप की यात्रा पर रहे। यह स्थिति उनके लिए चुनौतीपूर्ण थी। रूस से संबंध ठीक रखते हुए यूरोपीय देशों से साझेदारी बढ़ाने का मुश्किल कार्य करना था। नरेंद्र मोदी ने अपनी कुशलता का परिचय दिया। बहुत संतुलित तरीके से स्थिति को संभाले रखा। पूरी यात्रा में वह सहज रहे। मोदी ने सभी समस्याओं के समाधान हेतु वार्ता के महत्व को रेखांकित किया, कहा कि युद्ध से किसी समस्या का स्थायी समाधान नहीं हो सकता। मोदी की कूटनीतिक कुशलता कामयाब रही। डेनमार्क में मोदी की कई अन्य देशों के साथ द्विपक्षीय व क्षेत्रीय मसलों पर वार्ता हुई। नरेन्द्र मोदी भारत नॉर्डिक शिखर सम्मेलन में सहभागी हुए। उनकी आइसलैंड की प्रधानमंत्री कैटरीन जैकोब्सदोतिर, नॉर्वे के प्रधानमंत्री जोनास गहर स्टोर, स्वीडन की प्रधानमंत्री मैग्दलेना एंडरसन और फिनलैंड की प्रधानमंत्री सना

नरेंद्र मोदी का करिश्मा विलक्षण है। यह भारत तक ही सीमित नहीं है। कुछ समय पहले उन्हें विश्व का सर्वाधिक लोकप्रिय नेता प्रमाणित किया गया। भारत में उनकी लोकप्रियता 2014 से लगातार जनादेश के रूप में अभिव्यक्त हो रही है।

मारिन के साथ द्विपक्षीय वार्ता भी हुई।

नॉर्वे के प्रधानमंत्री जोनास गहर स्टोर से मुलाकात के दौरान दोनों प्रधानमंत्रियों ने द्विपक्षीय संबंधों में चल रही गतिविधियों की समीक्षा की गई। दोनों नेताओं ने ब्लू इकोनॉमी, नवीकरणीय ऊर्जा, हरित हाइड्रोजन, सौर और पवन परियोजनाओं, हरित शिपिंग, मत्स्य पालन, जल प्रबंधन, वर्षा जल संचयन, अंतरिक्ष सहयोग, दीर्घकालिक अवसंरचना निवेश, स्वास्थ्य और संस्कृति जैसे क्षेत्रों में जुड़ाव को मजबूत करने की क्षमता पर चर्चा की। इस दौरान क्षेत्रीय और वैश्विक घटनाक्रम पर भी चर्चा हुई। यूएनएससी के सदस्य के रूप में भारत और नॉर्वे संयुक्त राष्ट्र में पारस्परिक हित के वैश्विक मुद्दों पर एक-दूसरे के साथ जुड़े रहे हैं। स्वीडन की प्रधानमंत्री मैग्डेलेना एंडरसन से मुलाकात के दौरान दोनों नेताओं ने द्विपक्षीय साझेदारी में हुई प्रगति की समीक्षा की। दोनों नेताओं ने नवाचार, जलवायु प्रौद्योगिकी, जलवायु कार्रवाई, हरित हाइड्रोजन, अंतरिक्ष, रक्षा, नागरिक उड्डयन, आर्कटिक, ध्रुवीय अनुसंधान, सतत खनन और व्यापार और आर्थिक संबंधों जैसे क्षेत्रों में सहयोग को मजबूत करने की संभावनाओं पर भी चर्चा की। आइसलैंड की प्रधानमंत्री कैटरीन जैकोब्सदोतिर से मुलाकात के दौरान दोनों नेताओं ने विशेष रूप से भूतापीय ऊर्जा, नीली अर्थव्यवस्था, आर्कटिक, नवीकरणीय ऊर्जा, मत्स्य पालन, खाद्य प्रसंस्करण, डिजिटल विश्वविद्यालयों सहित शिक्षा और संस्कृति के क्षेत्रों में आर्थिक सहयोग को और मजबूत करने के तरीकों पर चर्चा की। प्रधानमंत्री ने लैंगिक समानता को बढ़ावा देने के लिए प्रधानमंत्री जैकोब्सदोतिर के व्यक्तिगत प्रयासों की सराहना की और उन्हें इस संबंध में भारत की प्रगति के बारे में जानकारी दी। क्षेत्रीय और वैश्विक विकास पर भी चर्चा हुई। फिनलैंड की प्रधानमंत्री सना मारिन के साथ बातचीत में दोनों नेताओं ने व्यापार, निवेश, प्रौद्योगिकी और ऐसे अन्य क्षेत्रों में इस साझेदारी को और मजबूत करने के तरीकों पर चर्चा की।

नरेंद्र मोदी का करिश्मा विलक्षण है। यह भारत तक ही सीमित नहीं है। कुछ समय पहले उन्हें विश्व का सर्वाधिक लोकप्रिय नेता प्रमाणित किया गया। भारत में उनकी लोकप्रियता 2014 से लगातार जनादेश के रूप में अभिव्यक्त हो रही है। उनकी विदेश यात्रा का अंदाज अलग होता है। वह भारतीय मूल के लोगों का मनोबल बढ़ाते हैं। संबंधित देश के लोग भी उनके प्रति आकर्षित होते हैं। इन सबका सकारात्मक प्रभाव विदेश नीति पर पड़ता है।

इसमें भी क्षेत्रीय व द्विपक्षीय विषयों पर चर्चा होगी। इसके पहले प्रधानमंत्री के साथ जर्मनी गए विदेश मंत्री एस जयशंकर ने अपनी समकक्ष एनालेना बेरबॉक से मुलाकात की। इनके बीच यूक्रेन संघर्ष और हिंद प्रशांत पर विचार विमर्श किया गया। दोनों विदेश कार्यालयों के बीच सीधे एन्क्रिप्टेड कनेक्शन को लेकर समझौते पर

भारत द्वारा कोरोना वैक्सीन का निर्माण इसका उदाहरण है। नरेन्द्र मोदी ने संयुक्त रूप से डेनमार्क की प्रधानमंत्री मेटे फ्रेडरिकसन और डेनमार्क के क्राउन प्रिंस फ्रेडरिक डेनमार्क उद्योग परिसंघ में भारत डेनमार्क व्यापार मंच में भागीदारी की। दोनों अर्थव्यवस्थाओं के पूरक कौशल पर जोर दिया और डेनिश कंपनियों को हरित प्रौद्योगिकियों, कोल्ड चेन, कचरे से धन, शिपिंग और बंदरगाहों जैसे क्षेत्रों में भारत में उपलब्ध विशाल अवसरों का लाभ उठाने के लिए आमंत्रित किया। हरित प्रौद्योगिकी, नवाचार और डिजिटलीकरण, ऊर्जा स्वतंत्रता और नवीकरणीय ऊर्जा, जल, पर्यावरण और कृषि, बुनियादी ढांचा, परिवहन और सेवाएं क्षेत्र सहयोग बढ़ाया जाएगा।

हस्ताक्षर किए गए। अंतर-सरकारी परामर्श में इसकी पूर्ण रिपोर्टिंग करेंगे। विदेश मंत्री ने अपने जर्मनी की आर्थिक सहयोग एवं विकास मंत्री स्वेजा शुल्ज से भी मुलाकात की। इस दौरान उन्होंने जलवायु एक्शन, लचीली एवं विश्वसनीय आपूर्ति श्रृंखला, तीसरे देश की भागीदारी और यूक्रेन संघर्ष के आर्थिक प्रभाव पर चर्चा की। भारत और जर्मनी के बीच जलवायु परिवर्तन और स्वच्छ ऊर्जा पर सहयोग संबंधी समझौता हुआ। कृषि मंत्री नरेंद्र सिंह तोमर और जर्मनी के आर्थिक सहयोग एवं विकास मंत्री वेन्जा शुल्ज के बीच वर्चुअल मीटिंग में कृषि क्षेत्र को लेकर अहम समझौता हुआ। यह समझौता कृषि क्षेत्र में प्राकृतिक संसाधनों के बेहतर प्रबंधन पर केंद्रित है। इसके तहत दोनों देश इस क्षेत्र में साझा शोध को बढ़ावा देंगे। कृषि क्षेत्र में पर्यावरण के अनुकूल विकास के लिए जर्मनी भारत को तीस करोड़ यूरो का कम दरों वाला लोन देगा। ऊर्जा के स्वच्छ एवं अक्षय साधनों में ग्रीन हाइड्रोजन बेहतर विकल्प है। भारत और जर्मनी ने इंडो-जर्मनी ग्रीन हाइड्रोजन टास्क फोर्स गठित करेंगे। इसके माध्यम से दोनों देश साझा प्रयास करेंगे। वर्चुअल माध्यम से संयुक्त घोषणा पर हस्ताक्षर किए गए। भारत में स्वच्छ ऊर्जा के क्षेत्र में बहुत संभावना है। इसके दृष्टिगत भारत ने जर्मनी की कंपनियों को आमंत्रित किया है।

इसके अलावा छठी भारत जर्मनी अंतर सरकारी परामर्श बैठक में विश्व व्यापार संगठन डब्ल्यूटीओ में सुधार का आह्वान किया गया। नियमों पर आधारित स्वतंत्र, निष्पक्ष एवं समावेशी व्यापार के महत्व को रेखंकित किया गया। यूरोपीय संघ और भारत के बीच मुक्त व्यापार समझौते, निवेश प्रोटोकाल समझौते और जियोग्राफिकल इंडिकेशंस समझौते को समर्थन पर सहमति व्यक्त की गई।

(लेखक हिन्दू पीजी कॉलेज में एसोसिएट प्रोफेसर हैं। ये उनके निजी विचार हैं।)

मोदी सरकार की गरीब कल्याण योजनाओं से कम हो रही गरीबी



पीयूष द्विवेदी

भा

रातीय राजनीति में आजादी के बाद से ही गरीबी का मुद्दा प्रमुखता से उठाया जाता रहा है। देश की पंचवर्षीय योजनाओं में गरीबी उन्मूलन को केंद्र में रखकर नीतियों का निर्धारण भी होता रहा है। देश में सर्वाधिक समय तक शासन करने वाली कांग्रेस ने इंदिरा गांधी के जमाने में 'गरीबी हटाओ देश बचाओ' का नारा दिया था। इंदिरा के बाद उनके बेटे राजीव गांधी भी इस नारे को बढ़ाने में पीछे नहीं रहे। लेकिन इन सबके बावजूद हम देख सकते हैं कि आज आजादी के सात दशक बीतने के बाद भी देश के समक्ष गरीबी की समस्या मुंह बाए खड़ी है। इसका कारण एकदम सीधा है कि कांग्रेस सरकारों का गरीबी उन्मूलन अधिकांशतः नारों तक सीमित रहा और धरातल पर गरीबों के हित में बहुत कम काम हुए। गरीबों को अविचारित सब्सिडी और लोकलुभावन घोषणाओं से आकर्षित कर चुनावों में वोट बैंक की तरह इस्तेमाल किया जाता रहा, लेकिन उनके दीर्घकालिक विकास के लिए कोई ठोस कदम नहीं उठाए गए। लिहाजा पैसा खर्च होता रहा लेकिन गरीब, गरीब ही बने रहे। 2014 में नरेंद्र मोदी के केंद्र की सत्ता में आने के बाद से इस स्थिति में बड़ा बदलाव देखने को मिला है। अब गरीबों को लुभाने के लिए योजनाएं नहीं बनाई जाती बल्कि उनके हितों को बल देने के लिए योजनाओं की रचना की जाती है। मोदी सरकार द्वारा चलाई जा रही गरीब कल्याण की अनेक योजनाओं का ही परिणाम है कि आज वर्ल्ड बैंक अपनी रिपोर्ट में देश की गरीबी में कमी आने की बात कह रहा है। विश्व बैंक द्वारा हाल ही में जारी अपनी रिपोर्ट में कहा गया है कि भारत में अत्यंत गरीबों की संख्या घटी है। साल 2011 से 2019 के बीच अत्यंत गरीबों की संख्या में 12.3 फीसदी की कमी आई है और इस मामले में शहरी केंद्रों के मुकाबले ग्रामीण क्षेत्रों का प्रदर्शन बेहतर रहा है। रिपोर्ट में यह भी कहा गया है कि इस दौरान छोटी जोत वाले किसानों की आय में दस प्रतिशत तक की वृद्धि हुई है। यह आंकड़े दर्शाते हैं कि मोदी सरकार केवल गरीब कल्याण की बातें ही नहीं कर रही, अपितु सरकार की योजनाएं धरातल तक पहुँच रही हैं और जमीन पर उनका व्यापक असर भी हो रहा है। इसके अलावा किसानों की आय में वृद्धि के लिए

किए जा रहे सरकार के प्रयास भी रंग लाने लगे हैं। दरअसल 2014 में जब नरेंद्र मोदी केंद्र की सत्ता में आए तो उन्होंने देश में गरीबी की समस्या को देखते हुए यह समझने में जरा भी देर नहीं की कि जबतक देश के गरीबों को अर्थतंत्र के ढाँचे में सीधे तौर पर शामिल नहीं किया जाएगा उनका स्थायी विकास संभव नहीं है। इसी विचार से मोदी सरकार द्वारा सर्वप्रथम प्रधानमंत्री जनधन योजना की शुरुआत की गई। इसके तहत देश के करोड़ों ऐसे गरीबों जिनका कोई बैंक अकाउंट नहीं था, के जीरो बैलेंस पर अकाउंट खुलवाए गए। उस अकाउंट से पैन-आधार कार्ड के माध्यम से कई लाभकारी योजनाओं को जोड़ा गया और उनकी लाभ राशि को सीधे खाते में भेजने की व्यवस्था शुरू की गई। तब विपक्ष ने इस योजना का बहुत मखौल बनाया था, लेकिन कोरोना काल में गरीबों को सरल-सहज ढंग से सीधे आर्थिक सहायता पहुँचाने में इन जनधन अकाउंट्स का महत्व विशेष रूप से स्पष्ट हुआ। इसी प्रकार मुद्रा योजना के जरिये पिछड़े व गरीब लोगों को स्वरोजगार हेतु आसानी से लोन उपलब्ध कराया जाना भी गरीबी उन्मूलन की दिशा में बड़ा कदम साबित हुआ है। उज्ज्वला योजना के जरिये देश के लगभग आठ करोड़ गरीब परिवारों को मुफ्त गैस कनेक्शन दिया जाना उनके जीवनस्तर में महत्वपूर्ण बदलाव लाने वाला कदम था। इसके अलावा जनऔषधि केंद्र के जरिये सस्ती दवाओं तथा आयुष्मान भारत के जरिये पांच लाख तक के मुफ्त इलाज की व्यवस्था सुनिश्चित होने ने गरीब तबके के लोगों को बड़ी राहत देने का काम किया है। उनकी जो जमापूँजी अक्सर महंगे इलाज की भेंट चढ़ जाती थी, अब वो सुरक्षित रहती है और उनको बेहतर इलाज भी मिल जाता है। इसी क्रम में प्रधानमंत्री आवास योजना के जरिये बेघर गरीबों को बेहतर घर मिलने की कवायद भी चल ही रही है। गरीब कल्याण अन्न योजना ने महामारी के दौर में गरीबों को भुखमरी की स्थिति से बचाया और अब भी यह योजना जारी है। इस योजना के विषय में इंटरनेशनल मोनेटरी फण्ड (आईएमएफ) द्वारा कहा गया था कि प्रधानमंत्री गरीब कल्याण अन्न योजना ने महामारी से प्रभावित 2020 में अति गरीबी को 0.8 फीसदी के निचले स्तर पर बरकरार रखने में महत्वपूर्ण भूमिका निभायी है। इन सभी योजनाओं के अलावा और भी बहुत सारी योजनाएं व कार्यक्रम मोदी सरकार द्वारा गरीबों के लिए चलाए जा रहे हैं। इन सब प्रयासों का ही परिणाम है कि आज देश में गरीबी के स्तर में कमी देखने को मिल रही है। कहने की जरूरत नहीं कि मोदी सरकार के शासन में गरीबी हटाओ कोई हवा-हवाई नारा नहीं, बल्कि जमीन पर साकार हो रही हकीकत है।

(लेखक स्वतंत्र टिप्पणीकार हैं। प्रस्तुत विचार उनके निजी हैं।)

Discussion on book “SIYASAT KA SABAK” (Jogendra Nath Mandal) on 26 March 2022



Dr. Syama Prasad Mookerjee
Research Foundation

Brijlal IPS(Retd)
Member of Parliament, Rajya Sabha
Former DGP, Uttar Pradesh
discussed his book

"SIYASAT KA SABAK"
(Jogendra Nath Mandal)

with
Shiwanand Dwivedi
Senior Research Fellow, SPMRF & Co-Author of
"Amit Shah and the March of BJP"

Introductory Remarks
Dr Anirban Ganguly
Hony. Director SPMRF, Member NEC, BJP

 Saturday, 26th March 2022



Discussion on “PM Narendra Modi’s address on Amrit Kaal Mandate” on 13 March 2022



Dr. Syama Prasad Mookerjee
Research Foundation

Discussion on

PM Narendra Modi's
address on

"Amrit Kaal
Mandate"

Speakers:



Anant Vijay
Sr. Columnist & Author :
Marxvaid Ka Ardhshatya



K K Upadhyay
Senior Journalist



Dr. Anirban Ganguly
Hony. Director SPMRF,
Member NEC, BJP



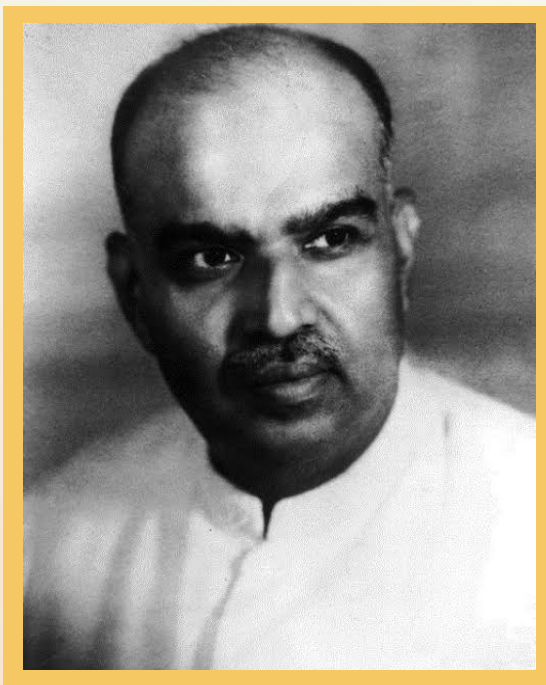
Harshvardhan Tripathi
Public Policy Expert,
Thinker, Commentator



Dr. Binay Kumar Singh
Author & Columnist, Author:
Bleeding India: Four Aggressors,
Thousand Cuts

Discussion on “Institutionalised Violence in West Bengal: Diagnosis & Cure” at Banaras Hindu University (BHU), Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh on 03 March 2022





“Freedom consists not only in the absence of restraint but also in the presence of opportunity. Liberty is not a single and simple conception. It has four elements – national, political, personal and economic. The man who is fully free is one who lives in a country which is independent; in a state which is democratic; in a society where laws are equal and restrictions at a minimum; in an economic system in which national interests are protected and the citizen has the scope of secure livelihood, an assured comfort and full opportunity to rise by merit.

-Dr. Syama Prasad Mookerjee
Patna University Convocation
27th November 1937

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