



Dr. Syama Prasad Mookerjee
Research Foundation



THE PLOY BEHIND THE PLOT

Are Western NGOs, Media, and Think Tanks Resorting to Misleading Extrapolation of Data to Pin Down a PM Modi-led Resilient and Rapidly Rising India That Refuses to Bow Down to Western Diktats?

PATHIKRIT PAYNE

THE PLOY BEHIND THE PLOT

Are Western NGOs, Media, and Think Tanks Resorting to Misleading Extrapolation of Data to Pin Down a PM Modi-led Resilient and Rapidly Rising India That Refuses to Bow Down to Western Diktats?

PATHIKRIT PAYNE

Disclaimer: Adequate efforts have been made to cross check every data and source of information. However, any inadvertent, technical, or typos error would be rectified if notified.

First the Context: During the middle of the Covid crises that rattled the whole world, India was perhaps one of the few, or rather the only country, which had a full-fledged program to provide additional free rations to more than 80 crores of its eligible populace, in order to ensure that amidst the Covid pandemic, or the post pandemic economic challenges that gripped the whole world, no Indian family had to bother for their daily meals. That program, namely Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Anna Yojana or (PM-GKAY)ⁱ, which was started in March 2020, continues till date, and only recently it has been announced by Prime Minister Narendra Modi that it would be continued for the next five yearsⁱⁱ by Union Government of India. These additional free rations were provided over and above the highly subsidized foodgrain that eligible people of India already get as part of the National Food Security Act.

Not just that, under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, India also administered free Covid vaccines to more than 100 crores of its eligible population. In all, more than 200 croresⁱⁱⁱ of free vaccines were administered in India. Further, India also went ahead to provide vaccines to more than 100 other countries^{iv} who were in dire need of vaccines, but were denied the same by most of the advanced economies of the Western Hemisphere, often accused of vaccine hoarding^v and even refusal to waive intellectual property rights over the vaccines^{vi}.

Interestingly so, India produced almost the entire lot of its required

vaccines domestically by utilizing its own industrial scale proficiency in vaccine manufacturing. The manner in which the Union Government of India coordinated with India's private sector and State Governments for last mile connectivity, and in creation of a digital database of vaccine administration in the form of Cowin App, was benchmark of a template for many others to emulate.

Further, at a time when the pandemic had already hit everyone hard, India was also besieged with border challenges thrown on her by China that left New Delhi with little option but to spend massively on major upgradation of border infrastructure and military preparedness as well. In other words, India had to deal with both the Covid pandemic and the looming dangers of a potential conflict.

India was Dealing with Economic Challenges and Threats of War, but Still Went Ahead with Crucial Economic Reforms

Interestingly, in the middle of such challenges, Government of India under leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, continued with the momentum of major economic reforms and initiated the *Atmanirbhar Bharat Abhiyan* scheme^{vii} to not only make India a major hub for global manufacturing ecosystem, but also develop resilience of its supply chains to reduce India's dependence on external supply chains, which showed disruptive tendencies during pandemic, and post-pandemic phase. Interestingly enough, unlike many in

the West, Government of India did not take the easy way out to deal with the challenges, by printing countless additional currency notes, to distribute among masses. It instead, worked on dealing with supply side issues of the economy, and gave free vaccines, rather than distributing currency notes.

As a result of all these, India not only managed to deal with the Covid pandemic in a much better manner than most major Western states, but also managed the economy in such a manner that at a time when most major economies of the world have been grappling with massive inflationary pressures, along with recessionary trends, India emerged as the only economy, among the major economies that continued to shine brightly with robust economic growth rates, healthy exports and an impressive foreign exchange reserve. **Demand regained strength but there was no currency**

supply induced inflation, thanks to Modi Government's decision not to emulate the Western template of printing additional notes and distributing them.

What World Bank's G20 Document Mentioned About India's Digital Public Infrastructure Development Under PM Modi's Leadership

'The India stack exemplifies this approach, combining digital ID, interoperable payments, a digital credentials ledger, and account aggregation. In just six years, it has achieved a remarkable 80 per cent financial inclusion rate—a feat that would have taken nearly five decades without a DPI approach'^{xix}

What the Managing Director of International Monetary Fund Remarkd About India

"India deserves to be called a bright spot on this otherwise dark horizon because it has been a fast-growing economy, even during these difficult times, but most importantly, this growth is underpinned by structural reforms,"^{viii}

**Kristalina Georgieva, MD, IMF
October 13, 2022**

India's digital ID system Aadhaar, digital payment system UPI, data-exchange platform Digilocker and its other showcase platforms have found a special mention among the examples of DPIs 'all of which play a leading role in the advancement of financial inclusion in many countries'.^{x-}
Outlook Magazine

India's Journey Towards a Resilient Future Amidst the Challenges of Pandemic

India's journey towards a resilient future was not easy as a result of global supply chain disruptions caused by the pandemic, and conflict induced sanctions on major commodity supplying nations like Russia that catapulted the prices of fossil fuel, foodgrain and several other commodities in the international markets. India had to meander through difficult terrains of geopolitical complexities and domestic expectations, to achieve the impossible milestone of emerging as an economic powerhouse that weathered successive storms with elan.

It must also be remembered that what Governments of Western developed nations are expected to deliver to their citizens, Government of India, on most occasions, is compelled to do it in several multiples of the same, since India's population is 140 crore and not 14 crores.

Yet, India has been reasonably successful, by any given benchmark, in achieving the impossible feats of taking care of the economy and its people simultaneously during the phase of pandemic. Through the most difficult times, it remained rock solid as the third largest ecosystem^{xi} for start-ups globally, created 8 crore new entrepreneurs^{xii} through the MUDRA

initiative, achieved exports of above \$750 billion^{xiii}, while maintaining healthy forex reserves much above \$500 billion throughout, reaching up to \$645 billion^{xiv} in October 2021, at a time when several countries of the world were reeling under severe shortage of forex reserves because of economic impact of Covid pandemic. Eventually India not only crossed the \$3 trillion mark, but also became \$3.75 trillion^{xv} economy in 2023, and maintained impressive growth rates. Incidentally, as per latest figures available in December 2023, 44.62 crore loans have been sanctioned, since 2015, under MUDRA Yojana. The total amount sanctioned as loans, for micro enterprises, is Rs 26.24 lakh crore, while the amount disbursed stands at Rs 25.59 lakh crore¹. All this happened when European Union officially entered into recession^{xvi} in 2023. All this also happened when many from the West were busy writing relentless obituaries of the 'India Story'. But they got it all wrong.

India's achievements were no miracle but the outcome of effective policy planning, implementing crucial structural reforms, capacity building and addressing the systemic bottlenecks in the economy. It is also important to mention that India's growth story during tumultuous times not only helped India emerge stronger and more resilient as an economy, and as a society, but also benefitted others as well. It is this part that critics of India, especially from the West, needs

1. Refer to Graphics on print edition of The Economic Times on 12th December, 2023, titled Mudra for Small Business

to acknowledge more profoundly.

From being one of the first respondents to the earthquake crisis in Turkey, to helping Sri Lanka with shiploads of food, medicine, fuel and other essential items, when the tiny island nation was in deep economic crisis, India's economic growth has also been creating jobs in Western economies. For example, in June 2023, Air India gave firm orders for 470 aircrafts, of which 220 civilian jets were to be procured from Boeing in US. As per US President Joe Biden, the order for 220 jets is expected to create 1 million jobs^{xvii} in US alone.

One must also acknowledge how India over the years created one of the most proficient disaster response management systems in the world, ensured rapid response mechanisms in place for evacuation of civilians during any natural disaster, especially cyclones, anywhere in India, as well as created a robust framework for evacuation of its citizens from anywhere in the world, during crisis situations.

India showed remarkable proficiency in evacuating thousands of its citizens from Ukraine and Israel, when war broke out in those places, a feat which, even many other countries of the world, could not achieve, especially in case of evacuations from Ukraine. India not only evacuated its own citizens but also helped in evacuation of citizens from other countries as well. No one from India, was ever left behind when any disaster struck in those places. India, in an

uncompromising manner, prioritizes the safe evacuation of its citizens from crisis-hit foreign soil, before anything else, something which has often become the 'talk of the town' in social media.

However, from Western Press & Think-Tanks, India's Resilience was Greeted only with Brickbats, Albeit Discreetly

Yet, instead of praise and standing ovations, what India received from Western media and other vested interests, especially the Western Academia-Think Tank-NGO nexus, have only been brickbats. As India continues its journey towards *Atmanirbharta*, or self-reliance, repeated attempts have been made by Western Media and foreign NGOs to project India in the most retrograde manner.

Even though, India as a country created the most proficient template of social welfare delivery through the JAM (Jandhan-Aadhar-Mobile) Trinity^{xviii}, as part of its development of the most comprehensive Digital Public Infrastructure or DPI, have been giving free additional rations to more than 80 crore people, and have been holding free and fair elections, year after year, even during the difficult phase of pandemic as well, attempts have been made by Western interests, with deliberate incorrect extrapolation of data, to project India as a country where people are 'hungry' and devoid of 'freedom'. Nothing though can be far from the truth than this.

The Ludicrous Hunger Index and Its Laughable Conclusions

Take for example the World Hunger Index in which India was ranked 107th^{xix} among 121 countries in 2022. In 2023, this index, which is brought out by two European Agencies, namely ‘Concern Worldwide’ and ‘Welt Hungerlife’ ranked India 111^{xx}. As per this ‘comedy’ in the name of an index, India fared worse than even Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Nepal and Bangladesh in managing hunger. Anyone with a certain understanding of geopolitics, and how academia, think tanks, and NGOs, have allegedly been frequently used to create research reports or Indexes, with ulterior motives, to pin down certain countries or regimes through disinformation, or for geopolitical score settling, would know how far the reality of India is from what has been projected by this index.

Or else, who on earth would believe that Pakistan, where prices of foodgrains have skyrocketed amidst pressures of galloping inflation, dwindling forex reserves, failing economy, and where visuals of people jostling with each other among frenzied mobs, over a sack of grain^{xxi}, have become a norm, or Sri Lanka where people were on a rampage^{xxii}, forced their President to leave the country, as a result of massive economic collapse, and where things eventually became normal only after India sent shiploads of foodgrains^{xxiii}, or Nepal where almost all essential

commodities are imported from India, are better off in Hunger Index than India? It is either that making of such an index has an ulterior motive, or the reports are made by juveniles with an obnoxious level of ignorance about reality.

The real issue is this. Would some armchair analysts of Western thinktanks, forever dependent on dole-outs by major Western foundations backed by powerful cartels, decide the performance of India? Can such reports impede India’s growth story? Certainly Not. As things stand now, whenever India stops export of foodgrains^{xxiv}, it sends shivers across the political landscapes of many countries who depend on Indian exports for their foodgrain procurement, and to stabilise global foodgrain market prices. And yet, quite hilariously, they would project India in a manner as if no country is worse off than India even as India’s JAM trinity, social welfare delivery schemes and economic reforms have been acknowledged, as stated earlier, for their performance by multilateral financial institutions such as IMF^{xxv}.

Their Problem is that India Does Not Care Anymore About Such Reports

Frankly, India does not care two hoots about such think tanks and their alleged ‘Motivated’ reports anymore. However, it is important to expose the deep nexus of such indexes, the suspicious role of Western media in amplifying such reports, and how they are used by deep states of certain

countries to pin down the likes of India, with whom, on the face of it, they do certainly extend the hand of friendship, and want to deepen economic and defense relationships, but their own tentacles play a Machiavellian role to pin down or contain the same India.

Last year, the reality of the World Hunger Index Report 2022, was exposed by Union Government of India. The report was based on replies on 8 questions from a mere 3000 respondents, of an opinion poll by Gallup World Poll for what is termed as Food Insecurity Experience Scale (FIES).

In the first place to gauge the condition of India based on a mere 3000 responses on questions which are more of opinions in nature, can at best be termed as a shoddy or a juvenile job.

A look at some of the questions asked in those surveys reveal further as to how shallow, lopsided and manipulative these indexes are

One of the questions goes as follows, *“During the last 12 months, was there a time when, because of lack of money or other resources: You were worried you would not have enough food to eat? You ate less than you thought you should?”*^{xxvi}

In the first place, PM-GKAY scheme by Government of India ensured that no one would have to bother about basic food in India, either during the Covid phase or the post-Covid phase. Secondly, it may so happen that someone may have enough to have three wholesome meals a day,

but may not have ‘enough’ to order an exotic meal online. Does that indicate food crisis or undernourishment as a result of ‘lack of money’? It may so, hypothetically, happen that one may have enough to have three wholesome meals a day but not enough to keep on munching snacks throughout the day or have 12 ‘Rotis’ instead of 4 ‘Rotis’ in every meal. Does that indicate malnourishment or hunger? Does it have anything to do with the ‘per capita dietary energy supply’ which is a much better quantifiable figure to define food availability in a nation?

Interestingly, India’s ‘per capita dietary energy supply’ has consistently shown major increase owing to massive increase in productivity in agricultural sector.

Herein, it is important to mention what all measures have been taken by Modi Government through the *Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Anna Yojana or PM- GKAY*, that ensured that basic availability of food was never a problem for the mass during the pandemic or post-pandemic phase.

Some salient features of the PM-GKAY, as per the 15th October, 2022 PIB Press Release are following

- So far, under the PM-GKAY scheme the Government allocated a total of almost 1121 Lakh MT foodgrains to the States/UTs equivalent to about Rs. 3.91 Lakh Crore in food subsidy. The scheme

has been extended till December 2022. (Data up till December 2022 even though the scheme has been extended and would continue for the next five years)

- The distribution has been done through State Governments, who on their own further supplemented the efforts of Central Government by providing pulses, edible oils and condiments etc to the beneficiaries.
- Under Anganwadi Services, since Covid-19 pandemic, supplementary nutrition was provided to approximately 7.71 crore children upto the age of 6 years and to 1.78 crore pregnant women and lactating mothers. 5.3 Million Metric Tonnes of Foodgrains (comprising 2.5 Million Metric Tonnes of Wheat, 1.1 Million Metric Tonnes of Rice, 1.6 Million Metric Tonnes of Fortified Rice and 12,037 Metric Tonnes of Jowar and Bajra) was supplied.
- The three other indicators apart from PoU, included in Global Hunger Index relate primarily to children viz. Stunting, Wasting and Under 5 mortality. These indicators are outcomes of complex interactions of various other factors like drinking water, sanitation, genetics, environment and utilisation of food intake apart from hunger, which is taken as the causative/outcome factor for stunting and wasting in the

GHI. Calculating hunger based on mainly indicators relating to health indicators of children is neither scientific nor rational.

- The distribution of supplementary nutrition was undertaken by Anganwadi Workers and Helpers across 1.4 million Anganwadis in India. Take Home Ration was delivered to beneficiaries at their homes every fortnight.
- Under the Pradhan Mantri Matri Vandana Yojna, more than 1.5 Crore registered women were provided Rs 5000/- on the birth of their first child for wage support and nutritious food during pregnancy and post-delivery period.
- The three other indicators apart from PoU, included in Global Hunger Index relate primarily to children viz. Stunting, Wasting and Under 5 mortality. These indicators are outcomes of complex interactions of various other factors like drinking water, sanitation, genetics, environment and utilisation of food intake apart from hunger, which is taken as the causative/outcome factor for stunting and wasting in the GHI. Calculating hunger based on mainly indicators relating to health indicators of children is neither scientific nor rational.

Source: Press Information Bureau
15th October, 2022

The Real Issue is Not About Availability of Authentic Data but Intent

It is not that those who made the report, and ranked India literally at the bottom of the table did not have access to real data. However, who cares for data when the real objective of such surveys is to pin down a country which is not just growing, but is also questioning the present global status-quo, which is overwhelmingly tilted in favor of developed countries of the West? The West, in reality, still prefers an India as projected in the *Slumdog Millionaire* movie, and still live in the illusion that India has not changed since then.

The saddest part however, and which reflects poorly on present day journalism, especially that of West, is how without even getting into the depth of the issues, or analysing the stark contrast between what such indexes negatively project vis-à-vis the reality of India's progress in social welfare and economic growth, prefer to carry the reports in their respective publications.

How Western Media Projected a One-Sided Picture of India's Action Against BBC and NewsClick Portal

Interestingly, it is not just about such hunger index alone. Take for example the reportage by France 24 English, aired on 2nd November 2023. The program titled 'India's declining press freedom: Journalists face increasing threats'^{xxvii}, mentioned

about the tax raids that were done at BBC office in India by Indian Income Tax Officials, and about the raids and arrests that have been done at the NewsClick office recently. In both cases, it was apparent that France 24 editorial already had decided what conclusions would have to be drawn, as was evident by the narration. The program also did not go into the depth of the reasons as to why BBC India Office was raided and why NewsClick Founder and HR Head were arrested^{xxviii}.

France 24 took a brief interview of Paranjoy Guha Thakurta, who, quite unsurprisingly, tried to accuse the Government of India of being 'intolerant' and 'vengeful', but it seemed that the India Correspondent of France 24 did not ask Guha Thakurta about the serious allegations of wrongdoings against NewsClick, including that of external influence in the stories they carried in their portal, which deliberately tried to portray India in bad colours while glorifying China, the alleged role of US-based Neville Roy Singham, the allegations of dubious money flow from abroad, and the Chinese involvement angle in all of it. Or perhaps that part, in case it was shot, must have been edited by the editorial team of France 24, as not doing so would have brought the rabbits out of the hat.

In reality, this is what Western media houses, once known for their authentic journalism, have now apparently been reduced to, as nothing more than amplifying mouthpieces of the certain interest groups.

Now Coming to the Brass Tacks

The BBC Saga of Tax Evasion:

The case against BBC was a serious one about tax evasions and in any sovereign country, its revenue officials would have the legal rights and obligations to unearth the same, and prosecute the concerned organisations. Does it not happen in Europe? Do countries of Europe let go off organisations if they deliberately under-report income and avoid paying tax? Then why should the benchmarks be different for India? Should BBC been let off just because it is a European organisation? Is this not the reflection of the same supremacist mindset of the West, which still harp on the illusion that they and their organisations are above scrutiny?

Interestingly, in case of the BBC issue, there are reports that came on June 6, 2023 that stated that BBC officials did admit to underreporting^{xxix} of income of up to Rs 40 crore, a vindication of the authenticity of actions taken by Income Tax Officials of India. As and when the case comes up in front of the concerned tribunals, the matter would be settled as per the merit of the case. And this is where Indian system stands apart, and it needs no lecture from abroad.

For the uninitiated, BBC India is still operating and its content is very much available, unlike what the likes of France 24 and many of its Western European cohorts would try to falsely project that India is clamping down on reportage of BBC.

Exposing Western Double Standards Over Press Freedom: What About UK's Revocation of License of CGTN and EU's Ban on Russian Media Houses like Russia Today and Sputnik?

The interesting issue that needs deliberation is whether the same media houses of the West use the same standards of criticism while judging the actions of their respective Governments. Or is it that the yardsticks change? Take for example the decision of UK Government in February 2021 to revoke^{xxx} the license of CGTN to operate and broadcast from UK, because of CGTN's ownership patterns and the control of Chinese Communist Party^{xxxi} in the concerned media organisation. Did the Western Media criticize it or were they okay with it? Now if allegations come on BBC India for having taken funding from Chinese Huawei^{xxxii} and because of that its news coverage has a typical anti-India approach, should that not be investigated by Indian agencies? Is it that European media still live with the presumption that non-Western countries do not have the right to take the same legal actions which European agencies can take?

Worse, in spite of the grand lectures on freedom of expressions, European Union had imposed ban^{xxxiii} on broadcast in EU region by Russia Today and Sputnik for being backed by Kremlin. The pretext was 'disinformation' by Russian broadcasters on Ukraine-Russia

conflict. Or, was the prime purpose of the ban to invariably make sure that the ‘other side’ of the story on the Ukraine-Russia conflict is not revealed to the residents of EU?

Therefore, does it not indicate that Europe still presumes that European Agencies can revoke license to operate, and even ban broadcast of any foreign media channel, where they deem it fit, but Europe based media houses can continue to peddle one sided anti-establishment propaganda in third world countries, for a multitude of ulterior motives, and yet that has to be accepted as ‘Honest Journalism’ by Global South or Third World countries?

Is this the benchmark that Europe wants to set for the rest? It is not for nothing that India’s External Affairs Minister had in the recent past stated that *‘Europe has to grow out of the mindset that its problems are the world’s problems but the world’s problems are not Europe’s problems’*.^{xxxiv}

Europe desperately needs some course correction.

How Reportage by France 24 on NewsClick Investigation was Deceptive

If the misleading coverage by Western media houses on investigation in the BBC tax evasion issue has been abominable, even more obnoxious

has been how the likes of France 24 covered the NewsClick issue. The opaque manner in which NewsClick received funds from abroad, allegedly from entities with close proximity to the Chinese Government, deserves nothing but serious investigations, and it goes beyond saying that agencies of European countries would have done nothing less than that. The France 24 programme did not delve into that aspect.

As per reports, NewsClick had received Rs 38 crore from Chinese linked entities, of which Rs 28 crore was received between 2018 and 2022 as export remittance, from two US based entities^{xxxv}, even though, as per media reports, NewsClick could not provide any evidence of the kind of services they were providing for which they received these amounts. Interestingly, NewsClick paid around Rs 21 lakhs as salary to Gautam Navlakha, a known Maoist and Islamist terror sympathizer. Previously, in February 2021^{xxxvi} as well, the premises of NewsClick were searched by Enforcement Directorate Officials on money laundering probe surrounding the receipt of this Rs 38 crore from entities based in US, and with alleged links with Chinese Communist Party. Incidentally, ED had also issued summons twice to Neville Roy Singham, the alleged mastermind, for questioning on this issue.

Now if Gautam Navlakha, known for his involvement in anti-Indian and unlawful activities such as actively supporting banned Naxal organisations and having anti-national nexus^{xxxvii}, is a shareholder^{xxxviii} in NewsClick,

which has allegedly received funds from China linked entities, and has been constantly peddling news against India, criticize Government of India on every count, while enhancing the image of China^{xxxix}, should the Indian agencies not then book the organisation under stringent laws, and investigate the matters on charges of money laundering and for anti-India activities? It is ultimately India's judiciary that would look into the merit of the charges in trial phase, and therefore India does not need sermons from Western media houses, just as India does not need give sermons to West on what it should do.

Be it on the management of Covid pandemic, the border tension between India and China, as well as the farm protests in India, it was clear that the objective of NewsClick, through its reportage, was to tarnish the image of India, or pin down the Indian establishment, while promoting a rival nation in lieu of alleged payments. Therefore, as a sovereign country, India does have the right to prosecute those who were working as cohorts and promoting paid agenda of a foreign country in the name of journalism, and at the cost of national interest. Agencies of US and EU would have done no different.

The Dark Reality of World Press Freedom Index

As per the Office of the Registrar of the Newspapers of India, as of March 31st, 2022^{xl}, India has 1,46,045 publications of which 20,821 fall in the category of newspapers while

1,25,767 are in the category of periodicals. There are hundreds of Current Affairs & News TV Channels. It has one of the most critical and vibrant news media. Its internet is imbued with hundreds of thousands of vloggers who air their views on issues of governance and current affairs on a regular basis, some being supportive and some being critical of Government of India, which is fair in a democracy. Indians are today one of the most active communities when it comes to social media and micro blogging. Yet the West wants the world to believe that media has no freedom in India.

Interestingly, on the issue of World Press Freedom, Dr. Dan Steinbock, ‘an internationally recognized strategist of the multipolar world and the founder of Difference Group’ wrote,

‘For years, the press freedom index by the Reporters Without Borders (RSF) has been widely quoted, even though its methodology is biased and RSF was long led by a white supremacist with a penchant for US-led regime change. Now RSF is targeting Asia’ (The Street, May 25, 2021)^{xli}.

It is a known fact that in many of the Western media publications, only those from the concerned countries like India, are allowed to write, who would invariably carry anti-establishment content and would be critical of India. Seldom one would find a nationalist Indian allowed to write articles for mainstream media of the West.

Agenda Driven Western Indexes Want You to Believe Afghanistan and Pakistan Safer for Journalists than India

And therefore, it is not surprising that the World Press Freedom Index brought out by Reporters Sans Frontiers (RSF) has ranked India at 161 in its 2023 ranking^{xlii}, while it ranked India at 150 in 2022. In the 2023 report, India has been ranked even below Pakistan (150), Afghanistan (152), Libya (149), Somalia (141), and even Mali (113), to name a few.

Most of the countries mentioned here (except India), are either bankrupt, mired in civil wars, or infested with terrorism, or all at the same time, and have no well-organized democracy in place. But for Western media, and the makers of these indexes, India is 'worse' than them. Here objectivity of the facts has little relevance. The more important thing, it seems, is to execute an agenda. Right now, targeting India appears to be hot on the menu.

It is Another Matter Though That India is the Place Where European Companies and Political Leaders Rush to Meet Indian Leadership and Sign Agreements

The moot question then is: Should anyone even take these reports seriously? Pakistan is a hotbed of terror incubation, and a country that

has been responsible for proliferation of terrorism across the world. Afghanistan meanwhile, is a country that been under sanctions time since Taliban took over, and a place where personal freedom is an anathema, while free media is almost nonexistent. And yet, RSF would make the world believe that their 'Know-all' analysts sitting in the most secure alleys of Western Europe, know the best as to how it is 'safer' for a journalist in Afghanistan or Pakistan than in India. Can there be something more hilarious or obnoxious than this?

However, it is also important to ponder, if being into journalism or media profession, makes someone above the law of the land. Say for example, if it is found that someone is involved in blackmailing and extortion^{xliii}, should that person be spared from legal proceedings just because that person is in the profession of journalism? Or should it be that someone who has been involved in acts of terror should be kept untouched just because he was carrying a press card^{xliv}?

These are issues that are needed to be considered because such incidents have happened in India where when some were arrested on charges of blackmail, or someone involved in acts of terror was found to be in possession of a press card, and immediately some vested interests were quick to draw false conclusions about lack of press freedom. That is the level some have been stooping to, to pin down India.

Sponsored Hate Campaigns by US-Based Newspapers Against Government of India: A New Norm?

In fact, to understand the extent to which anti-India tirade in Western newspapers, including those in US, has been institutionalised, one has to decipher the two advertisements that came out in leading newspapers of US in the last one year, which are purely aimed at targeting PM Modi-led Government of India.

In October 2022, Wall Street

Journal carried a full-page ad^{xlv}, which was purely mala fide in its intent. This advertisement was allegedly sponsored, from behind the scene, by someone who has been designated as a ‘Fugitive Economic Offender^{xlvi}’ by Courts in India.

Steven Klein writes in International BusinessTimes, *‘Frontiers of Freedom, a US-based organisation, filed a petition on behalf of Viswanathan with the US State Department in August this year. A full-page ad declaring Nirmala Sitharaman and 10 others as PM Modi’s “Magnitsky 11” was also run^{xlvii}.*



Wall Street Journal allowed a designated ‘Fugitive Economic Offender’, accused of Major Wrongdoings in India, Run a Defamatory Campaign against Government of India through a Full-Page Ad. The Ad Aimed at Maligning India’s Appeal as a Business Destination.

Photo Courtesy: The New Indian

The defamatory ad titled ‘Wanted Modi’s Magnitsky 11’ had names of India’s Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, Solicitor General Tushar Mehta, Supreme Court Judges, namely Justice Hemant Gupta and Justice V Ramasubramanian, and senior officials of Enforcement Directorate, among others.

It is alleged that the real sponsor behind the veil was Ramachandran Vishwanathan, who is an Indian American. Ramachandran Vishwanathan^{xlvi} was a co-founder of the ill-famed Devas Multimedia that masterminded the fraudulent Devas-Antrix deal (that eventually got scrapped), and who wanted Biden Administration to ban^{xlvi} the above-mentioned officials, and ‘impose economic and visa sanctions on them’, under the Global Magnitsky Human Rights Accountability Act of 2016, a perfect example of how ‘Human Rights’ has been weaponized by powerful cartels and lobbies in the West, which they can use to their benefit any time. The crux of the issue is that National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT) has in May 2021 ordered the liquidation of Devas Multimedia. The order was later upheld by Supreme Court of India¹.

Thus, hiding behind US laws, fugitive Ramachandran Vishwanathan and his suitors, wanted US Administration to take revenge on India, on his behalf. He also tried his best through the sponsored Ad to malign India as an investment destination, to deter future foreign investments in India, which invariably did not prevent foreign investors from

rooting for India, with even more growing interest.

The core issue here is how Wall Street Journal allowed such an obnoxious and sponsored full-page advertisement on its newspaper, which even went to the extent of shockingly terming India’s Finance Minister as a ‘Human Rights Violator’. It is either that anything can be published in such newspapers for a fee, or else, WSJ endorsed the content, even if discreetly.

Kanchan Gupta, Senior Advisor to Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, and a veteran journalist himself, wrote on Twitter,

*Shameful weaponisation of American media by fraudsters. This shockingly vile ad targeting #India and its Government appeared in @WSJ. Do you know who is behind this and similar ads? This ad campaign is being run by fugitive Ramachandra Vishwanathan, who was the CEO of Devas.*ⁱⁱ

Asha Jadeja Motwani wrote on Twitter,

*‘Full page ad war on India’s growth & progress. WSJ These are deep pocketed Hindu haters, pretending this is a war on Modi. Shame on Wall Street Journal for allowing such misinformation & lies. My guess? CAIR & IAMC are drawing from the “oil money pool” that these groups use.’*ⁱⁱⁱ

Govindarajan. V wrote on twitter, 'GM. Shocked to see such an open hate on India. It is abundantly clear that efforts are on to undermine & block our progress. It's time for all of us including opposition parties to keep India first in their agenda & defeat such divisive forces. Siding with them is anti- national'. ^{liii}

For the uninitiated, the Devas-Antrix deal dates back to January, 2005, and eventually got scrapped in 2011. On Devas Multimedia issue, in October, 2022, Business Today, writes,

'This year in June, the ED moved a Bengaluru court to declare Viswanathan a "fugitive economic offender" in connection with the failed satellite deal with Antrix Corp. The CBI too has registered an FIR against a few others like Executive Director of Antrix, KR Sridhara Murthi, MG Chandrasekhar and Vishwanathan alleging that the accused had entered into a criminal conspiracy and abused their position by favouring Devas by giving it rights for delivery of videos, multi-media and information services to mobile phones using S-Band through GSAT-6 and GSAT-6A satellites and terrestrial systems in India.^{liv}

However, this was not an isolated case. In June 2023, just on the eve of PM Modi's US visit, US based newspaper Washington Post came out

with a similar full-page advertisement by a bunch of NGOs that alleged press freedom is under attack in India. In the list of pictures, put up in the ad, of so-called journalists who are under detention in India, was the photo of Gautam Navlakha, who, as per the ad was a freelance. Since when Gautam Navlakha, a known sympathizer of radical Islamist terror groups, a declared member^{lv} of banned Maoist terror group in India, with possible links^{lvi} with ISI, and is known to advocate armed violence against India, became just a freelance (journalist), only Washington Post and the Sponsor of the ad could explain. If this is not hypocrisy then what else is?

The Declining Influence of Western Media in India, and Global South

For decades, Western NGOs, Academia and Think-Tanks through its various tentacles, created a halo of uprightness for themselves, among the people in the Third World, and enchanted them with the fake impression that whatever they do, write, or advocate, are all for greater good, and that they can never be wrong.

Such impressions, bolstered time and again by Western media and Hollywood movies, through persistent narrative setting, made most in the Third World believe, and support, everything that Western media narrated, be it on West's invasion of Iraq, supporting anti-establishment elements in struggling Third World Countries, projecting

even acts of violence or civil unrest against incumbent Governments of Global South Countries as justified, glorifying terrorism in the name of resistance in Third World Countries, funding of regime change, demonising businessmen of Asia and Africa, triggering protests against industrialization through NGOs, indoctrination of Youth of Third World to believe that industrialisation is 'anti-people', terming shutting down of factories through violent protests as 'progressive' and 'pro-people' movements, demeaning nationalism, terming affinity towards native culture as being retrograde, and aping the West as being progressive. This went on for decades until social media arrived and exposed the truth to public .

The Modi Impact

In India too, it worked up till 2015 perhaps. But then the halo started peeling off. Inspired by PM Modi, India started witnessing a new wave of nationalism that was eager to embrace modernity and technology, and embed it with Bharat's ageless cultural ethos, sense of pride in civilizational heritage, and bond with family. As nationalism and 'pride of being an Indian' soared, the appeal of Western media started diminishing drastically. Anti-Indian news from Western media houses was no more getting endorsed by mass. Even domestic media houses were now countering it. The more Western media tried, the more they failed. The more they failed, the more they tried. Their disdain for India was so profound that where disinformation could not convince

anymore, they were replaced with caricatures, mockery and demeaning of Indian democracy, scoffing off its success in social welfare, and denigration of Indian entrepreneurs. The more they tried the more it became counterproductive though. It only helped in galvanising India even more, and made people rally behind PM Modi in unprecedented manner, reflected by successive electoral victories of BJP in state after state, as well as in Lok Sabha Elections.

Today, most in India do not take Western media too seriously. The erstwhile fake presumptions about the infallible nature of Western media are all gone now. Every time criticism is hurled through vitriolic op-ed in New York Times, Washington Post or Wall Street Journal, it only ends up bolstering the resolve of Indians to defy Western sermons even more. Most now even question about the neutrality of such newspapers, and most are convinced about the ulterior motives, the vested interests, and white supremacist attitude that exist beneath the veneer of uprightness of such media outlets now. Are we to believe that Washington Post, now owned by Jeff Bezos, founder of Amazon, is neutral? As Gautam Mukherjee writes in Firstpost, 'it is curious why Jeff Bezos is keen on maligning India given the considerable business his company does here'^{lvii}. Quest for a more compliant Government which would make laws more amenable to foreign ecommerce giants at the cost of the interests of small traders? Point to ponder.

Gautam Mukherjee further writes, in his Op-Ed on Firstpost,

‘It would appear that the Western media, tacitly backed by its governments, prefers a more malleable and corrupt Opposition, instead of the patriotic and financially incorruptible government led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi. As

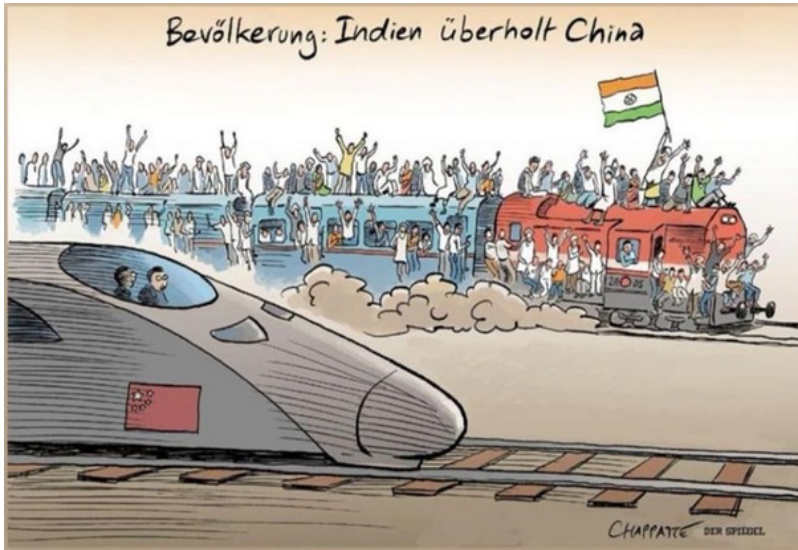
a whole, the Western powers may be interested in curbing Chinese influence and supply chains post Covid, but they are not comfortable with an independent-minded India either. They are not used to an erstwhile third world brown peopled country following its own national interest as it sees fit’^{lviii}

How Western Media Persistently Caricatured India: A Reflection of Colonial Mindset?



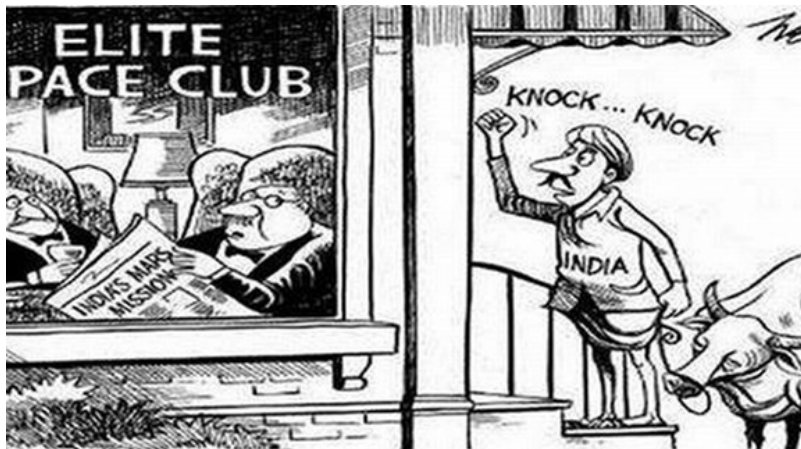
Spanish Newspaper La Vanguardia, mocks India's economic surge through full-page caricature and titled it 'The hour of the Indian economy' with the image of a Snake Charmer. Spain is currently ranked 15th while India is ranked 5th Globally in terms of Nominal GDP

Courtesy The Economic Times^{lix}



Germany's leading newspaper Der Spiegel's racist caricature of India overtaking China in terms of population

Courtesy: Hindustan Times^{lx}



The infamous New York Times Cartoon in 2014, mocking India's Space Success

Photo Courtesy: The Hindu^{lxi}

Will Western Media Clarify its Stand on European Neocolonialism in Africa?

The double standards of the Western media while evaluating Asian countries, and especially India in the recent past, even while whitewashing the colonial or neocolonial crimes of many Western countries in Africa, and elsewhere, is now getting increasingly exposed. Country after country in Central Africa are now resisting the persistent dominance, military presence, and interference of their erstwhile colonisers in their internal affairs, in spite of these countries having gained independence from the European colonisers long time back.

The questions that are needed to be asked to Western Media Houses are the following:

- How much have the Western media been critical of the European oppression of Africa, the sheer loot of minerals, the blatant interference in their internal affairs, the civil war like situations orchestrated in innumerable countries, the dirty games of regime change that have been done with impunity for decades?
- How much have the Western media been critical of the manner in which countries like Libya and Iraq were destroyed in the name of ‘War on Terror’, pushing these countries into the bottomless pit of chaos, even when there was no evidence of the regimes

of either of the two countries having actively colluded with terror groups, or having any link to 9/11 terror attack?

- Did the Western Media ever ask for court proceedings against such countries and their leaders who have been responsible for genocidal devastations in Iraq, Libya or Afghanistan?

Leave alone being vocally critical, on the contrary, the Western media, or at least a section of it, have often played the role of justifying what was done in those places.

India Under PM Modi Gave Unprecedented Respect to Africa which Western Media Deliberately Ignored

In fact, it was India under Prime Minister Modi, which took the initiative of including African Union in the G20 framework, something, which for sure, many in the West never liked as an idea. And after all these, the Western think-tanks, academia still have the audacity to come out with indexes which, invariably would put the Western media and the Western countries in the higher pedestal, and pin down those countries through lower rankings, who perhaps they, or their sponsors, feel must be cornered and who they feel must be ‘taught a lesson’ for ‘not towing’ to the Western lines.

People from West Flock in Millions to India in Search of Spiritual Peace: And Yet, The Agenda Driven Western Think Tanks Would Term India as an Unhappy Place

Interestingly, The World Happiness Report lists India at 126th position^{lxii}, behind even Sri Lanka, Nepal China and Bangladesh. This index too is a Western creation, and invariably they have kept the European nations and US ahead of the rest. In case of Asia, it is also expected to believe that people in a Communist China, are happier than those in India.

It is indeed an irony that for centuries, and more so now, every year millions of tourists from Western Hemisphere, as also from elsewhere, come to India in spiritual search of inner peace because material opulence could not give them that solace. Even a casual visit to Varanasi, Vrindavan, Mayapaur and Dharamshala, to name a few, would anytime vindicate this statement.

In the West, and especially in US, there are tremendous challenges going on with issues of mental health and associated gun violence. Issues of high level of consumption of alcohol and substance abuse are highly prevalent in Europe^{lxiii} and North America. In the West, the entire concept of 'Family' has disintegrated, and the sense of loneliness as well as associated issues of mental depression are real. Wokeism has almost destroyed the fundamental building blocks of society there.

A whole new generation has come

up with no sense of root and belonging. They live as individual entities, alone and perpetually in a state of mental crisis, depression, and other health issues with no family to bank on. Eventually alcoholism, obesity, dependence on anti-depressants, high rate of suicides and gun violence have become more of norm than exception in those regions. Add to this the high level of dependence on credit for sustenance, low levels of savings also add to the woes of people of the so-called Western developed countries.

The intriguing question then is how to define happiness? Who is the best judge for it? Does it mean that someone who has high level of consumption of alcohol, spends most nights in rave parties or dance bars, splurges on shopping with credit cards are more happy than someone who lives a disciplined life, returns from office to study for a better life, saves money, leads a conservative lifestyle, and does not waste it on needless consumptions?

The Irony: The Happiest Countries from Global North Also Have Very High Suicide Rates

The fallacy of many of these indexes, and how they often fail to get the larger picture, is evident from the paradox of the fact that some of the so called most advanced, and happiest, countries (as per the World Happiness Index), also rank pretty high in terms of suicide rates among countries.

There is no denial that mental

illness is a serious concern of 21st Century and it does need global focus. However, without showing any disrespect to those who unfortunately died by committing suicides, purely if one looks at the comparative indexes, and unless one has to draw the erroneous conclusion that people are committing suicides out of sheer happiness, one is compelled to conclude that the World Happiness Index is just as fallacious as those on

hunger and press freedom.

Take for example the case of Finland^{lxiv} which has been termed as the happiest country in the world with Happiness Score of 7.8, as per World Happiness Report, 2023. However, what raises eyebrows is the fact that it is also among the top 30 countries of the world, on the suicide index as well. It has a total of 15.3^{lxv} suicides per one hundred thousand of population.

Country	Total Suicide Rate (per 100k)		Male Rate (per 100k)		Female Rate (per 100k)	
	Min	Max	Min	Max	Min	Max
Botswana	16.1		26.3		6.4	
Japan	15.3		21.8		9.2	
Finland	15.3		23.2		7.6	
Estonia	14.9		24.3		6.5	
Sweden	14.7		19.9		9.5	
Moldova	14.7		26.1		4.1	
Solomon Islands	14.7		27		1.9	
Austria	14.6		22.8		6.7	
Cuba	14.5		23		6	
Switzerland	14.5		20.2		9	

showing: 179 rows

Source: <https://worldpopulationreview.com/country-rankings/suicide-rate-by-country>

Incidentally, Finland is not an exception. One can take the example of Belgium as well which has been ranked 17th in the world as per the World Happiness Index^{lxvi}. Ironically, Belgium also ranks^{lxvii} 17th in the rank of countries with the highest suicide rates^{lxviii}.

The story does not end there. A striking similarity of being ranked high in the Happiness Index as well as in the Suicide Index, can be found for many other countries of the Western

Hemisphere, including Sweden, United States, Austria and Switzerland to name a few. India ranks much lower in the Suicide Index compared to the countries mentioned above. If this does not expose the fallacies of such indexes, then what else does?

Among the key factors, based on which the Happiness Index is made, includes the following

- Social Support
- Income

- Health
- Freedom
- Generosity
- Absence of Corruption

Source: <https://happiness-report.s3.amazonaws.com/2023/WHR+23.pdf>

How Consistently They Fail to Understand India

Now let us take the case of India. Interestingly, even today in India, even if a stranger visits the home of a person from extremely modest background, he would never be shooed away, or accused of trespassing. Instead, he would be greeted with a smile, and treated as a revered guest, defined by the philosophies of *Atithi Devo Bhava*, and would be served with whatever food that would be available at that home, even if the host would otherwise be struggling to make both ends meet.

Therefore, from the perspective of **Generosity**, and the sense of happiness that comes from sharing, which is a critical part of Indian ethos, as well as the manner in which major Indian NGOs such as Akshay Patra Foundation, Ram Krishna Mission, Bharat Sevashram to name a few, (even though there are thousands of such genuine NGOs) work, to stand by the underprivileged, it is either that West does not understand it, or deliberately underestimate their contribution. The way members of Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh, in millions, worked in tandem with Government agencies to distribute basic necessities

to people during any natural calamity or during the pandemic induced lockdown, can simply not be found anywhere else in the world.

Likewise, the kind of **Social Support** Government of India has been giving through PM-GKAY, MUDRA Yojana, Swachh Bharat Abhiyan, free vaccines, and a whole host of other schemes, it is difficult to fathom as to how the makers of such reports can ignore the magnitude of the work that is done by countries like India to take care of their people through govt-funded social welfare schemes.

On the issue of **Income** as well, what most fail to comprehend is that in terms of Purchasing Power Parity, India is the third largest economy of the world, with one of the lowest costs of living. Also, in case of India, especially in rural and suburban, even in metropolitan cities, the prevalence of joint families, and families where the sons and parents live in the same house even after the sons have got married, the concept of cumulative income, and how it acts as a cushion during difficult times, is something which, many in the West fail to comprehend.

On the issue of **Health**, without even going into details, the management of Covid pandemic has shown to rest of the world that it is one thing to have good healthcare infrastructure on paper, but completely a different thing when it is put to test in the most challenging times. India's healthcare was able to do much better than rest.

Likewise, on the issue of **Freedom**,

it would be futile to even explain to the West what freedom means to a country like India, what it takes to fight and snatch it from colonisers, and how freedom does not mean absence of discipline or being all alone. This, till date, the people of the Western Hemisphere have never understood, as to what makes even the modest Indian, living with a big family, amidst a bigger neighbourhood, where everyone knows each other, is so content in life, in spite of a multitude of struggles. And yet they would judge India and its people all the time. On issues of political freedom as well, the fact that democracy has been working seamlessly in a country of 140 crore people, is itself a reflection of free choices Indians have to choose their Governments.

How the Covid Pandemic Broke Many of the Myths of the Western World

Interestingly, the West had a presumption perhaps that the countries of Western Hemisphere were far better prepared to deal with a pandemic like Covid than most of their Asian counterparts. Just as India now is being consistently ranked lower the table on every count, in spite of its phoenix like rise in post Covid era, in a similar fashion, many of the so-called ‘Western Experts’ had predicted an impending catastrophe that was about to hit India as a result of the Covid Pandemic, and the associated economic challenges. Some from the West even went on to give prophecies that no less than 12-24 crore^{lxx} people would be affected by Covid pandemic

in India.

However, what happened in reality was entirely different. The total number of cases in India was less than 5 crores (4.5 crore to be precise)^{lxx}, with far less mortality than global average, a magnificent feat for a country with 140 crore population and high population density, something that baffles the West till date.

What West Fails to Comprehend: How Families and Communities in Indian Context Act as Cushion During Tumultuous Times

While the West grappled badly with the pandemic challenges in spite of having a far better healthcare infrastructure, in case of India, families, neighbourhoods and Indian NGOs worked hand in hand with the state machineries to help people. Whether it was the pandemic or any of the economic challenges, the families, neighbourhoods, communities, societies and colonies in India, stood like rock, to help and support each other.

And yet, the West would have the audacity to say that India is a country of unhappy people. Does having aspiration for a better life and striving for the same through hard work, sometimes without holidays, or being conservative in life’s approach, especially being against mindless consumerism, or helping each other in the family and community, instead of being self-serving, or not splurging with borrowed money, and being

rooted to culture and traditional value systems, mean Indians are less happy? Certainly not.

India is a nation of festivities and celebration. Its resonance of colours and bliss across festivities is something that people of West flock here to witness and be part of. India therefore, does not need Western validations on its way of life. The trick here is again in the manner in which the questions are framed by such surveys to draw a certain kind of conclusions, which invariably is to show countries like India in bad light.

If one takes into account the issues of mental health, then it is definitely a problem that is plaguing the whole world, but its incidence is much less in India when compared to its impact in Western Europe or North America, as proportion to population. The pandemic did have its impact on mental health across the world, but pinning that as a reason for India to be ranked so low, is nothing but deliberate and blatantly wrong extrapolation. As stated earlier, how much the concept of 'Family' works to make people in India, and even in East Asia, less susceptible to issues of mental health, depression or stress related disorders, is something West would always fail to comprehend.

The Sinister Role that Some of the So-Called Western Philanthropists Play

The story does not end here. There is an increasing trend wherein one can witness how some so-called philanthropists based in the West, have

made it a habit to fund such surveys. Take for example how a concerted effort has been made for quite some time to pin down and malign the names of some of India's major industrialists. It is kind of strange that a discreet campaign goes on through social and mainstream media wherein the West based entrepreneurs, start-up founders and industrialists are projected as 'global change agents' 'visionaries', 'thinkers' and 'kind-hearted', while projecting Indian industrialists exactly in the opposite manner.

How can one forget the likes of George Soros and the concerted effort that he, and organisations supported by him, made to target certain Indian industrialists, with explicit hope that it would create political and electoral ripples in India. In other words, would it be too wrong to say that he has been desperately hoping, and working, towards a regime change, through 'Colour Revolution' or orchestrated civilian unrest, not just in India but elsewhere too? It is not for nothing that India's External Affairs Minister Dr S. Jaishankar termed George Soros as '*old, rich, opinionated and dangerous*^{lxxi}'

Is India Being Projected in Bad Light for Not Being Compliant to Diktats of West?

It is often alleged that many so-called philanthropists have often been suspected to be front of other organisations intricately connected to deep states of certain countries. So, it is not surprising why a whole bunch of global surveys continue to

show India in bad light, especially at a time when India has emerged as a more resilient economy than what it was before the Covid pandemic, and has done much better as an economy through tumultuous times of Covid, post Covid economic challenges, in the middle global supply chain disruption impacts and above all, the challenge to produce and vaccinate a huge population, which it did deal with much elan and efficiency.

Or is it that India is being targeted by these so-called surveys, and being projected with lot of negativities, primarily because India is emerging more of a competitor than a mere market? Is it because India in certain ways is defying the Western diktats, and challenging the global status-quo by seeking reforms in multilateral institutions, taking initiative to include African Union in G20, and becoming the de facto torchbearer of the concerns of Global South?



By Ensuring African Union's Inclusion into the G20 Framework, PM Modi Bestowed Unprecedented Honour on the African Continent. (Pic)

Not only India became more resilient in the post pandemic era, in spite of global supply chain constraints, it also through its G20 Presidency brought the developing countries of the world, commonly known as Global South, under one umbrella and voiced the need for reforms in global multilateral institutions such as UN, IMF, World Bank and WHO, to make them respond better to the needs of the developing economies of the world.

Is the West Becoming Uncomfortable with India's Emergence as De Facto Voice of Global South Under PM Modi's Leadership?

What PM Modi Stated at the Voice of Global South Summit in January, 2023:

We, the Global South, have the largest stakes in the future. Three fourths of humanity lives in our countries. We should also have equivalent voice. Hence, as the eight-decade old model of global governance slowly changes, we should try to shape the emerging order.

Most of the global challenges have not been created by the Global South. But they affect us more. We have seen this in the impacts of COVID pandemic, climate change, terrorism and even the Ukraine conflict. The search for solutions also does not factor in our role or our voice.

India has always shared its developmental experience with our brothers of the Global South. Our development partnerships cover all geographies and diverse sectors. We supplied medicines and vaccines to over 100 countries during the pandemic. India has always stood for greater role of developing countries in determining our common future.

As India begins its G20 Presidency this year, it is natural that our aim is to amplify the Voice of the Global South. For our G-20 Presidency, we have chosen the theme of – “One Earth, One Family, One Future”. This is in line with our civilizational ethos. We believe the path to realizing ‘oneness’ is through human-centric development. People of Global South should no longer be excluded from the fruits of development. Together we must attempt to redesign global political and financial governance. This can remove inequities, enlarge opportunities, support growth and spread progress and prosperity.

To re-energise the world, we should together call for a global agenda of ‘Respond, Recognize, Respect and Reform’: Respond to

the priorities of the Global South by framing an inclusive and balanced international agenda. Recognize that the principle of ‘Common but Differentiated Responsibilities’ applies to all global challenges. Respect sovereignty of all nations, rule of law and peaceful resolution of differences and disputes; and Reform international institutions, including the United Nations, to make them more relevant.

Despite the challenges the developing world faces, I remain optimistic that our time is coming. The need of the hour is to identify simple, scalable and sustainable solutions that can transform our societies and economies. With such an approach, we shall overcome the difficult challenges- whether it is poverty, universal healthcare or building human capacities. In the last Century, we supported each other in our fight against foreign rule. We can do it again in this Century, to create a new World Order that will ensure the welfare of our citizens. As far as India is concerned, your Voice is India’s Voice. Your Priorities are India’s Priorities. (Excerpts)

Source: <https://www.pmindia.gov.in>

Interestingly, much as India remains at loggerheads with China on various issues, it did not make India veer into the arms of the West, as many had anticipated. Some even had presumed that India would now be a willing

and readymade front of the West to contain China. However, it seems they were wrong in understanding India. In simple terms, India was not willing to be West’s ‘Asian Ukraine’ to counter China. Also, India refused

to stop buying crude oil and other commodities from Russia in spite of stiff pressure from the West. Not just that, India's External Affairs Minister Dr S Jayshankar showed the mirror the West, not once just but several times. PM Modi has firmly maintained an 'India First' policy and ensured good relation with both West and Russia.

Further, India dealt with the entire Covid pandemic without importing any vaccine, and to make the Indian economy more resilient, PM Modi led Indian Government went ahead with a series of measures to boost domestic manufacturing, something that may be an anathema for at least some of the major corporate cartels abroad, especially those who look at India as no more than a mere market for their products, and abhor to witness the emergence of India as a competitor. India is slated to be a major hub of global manufacturing in the times to come, and policies under *Atmanirbhar Bharat Abhiyan* including PLI scheme, allowing 100% FDI on contract manufacturing, and reducing corporate tax rates are all aimed at that.

If the anti-India tirade that is often orchestrated from West through their media houses and think-tanks, is not meant to pin down India, because India is emerging more as a 'Challenger', as well as one who is becoming 'Defiant' from at least a section of the Western perspective, then what else explains the sheer idiosyncrasy of such surveys that tend to project India lowly ranked even in case of democracy? Can there be anything more hilarious than that?

Does India Need Lessons in Democracy from Western Think-Tanks and NGOs? Certainly Not!

Take for example the survey on democracy that is done by V-Dem. It is important to mention that V-Dem^{lxxii} is funded by George Soros. In V-Dem's Electoral Democracy Index^{lxxiii}, India was ranked at the 108th position in 2023, which is even below Nigeria (91), Liberia (66), Ukraine (106), Somaliland (102), Malawi (64), Zambia (86), Sierra Leone (79) and Sri Lanka (78). No Wait, they even had ranked Guatemala (99) ahead of India, and expect Indians to take such reports seriously.

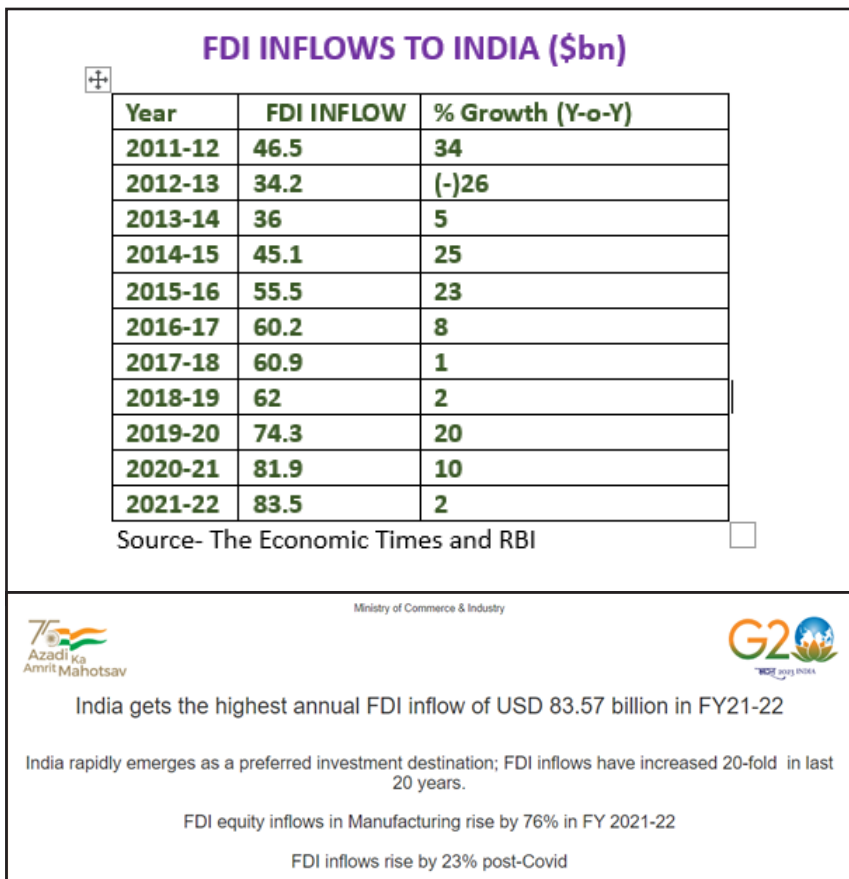
V-Dem wants the world to believe that India's democracy is worse than that of Nigeria, Liberia, Ukraine, and even Somaliland, and that India's democratic institutions and democratic processes are so abominable that India cannot be termed as a liberal democracy. Incidentally, many of the countries ranked above India in the index, have had chequered history mired in civil wars, social unrest, economic collapse to name a few. There are even question marks as to how some of them can even be termed democracy.

Moot question is whether India's democracy is being termed worse than that of Ukraine because regime change games in Ukraine were easier to play than that in India? One must remember the Maidan Revolution of 2014 and what happened there, as well as the

alleged external players involved in that regime change game, and how things went for the worse for Ukraine since then.

If Indeed Western Think-Tanks Believe India is in Poor Shape, Why then Flock to India to Invest & to Improve Diplomatic Ties?

The interesting question then, which would be asked to the makers of such indexes, is that if India’s democracy is so illiberal, and its democratic institutions are so unreliable, then why are American or Western European corporate entities jostling with each other to invest their hard-earned money in India? Why are European countries or even US keen to make India a ‘trusted partner’ then? Why not invest that money elsewhere?



Source- Press Information Bureau, Government of India,

Also, if India is not liberal, then why is it that more than 100 countries of Global South have reposed their faith on India as their voice and torchbearer, to raise such issues which, for long have been brushed aside and ignored by multilateral institutions controlled by Global North? If India is not liberal then how come in the most democratic manner with razor sharp efficiency, Government of India could make sure that all eligible citizens of India would get free Covid vaccines, and more than 80 crore people of India would be ensured of free additional rations during the most challenging times of Covid and post Covid phase? If India is not liberal then how could India, year after year, hold elections in the most efficient manner, with record number of voters exercising their democratic rights, and ensuring seamless transition of power without any violence or litigations?

Can Western Think-Tanks Ever Comprehend the Scale of India's Elections?

To understand the scale of Indian elections and how they are conducted in the most efficient manner, and at a magnitude that most Western countries cannot even fathom, let us consider the Lok Sabha Elections of 2019 that was conducted in seven phases between 11th of April and 19th of May, 2019. This was an election for 542 electoral constituencies, for which 8039 candidates^{lxxiv} from 650 political parties were in the fray, in which a near 900 million Indian citizens were eligible to vote.

For this, Election Commission of India had made preparations in 1,035,918 polling stations, 3.96 million electronic voting machines (EVM) and 1.74 million VVPAT units. This was an election for which Election Commission of India had made arrangements with 2.7 lakh Central Police Force personnel and 2 million State Police Personnel^{lxxv}. If countries of Global North or the Western Hemisphere or their think-tanks and NGOs have to understand even the basics of what last mile voting means, then they must come to India to understand what kind of preparations it takes to ensure that not even a single Indian eligible voter, staying in some of the remotest parts of India, is deprived of their voting rights. The Election Commission of India ensure a polling booth, and sends election officials even to those places where even a single voter resides.

More importantly, in spite of the most acrimonious campaigns that happens in India's elections, when the results come out, there has never been any major incident of the incumbent political party in power, showing reluctance to hand over the reign, in case the verdict of the election goes against them. One can contrast this with what happened in US in January 2021 in what is commonly known as Capitol riots. Moreover, post-election litigations are a common stuff in US. In countries like UK, no one nowadays keep a count of the number of times Prime Ministers change. Contrast this with seamless transition of power in India, and political stability that is now a norm than an exception.

Many Countries Ranked Above India in Democracy Index, Would Have Withered Away if They had To Deal with India's Complexities and Challenges

It is rather sidesplitting that V-Dem not only ranked many such countries with chequered past of military coups, civil wars and frequent constitutional crises ahead of India, in their rankings, but also attempted to compare a democracy like India with Scandinavian countries, who are always ranked among the top league of such charts. Given India's population, complexities and a multitude of diverse challenges that it faces, including a troubled neighborhood along with relentless wave of terrorism and threats of war, the fact that India has maintained its stoic restraint and continues to repose its faith in democracy is in itself its victory. It does not need any validation from a George Soros funded agency.

Also, the fact that India has remained a functional democracy defined by rule of law, and guided by constitution, as well as an independent judiciary, that it never got mired in a civil war, in spite of foreign funded insurgent groups, cross border terror groups and foreign NGOs funded anarchists attempting the same innumerable times, the fact that it has, in spite of constraints of democracies, been able to take along everyone, even while implementing major economic

reforms, and delivered results in terms of increasing prosperity of people, reducing poverty and consistently raising GDP levels, is itself a vindication of its democratic stability. Between 2015-16 and 2019-21 alone, India brought 135 million people out of multidimensional poverty^{lxxvi}, in spite of major challenges. Incidentally, 135 million is a little less than half of the population of US.

Many of the Western European or Scandinavian countries, would have withered away long time back if they had to manage India's complexities, challenges and threats, and yet had to remain steadfast as a democracy.

There is no democracy in the world which does not have its of set of shortfalls and misgivings. Yet, in spite of all of that, no one, who has ever resided in India, would ever say that India is not democratic. At its core, in its ethos, as part of its heritage, India has been democratic in its DNA much before these ideas germinated in the Western Hemisphere. And unlike many in the West, who claim to champion so- called liberal democracy, India does not have a history of colonising other countries or subjugating anyone else. On the contrary, India had to face centuries of suppression, oppressions, colonialism, subjugation, torment, destruction and loot. And yet India preferred to become democratic when it got independence in 1947, and still remains a vibrant one.

What Salvatore Babones Says on Flawed Practices behind India's Low Rankings

On the issue of India's low ranking in the democracy index, Salvatore Babones, Associate Professor at University of Sydney, stated during an interview,

'The problem is that the rankings do reflect the general opinion of the analysts and intellectuals who know the country. When the Economist Intelligence Unit democracy index ranks India, it is not sending a team to do fact finding. Instead, they send a survey. And all three organizations work the same way. They send a survey to people who are in the field.'

He further stated,

'In India's case, the survey is conducted by Indian intellectuals like university professors or non-residents Indians who teach/research outside India. The work can also go to journalists from outside India, authors and public intellectuals. We don't have access to the list of experts they rely on. The only thing we do know is that for each country they're relying on people who have some acknowledged expertise on the country. It is evident that Indian intellectuals and university professors have a clear bias against Narendra Modi and BJP.'

Source: Refer to <https://www.policycircle.org/society/low-democracy-index-rankings-for-india/>

Dr Salvatore Babones Exposes the Shortcomings of Democracy Surveys

In his newsletter, Dr. Salvatore Babones further states the following

- (1) The Varieties of Democracy Institute has always ranked India's democracy relatively poorly because its objective sub-indices in effect give India no credit for its objectively strong representative democracy based on genuine universal suffrage.**
- (2) The recent downgrading of Indian democracy by V-Dem has been driven entirely by subjective expert evaluations that rate India's electoral environment today as worse than at the height of the Emergency.**
- (3) V-Dem's electoral indicators fail to differentiate between genuine and "sham" democracies, with the result that one-party dictatorships can and often do score higher than real democracies for the quality of their elections.**

Source: <https://newsletter.salvatorebabones.com/p/inside-the-v-dem-rankings>

Have Reports by Western Think-Tanks & NGOs Become Tools to Pin Down Any Country Attempting to Emerge as Resilient and Defiant in its Foreign Policy?

Interestingly, these surveys, with a clear-cut bias, are not meant to show the real picture perhaps, and neither it is that India expects the makers of these surveys to ever acknowledge India's achievements. However, the reason why these surveys have recently developed a trend to project the world's largest democracy, and the fifth largest economy of the world, in an even more bad light, is perhaps because in the last nine years, India under leadership of PM Modi, has made laws against money laundering much stricter, have clamped down on thousands of such foreign NGOs or foreign funded NGOs, who in the name of social work, were involved in activities inimical to India. Also, India has taken stringent actions against the narcotics syndicates and have clamped down heavily on those involved in promoting secessionist agendas in India.

For some, that India is doing these things, which is hampering their vested interests of keeping India internally on the boil, is almost akin to India being illiberal perhaps

Be it Government of India's major policy initiatives such as Demonetisation, Citizenship

Amendment Act or CAA, farm reform laws or abrogation of Article 370, the general coverage of the affairs in Western media has been extremely regressive with a clear cut left leaning anti-establishment orientation, if one may say so, and with sheer lack of objectivity.

The coverage, in most cases, never attempted to understand the sheer purpose of the decisions and how it was for greater good. Whether it was the farm reform laws that were aimed at unshackling the farm sector from stranglehold of middlemen, and to give greater access of market to farmers, or the CAA aimed at prioritizing granting of Indian citizenship to religiously persecuted minorities in Pakistan, Bangladesh and Afghanistan, be it the policy decision of Demonetisation, or abrogation of Article 370, both of which, as policy decisions, were upheld by Supreme Court of India, the real purpose of the decisions, often never got attention or space in Western media's coverage and often got overwhelmed in the deliberate, agenda driven anti-establishment narrative creation job of West. The objective often seemed was to foment anti-Government resentment among people of India through sustained disinformation campaigns. Later, those very agenda driven articles were often resorted to, by makers of indexes, to push down India in rankings and to falsely project India as 'Electoral Autocracy'

It is almost a known fact how efforts have been made by vested interests to foment unrest in India through fake narrative building, spreading of

misinformation and instigating certain elements to go on rampage and take the nation to ransom. The objective in many such cases, was to provoke Indian law enforcement agencies so that they fire at provocateurs, and then it would be an opportune time for Western press to write vitriolic articles against Government of India to project how ‘inhuman’, ‘anti-democratic’ it is.

However, fortunately Government of India, and its agencies, understood the plot much in advance, and in most cases, showed extreme restraint even at the face of grave provocations, thereby nipping in the bud of plans of those who wanted to create an Arab Spring, or an Orange Revolution kind of civil war situation in India. Is their anger because they failed? Is this why India is now illiberal for them?

Also, India not only has been becoming a more resilient economy, but, as stated earlier, has been galvanizing Global South to challenge the status quo that since 1945 has worked mostly to the benefit of the Global North. Invariably, it is rattling those who for long benefitted from the status quo.

Incidentally, it is also to be mentioned that it has become a trend in some of the major Western media publications, to give space to write articles only to those which are known to be strong critic of India or Government of India. It is not easy to find a publication, which is willing to entertain anyone who wants to write a positive article on India’s achievements in the last one decade. There is perhaps a certain de facto red

line that only those articles would be given space and due compensation, which tend to be critical of India.

Target is Not Just Perhaps Government of India but Indian Nationalism, Culture, Heritage and Stability as Well

What has also been very alarming is the double standards that one can witness in Western publications demeaning traditions of Hindu culture, deliberately branding Hindu community as ‘intolerant’, and even going to the extent of showing double standards on issues of terrorism. There is not a single incident of any discrimination, on caste, creed or religion that has ever happened in India under PM Modi’s leadership, when it comes to delivering social welfare benefits, administering vaccines, disbursing additional free rations, building toilets, providing homes to the underprivileged under various schemes, sanctioning loans under MUDRA Yojana or in recognizing any Startup under Startup India initiative, in evacuation of its citizens from abroad during crisis situations, or extending relief to Indians during any natural calamity.

Yet, Western media and certain Commissions, spare no stone unturned to term Government of India under PM Modi’s leadership as ‘Far Right’ and ‘Hindu Nationalist’ in negative connotation. Europe must remember it is Europe that is the fountainhead of ‘Far Right’ politics. In India ‘Far Right’ has no place since Indian civilisational ethos has always been

all-encompassing. What one simply cannot comprehend is why being 'Hindu' and being 'Indian Nationalist' is projected in negative manner in West. Is being Nationalist wrong? Has Western media ever termed any US or Europe based incumbent Government as 'Christian Nationalist' in negative connotation? Is being Hindu wrong? Is preserving India's ancient culture which is *Sanatan* or eternal in its essence, wrong? The West must realise that at a time when multiculturalism has literally failed in Europe, India continues to be a melting pot of religions and cultures. However, if the Western concept of being 'liberal' would mean to allow the 'Nation' to be ravaged by vested interests and by agents of Wokeism, then certainly, India would not allow that any more.

Are Vested Interests Attempting to Undermine Nationalism in Developing Countries?

It must be mentioned here that George Soros has pledged \$1 billion to fund a new university network to tackle the spread of nationalism^{lxxvii}. In 2020, American Billionaire George Soros, (whom Elon Musk has termed as someone, who 'fundamentally hates humanity'^{lxxviii}), had stated that rise of nationalism is the 'great enemy'^{lxxix} of open society. George Soros apparently therefore wants nations to disintegrate. Certainly, India with a civilizational heritage that dates back to thousands of years, cannot be a lackey of George Soros, and toe to the lines of his whims.

Why Nationalism of India is an Anathema for Many in the West

And therefore, if for preserving India's civilizational heritage ethos, philosophy of global brotherhood, and spirituality, it has to end up in the bad book of the likes of George Soros and reports funded by him, then so be it. Agents of 'regime change' and creators of political turbulence globally, who masquerade as 'Philanthropists' would certainly not decide the destiny of India.

Nevertheless, it is still important to understand why the likes of George Soros, and perhaps many like him, consider 'Nationalism' as an anathema. It can be easily deciphered that separating an individual from his roots, family values, cultural ethos, pride in civilizational heritage, sense of belonging to his/her nation, and attachment to family, are perhaps precursors before he can be brainwashed into an anarchist and a left-wing woke, who has no sense of belonging to anything. That is the creed which then latch on to vitriolic diatribes hurled by pseudo-liberal Wokes, who poison their minds with misinformation, make them turn against their nation, and who make them their foot soldiers of mayhem in society, who then would not mind to just spread violence and destruction.

Those isolated souls, devoid of any sense of pride, belonging or attachment

to family or nation, with no sense of purpose, then get addicted to alcohol, or narcotics, live with perpetual disgruntlement and eventually turn destructive. They either destroy their own nations or themselves or both. That is how Arab Spring was triggered in Middle East that plunged nation after nation into horrendous civil war like situation. It happened in many other places as well, especially the games of regime change through orchestrated and triggered nationwide mass protests, often in all of which, the role of foreign, especially Western NGOs is strongly suspected.

Attempts were made in India too, and not just in the recent past alone. For long, India could never leverage its real potential. It perpetually remained short of what it was always capable of achieving. A combination of lackadaisical policies, declining sense of pride, rising corruption, frequent unrests, violent disruptions to process of industrialization, rise in insurgency, glorification of Maoist movement, and above all, the rising stranglehold of foreign NGOs in the affairs of India, ensured brain drain continued unabated, and India remained forever dependent on crucial imports. Add to it corruption and misgovernance that pulled India down even more. Not just that. Perpetual denigration of Hinduism, and Indian civilizational culture was the norm, exacerbated by a ruling elite of yesteryears, which showed no inclination to stem the tide. One was not considered elite enough, and part of the club, unless he has distanced himself, and denigrated Hinduism enough. That was the norm.

Adherence to *Sanatani* ethos was often perceived as being regressive.

Prime Minister Modi's advent changed all of that. Not only he played a pivotal role in making the young generation get rooted to India's ethos more profoundly, but also through decisive policy making, took India from the list of Fragile Five to be among the Major Five economies of the world in less than a decade. Today, India is on its path to become a \$5 trillion economy in the next few years, and eventually a \$10 trillion economy in the next one decade. Its armed forces have been revitalised as well. Today as things stand, the kind of stories that Western media peddle by maligning PM Modi led India, is backfiring.

Today, for Western media, it is next to impossible to make Indian youth have empathy for rabble rousers, overground workers and sympathisers of terror groups and anarchists. And thus, there is no doubt that the likes of George Soros and his cohorts are concerned about a 'resurgent India' under PM Modi that now cannot be manipulated anymore for their vested interests. Their business of narrative manipulation and keeping control of global affairs have hit the roadblock named India.

Blatant Double Standards of West, Even on Issues of Terrorism, is Now Exposed

Whenever the countries of Western Hemisphere, or Global North, have been targeted by terrorism, the rest of the world was expected to rally

behind them and condemn in unison such incidents, and even was expected to go to war on their behalf. But when terrorism strikes rest of the world, especially countries like India, then the pendulum of reaction vacillates from stoic silence to terming perpetrators as ‘gunmen’, ‘insurgent’ or ‘rebel’, instead of calling them terrorists. Some even go to the extent of terming designated terrorists as ‘activists’ or mere ‘separatists’, thereby whitewashing their call for violence and armed attacks on military and civilian institutions. Some Western publications for long even justified such attacks and delved into utopian ‘root cause investigations’ drama instead of just condemning such attacks in no uncertain terms. India has faced such travesties for decades.

Even today, even though Global North perceives India as a preferred destination for investments, both because of its market potential, education base and low-cost manufacturing potential, it at the same time remains sympathetic towards a rogue state like Pakistan, which is known for its role as a terror incubation hub, and for fomenting terrorism across the border into India. One does not get surprised witnessing the kid-glove approach towards Pakistan from West, even today, and how conveniently it gets out of the clutches of FATF^{lxxx} in spite of continuing to be a hub of terrorism. It is not that India does not understand the deep games and double standards of West.

Even on the issue of anti- India secessionist movements, and acts of terror, targeted killings, and

civil unrest being orchestrated by Khalistani elements from soils of UK, US or Canada, and especially from Canada, there seems to be similar stoic silence, almost on the borderline of discreet endorsement, on the part of the G-7 countries. Even when heinous threats of blowing up Indian civilian aircrafts^{lxxxi} or death threats to Indian diplomats and lawmakers are given from their soil, there is a palpable tendency to look the other way by Governments of those countries, instead of showing the same ‘no tolerance towards terrorism’ attitude, which those countries, incidentally, expect from India when West is attacked by terror elements.

Are Some Playing a Double Game with India?

It is highly unlikely that many of the NGOs who have shown their open disdain for India, and continue to malign India in various ways, some even dreaming and hoping of a civilian uprising, work in silos without anyone directing them to take a specific line. It would not be surprising, as is often alleged, if at least some of them have direct or discreet understanding to act as fronts for deep states of certain countries, and actively collaborate in the ‘regime change’ projects.

That is the irony that India has to deal with in today’s era. Some even allege that the very

same countries which term India as their close and strategic partners, while extending one hand of friendship, ensures that the other hand works in containing, restraining, and even destabilising India.

In the end, it seems, in spite of pontificating on virtues of democracy, freedom, rule of law, free world, they still want pliable Governments who would toe to their lines, parrot their views, go to war on their behalf, whenever asked for, and ensure that interests of the West are never compromised. West, everything said and done, want to be treated as 'First among Equals'. Whoever emerges as independent or attempts to do so, becomes a 'Pariah' for them.

Is it Time for India to Develop Its Own Template to Counter these Challenges?

There is no denial that India shares various areas of convergence with the West. It would also be unfair to presume that everyone from West is against India. There are many in the West who back India and its progress. There are many genuine business entities and support groups who root for India and its stand on various issues. Heads of States of various major countries share a warm and cordial relation with Prime Minister of India. It was also evident recently when G20 for the year 2023, under India's Presidency, was successful in

unanimously passing the New Delhi Leaders' Declaration. It must be remembered that West itself is deeply divided on many issues. There are deep fissures and fault lines in their social and political structures today. Democracies, even in the West are not without deep seated factionalisms, wherein, if one group in a country wants to contain India, the other side genuinely wants India to progress.

However, at least from a significant and powerful section of West, potentially front-ended by Western NGOs and media, as India strives to be more resilient, independent and economically a voice to reckon with, it would be showered with more such brickbats and deliberate negative narratives. Among them, at least some sections of powerful cartels or deep states certainly would want to contain India. They, as it seems, neither want India to collapse like Pakistan, nor would they want to witness India emerge as a powerful and unrelenting rival like China.

They certainly, it seems, had plans to put India somewhere in between. This means a situation where India remains an externally stable country but, in many ways, would remain internally in chaos, as well as perpetually dependent on the West for critical imports.

For years, at least some of the foreign NGOs, backed by powerful cartels, and aided by certain internal elements, have worked to capitalize on India's fault lines to fulfill this

objective. For them, ‘India is a great country, so long as India remains only a market and a subservient partner’. That plan, of theirs’, seems to be failing now. And that is where one can witness the restlessness of the likes of George Soros resulting in his anti-India diatribes.

What Should India do? Well, it certainly does not mean that India should stop its journey of progress. It also does not mean that it should give up its close proximity with its Western allies. It only means that India should continue with its work to make the country more resilient, develop template to counter the fake narratives, and expose the vested interests of such NGOs, and ensure that as a nation, India no more takes anyone’s friendship at face value.

There is one thing however that India has never done. It has never developed its own army of NGOs and think-tanks to pin down other countries through proxy battles of misinformation and disinformation, or narrative shaping. It has never attempted to leverage the internal fissures in those countries, who claim to be India’s allies but spare no opportunity to continuously hurt Indian interests through other means. India has always honoured its commitments towards its allies and partners. Whether India should explore that option or play by the rulebook, as it has always done, in terms of never interfering or commenting on the internal affairs of any ally, partner or friend, has to be decided by its policymakers. But nevertheless, its time perhaps, as some would say, may

On a concluding note, it must be mentioned what the Russian President Vladimir Putin recently stated about Prime Minister Modi. He Stated the following

“I cannot imagine that Modi could be intimidated, or forced to take any actions, steps and decisions that are contrary to the national interests of India and the Indian people. And there is such pressure, I know. By the way, he and I never even talk about this. I just look at what is happening from the outside, and sometimes, to be honest, I’m even surprised at his tough position on defending the national interests of the Indian state,” ^{lxxxvii}

have arrived.

That says a lot about what India currently is facing in its mission to emerge as self-reliant, assertive, and defiant, riding on an independent foreign policy that puts the interest of people of India at its pinnacle rather than appease any major power bloc, as even as it aspires to maintain good relation with everyone and become the bridge to tide over major differences that keeps the world in perpetual state of turmoil.

(Pathikrit Payne is a Senior Research Fellow with Dr. Syama Prasad Mookerjee Research Foundation, and a Well Known Geopolitical Analyst. Views expressed are his own)

ENDNOTES & REFERENCES

- i. Refer to <https://www.myscheme.gov.in/schemes/pm-gkay>
- ii. Refer to data provided by Press Information Bureau, <https://pib.gov.in/PressReleaseIframePage.aspx?PRID=1980689>
- iii. Refer to Press Release by Press Information Bureau, <https://pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=1842157#:~:text=In%20a%20historic%20achievement%2C%20India's,2%2C63%2C26%2C111%20sessions.>
- iv. Refer to data on page of Ministry of External Affairs, <https://www.mea.gov.in/vaccine-supply.htm>
- v. Refer to article by Reuters, <https://www.reuters.com/business/healthcare-pharmaceuticals/who-warns-against-vaccine-hoarding-poor-countries-go-without-2021-12-09/>
- vi. Refer to article published by CNBC, <https://www.cnbc.com/2021/04/22/covid-rich-countries-are-refusing-to-waive-ip-rights-on-vaccines.html>
- vii. Refer to official data provided by Government of India, <https://static.mygov.in/indiancc/2021/07/mygov-1000000000382602708.pdf>
- viii. Refer to article in The Economic Times Portal, <https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/economy/indicators/india-is-the-bright-spot-on-the-dark-global-horizon-imf-md-kristalina-georgieva/articleshow/94842867.cms>
- ix. Refer to article in The Economic Times, <https://bfsi.economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/industry/world-banks-g20-document-on-indias-dpi-testament-to-rapid-progress-and-innovation-pm-modi/103512795>
- x. Refer to report in Outlook Magazine, <https://business.outlookindia.com/news/world-bank-praises-indias-digital-infrastructure-for-its-transformative-potential>
- xi. Refer to data provided by Press Information Bureau, <https://pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=1913106>
- xii. Refer to article in The Financial Express, <https://www.financialexpress.com/business/sme-msme-fin-pm-modi-8-crore-youngsters-have-become-entrepreneurs-first-time-with-mudra-loans-2987091/>
- xiii. Refer to article on Business Line, <https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/economy/india-crossed-750-billion-in-exports-on-track-to-achieve-2-trillion-target-goyal/article66672241.ece>
- xiv. Refer to article in Mint, <https://www.livemint.com/economy/indias-foreign-exchange-reserves-rose-2-5-billion-to-598-billion-rbi-data-11701434212203.html>

- xv. Refer to article in Business Today, <https://www.businesstoday.in/latest/economy/story/indias-gdp-crosses-3-trillion-mark-hits-375-tn-in-2023-finance-ministry-385165-2023-06-12>
- xvi. Refer to article in The Economic Times, <https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/international/business/eurozone-in-recession-at-start-of-2023/articleshow/100848910.cms>
- xvii. Refer to <https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/india/air-india-boeing-deal-to-create-1-million-jobs-in-the-us-president-biden-tells-pm-modi/articleshow/97945247.cms>
- xviii. Refer to Press Release by Press Information Bureau, <https://pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=1955439>
- xix. Refer to <https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/india/level-of-hunger-in-india-serious-ranks-107-on-global-hunger-index-2022/articleshow/94876759.cms>
- xx. Refer to <https://indianexpress.com/article/india/ranks-111th-global-hunger-index-2023-erroneous-measure-8980416/>
- xxi. Refer to article in Business Today, <https://www.businesstoday.in/latest/world/story/pakistan-wheat-shortage-people-fight-over-flour-sacks-in-markets-minister-says-crisis-can-worsen-further-359905-2023-01-12>
- xxii. Refer to article in BBC, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-62104268>
- xxiii. Refer to article in Business Standard, https://www.business-standard.com/article/international/india-provided-nearly-4-billion-in-food-financial-assistance-to-sri-lanka-122090500038_1.html
- xxiv. Refer to <https://www.indiatoday.in/business/story/india-rice-export-ban-impact-on-global-importers-supply-chain-issues-2411961-2023-07-26>
- xxv. Refer to Article in Hindustan Times, <https://www.hindustantimes.com/india-news/imf-chief-praises-india-s-economy-says-bright-spot-101681262524530.html>
- xxvi. Refer to PIB Press Release <https://pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=1868103>
- xxvii. Refer to <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ItMtAiBHOsY>
- xxviii. Refer to article in The Hindu, <https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/news/slick-founder-prabir-purkayastha-arrested-in-uapa-case/article67376922.ece>
- xxix. Refer to <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/videos/news/bbc-admits-tax-evasion-in-india-underreported-4-8mn-income-report/videoshow/100809716.cms>

- xxx. Refer to Ofcom website report <https://www.ofcom.org.uk/news-centre/2021/ofcom-revokes-cgtn-licence-to-broadcast-in-uk>
- xxxi. Refer to Reuters article <https://www.reuters.com/article/britain-ofcom-cgtn-idINKBN2A41DT/#:~:text=After%20an%20investigation%2C%20the%20British,controlled%20by%20the%20Communist%20Party.>
- xxxii. Refer to The Times of India article, <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/bbc-taking-money-from-chinese-firm-huawei-in-cash-for-propaganda-deal-jethmalani-on-pm-modi-documentary-row/articleshow/97488021.cms?from=mdr>
- xxxiii. Refer to Reuters article, <https://www.reuters.com/world/europe/eu-bans-rt-sputnik-banned-over-ukraine-disinformation-2022-03-02/>
- xxxiv. Refer to report in Outlook Magazine, <https://indianexpress.com/article/india/europe-has-to-grow-out-of-mindset-that-its-problems-are-worlds-problems-jaishankar-7951895/>
- xxxv. Refer to article, <https://www.hindustantimes.com/india-news/newsclick-received-28-29-crore-from-us-businessman-police-101696532605823.html>
- xxxvi. Refer to article in Deccan Herald, <https://www.deccanherald.com/india/ed-issues-fresh-summons-to-american-millionaire-singham-in-newsclick-money-laundering-case-2773049>
- xxxvii. Refer to The Economic Times article, <https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/india/funds-came-from-china-to-disrupt-indias-sovereignty-delhi-police-fir-against-newslick/articleshow/104211719.cms>
- xxxviii. Refer to article in The Hindustan Times, <https://www.hindustantimes.com/india-news/newslick-founder-conspired-to-sabotage-2019-polls-siphoned-off-funds-fir-101696583492155.html>
- xxxix. Refer to article in Business Today, <https://www.indiatoday.in/india/story/newslick-controversy-did-china-shift-its-propaganda-from-phone-apps-to-media-2418737-2023-08-09>
- xl. Refer to official data from the website of Office of Registrar of Newspapers for India, https://rni.nic.in/all_page/press_india.aspx
- xli. Refer to Article published in The Street, <https://www.thestreet.com/economonitor/news/how-the-world-press-freedom-index-was-politicized-long-before-the-new-cold-wars>
- xlii. Refer to the Report in The Indian Express, <https://indianexpress.com/article/india/india-slips-11-positions-world-press-freedom-index-8589968/>
- xliii. Refer to The Hindustan Times article, <https://www.hindustantimes.com/india-news/two-chhattisgarh-journalists-arrested-on-charges-of>

extortion-101635308614887.html

- xliv. Refer to The Statesman article, <https://www.thestatesman.com/india/terrorist-carrying-press-card-killed-encounter-burqa-clad-woman-involved-tossing-grenade-identified-1503055935.html>
- xlv. Refer to Article on Zee News, <https://zeenews.india.com/economy/full-page-ad-war-against-pm-modi-in-wall-street-journal-twitter-is-slam-hindu-haters-divisive-forces-2522069.html>
- xlvi. Refer to article in Mint, <https://www.livemint.com/news/india/who-is-ramachandran-viswanathan-all-you-need-to-know-as-bengaluru-court-declares-him-fugitive-economic-offender-11686492065202.html>
- xlvii. Refer to Article in International Business Times, <https://www.ibtimes.co.in/who-behind-wanted-modis-magnitsky-11-full-page-ad-wsj-what-it-about-explained-853182>
- xlviii. Refer to Article in Firstpost, <https://www.firstpost.com/opinion-news-expert-views-news-analysis-firstpost-viewpoint/when-a-fugitive-launches-a-full-page-ad-war-in-wsj-against-modi-on-the-lines-of-wanted-dead-or-alive-posters-11474221.html>
- xlix. Refer to Article in IBTimes, <https://www.ibtimes.co.in/who-behind-wanted-modis-magnitsky-11-full-page-ad-wsj-what-it-about-explained-853182>
- l. Refer to Report on Mint, <https://www.livemint.com/companies/news/supreme-court-upholds-nclat-order-on-winding-up-of-devas-multimedia-11642414609860.html>
- li. Refer to Tweet by Kanchan Gupta, <https://twitter.com/KanchanGupta/status/1581217587282989057>
- lii. Refer to Tweet by Asha Jadeja Motwani, <https://twitter.com/ashajadeja325/status/1581019601478897665?lang=en>
- liii. Refer to Tweet by Govindarajan.V, <https://shorturl.at/yBDUZ>
- liv. Refer to article in Business Today, <https://www.businesstoday.in/latest/politics/story/shame-on-wall-street-journal-how-wsj-s-full-page-ad-against-modi-govt-has-set-twitter-on-fire-349986-2022-10-16>
- lv. Refer to Article in The Indian Express, <https://indianexpress.com/article/cities/mumbai/reasonable-grounds-for-believing-accusations-about-gautam-navlakha-being-cpi-maoist-member-court-8555363/>
- lvi. Refer to article in India Today Magazine, <https://www.indiatoday.in/law/story/activist-navlakha-links-isi-agent-says-nia-court-bail-denied-2359988-2023-04-14>
- lvii. Refer to Article published in Firstpost, [42](https://www.firstpost.com/opinion-</div><div data-bbox=)

news-expert-views-news-analysis-firstpost-viewpoint/when-a-fugitive-launches-a-full-page-ad-war-in-wsj-against-modi-on-the-lines-of-wanted-dead-or-alive-posters-11474221.html

- lviii. Refer to Article in Firstpost, <https://www.firstpost.com/opinion-news-expert-views-news-analysis-firstpost-viewpoint/when-a-fugitive-launches-a-full-page-ad-war-in-wsj-against-modi-on-the-lines-of-wanted-dead-or-alive-posters-11474221.html>
- lix. Refer to article in The Economic Times, <https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/new-updates/spanish-newspaper-portrays-indias-economic-growth-with-image-of-a-snake-charmer-netizens-call-it-an-insult/articleshow/94853763.cms>
- lx. Refer to Article on Hindustan Times, <https://www.hindustantimes.com/india-news/union-minister-slams-german-cartoon-mocking-india-population-not-smart-to-bet-der-spiegel-racist-cartoon-101682350774260.html>
- lxi. Refer to the article in The Hindu, <https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/NYT-apologises-for-cartoon-on-India%E2%80%99s-Mars-mission/article11060821.ece>
- lxii. Refer to The Times of India article, <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/world-happiness-index-flawed-indias-rank-should-have-been-48-not-126-sbi-ecowrap/articleshow/99337121.cms?from=mdr>
- lxiii. Refer to Politico Article, <https://www.politico.eu/article/eu-illegal-drug-problem-european-monitoring-centre-addiction-health-care/#:~:text=Cocaine%20is%20Europe's%20most%2Dused,also%20gaining%20prominence%20in%20Europe.>
- lxiv. Refer to Report of World Population Review, <https://worldpopulationreview.com/country-rankings/happiest-countries-in-the-world>
- lxv. Refer to Data provided by World Bank, <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SH.STA.SUIC.P5?locations=FI>
- lxvi. Refer to article in Brussels Times, <https://www.brusselstimes.com/416960/global-happiness-finland-again-the-happiest-nation-belgium-sees-improvement>
- lxvii. Refer to World Population Review, <https://worldpopulationreview.com/country-rankings/suicide-rate-by-country>
- lxviii. Refer to Report <https://worldpopulationreview.com/country-rankings/suicide-rate-by-country>
- lxix. Refer to article published in The Times of India, <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/covid-19-in-india-five-predictions-that-turned-out-to-be-false/articleshow/81688495.cms>

- lxx. Refer to data provided by Government of India, <https://www.mygov.in/covid-19/>
- lxxi. Refer to article in The Economic Times, <https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/india/sorosis-is-old-rich-opinionated-and-dangerous-jaishankar/articleshow/98038537.cms>
- lxxii. Refer to Firstpost article, <https://www.firstpost.com/world/v-dem-denigrates-india-once-again-ranks-it-108th-on-democracy-index-12234612.html>
- lxxiii. Refer to V-Dem Report here, https://www.v-dem.net/documents/30/V-dem_democracyreport2023_highres.pdf
- lxxiv. Refer to report in PRS website, <https://prsindia.org/theprsblog/analysis-of-the-contesting-candidates-in-general-election-2019>
- lxxv. Refer to report in Orissa Post, <https://www.orissapost.com/largest-ever-deployment-of-security-personnel-in-indian-elections/>
- lxxvi. Refer to article in The Economic Times, <https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/economy/indicators/135-million-indians-moved-out-of-multidimensional-poverty-in-five-years-niti-aayog-report/articleshow/101825806.cms>
- lxxvii. Refer to article in Forbes, <https://www.forbes.com/sites/daviddawkins/2020/01/24/billionaire-george-soros-pledges-1-billion-university-fund-to-fight-would-be-dictators/?sh=29f2310139d2>
- lxxviii. Refer to article in Mint, <https://www.livemint.com/news/world/hates-humanity-elon-musk-slams-george-soros-for-eroding-societal-cohesion-11698903845230.html>
- lxxix. Refer to article in The Indian Express, <https://indianexpress.com/article/india/most-frightening-rise-of-nationalism-is-in-india-says-billionaire-george-soros-at-davos-6232648/>
- lxxx. Refer to article in Mint, <https://www.livemint.com/news/india/pakistan-out-of-fatf-s-grey-list-here-s-what-india-said-11666409301904.html>
- lxxxi. Refer to article in Business Standard, https://www.business-standard.com/india-news/sikh-separatist-gurpatwant-pannun-threatens-to-blow-up-air-flight-on-nov-19-123110500157_1.html
- lxxxii. Refer to report in Mint, <https://www.livemint.com/news/pm-modi-cannot-be-intimidated-or-forced-to-russian-president-vladimir-putin-11701996460415.html>

Published by



**Dr. Syama Prasad Mookerjee
Research Foundation**

9, Ashoka Road, New Delhi- 110001

Web :- www.spmrf.org, E-Mail: office@spmrf.org,

Phone:011-69047014



@spmrfoundation

Copyright © Dr Syama Prasad Mookerjee Research Foundation
All rights reserved.