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Dr. Anirban Ganguly

Real Tribute to Babasaheb Dr Ambedkar – realising his vision of empowering the most marginalised

‘Should have displayed the largeness of heart to re-invite [to Parliament] the sculptor of the Constitution with due honour. For the sake of the welfare of the nation, if not for anything else, Nehru should have left the way open for Saheb to be elected to the Lok Sabha. But quite to the contrary, the Congress shook hands with a person like Dange and applied all its strength and got into all kinds of machinations to defeat Saheb, which proves that Congress cared more for the party than for the welfare of the country.’

For decades since independence a certain section have only mouthed public platitudes as homage to Babasaheb Dr Ambedkar. In reality this section, primarily led by the Congress and the communist parties worked over-time and in a coordinated manner to defeat Dr Ambedkar in the first general elections in 1951-1952. Communist Party of India’s general secretary S.A.Dange was at the forefront of the campaign against Dr Ambedkar. This group, directed by Pandit Nehru once again ensured Babasaheb’s defeat in a by-election in 1954. On this second manipulated defeat, Babasaheb’s wife, Dr Savita Ambedkar lamented this vindictiveness against him. She wrote in her reminiscences of life with Dr Ambedkar, that the Congress:

That second defeat had a major effect on Dr Ambedkar, writes Dr Savita Ambedkar, ‘This horrendous defeat in the elections, had an extremely harmful impact on his already debilitated health, melancholy, disappointment, depression and disability returned.’

The same absence of ‘largeness of heart’ was missing when successive Congress governments, primarily those led by Pandit Nehru and Indira Gandhi refused to confer Bharat Ratna on Dr Ambedkar. In the meantime, these leaders conferred it on themselves and many others. The same treatment was meted out to Sardar Patel. His centenary in 1975, was not observed or celebrated in befitting manner, he was also overlooked for a long period for the Bharat Ratna.

Dr Ambedkar’s resignation letter is not reflected in the Parliament records. A strange thing if one were to keep in mind the momentous and portentous event it was. The animosity towards Dr Ambedkar was so intense by the Congress establishment that it went

all out to see to it that records that would expose the reason for Dr Ambedkar's resignation were erased. The aim was to sanitise his act of resigning in frustration from the Nehru cabinet.

'From my early childhood,' Dr Ambedkar stated in his statement of resignation, 'I have dedicated myself to the upliftment of the Scheduled Castes among whom I was born. It is not that there were no temptation in my way. If I had considered my own interest, I could have been anything I wanted to be and if I had joined the Congress would have reached the highest places in that organisation.'

But since he had chosen not to bend before and to compromise with the Nehruvian establishment, Dr Ambedkar faced an all-out attempt at being marginalized. Those who have paid lip-service to Dr Ambedkar's vision and commitment of empowering the marginalized have themselves a poor

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record of serving and of empowering them. That is the reason why, for decades, they had no access to sanitation, healthcare and hygiene. For decades they remained poor and marginalized being deprived of opportunities and of the basics of life. Prime Minister Narendra Modi, on the other hand, is consistently actualizing Dr Ambedkar's vision into action and achievement. Among the many such empowering transformative milestones that can stand as tribute to Dr Ambedkar's vision and hope for free India, a few needs be cited.

25 crore people escaping multidimensional poverty in the last one decade, an overall and significant improvement in Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI) indicators and poorer states recording a faster decline in poverty are, in a sense, a tribute to Dr Ambedkar's vision.

The index of deprivation (DI) which indicates the lack of basic amenities such as household access to water, to toilets, of households without drainage has seen considerable shrinkage. A recently released SBI report on these parameters and access has demonstrated how 'the DI index has shrunk considerably' halving in the last decade with a number of states demonstrating 'a significantly better performance.' An interesting finding of this report is that 'in almost all states the decline in percentage of households fetching water outside [its] premise significantly lead to increase in working females in Agriculture and Allied Activities. The results further vindicate that an 8.3 percentage points decline in percentage households fetching

water from outside premises leads to 7.4 percentage points increase in females' participation in agriculture and allied activities at the all India level.

Improved sanitation has had a huge impact on mortality rates, maternal as well as neonatal. The flagship Swachh Bharat mission has had a transformative effect on this count annually saving 60,000 to 70,000 infant lives. The gigantic effort of Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM), which has successfully provided 'tap water connections to 11.96 crore additional rural households bringing the total coverage to more than 15.20 crore households', accounting for over 78% of all rural households in India is another such tribute to the vision of empowerment that Dr Ambedkar envisaged and articulated. What is more significant is that WHO estimates 'show over 5.5 crore hours would be saved daily, primarily for women, otherwise spent collecting water, through achievement of JJM goals in full while also simultaneously preventing nearly 400,000 deaths from diarrheal diseases, saving approximately 14 million Disability Adjusted Life Years (DALYs) through providing safely managed drinking water for all households in the country.'

These efforts will lead to gradual transformation in society leading to shifts that are tectonic in nature as far the country's future and its growth trajectory is concerned. Prime Minister Modi speaks of the 'Viksit Bharat' goal and of its realisation and he has started working towards that goal by making the foundations and the basis strong so that the potential and energies of crores of marginalized Indians can be unleashed

25 crore people escaping multidimensional poverty in the last one decade, an overall and significant improvement in Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI) indicators and poorer states recording a faster decline in poverty are, in a sense, a tribute to Dr Ambedkar's vision.

for their own empowerment and for realizing the aspiration of a developed India by 2047.

This in itself is a most effective and empowering tribute to Dr Ambedkar. An empowerment of this proportion is a real tribute to the spirit and ideals of justice and of equity that the Constitution envisaged as well. Through a decade of relentless and creative effort, driven by an unwavering commitment to the most marginalized, Prime Minister Narendra Modi has initiated an unmistakable turnaround, addressing the neglect and deprivation of over five decades since independence.

Those who only indulged in politics in Dr Ambedkar's name and those who attempted to suppress his legacy and contributions, failed to empower the marginalized and thereby neglected the foundational basics of a democratic and free India. They cannot shrug off that omission. They cannot escape its blame.

(The writer is the Chairman of Dr Syama Prasad Mookerjee Research Foundation.)

Salient Points of Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi's Foreign Policy

Strengthening India's Role as a Global Leader

- In 2024, PM Modi's foreign policy continues to position India as a leading global voice, particularly advocating for the interests of the Global South in multilateral forums.
- India strives to be a key player in global governance, calling for reform in international organizations like the United Nations, WTO, and IMF to better represent the developing world.

Commitment to the Global South

- PM Modi emphasizes India's role as a representative of the Global South, focusing on the needs and concerns of developing countries in Africa, Latin America, and Asia.
- India is committed to enhancing diplomatic, economic, and cultural ties with these regions, ensuring their perspectives are heard in global policy discussions.

Promoting South-South Cooperation

- India has prioritized South-South cooperation, working to create platforms for mutual support and exchange among developing countries.
- By increasing trade, technology transfers, capacity-building, and knowledge-sharing, India is strengthening economic and developmental cooperation with the

Global South.

Economic Diplomacy and Trade Expansion

- PM Modi's foreign policy aims to expand India's trade relations with the Global South through regional economic agreements, trade facilitation, and investments.
- India has made significant strides in enhancing its economic partnerships with countries in Africa, Southeast Asia, and Latin America, focusing on mutually beneficial trade and investment models.

Energy and Infrastructure Collaboration

- India continues to support energy and infrastructure development in the Global South, particularly through renewable energy projects like solar energy partnerships.
- PM Modi has focused on helping countries in the Global South build

India's foreign policy emphasizes the importance of maintaining a free, open, and inclusive Indo-Pacific region, where the Global South, particularly Southeast Asia and island nations, plays a central role.

PM Modi has focused on helping countries in the Global South build critical infrastructure such as roads, ports, and energy networks, often through low-interest loans and technical assistance.

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Climate Diplomacy and Climate Justice

- India has firmly positioned itself as a leader in the fight for climate justice, advocating for fairer climate finance and support for the Global South.
- PM Modi emphasizes the need for developed nations to meet their climate commitments and assist developing countries in transitioning to sustainable, renewable energy sources.

Technology and Digital Diplomacy

- PM Modi's foreign policy in 2024 underscores India's role as a technology partner for the Global South, supporting the digital transformation of developing nations.
- India is helping these countries enhance their digital infrastructure, e-governance, and access to technology, aiming to bridge the digital divide and promote economic growth.

Security and Peace in the Global South

- India has increased its role in promoting peace and stability in conflict-prone regions of the Global South, particularly in Africa and the Middle East.
- Through peacekeeping missions, diplomatic mediation, and regional partnerships, India works to resolve conflicts, provide humanitarian aid, and support peace-building initiatives.

Multilateralism and Reform of Global Institutions

- PM Modi strongly advocates for the reform of global institutions, ensuring that the voices of the Global South are not marginalized in international decision-making processes.
- India seeks to make the UN Security Council, the World Bank, and other key institutions more inclusive and responsive to the needs of developing countries.

Health Diplomacy and Vaccine Equity

- In line with its leadership in global health, India has taken significant steps in providing affordable vaccines and medicines to the Global South,

By increasing trade, technology transfers, capacity-building, and knowledge-sharing, India is strengthening economic and developmental cooperation with the Global South.

India is helping these countries enhance their digital infrastructure, e-governance, and access to technology, aiming to bridge the digital divide and promote economic growth.

particularly in the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic.

- PM Modi's foreign policy focuses on ensuring access to healthcare and vaccines for developing countries, supporting their efforts to combat public health crises.

Cultural and People-to-People Diplomacy

- India continues to promote people-to-people exchanges and cultural diplomacy with countries in the Global South, strengthening ties through educational programs, tourism, and cultural collaboration.
- PM Modi has emphasized the importance of soft power in fostering positive relations and mutual understanding between India and the Global South.

India's Vision for a Multipolar World

- PM Modi envisions a multipolar world where the interests of the Global South are represented alongside those of traditional global powers.
- India seeks to build partnerships based on equality, mutual respect, and shared goals, empowering developing nations

to have a greater say in global affairs.

- Support for Free and Open Indo-Pacific
- India's foreign policy emphasizes the importance of maintaining a free, open, and inclusive Indo-Pacific region, where the Global South, particularly Southeast Asia and island nations, plays a central role.
- India has bolstered its partnerships with countries in the Indo-Pacific through strategic dialogues, defense cooperation, and infrastructure development.

Diplomatic Engagement through Regional Forums

- PM Modi has strengthened India's involvement in regional organizations like the G20, BRICS, SCO, and ASEAN, using these platforms to champion the interests of the Global South.
- By engaging in these forums, India has consistently advocated for the reform of international trade, finance, and governance structures to better serve developing nations.

Humanitarian Aid and Disaster Relief

- India continues to provide humanitarian aid and disaster relief to Global South countries facing natural calamities, reflecting its commitment to solidarity in times of need.
- Through the provision of food, medical aid, and logistical support, India strengthens its diplomatic relationships with nations in Africa, Southeast Asia, and the Caribbean.

Ten Years of Act East and ASEAN-India Summit 2024



Dr Prabir De

ASEAN-India relations have grown from strength to strength, with rising trade and investment flows, friend-shoring, and people-to-people contacts. India's relationship with ASEAN has evolved from that of a Sectoral Partner in 1992 to a Dialogue Partner in 1996, and a Summit-level Partner in 2002. In 2012, the relationship was upgraded to a Strategic Partnership and then to Comprehensive Strategic Partnership level in 2022. **India-ASEAN ties are critical to guiding Asia's future. Started in 2002 in Cambodia during PM Vajpayee tenure, today the ASEAN-India annual summit process has entered into the third decade of partnership.**

The 44th ASEAN Summit and the 21st ASEAN-India summit took place in Vientiane on 10 and 11 October 2024. **This year's ASEAN-India Summit is of special significance since India is commemorating the ten years of the Act East Policy (AEP). The AEP was introduced in 2014 by PM Modi. This was Prime Minister's 11th participation in the Summit.**

The world is passing through

uncertainties and countries are looking for resilient solutions. The theme of this year's ASEAN summit was "ASEAN: Enhancing Connectivity and Resilience". Since 2002, India has not missed a single ASEAN-India summit. **PM Modi attended the several key summits, including the East Asia Summit and the 21st India-ASEAN Summit on 10 and 11 October 2024. The PM's presence underscores the continuity of India's proactive engagement with ASEAN and the East Asia Summit (EAS).** Marking a decade of AEP, PM Modi and ASEAN leaders reviewed the progress of ASEAN-India Comprehensive Strategic Partnership and presented the future direction of cooperation.

ASEAN-India Regional Engagements

ASEAN and India share both land and maritime borders. They are civilizational partners. ASEAN and India together share 7 per cent of the world GDP and 26 per cent of the world population. Their combined strength is, therefore, phenomenal. ASEAN is currently India's 4th largest trading partner, and India is ASEAN's 7th largest trade partner. ASEAN has truly become a global economy, where FTAs have been playing a key role in the integration.

ASEAN-India relations have been elevated to the Comprehensive Strategic Partnership (CSP) level. Both have agreed to establish the ASEAN-India CSP that is meaningful, substantive, and

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mutually beneficial.

After Prime Minister Modi was sworn in for the third term in June 2024, he went to Brunei and Singapore. Heads of States of Vietnam and Malaysia visited India in between. The External Affairs Minister (EAM) and minister of states also visited several ASEAN member states in the last one year from September 2023. Prime Minister Modi also inaugurated the campus of Nalanda University – rebuilt in partnership with several Southeast and East Asian countries. The Indian Defence Minister attended the 10th ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting-Plus (ADMM-Plus) in November 2023. The ASEAN Secretary General visited India in February 2024. The 24th ASEAN-India Joint Cooperation Committee (AIJCC) Meeting was held in March 2024. In May 2024, the 26th ASEAN-India Senior Officials' Meeting

(AISOM) took place. India EAM attended the ASEAN-India Foreign Ministers' Meeting and the PMC+1 Meeting in July 2024. Indian Commerce and Industry Minister co-chaired the 21st ASEAN-India Economic Ministers in September 2024. It has been a very hectic engagement between ASEAN and India since September 2023 despite general elections in India and Indonesia – two largest economies of the region.

ASEAN and India have been witnessing the best phase of their relations post-pandemic. The bilateral trade between them was just US\$ 9 billion when they had the 1st summit way back in 2002, and now the trade is likely to cross the US\$ 150 billion mark by the turn of 2024. India and some of the ASEAN member states such as Malaysia have agreed to trade in local currency. More ASEAN member states are likely to follow suit. The GVC networks between India and ASEAN have grown in last one decade along with the rising gross cumulative investment flows between them, which has exceeded US\$ 125 billion during 2000-2023. ASEAN and India have started reviewing the AITIGA and they had a couple of rounds of negotiations in recent past including completion of a joint study.

To boost India-ASEAN economic relations, e PM Modi announced the 12-point agenda at Jakarta in 2023. The 12-point agenda covers a wide set of areas crucial for economic engagement, thus reflecting India's high commitment to ASEAN-India relations.

Out of the 12-point proposal, digital cooperation has witnessed some progress. The real-time, cross-border linking of India's Unified Payments Interface (UPI) and Singapore's PayNow has been implemented in 2023 and both sides are planning to expand the operation. ASEAN has shown interests in India's UPI and so also India to ASEAN's fast payment systems (FPSs). In June 2024, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) officially joined "Project Nexus", marking a milestone in India's integration with ASEAN's financial infrastructure.

In October 2024, PM Modi has announced 10-point plan which includes: i) Celebrating the year 2025 as ASEAN-India Year of Tourism for which India would make available USD 5 million towards joint activities; ii) To celebrate a decade of Act East Policy through several people centric activities including Youth Summit, Start-up Festival, Hackathon, Music Festival, ASEAN-India Network of Think Tanks and Delhi Dialogue; iii) To organise ASEAN-India Women Scientists Conclave under ASEAN-India Science and Technology Development Fund; iv) Doubling the number of scholarships at Nalanda University and provision of new scholarships for ASEAN students at Agricultural Universities in India; v) Review of ASEAN-India Trade in Goods Agreement by 2025; vi) Enhancing Disaster Resilience for which India would make available USD 5 million; vii) Initiate a new Health Ministers' track towards building

Health Resilience; viii) Initiate a regular mechanism of ASEAN-India Cyber Policy Dialogue towards strengthening Digital and Cyber Resilience; ix) Workshop on Green Hydrogen; and x) Invited ASEAN Leaders to join 'Plant a Tree for Mother' campaign towards building climate resilience.

In the last ASEAN-India summit, leaders agreed to create a new ASEAN-India Plan of Action (2026-2030) that will guide both sides in realizing the full potential of the ASEAN-India partnership and adopted two Joint Statements: i) Joint Statement on Strengthening ASEAN-India Comprehensive Strategic Partnership for Peace, Stability and Prosperity in the Region in the context of the ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific (AOIP) with the Support of India's Act East Policy (AEP) – Leaders recognized the contribution of India's Act East Policy in advancing the partnership between ASEAN and India; and ii) ASEAN-India Joint Statement on Advancing Digital Transformation. Leaders appreciated India's leadership in the field of digital transformation and welcomed partnership with India in digital public infrastructure.

What follows is that the last twenty summits present India's energetic engagements with ASEAN, which have transformed the relationship into the realm of Indo-Pacific. India and ASEAN advocate a free, open, rules-based and inclusive Indo-Pacific region, and call for peaceful resolution of disputes while respecting the sovereignty and territorial integrity of all nations. Both sides have

agreed to continue to work on shared interests and aspirations in ensuring regional peace, security, and stability.

Way Ahead

ASEAN-India relations have been getting melted into Indo-Pacific partnership. ASEAN and India have mutually agreed to collaborate on the Indo-Pacific. AOIP's convergence with the Indo-Pacific Oceans Initiative (IPOI) provides a strong basis for the next phase of ASEAN-India cooperation. There are

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several common areas of cooperation between ASEAN's AOIP and India's IPOI.

Today, digital cooperation is the best part of ASEAN-India economic engagements and it will continue to add further momentum. Cross-border e-commerce and Fintech innovations are key sectors where MSMEs are expected to thrive. There are ample opportunities to collaborate.

ASEAN and India should also work together to forge green infrastructure and resilient supply chains, explore cooperation on the Single Window platform to enhance trade facilitation and integration and promote the development of MSMEs and start-ups. The areas that offer high prospects are pharmaceuticals, health, cyber, financial, and maritime security domains. The coming summit may show some lights in this front.

Concluding the negotiation of the AITIGA review may take time but ASEAN and India may intensify their efforts to achieve a substantial conclusion even before the new deadline of 2025. The ASEAN chairmanship has come to Malaysia. India-ASEAN relation is expected to gain new scale under the chairmanship of Malaysia in 2025. Today, global uncertainties are looming large. ASEAN and India may further intensify their cooperation to stabilise the global order.

(The author is Professor, RIS, New Delhi. He has written extensively on India-Southeast Asia/ASEAN relations. Views are author's own.)

Global South 2.0: Shaping a New World Order?



Dr Rajesh Kumar

The concept of the ‘Global South’ has recently gained prominence as a symbol of unity among postcolonial and developing nations, advocating for a more equitable global order. Traditionally referring to countries in Africa, Asia, Latin America, and the Caribbean, it now represents a collective call for greater influence in global governance. For example, the BRICS Outreach meeting in Kazan in October 2024 was held under the theme ‘BRICS and the Global South: Building a Better World Together.’¹ Similarly, the ‘Voice of the Global South Summit’ convened under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, emphasized the need for the Global South to play a central role in shaping the evolving global governance framework.²

However, the Global South is far from a monolithic entity, encompassing

1 ‘Kazan Declaration’, 16th BRICS Summit, Kazan, Russia, https://cdn.brics-russia.ru/upload/docs/Kazan_Declaration_FINAL.pdf?1729693488349783

2 https://www.pmindia.gov.in/en/news_updates/pms-remarks-at-opening-session-of-voice-of-global-south-summit-2023/

a diverse range of countries with varying approaches, visions, and levels of economic development. These differences stem from distinct historical trajectories, economic structures, political priorities, and cultural contexts, which influence how each nation engages with global governance and addresses shared challenges.³ Despite these variations, countries of the Global South often collaborate on issues such as climate change, trade, and development financing, seeking to amplify their collective voice on the global stage. As the Global South continues to evolve, there is considerable speculation about its future form—whether it will solidify into a more unified bloc capable of exerting greater influence or remain a loosely connected coalition shaped by shared but diverse interests.

Historical Context

The term “Global South” refers to nations in Asia, Africa, and Latin America, many of which experienced colonial exploitation and marginalization during the 19th and 20th centuries. Following decolonization, these countries sought to reclaim their political and economic agency through movements like the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM)

3 Laura Trajbe rWaisbich, Supriya Roychoudhury & Sebastian Haug, ‘Beyond the single story: ‘Global South’ polyphonies’, *Third World Quarterly*, 42, 9, 2021, pp. 2086-2095.

and the Group of 77 (G77. The Non-Aligned Movement (NAM), established in 1961, provided newly decolonized nations with a platform to assert their sovereignty and resist alignment with Cold War superpowers, focusing on self-determination and peaceful coexistence.⁴ The Group of 77 (G77), formed in 1964 within the United Nations, united developing countries to advocate for equitable economic policies and a restructured global economic order to address the legacies of colonial exploitation.⁵ These efforts laid the foundation for South-South cooperation and a collective push for a more just global order.

Despite efforts to assert their influence, the Global South has faced persistent structural inequalities in the global system, highlighted by the dominance of Bretton Woods institutions and unfair trade practices. During colonial times, these regions were exploited as sources of raw materials and cheap labour for the Global North. After decolonization, this imbalance continued, reinforced by unequal trade terms and the control of financial institutions like the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank. In the 1970s, the Global

South called for a New International Economic Order (NIEO) to create fairer economic systems.⁶ While the NIEO did not achieve its goals, it reflected a growing recognition among these nations of their ability to work together and push for a more just global order.

Global South's Resurgence

The resurgence of the Global South as a cohesive and influential force in global affairs is underpinned by several interrelated factors, reflecting both structural changes in the international system and the agency of developing nations. The rapid economic growth of countries like China, India, Brazil, and South Africa has significantly altered global economic dynamics. These nations have demonstrated resilience and innovation, with rising GDPs and expanding global influence, challenging the long-standing dominance of Western powers.⁷ The BRICS grouping exemplifies this shift, providing an alternative framework for global economic governance. Through institutions like the New Development Bank (NDB) and BRICS Contingent Reserve Arrangement (CRA), BRICS countries are reshaping financial systems to better serve the interests of emerging economies.

The Global South accounts for the

4 'Declaration on the purposes and principles and the role of the non-aligned movement in the present international juncture', <https://www.mea.gov.in/Images/pdf/Declarationpurposesnam.pdf>

5 Dena Freeman, "The Role of the Global South at the UN: Using International Politics to Re-Vision the Global." *The Global South*, 2017, pp.71-91.

6 Nils Gilman, 'The New International Economic Order', *Humanity*, <https://humanityjournal.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/HUM-6.1-final-text-GILMAN.pdf>

7 Guiyin Zhou, 'Rise of Global South and changes in contemporary international order' *China International Strategy Review*, 6, 2024, pp.58-77.

The Global South is far from a monolithic entity, encompassing a diverse range of countries with varying approaches, visions, and levels of economic development. These differences stem from distinct historical trajectories, economic structures, political priorities, and cultural contexts, which influence how each nation engages with global governance and addresses shared challenges. Despite these variations, countries of the Global South often collaborate on issues such as climate change, trade, and development financing, seeking to amplify their collective voice on the global stage.

majority of the world's population, with many nations experiencing a demographic dividend—a young and growing population that drives innovation, labor force expansion, and consumer demand.⁸ Today, the Global South contributes approximately 40 percent of global trade, half of the world's manufacturing output, and a substantial portion of high-tech products. The rapid urbanization and rising middle class in these nations are also creating new markets for goods

⁸ Zhuang Han, Claude Mbarga, Michel Tenikue and Sarah Giroux, *Demographic Dividends across the Global South: A Comparison of Africa, Asia, and Latin America (1970–2020)*, <https://www.intechopen.com/chapters/1126427>

and services, further solidifying their influence in the global economy.

This resurgence is also rooted in the changing dynamics of global power. The global geopolitical landscape is undergoing significant transformation, marked by the relative decline of Western hegemony. This has created a more favourable environment for the Global South to assert its agency. For instance, Global South embraced multilateralism as a means to address shared global challenges such as climate change, food security, energy transition, and public health. A key victory for the Global South was the establishment of the loss and damage fund at COP27, marking a significant milestone in climate justice. Platforms like the India-led International Solar Alliance (ISA) aim to promote renewable energy adoption in sun-rich countries, while the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) seeks to create the world's largest free trade area, boosting intra-African trade and economic integration.

The COVID-19 pandemic further highlighted the Global South's rising influence. While inequities in vaccine distribution underscored systemic disparities, the pandemic also demonstrated the potential of South-South cooperation in addressing health crises. Countries like India and Cuba played vital roles in providing affordable vaccines and medical expertise.⁹

⁹ https://www.mea.gov.in/lok-sabha.htm?dtl/36996/QUESTION_NO3857_VACCINE_MAITRI

The COVID-19 pandemic further highlighted the Global South's rising influence. While inequities in vaccine distribution underscored systemic disparities, the pandemic also demonstrated the potential of South-South cooperation in addressing health crises. Countries like India and Cuba played vital roles in providing affordable vaccines and medical expertise.

Challenges

The Global South is far from a unified bloc, with significant political differences often shaping its response to regional and global developments. The Ukraine conflict has exposed these divisions, highlighting varying priorities, alliances, and approaches to international crises.¹⁰ Similarly, internal divisions and regional rivalries often complicate collective action within the group.¹¹ The disparity between emerging powers like China and India and smaller, less developed nations underscores the unevenness within this grouping.

Furthermore, the Global South has struggled to reform multilateral

institutions, which remain dominated by developed nations. Key bodies like the UN Security Council, IMF, and World Bank continue to marginalize Global South voices, hindering their influence in global decision-making.

What Ahead?

Despite challenges, the Global South's influence in shaping a new world order is undeniable. Its demographic strength, economic rise, political advocacy, and multilateral engagement have positioned it as a key player in global governance. As the world becomes more multipolar, the Global South has the potential to challenge traditional powers and promote a more inclusive, equitable, and sustainable global system.

The future of the Global South will depend on continued cooperation and reform of global institutions. By overcoming internal divisions, it can create a world order that is more representative and responsive to the needs of all nations, particularly those long marginalized. The Voice of the Global South Summit has played a crucial role in solidifying India's position as a key advocate for the Global South's interests, reinforcing its leadership in reshaping global geopolitics and promoting a more inclusive, equitable global order.

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10 Raj Verma, 'The Russia-Ukraine war and the Global South's sovereignty paradox' *Contemporary Security Policy*, 2024, 45, 4, pp.555–569.

11 Manjari Chatterjee Miller, 'China and India Compete for Leadership of the Global South', <https://www.cfr.org/blog/china-and-india-compete-leadership-global-south>

भारत के विश्वगुरु बनने की नई यात्रा



नागेन्द्र कुमार सिंह

प्रधानमंत्री श्री नरेन्द्र मोदी के नेतृत्व में भारत की विदेश नीति ने अपनी अभूतपूर्व और क्रांतिकारी दिशा को प्राप्त किया है। बीते एक दशक में भारत ने वैश्विक परिप्रेक्ष्य में अपनी प्रभावशाली उपस्थिति दर्ज कराई है। प्रधानमंत्री मोदी जी की विदेश नीति न केवल भारत के राष्ट्रीय हितों की रक्षा करती है, बल्कि “वसुधैव कुटुंबकम” के आदर्श को साकार करते हुए वैश्विक शांति, समृद्धि और स्थिरता की दिशा में एक नया मार्ग प्रशस्त करती है।

वैश्विक परिदृश्य में भारत की पुनर्स्थापना

प्रधानमंत्री श्री नरेन्द्र मोदी के कार्यकाल में भारत ने अपने पारंपरिक साझेदारों के साथ रिश्तों को मजबूती प्रदान करते हुए नए रणनीतिक सहयोगियों की ओर भी कदम बढ़ाए हैं। उनकी “पड़ोसी प्रथम” (नेबरहुड फर्स्ट) नीति के तहत दक्षिण एशियाई देशों के साथ आर्थिक, सांस्कृतिक और सामरिक संबंधों को गहराई मिली। 2014 में शपथ ग्रहण समारोह में SAARC देशों के नेताओं को आमंत्रित करना इस नीति का एक ऐतिहासिक उदाहरण है।

इसके साथ ही, “एक्ट ईस्ट” नीति के तहत भारत ने दक्षिण-पूर्व एशिया के आसियान देशों के साथ संबंधों को प्रगाढ़ बनाया। यह नीति भारत की पूर्वी सीमाओं को सुरक्षा और आर्थिक सहयोग के एक मजबूत सूत्र में बांधती है। इसी क्रम में 2018 में गणतंत्र दिवस पर सभी 10 आसियान देशों के प्रमुखों की उपस्थिति इसका एक उत्कृष्ट उदाहरण है।

अंतरराष्ट्रीय मंचों पर भारत की बढ़ती भूमिका

प्रधानमंत्री श्री नरेन्द्र मोदी के नेतृत्व में भारत ने अंतरराष्ट्रीय मंचों पर एक प्रभावशाली और मजबूत उपस्थिति दर्ज की है। उनकी दूरदर्शी नीतियों और कुशल कूटनीति के कारण आज भारत एक वैश्विक शक्ति के रूप में उभर रहा है। श्री मोदी ने भारतीय सभ्यता और मूल्यों को वैश्विक स्तर पर प्रस्तुत करते हुए यह सुनिश्चित किया है कि भारत की आवाज सुनी जाए और उसे गंभीरता से लिया जाए।

2014 में प्रधानमंत्री पद संभालने के बाद से श्री मोदी ने भारत की विदेश नीति में एक नई ऊर्जा का संचार किया। उनकी पहल ने भारत को केवल एक सहभागी देश के रूप में नहीं, बल्कि एक नेतृत्वकर्ता के रूप में स्थापित किया है। चाहे वह जलवायु परिवर्तन का मुद्दा हो, विकासशील देशों की आवाज उठाने का कार्य हो, या फिर वैश्विक स्वास्थ्य और अर्थव्यवस्था से संबंधित चर्चाएं हों, भारत ने हर क्षेत्र में अपनी सशक्त उपस्थिति दर्ज कराई है।

2023 में भारत ने पहली बार G20 शिखर सम्मेलन की मेजबानी की। यह न केवल भारत की कूटनीतिक सफलता थी, बल्कि “वसुधैव कुटुंबकम” की भारतीय भावना को विश्व मंच पर प्रभावी ढंग से प्रस्तुत करने का एक अवसर भी था। इस सम्मेलन में जलवायु परिवर्तन, वैश्विक आर्थिक चुनौतियों और विकासशील देशों के लिए वित्तीय सहयोग जैसे महत्वपूर्ण मुद्दों पर भारत ने ठोस नेतृत्व प्रदान किया। श्री मोदी ने वैश्विक दक्षिण (Global South) की आवाज को एक नई पहचान दी, जिसमें भारत को उन देशों का प्रतिनिधि माना गया जो आज तक वैश्विक निर्णयों में उपेक्षित रहे थे।

श्री मोदी की कूटनीति का एक बड़ा उदाहरण संयुक्त राष्ट्र में भारत की सक्रिय भूमिका है। भारत ने अपनी स्थायी सदस्यता के लिए अभियान तेज किया और विश्व को यह विश्वास दिलाया कि एक बहुध्रुवीय दुनिया में भारत का स्थायी सदस्य बनना अनिवार्य है। इसके अतिरिक्त, भारत ने संयुक्त राष्ट्र सुरक्षा परिषद के गैर-स्थायी सदस्य के रूप में शांति स्थापना, आतंकवाद के खिलाफ लड़ाई और

2014 में प्रधानमंत्री पद संभालने के बाद से श्री मोदी ने भारत की विदेश नीति में एक नई ऊर्जा का संचार किया। उनकी पहल ने भारत को केवल एक सहभागी देश के रूप में नहीं, बल्कि एक नेतृत्वकर्ता के रूप में स्थापित किया है। चाहे वह जलवायु परिवर्तन का मुद्दा हो, विकासशील देशों की आवाज उठाने का कार्य हो, या फिर वैश्विक स्वास्थ्य और अर्थव्यवस्था से संबंधित चर्चाएं हों, भारत ने हर क्षेत्र में अपनी सशक्त उपस्थिति दर्ज कराई है।

विकासशील देशों के अधिकारों की पैरवी की।

जलवायु परिवर्तन के प्रति भारत की प्रतिबद्धता भी श्री मोदी के नेतृत्व में विश्वभर में सराही गई। 2015 के पेरिस समझौते से लेकर 2021 के ग्लासगो सम्मेलन तक, भारत ने अपने जिम्मेदाराना दृष्टिकोण का प्रदर्शन किया। प्रधानमंत्री मोदी द्वारा “पंचामृत” की घोषणा—2070 तक नेट-जीरो उत्सर्जन का लक्ष्य—दिखाता है कि भारत विकास और पर्यावरण संरक्षण के बीच संतुलन स्थापित करने में सक्षम है।

इसके अलावा, प्रधानमंत्री मोदी ने वैश्विक आर्थिक सहयोग को भी एक नई दिशा दी। भारत की डिजिटल क्रांति, जैसे आधार और यूपीआई, ने दुनिया के सामने एक ऐसा मॉडल प्रस्तुत किया जिसे कई देशों ने अपनाया। भारत की मेक इन इंडिया और स्टार्टअप इंडिया जैसी पहलें वैश्विक निवेशकों को आकर्षित कर रही हैं, जिससे भारत का आर्थिक प्रभाव बढ़ रहा है।

प्रधानमंत्री मोदी का नेतृत्व इस बात का प्रमाण है कि सही दृष्टिकोण और मेहनत से भारत जैसे विकासशील देश भी विश्व मंच पर अग्रणी भूमिका निभा सकते हैं। उनका विजन केवल भारत के विकास तक सीमित नहीं है, बल्कि एक ऐसे विश्व की कल्पना करता है जहां शांति, समृद्धि और समावेशिता हो। अंतरराष्ट्रीय मंचों पर भारत की बढ़ती भूमिका श्री मोदी के नेतृत्व की दूरदर्शिता और भारत की वैश्विक छवि को मजबूत करने के उनके अथक प्रयासों का परिणाम है।

आज, जब भी वैश्विक चुनौतियों की बात होती है, भारत का नाम न केवल उन देशों में शामिल होता है जो समाधान का हिस्सा हैं, बल्कि उन नेताओं में भी शामिल होता है जो इन समाधान की दिशा तय करते हैं। यह न केवल भारत के लिए गौरव की बात है, बल्कि विश्व को भी “नए भारत” की शक्ति और क्षमता का एहसास कराता है।

वैक्सीन मैत्री अभियान: भारत की वैश्विक मानवता की अनूठी मिसाल

कोविड-19 महामारी ने जब पूरी दुनिया को अपनी चपेट में ले लिया था, तब एक ऐसे वैश्विक नेतृत्व की आवश्यकता महसूस हो रही थी जो केवल अपने देश की नहीं, बल्कि पूरी मानवता की भलाई के लिए प्रयास करे। प्रधानमंत्री श्री नरेन्द्र मोदी के नेतृत्व में भारत ने इस चुनौती को अवसर में बदलते हुए दुनिया के सामने एक नई मानवतावादी दृष्टि प्रस्तुत की। उनके मार्गदर्शन में शुरू किया गया “वैक्सीन मैत्री अभियान” न केवल भारत की वैज्ञानिक और औद्योगिक क्षमताओं का प्रतीक बना, बल्कि यह पूरे विश्व को यह दिखाने में सफल रहा कि भारत एक सशक्त और दयालु राष्ट्र है।

प्रधानमंत्री मोदी की दूरदर्शिता का परिणाम यह रहा कि जब दुनिया के कई देश वैक्सीन उत्पादन के लिए संघर्ष कर रहे थे, तब भारत ने अपने व्यापक फार्मास्युटिकल इंफ्रास्ट्रक्चर और वैज्ञानिक दक्षता का उपयोग करते हुए

2023 में भारत ने पहली बार G20 शिखर सम्मेलन की मेजबानी की। यह न केवल भारत की कूटनीतिक सफलता थी, बल्कि “वसुधैव कुटुंबकम” की भारतीय भावना को विश्व मंच पर प्रभावी ढंग से प्रस्तुत करने का एक अवसर भी था। इस सम्मेलन में जलवायु परिवर्तन, वैश्विक आर्थिक चुनौतियों और विकासशील देशों के लिए वित्तीय सहयोग जैसे महत्वपूर्ण मुद्दों पर भारत ने ठोस नेतृत्व प्रदान किया। श्री मोदी ने वैश्विक दक्षिण (Global South) की आवाज को एक नई पहचान दी, जिसमें भारत को उन देशों का प्रतिनिधि माना गया जो आज तक वैश्विक निर्णयों में उपेक्षित रहे थे।

कोविड-19 महामारी ने जब पूरी दुनिया को अपनी चपेट में ले लिया था, तब एक ऐसे वैश्विक नेतृत्व की आवश्यकता महसूस हो रही थी जो केवल अपने देश की नहीं, बल्कि पूरी मानवता की भलाई के लिए प्रयास करे। प्रधानमंत्री श्री नरेन्द्र मोदी के नेतृत्व में भारत ने इस चुनौती को अवसर में बदलते हुए दुनिया के सामने एक नई मानवतावादी दृष्टि प्रस्तुत की। उनके मार्गदर्शन में शुरू किया गया “वैक्सीन मैत्री अभियान” न केवल भारत की वैज्ञानिक और औद्योगिक क्षमताओं का प्रतीक बना, बल्कि यह पूरे विश्व को यह दिखाने में सफल रहा कि भारत एक सशक्त और दयालु राष्ट्र है।

रिकॉर्ड समय में कोविड-19 वैक्सीन तैयार की। सीरम इंस्टिट्यूट ऑफ इंडिया और भारत बायोटेक जैसे संस्थानों के सहयोग से निर्मित कोविशील्ड और कोवैक्सिन ने न केवल भारत के नागरिकों को सुरक्षा प्रदान की, बल्कि वैश्विक समुदाय की जरूरतों को भी पूरा किया।

श्री मोदी के नेतृत्व में भारत ने जनवरी 2021 में “वैक्सीन मैत्री अभियान” की शुरुआत की। इस अभियान का उद्देश्य था विश्व के विभिन्न देशों, विशेष रूप से विकासशील और गरीब देशों, को कोविड-19 वैक्सीन उपलब्ध कराना। इस अभियान के तहत भारत ने 100 से अधिक देशों को वैक्सीन की करोड़ों खुराकें उपलब्ध कराईं। इनमें नेपाल, भूटान, बांग्लादेश, म्यांमार जैसे पड़ोसी देश शामिल थे, साथ ही अफ्रीकी, कैरेबियाई और दक्षिण अमेरिकी देशों को भी मदद दी गई। यह न केवल कूटनीतिक दृष्टि से महत्वपूर्ण था, बल्कि वैश्विक महामारी के समय मानवता की सेवा का उत्कृष्ट उदाहरण भी था।

वैक्सीन मैत्री अभियान के पीछे प्रधानमंत्री मोदी का यह विश्वास था कि “विश्व एक परिवार है” और इस संकट की घड़ी में मानवता की रक्षा करना सभी का कर्तव्य है। इस दृष्टिकोण को भारत की प्राचीन सोच “वसुधैव कुटुंबकम्” से प्रेरित माना गया। जहां कई शक्तिशाली राष्ट्र अपने वैक्सीन भंडारण में व्यस्त थे, वहीं भारत ने बिना

किसी भेदभाव के हर उस देश की मदद की जिसे इसकी जरूरत थी।

अंतरराष्ट्रीय स्तर पर इस पहल को व्यापक सराहना मिली। संयुक्त राष्ट्र और विश्व स्वास्थ्य संगठन ने भारत की इस पहल को “वैश्विक एकजुटता” का उदाहरण बताया। कई देशों के प्रधानमंत्रियों और राष्ट्राध्यक्षों ने भारत का धन्यवाद किया और इसे असाधारण कूटनीतिक प्रयास करार दिया।

कोविड-19 वैक्सीन मैत्री अभियान ने यह भी साबित किया कि भारत न केवल वैज्ञानिक और तकनीकी रूप से आत्मनिर्भर है, बल्कि वह अपनी आत्मनिर्भरता का उपयोग पूरी दुनिया की भलाई के लिए कर सकता है। इस अभियान ने वैश्विक राजनीति में भारत की स्थिति को और मजबूत किया और यह स्पष्ट किया कि भारत केवल एक उभरती हुई शक्ति नहीं, बल्कि एक जिम्मेदार और संवेदनशील वैश्विक नेता है।

श्री नरेन्द्र मोदी की इस पहल ने भारत को “दुनिया की फार्मैसी” के रूप में स्थापित किया और यह दिखाया कि जब संकट गहराता है, तब भारत मानवता के पक्ष में खड़ा होता है। वैक्सीन मैत्री अभियान केवल टीके के आदान-प्रदान तक सीमित नहीं था; यह मानवता के प्रति भारत के सच्चे संस्कार और कर्तव्य का प्रतीक था। यह प्रधानमंत्री मोदी की दूरदर्शिता और नेतृत्व क्षमता का प्रमाण है, जिसने न केवल भारत बल्कि पूरी दुनिया को एक नई उम्मीद दी।

निःसंदेह प्रधानमंत्री नरेन्द्र मोदी की विदेश नीति ने भारत को एक आत्मनिर्भर, सशक्त और जिम्मेदार वैश्विक शक्ति के रूप में स्थापित किया है। उनकी नीतियां न केवल भारत के राष्ट्रीय हितों की रक्षा करती हैं, बल्कि विश्व को एकजुट और समृद्ध बनाने की दिशा में अग्रसर हैं। “वसुधैव कुटुंबकम्” के सिद्धांत पर आधारित यह विदेश नीति, भारत को एक सच्चे विश्वगुरु की भूमिका में स्थापित करने की क्षमता रखती है।

(डॉ नागेंद्र कुमार सिंह महामना मदन मोहन मालवीय हिन्दी पत्रकारिता संस्थान के निदेशक हैं। लेखक के विचार निजी हैं।)

India's Defiance Against the Culture of Unilateral Sanctions by West

Unilateral sanctions by West makes developing countries suffer more. PM Modi charted a new road for India and the developing world



Pathikrit Payne

Two iconic statements made by Prime Minister Narendra Modi a few years ago vividly summarised the most fundamental and complex challenge the world has been besieged with for decades now, and especially in the last three years.

In September, 2022 during the SCO Summit, Prime Minister Modi stated 'this is not the era of war', during an interaction with Vladimir Putin, the President of Russian Federation.

In January 2023,, during the Voice of Global South Summit, Prime Minister Modi during his inaugural speech stated the following,

“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.”

UN perpetually failed in preventing conflicts

Both the statements had one underlying factor. It reflected the sheer failure of global multilateral institutions created in the aftermath of the Second World War, in fulfilling their stated objectives of created an inclusive and peaceful world, as well as in preventing conflicts from happening henceforth.

Not only the end of Second World War witnessed the beginning of Cold War between two ideological blocks but also resulted in an unprecedented arms race, and triggering of innumerable conflicts in several parts of the world. Often, and unfortunately so, third world countries became the theatre for major powerhouses to settle their scores. Vietnam being a glaring example of the same.

Then there were prolonged wars between states like Iran and Iraq which went on for nearly a decade. Even with the end of Cold War, and disintegration of Soviet Union, peace did not usher in. Global multilateral institutions once again failed to prevent the rise of state sponsored non-state actors and their use by states to farther their geopolitical agenda through asymmetric warfare even

while keeping the plausible deniability excuse readymade in hand. In most cases, such conflicts, resultant sanctions and rise in price of critical commodities as well as rise of violent non-state actors devastated developing or the third world countries more than anyone else.

What also became fashionable for intelligence agencies of powerful states was the use NGOs and academia to foment disenchantment against regimes resulting in orchestrated violence, anarchy, civil unrest and eventual triggering of civil wars to force regime change. UN could never create a mechanism to prevent that either.

The Larger Context of PM's Statement

Even though the statement, 'this is not an era of war' was made by Prime Minister Modi in front of President Putin, in the larger context, the underlying message was not just for him alone. It was also for those major powerhouses in the Western hemisphere or the Global North, and their powerful military industrial complexes, who have been responsible for waging innumerable wars whose justifications could still not be found till date.

Physical decimation of Iraq, in the name of 'War on Terror', not only destroyed that nation, fragmented it and triggered the beginning of incessant sectarian violence in the region, but also led to rise of violent terror groups like ISIS. Libya was destroyed and sunk into a bottomless pit of violent civil war, and so was Syria. Afghanistan witnessed two decades of war and expenditure of trillions of dollars with no positive outcome that could be showcased by anyone. Throughout the

Middle East and North Africa region (MENA), there has been innumerable conflicts, many of which continue till date. The same goes for Russia-Ukraine war which marked the beginning of its second year recently. Situation along Taiwan Strait meanwhile continues to be unpredictable and volatile. Japan, likewise remain on perpetual alert of a sudden missile attack from North Korea.

The Missing Conflict Resolution Mechanism

The fundamental question that still remains unanswered is whether the global multilateral organizations such as UN have been able to fulfill their goals. Has it been able to create a viable conflict resolution mechanism to prevent disputes from taking the shape of violent conflicts? Does such multilateral organizations have the last word when it comes to dispute resolution or is it that global geopolitics have become pawn in the hands of giant military industrial complexes, with deep pockets, who periodically manipulate geopolitical events to trigger conflicts for the sake of blooming their war-based business and the war economies of their host countries.

The Russian- Ukraine conflict has been a classic example of a war that could have been avoided but not much was done to do the same. Instead, some kept on adding fuel to the fire to make sure that the war continues. It was as if Ukraine was the proxy for some to wage the final war against Russia. It was as if, for some, the unfinished agenda of the Cold War was being taken to logical conclusion now by pushing Russia to a corner from

where it would have had little option but to retaliate. Cold War had ended long time back. NATO, or the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, which was created to protect Western Europe against Soviet Union, should have been dismantled too with the end of Cold War. But instead, it kept on expanding and almost reached the doorstep of Russia. It was bound to create problems. And it did.

How Developing Economies Pay the Price for Wars Waged Elsewhere

Both Ukraine and Russia have been the biggest suppliers of some of the most critical commodities that run the wheel of global economy, especially those of developing economies. From wheat to edible oil, from iron ore to crude oil and natural gas, the Ukraine- Russia conflict and the resultant disruptions created major problem for the rest of the world. It was further abetted by the culture of sanctions that were imposed on Western states, US and EU, on Russia that created even more profound problems for a world that was barely limping out of a massive pandemic led economic crisis.

For many of the developing economies, and especially the smaller ones, rise in global prices of essential items like wheat, edible oil and crude oil, which most of them import, meant tremendous pressure on their foreign exchange reserves, which had already dwindled rapidly due to pandemic led economic challenges. This resulted in many economies from Global South either getting into debt trap or pushed to the brink of sovereign default due to their inability to pay their external debt as a result of severe strain on forex

reserves. Further, it became beyond the means of many to import even essential items for the same reasons.

It is really a matter of question as to whether the sanctions that were aimed at Russia by US and EU did ever serve their purpose or not. But it is for sure that many other countries that had nothing to do with the Ukraine-Russia war suffered immensely, first because of the supply chain disruptions as a result of the war and secondly because of the culture of sanctions that only helps in amplifying the prices of commodities by pushing key players out of commodity business.

Had it not been for the sanctions on Iran, Russia and Venezuela, the price of crude oil would have literally been less than half of what it is today. It would have helped developing countries grow faster. But that was not to be. Prices are jacked up artificially by imposition of unilateral sanctions by powerful states and poorer nations suffer as a result.

India's Defiance and Showing of Mirror

It is because of this perpetual habit of countries of Global North, essentially US and Western Europe to have utter disregard to the problems that rest of the world faces due to their culture of imposing unilateral sanctions that India's External Affairs Minister had to state. "Somewhere Europe has to grow out of the mindset that Europe's problems are the world's problems but the world's problems are not Europe's problems. That if it is you, it's yours, if it is me it is ours."

This statement defines how Global North imposes its unilateral decisions

on rest of the world and then through constant driving of a one-sided narrative creates a perception that going against the dictum of Global North (EU and US to be precise) is akin to going against 'humanity', 'democracy' and 'liberty' (sic!), even though the truth may be far from this. There have been innumerable wars elsewhere on which the Global North have not even blinked its eyes, and instead have profited by selling weapons. In case of Ukraine-Russia war as well, the western military industrial complexes have been minting money by constantly pouring fuel to the fire. No real time efforts have been made to douse the fire and resolve the issues. Things can simply return to tranquility if NATO stops its expansionist agenda and accept that Russia too deserves to be respected.

Weaponization of Sanctions: A Dangerous Trend

Even when Europe continued its buying of gas from Russia, a narrative was created worldwide that as if those who would buy any commodity from Russia would be termed 'rogue' and would be identified as one who is against the will of the Global North. This would be followed possibly by sanctions on those countries as well including freezing of their forex reserves kept in dollar or euro currency, as well as debarring them from use of SWIFT systems for international banking operations. It is this climate of fear and weaponization of sanctions through threat of suspension from messaging systems like SWIFT or freezing forex reserves that has made many countries of the world to take note and wonder if this is the kind

of international rule based order that the world, and especially the third world or the Global South had really wished for.

India Emerged Stronger Because it Defied Sanctions

Against all odds of pandemic led economic challenges, severe rise in global prices of commodities, and responsibility to manage the aspirations and health of 1.4 billion population through tumultuous times of last three years, India not only emerged as the fifth largest economy of the world but also a more resilient one, which through difficult phases maintained a healthy forex reserve in excess of \$550 billion, had record exports of nearly \$670 billion in 2021-22, and had crossed newer benchmarks for gross tax collection and FDI, at Rs 27 lakh crore and \$84 billion respectively. India achieved this even while administering more than 200 crore of free vaccines to its eligible population and provided additional free rations to more than 80 crore people. Things in 2024 are much better, with India on the cusp of breaching the \$4 trillion GDP mark, forex reserves being above \$650 billion, exports for 2024-25, expected to be above \$800 billion, while India against all odds, continues its journey toward becoming a \$5 trillion economy by 2027-28.

However, it would perhaps not have been possible for India to emerge stronger had India not charted an independent foreign policy and continued sourcing oil from Russia in spite of severe pressure from the Western power blocks against the same. By sourcing discounted oil from Russia, India saved over Rs 35,000 crore till September 2022, as per reports.

By December 2022, Russia became the top supplier of crude oil to India. Not just that, India worked on a rupee settlement scheme for international trade in areas where transacting in currencies like Dollar or Euro is becoming problematic. India also worked on special Rupee Vostro Account for the same. Work has also perhaps started in making UPI India's alternative to dependence on SWIFT. India's push for green hydrogen is also because it eventually wants to break out of this cycle of sanctions and price rise shocks of crude oil that tramples aspirations of emerging nation while some mint money.

India's Emergence as a Responsible Yet Defiant Voice

Interestingly, India continues to be a nation with deep rooted good relation both with Western Europe, US as well as Russia. It has successfully meandered through difficult terrains of global diplomacy by refusing to side with the West in condemning Russia even while steadfastly remaining firmly in favor of dialogues to resolve issues instead of wars.

In today's era, it is difficult to diffuse any volatile situation when a narrative is deliberately shaped to paint one party as evil. The objective should ideally be to institutionalize a mechanism where war becomes the last resort and not the end objective for any dispute. Unfortunately, this is where global multilateral institutions like UN have failed or have remained mute spectators. The void thus created allowed manipulation of geopolitical situations by some to thrust conflict on some, to farther the business agenda of defence industrial complexes

of some nations who thrive on conflicts. This must end and this is why Prime Minister Modi steadfastly mentioned that this is not an era of war, a message with deep rooted resonance and ramifications for West as well.

The Rise of Global South under PM Modi's Leadership

During the Voice of Global South Summit, 2023, Prime Minister Modi during his inaugural speech also stated, '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.

He further stated, "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."

Prime Minister Modi's statement essentially echoes the sentiment of nearly 120 nations of Global South who have suffered immeasurably due to lack of reforms in UN, its failure to prevent conflicts and the resultant unilateral sanctions mostly imposed by the West, often in an arbitrary manner that put

severe strain on well being of developing nations and their populace. It is because of these reasons that India's presidency of G20 in 2023 has ushered a new reign of hope among the countries of Global South who are increasingly looking up to India to not just emerge as a solution provider and arbiter for complex global challenges but also become the voice of the voiceless states of Global South.

What India Preaches: Empathy and Oneness

For G20 in the year 2023, Prime Minister Modi coined the theme as Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam- "One Earth, One Family, One Future". In essence, what it signifies is that unless everyone starts considering the whole world as one family, unless there is empathy for citizens of every nation, being or small, weak or powerful, rich or poor, unless there is respect for sovereignty of each nation, unless there is this realisation that war cannot be business and an end objective, unless there is acceptance among the powerful western states that the culture of sanctions have deep rooted negative ramifications for smaller economies, there would never been everlasting peace in the world and the gap between rich Global North and aspring Global South would never be bridged. It is because of sheer lack of reforms in multilateral organisations like UN that forums like G20 are becoming increasingly more relevant for developing countries where they find a more level playing field to push forward their views and demands.

Even as India is poised to become a \$5 trillion economy, it remains a

torchbearer and harbinger of change for Global South. From providing vaccines to 70 odd countries at a time when the rich nations were accused vaccine hoarding, from rushing in to help Sri Lanka with aid worth billions of dollars, when its economy collapsed under pressure of severe foreign exchange crisis, to being among the first responders when a devastating earthquake struck Turkey, India is showing the way of how emerging economic powerhouses as well as developed economies should behave. India has also demonstrated that its in house conflict resolution mechanism, as applied in solving insurgency issues of Northeast India or abrogation of Article 370 or settling border issues with Bangladesh, is far better and effective than ones practised by multilateral organisations. Reason being India's intent is clear. Peace, and conflict is its objective.

The message is loud and clear. If the culture of arbitrary sanctions thrustured by powerful western states on rest of the world to farther their own agenda is not stopped, if reforms in UN are not implemented to make it more inclusive in decision making, then Global South would have little option but to chart its own path. A path which would not be confrontational but would embody the philosophy of Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam. And beyond a point, Global North would have little option but to fall in line. For India and the world, PM Modi has shown the way ahead.

(Pathikrit Payne is a New Delhi based Geopolitical Analyst and Senior Research Fellow, SPMRF. Views expressed are his own)

How Nehru and Congress Ignored and Insulted Dr B.R. Ambedkar

Dr. Anirban Ganguly

As the campaign for the first general elections in 1951-1952 played out, the Congress led by Nehru fiercely targeted two leaders. For the fledgling Jana Sangh and Dr Syama Prasad Mookerjee, Nehru came out in open abuse, vowing to 'crush Jana Sangh.' For Dr Ambedkar and the Scheduled Caste Federation, the Congress adopted a ruse.

Nehru deputed his trusted communist friends to ensure Babasaheb's defeat. Jawaharlal Nehru was extremely unrelenting and ungracious when it came to his political and intellectual opponents. It did not matter to him that they were his colleagues in the Constituent Assembly till the other day and had contributed equally to erecting the constitutional edifice of free India.

He wanted both Ambedkar and Syama Prasad defeated. He was allergic to their parliamentary skills and to their vocal advocacy of a new polity for India. He wanted a new Parliament shorn of opponents, except communists, who, in any case, were his ideological co-travellers. Nehru did not put up a candidate against the CPI's A K Gopalan in Kannur. This camaraderie overflowed especially after Sardar Patel's death. Despite Nehru's flame-throwing blitzkrieg, Dr Mookerjee won his Calcutta south seat, with his Jana Sangh just about managing to stay afloat as a national party by bagging little over

three percent of the vote share.

Babasaheb lost from Bombay North seat, primarily because of the machinations of the communists who were outsourced by Nehru to carry out the hit-job against him. It did not matter to Nehru that Dr Ambedkar's health was failing restricting his mobility. It did not matter to him that Dr Ambedkar had completely exhausted himself in the gargantuan task of putting together the Constitution and was therefore worthy of a noble gesture of support. Speaking of his defeat, Dr Ambedkar, one of his most authentic biographers Dhananjay Keer tells us, felt that it 'was due to the machinations of S.A.Dange', then general secretary of the CPI.

During the campaign Dange had given out a vicious slogan, he said, 'Spoil your votes but don't vote Dr Ambedkar.' To Dr Ambedkar, Communism was 'like a forest fire; it goes on burning and consuming anything and everything that comes in its way.'

Dr Ambedkar had deeply studied communism and had closely followed and critiqued the communist movements and politics in India. He had seen through a number of their machinations. It always bothered to see that communists used the marginalised to serve their political ends, as fodder to fuel a false revolution. He had clearly stated that communists 'exploit labourers for their political ends.'

Dr Ambedkar's masterly intervention in Rajya Sabha while it discussed the international situation on 26 August 1954, is a best example of how deeply he had read and studied the immediate post-war international situation and the 'expansion of communism in the world' which posed a major challenge to the free world. It was a problem 'between that part of the world which believes in parliamentary and free democracy', and 'the expansion of communism in the world', he said. Speaking of the worldwide threat of communism, Dr Ambedkar, explained

'...if we take stock of the situation from May 1945, and find out what has happened, this is the situation. Russia has consumed, as I said, ten European States: one is Finland; two, Estonia; three, Latvia; four, Lithuania; five Poland; six, Czechoslovakia, seven, Hungary; eight, Rumania; nine, Bulgaria; and ten Albania. In addition, Russia has taken possession of parts of Germany, Austria, Norway and the Danish Island of Bornholm. Of these ten European States, three have been straightaway annexed by Russia and made part of her country. The rest seven are kept under Russian influence. This European conquest of Russia amounts to an absorption of a total of 85,000 square miles and 23 millions of people subjugated...'

Babasaheb made observations that would prove prescient in 1962. He argued, thus:

'...Here you have a vast country

endlessly occupied in destroying other people, absorbing them within its fold on the theory that it is liberating them. The Russian liberation, so far as I can understand, is liberation followed by servitude; it is not liberation followed by freedom. But the point is this—and it worries me considerably. You are, by this kind of a peace, doing nothing more but feeding the giant every time the giant opens his jaw and wants something to eat. When you are feeding the giant regularly and constantly, the question that I should ask myself is this. Is it not conceivable that this giant may one day turn to us and say: "I have now consumed everything that there was to be consumed; you are the only person that remains and I want to consume you.'

There could be no co-existence in such a system, Babasaheb argued:

'...The question is: Can communism and free democracy work together? Can they live together? Is it possible to hope that there will not be a conflict between them? The theory, at any rate, seems to me utterly absurd, for communism is like a forest; it goes on burning and consuming anything and everything that comes in its way. It is quite possible that countries which are far distant from the centre of communism may feel safe that the forest fire may be extinguished before it reaches them or it may be that the fire may never reach them. But what about the countries

which are living in the vicinity of this forest fire? Can you expect that human habitation and this forest fire can long live together?’

That forest fire from India's neighbourhood would make an attempt to consume parts of India in 1962. It had already consumed Aksai Chin in 1950s while Nehru kept silent and looked the other way.

The communist members in the Upper House, led by its leader Bhupesh Gupta could offer no counter point and analysis. Incensed with Dr Ambedkar's riveting analysis of their expansionist ideology communists indulged in catcalls and theatrical obstructionism while he spoke. Dr Ambedkar remained unperturbed and in the best of parliamentary tradition and etiquette continued articulating his masterly critique of Nehru's foreign policy. It was but natural that communists considered him, his devastating logic and profuse documentation in support of it, anathema to their propaganda and slogans. Ambedkar, for them, needed to be kept out of parliament or isolated at any cost.

Dr Savita Ambedkar, in her reminiscences of her life with Dr Ambedkar, recalling this first election writes how Nehru was 'keeping a sharp eye on the constituency' and of how 'S K Patil (Mumbai chief of the Congress) and S A Dange of the Communist Party had agreed' to collaborate to defeat Dr Ambedkar.

It emerged, writes Savita Ambedkar, that 'Nehru, S K Patil and Dange had decided that they would do all that was

required, use whatever strategy suited the occasion, but they were determined not to let Dr Ambedkar win.' The Congress-Communist conspiracy, Savita Ambedkar observed, left 'the Constitution-making Doctor Saheb defeated.' It was a terrible psychological blow for Saheb...'

It was Congress's manipulation that caused the defeat of the maker of the Indian Constitution. This first defeat deliberately inflicted on Dr Ambedkar, deeply disappointed him since he was looking forward to returning to Parliament. Parliament, he felt, was his natural arena of work, a forum standing on which he could give his best to his country's regeneration in his remaining years. 'This horrendous defeat in the elections,' writes Savita Ambedkar, 'had an extremely harmful impact on his already debilitated health, melancholy, disappointment, depression and disability returned.'

Nehru and Congress engineered a second electoral defeat when Babasaheb lost the by-elections to Lok Sabha from the Bhandara seat. For this election, Babasaheb chose a young RSS pracharak Dattopant Thengadi as his election convener after receiving the approval of the RSS Sarsanghchalak M.S. Golwalkar.

Thengadi would closely work as Babasaheb's understudy for the next two years and would go on to found the world's largest trade union movement Bharatiya Mazdoor Sangh. The Bhandara by-elections were a chance for the Congress to make amends and to give up its pettiness, but Nehru stuck to his blind opposition to Babasaheb.

Dr Savita Ambedkar, ruefully writes that the Congress 'should have displayed the largeness of heart to re-invite [to Parliament] the sculptor of the Constitution with due honour. For the sake of the welfare of the nation, if not for anything else, Nehru should have left the way open for Saheb to be elected to the Lok Sabha. But quite to the contrary, the Congress shook hands with a person like Dange and applied all its strength and got into all kinds of machinations to defeat Saheb, which proves that Congress cared more for the party than for the welfare of the country.'

During the Bhandara elections, Dr Ambedkar writes Keer, was scathing of Nehru and Congress. He was fighting the elections, he said, 'so that he might give the people the other point of view from the Opposition. It would not have been difficult, he said, for him to be in Parliament if he was prepared to make a compromise with the Congress.' Babasaheb firmly chose not to compromise or succumb before Congress and thus faced political humiliation and insult in his last years.

Was Nehru's intransigence due to Babasaheb's outspokenness? What is because Babasaheb was cogently, convincingly and forcefully reaching out to the people and was succeeding in creating and shaping an alternate vision and narrative which free India could accept? Why is it that the Parliament debates have no record of Dr Ambedkar's resignation statement? Why does one find it only in the volumes of Dr Ambedkar's writings and speeches? Why was the animosity against him so intense?

A reading of Dr Ambedkar's resignation statement reveals how he faced marginalization and discrimination at the hands of Pandit Nehru. 'I have never been a party to the game of power politics inside the cabinet or the game of snatching portfolios,' Dr Ambedkar told the House, 'I believe in service...' Yet his sense of service, of constitutional and of cabinet propriety was repeatedly ignored and played down by Nehru. Dr Ambedkar exposed Nehru's way of working. The cabinet, he argued, 'has become merely a recording and registration office of decisions already arrived at by Committees.'

The cabinet, Dr Ambedkar lamented, worked by Committees, 'there is a Defence Committee. There is a Foreign Committee. All important matters relating to Defence are disposed of by the Defence Committee. The same members of the cabinet are appointed by them.' Dr Ambedkar was not a member of any Committee. 'They work behind an iron curtain,' he lamented, and those who 'are not members have only to take joint responsibility without any opportunity of taking part in the shaping of policy.' This, for him, was an 'impossible situation.'

He was promised the 'Planning Department' because of his previous experience, and when the Planning Department did eventually come into existence he was left out of it. Other ministers were given more than one portfolio but not Dr Ambedkar. He was always overlooked. 'Others like me,' he told the House, 'have been wanting more work. I have not been considered for holding a portfolio temporarily when a Minister in charge has gone abroad for a

few days. It is difficult to understand what is the principle underlying the distribution of Government work among Ministers which the Prime Minister follows. Is it capacity? Is it trust? Is it friendship? Is it pliability?’

Dr Ambedkar was repeatedly overlooked for appointment in various committees of the cabinet. The manner in which he was first included, then excluded and then re-included in the Economic Affairs Committee is disconcerting. It clearly demonstrates the insult and indecent treatment that he was subjected to by Nehru. His own words divulge the pain he had to endure during those early years when he yearned to actively participate in the shaping of free India’s polity. When the Economic Affairs Committee was formed, writes, Babasaheb:

‘...I expected, in view of the fact that I was primarily a student of Economics and Finance, to be appointed to this Committee. But I was left out. I was appointed to it by the Cabinet, when the Prime Minister had gone to England. But when he returned, in one of his many essays in the reconstruction of the cabinet, he left me out. In a subsequent reconstruction my name was added to the Committee, but was as a result of my protest.’

He bore the insults stoically never venting his growing frustration at his inability to actively contribute, through his field of expertise, to the shaping of free India’s governance and policy structure. He was increasingly saddened on this count in his last years.

Having had a recorded history of heaping insult and ignominy on Dr Ambedkar, the Congress and the communist parties and their leaders can hardly claim to speak for him or to being the upholders or claimants of his legacy. Any such claim must be dismissed as hypocritical posturing and a display of rank opportunism.

(The author is Chairman, Dr Syama Prasad Mookerjee Research Foundation, Member, National Executive Committee (NEC), BJP. Views expressed are personal.) (A short version of this article had appeared in an English daily in early December 2024)

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Congress alliance with Maoists: A Desperate Gamble



Binay Kumar Singh

In recent years, evidence has surfaced linking the Congress Party with extremist groups like the CPI (Maoists) and international entities like George Soros working against India's sovereignty. This alliance, leveraging caste-based unrest and radical narratives, raises critical questions about national security, political ethics, and the pursuit of power at any cost.

'Congress Mukt Bharat' and 'Maoist Mukt Bharat'

Prime Minister Narendra Modi has consistently advocated for a 'Congress Mukt Bharat,' aiming to zero down the Congress's influence from Indian politics. Concurrently, Home Minister Amit Shah has championed the cause of a 'Maoist Mukt Bharat' by 2026, focusing on eradicating left-wing extremism.

The Bhima Koregaon Investigation: Exposing the Nexus

The Bhima Koregaon case brought to light troubling details about Urban Naxals and their connections with political entities. Maharashtra's Pune Police uncovered letters, resolutions, and evidence which are now part of the NIA investigation, tying CPI (Maoist) leaders

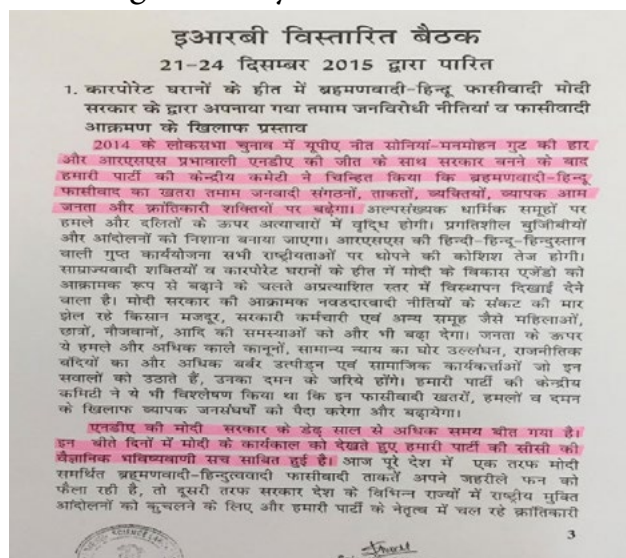
to a larger plot to destabilise India through violence and divisive narratives.

Plot to Assassinate Prime Minister Modi

One of the most shocking revelations was a plan to assassinate Prime Minister Narendra Modi. A letter dated April 18, 2017, from Maoist leader Rona Wilson to Comrade Prakash, explicitly mentions a "Rajiv Gandhi-type incident" as part of the strategy. The goal: eliminate Modi to disrupt the political and social fabric of the nation.

Alliance Between CPI (Maoists) and Congress

Documents reveal a troubling connection between the Congress Party and CPI (Maoists). During a 2015 Eastern Regional Bureau meeting, the Maoists explicitly resolved to oppose the Modi government, citing difficulties faced after the Congress Party's 2014 electoral loss.

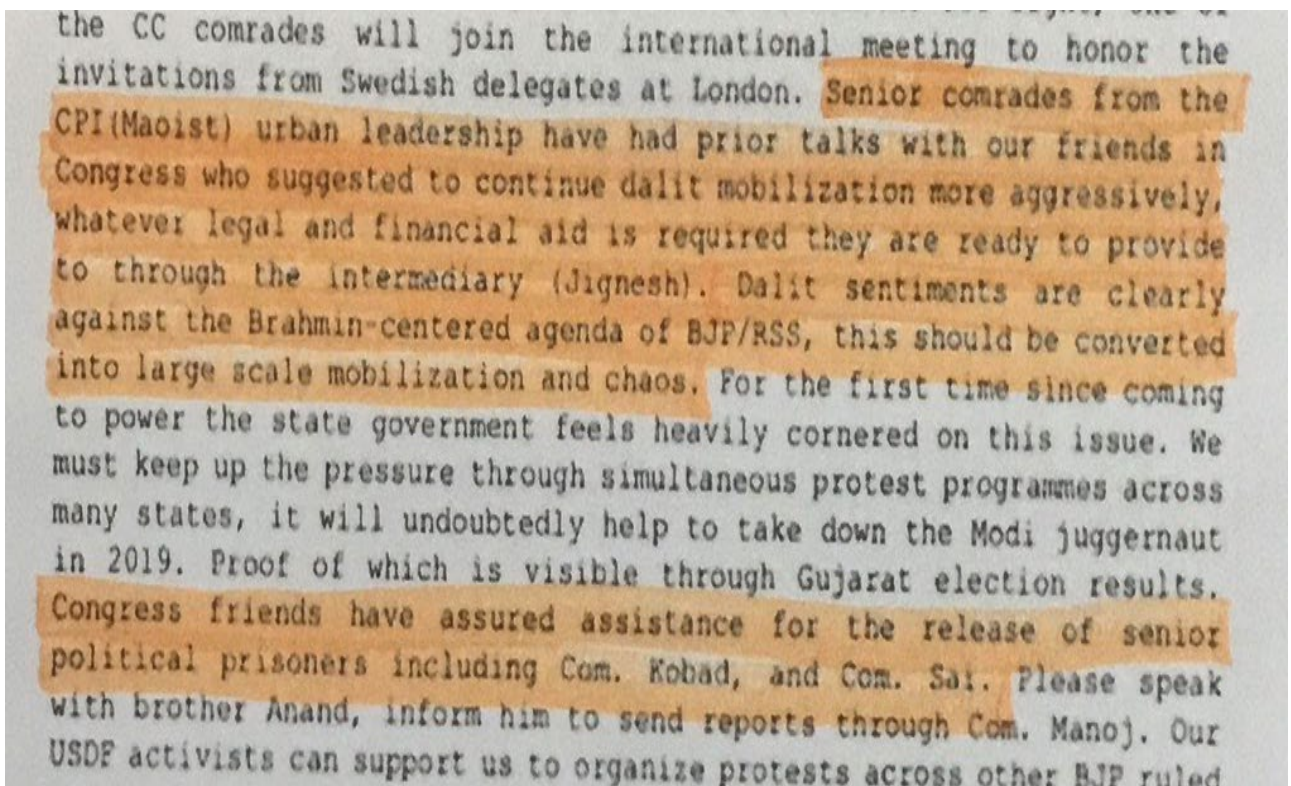


A letter dated January 2, 2018, further illuminates this nexus. Written by Comrade M to Rona Wilson, it highlights conversations between CPI (Maoist) urban leadership and Congress intermediaries. The letter outlines strategies to use caste-based mobilisation, particularly Dalit unrest, against the BJP and RSS. It also details promises of legal and financial aid from Congress, including support for the release of jailed Maoist leaders like Kobad Ghandy and Com. Sai.

Caste Politics: A Weapon for Destabilisation

Rather than working toward the upliftment of Dalits, these entities appear to exploit caste issues for political and ideological gain. The alleged coordination between CPI (Maoists) and Congress involves stoking caste-based grievances, inciting mass unrest, and destabilising the government.

The mobilisation of Dalit sentiments as



the CC comrades will join the international meeting to honor the invitations from Swedish delegates at London. Senior comrades from the CPI (Maoist) urban leadership have had prior talks with our friends in Congress who suggested to continue dalit mobilization more aggressively, whatever legal and financial aid is required they are ready to provide to through the intermediary (Jignesh). Dalit sentiments are clearly against the Brahmin-centered agenda of BJP/RSS, this should be converted into large scale mobilization and chaos. For the first time since coming to power the state government feels heavily cornered on this issue. We must keep up the pressure through simultaneous protest programmes across many states, it will undoubtedly help to take down the Modi juggernaut in 2019. Proof of which is visible through Gujarat election results. Congress friends have assured assistance for the release of senior political prisoners including Com. Kobad, and Com. Sai. Please speak with brother Anand, inform him to send reports through Com. Manoj. Our USDF activists can support us to organize protests across other BJP ruled

The convergence of interests between the Congress Party and the CPI (Maoists) has led to a troubling alliance. On one hand, the Congress seeks to regain power by any means necessary. On the other, the CPI (Maoists) aim to dismantle India's democratic framework and sovereignty. Together, they share a "common minimum programme" centred on destabilisation, unrest, and weakening the nation's unity.

a tool for political advantage was evident in the Bhima Koregaon riots. Congress-backed intermediaries reportedly played a role in amplifying tensions, not to address social injustices but to serve their own objectives.

The Role of Global Anti-India Forces

The involvement of international actors like George Soros adds another layer of

complexity. Soros has openly declared his opposition to Modi's leadership, criticising India's democratic framework under BJP governance. Documents suggest that financial and ideological backing from such entities aligns with Congress and CPI (Maoist) agendas, aiming to weaken India's sovereignty by exploiting internal divisions.

The Danger to National Security

This alleged alliance presents a dual threat:

1. **Internal Destabilisation:** Using caste and class divisions to incite widespread unrest.
2. **External Interference:** Partnering with anti-India forces to undermine the nation's democratic and social institutions.

While CPI (Maoists) pursue their goal of dismantling India, the Congress Party's willingness to align with such forces for political survival is deeply concerning.

MHA's Resolve to End Maoism by 2026

The Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA), under the leadership of Amit Shah, has embarked on a historic mission to eradicate CPI (Maoist) influence from India by 2026. This decisive push against left-wing extremism represents a major step toward restoring peace and stability in regions plagued by decades of insurgency. At the same time, the political dynamics surrounding this effort reveal a troubling alignment between extremist groups and opposition forces like the Congress Party, highlighting a shared agenda that threatens India's unity and democratic framework.

The government has made significant strides in combating Maoist insurgency. By targeting the organisational and operational framework of the CPI (Maoists), security agencies have demolished urban networks, neutralised key leaders, dismantled logistical networks, and curbed recruitment drives. Development programs have also been ramped up in affected areas to address grievances and build trust among local populations.

Under Amit Shah's leadership, the government is clear in its goal: to put the "last nail in the coffin" of Maoism. The timeline of 2026 represents a commitment to end left-wing extremism, ensuring that India moves forward as a united and peaceful nation.

Congress at a critical juncture

In stark contrast, the Congress Party finds itself at a critical juncture, struggling for political relevance. Having lost successive elections and faced diminishing public support, the party sees little hope of returning to power through democratic means. This desperation has pushed it toward controversial alliances and tactics, prioritising power over principle.

At this stage, the Congress Party not only views the Modi government as a political adversary but also perceives India's vibrant democracy as an obstacle to its ambitions. The party's inability to resonate with voters has led to a reliance on divisive politics, exploiting societal fractures and fault-lines to create unrest and destabilise the ruling government.

Congress has a history of demolishing

the institutions when they were in absolute power and now when they are out they are demeaning and demonising the institutions.

The Road Ahead: Unity vs. Division

The Modi government's decisive action against Maoism represents a commitment to preserving India's unity and security. However, the alliance between opposition forces and extremists poses a significant challenge, not just to the ruling party but to the nation itself.

At this critical juncture, it is essential for the people of India to recognise the stakes. The battle is no longer just about political power—it is about the soul of the nation. On one side stands a government determined to end extremism and strengthen democracy; on the other stands

The involvement of international actors like George Soros adds another layer of complexity. Soros has openly declared his opposition to Modi's leadership, criticising India's democratic framework under BJP governance. Documents suggest that financial and ideological backing from such entities aligns with Congress and CPI (Maoist) agendas, aiming to weaken India's sovereignty by exploiting internal divisions.

an alliance willing to divide the nation for its own survival.

India's vibrant democracy, with its institutions, freedoms, and unity in diversity, remains the ultimate target of those seeking chaos. It is now up to the citizens to see through this alliance of convenience and uphold the principles that define the nation.

It is also up to the citizens of Bharat to see through this deception. Recognising the difference between propaganda ("deep fake") and the truth ("verified real") is essential to safeguarding the nation's unity and sovereignty.

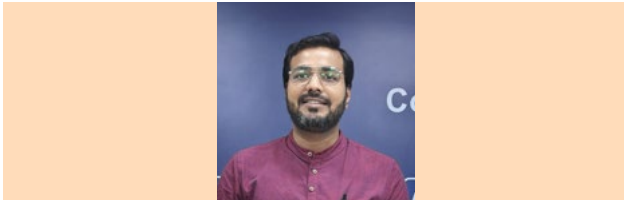
Both Congress and Communists have ideologies that Ambedkar critiqued for their inadequacies in addressing the unique socio-political challenges of India. Their current attempts to invoke Ambedkar's legacy seem disingenuous, lacking the depth of understanding and commitment that Ambedkar demonstrated in his fight for social justice.

In the words of Sardar Patel, "Every citizen of India must remember that he is an Indian and he has every right in this country but with certain duties." It is the duty of every Indian to protect the nation from forces that seek to undermine its sovereignty and divide its people.

The choice before the nation is clear: unity or division, progress or chaos, democracy or anarchy. Let us choose wisely.

(Binay Singh is a well known Author, Columnist and Senior Research Fellow, Strategic Studies at SPMRF. Views in the article are his own)

India and the Global South: Leading the Rise of a New Economic Powerhouse



Shivesh Pratap

Global South emerged in part to aid countries in the southern hemisphere to work in collaboration on political, economic, social, environmental, cultural, and technical issues. The Global South consists of developing countries across Africa, Latin America, Asia, and parts of Oceania, and has become a key player in the global economy. Its contribution to global GDP grew from 19% in 1990 to 42% in 2022, driven by nations like China, India, and Brazil. By 2023, four of the world's ten largest economies were from the Global South, and this trend is expected to continue. The region also accounted for 65% of global FDI inflows in 2023.

For the Global South, India is not merely a partner, but a potential leader who understands and champions their aspirations for long-term development and shared progress by bridge between the Global North and South. Let's delve in to the detail.

India: A Pivot of the Global South

India's evolving engagement with the Global South underscores its ambition to shape a more equitable international order while fostering mutual growth

with developing nations. Encompassing countries from Africa, Latin America, Asia, and the Caribbean, the Global South faces shared challenges of poverty, underdevelopment, and limited representation in global governance. India's active role in this collective reflects both its strategic aspirations and its commitment to global solidarity.

Strategic and Economic Ties

India views its relationship with the Global South as essential for amplifying its voice in global affairs. Prime Minister Narendra Modi has consistently emphasized the importance of fair representation, noting that "three-quarters of the world's population live in the Global South and should have an equal voice in international affairs." This advocacy aligns with India's broader efforts to reform global governance structures to reflect the realities of a multipolar world.

Economically, the Global South offers significant opportunities for India. In 2022, India imported 29.116 billion cubic meters of natural gas and 1.672 billion barrels of oil from these regions, supporting its growing energy needs. Simultaneously, Indian exports to these countries, such as \$18 billion in pharmaceuticals and \$10.3 billion in telecommunications equipment, have strengthened the "Make in India" initiative. This economic interdependence not only diversifies India's trade partnerships but also reduces reliance on traditional markets in the

West. The resource-rich Global South also enables India to secure critical materials, technology transfer, and collaboration in areas like renewable energy and digital infrastructure, essential for initiatives such as “Digital India” and “Green Growth.”

India’s Role and Importance in the Global South

India’s leadership within the Global South is evident through capacity-building and humanitarian efforts. With initiatives like a \$2.5 million fund for trade promotion and a \$1 million fund for enhancing trade policy capabilities, India is helping partner nations build robust economies. These measures are complemented by the “Development Compact” framework introduced by Prime Minister Modi, which emphasizes capacity building, technology sharing, concessional finance, and trade as cornerstones of engagement.

India’s role as a first responder in humanitarian crises, from providing aid in Papua New Guinea and Kenya to delivering essential supplies during conflicts in Gaza and Ukraine, showcases its ability to lead with empathy and action. Additionally, India’s G20 presidency offers a platform to unite Global South nations around pressing issues like economic growth, climate change, and sustainable development.

India’s growing trade with Latin America, now surpassing its trade volumes with Japan and South Korea, and its proactive stance amidst global geopolitical tensions, position it as a pivotal player in the Global South. By advocating for reforms in global governance, fostering trade, and leading through humanitarian

and developmental efforts, India exemplifies its vision of a balanced global order. As India deepens its ties with the Global South, it not only bolsters its geopolitical standing but also reinforces a shared commitment to development, equity, and progress. In doing so, it sets the stage for a transformative partnership that redefines the global economic and political landscape.

South-South Trade: A New Economic Powerhouse

Trade among Global South nations has witnessed exponential growth, with South-South trade volumes surging from \$2.3 trillion in 2007 to \$5.6 trillion in 2023. This represents a growing economic interdependence within the Global South, marking a departure from traditional reliance on Northern markets. Today, South-South trade accounts for 25% of global trade, while North-North trade continues to decline, emphasizing the shift in economic gravity towards developing regions.

Regional economic integration plays a critical role in this transformation. Nations in Africa, Asia, and Latin America are prioritizing intra-regional trade through favorable agreements, bolstering resilience against global economic uncertainties. East Asia, in particular, has emerged as a hub for manufactured goods, with 76% of its trade in this category, while Africa and Latin America continue to dominate in natural resource and commodity exports.

The Global South’s trade reflects its economic diversity. Africa and Latin America rely on resource exports (77% and 54% of their trade), while East Asia leads

India views its relationship with the Global South as essential for amplifying its voice in global affairs.

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in industrial production. Emerging global value chains (GVCs) are increasingly centered around Southern economies, boosting their bargaining power and technology-driven trade.

Political & Strategic Dimensions:

The Global South is increasingly advocating for a fairer global order. Home to 88% of the world’s population, these nations are demanding greater representation in international governance. The expansion of BRICS to include countries like Saudi Arabia and Iran underscores their growing influence. Shared histories of colonialism and economic dependency have fostered solidarity, enabling collective action on global inequalities and sustainable development.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s

concept of a “Development Compact” highlights the Global South’s push for capacity building, technology sharing, and concessional finance. Through these modalities, these nations aim to address pressing challenges such as climate change, economic inequities, and technological disparities, further solidifying their role as champions of a balanced and inclusive global governance structure.

Despite its rising prominence, the Global South faces significant challenges. Economic disparities remain stark, with GDP per capita in the Global North still 3.2 times higher. Additionally, high debt burdens in many Global South nations constrain their developmental potential. Yet, a youthful population offers hope; 69% of youth in these regions believe in a brighter future, in contrast to declining optimism in developed economies.

India’s Balanced Diplomacy vs. China’s Debt-Trap Diplomacy:

India offers a more beneficial leadership model for the Global South compared to China, based on democratic values, balanced diplomacy, and inclusive economic growth. Unlike China’s often criticized authoritarian approach and predatory tactics, India’s democracy, respect for sovereignty and commitment to mutual partnerships position it as a reliable partner. India’s democratic governance promotes freedom, sovereignty, and local agency, empowering Global South nations through initiatives like the Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation (ITEC) program. This contrasts with China’s debt-trap diplomacy via the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), which has

burdened countries with unsustainable debt.

India's strategic partnership with the United States, rooted in shared democratic values and cooperation in areas like technology, defense, and climate change, complements its historical ties with Russia. This balance is crucial for the Global South, as India can mediate between divergent global blocs, fostering dialogue and ensuring that developing nations' interests are represented. Moreover, India's non-aligned stance enables it to navigate complex geopolitical dynamics. While China often pursues a zero-sum approach to international relations, India's inclusive diplomacy allows it to act as a bridge between the Global North and South, facilitating solutions to global challenges such as climate change, energy security, and economic inequality.

India's leadership in climate change and renewable energy further differentiates it from China, which relies on coal. As a signatory of the Paris Agreement, India actively works towards renewable energy goals and champions sustainable development through programs like the International Solar Alliance (ISA). India's humanitarian efforts, such as the "Vaccine Maitri" initiative, and its cultural diplomacy, including yoga and Bollywood, enhance its soft power, fostering goodwill across the Global South. In contrast, China's transactional approach lacks the cultural connection that India offers.

Conclusion: A Transformative Force

The rise of the Global South signals a transformative shift in global dynamics, driven by its growing economic strength

and unified political advocacy. This emerging bloc is reshaping global governance and economic structures, with India playing a central role in promoting a more inclusive and balanced global order. As the Global South strengthens regional ties, champions equitable governance, and harnesses its demographic potential, it is poised to redefine the global economic and political landscape in the decades ahead. India's engagement with the Global South is a key component of its strategy to enhance international influence and build sustainable economic partnerships, ensuring the aspirations of developing nations are reflected in global policymaking.

India's leadership in this context offers a model of collaboration that prioritizes democracy, inclusivity, and sustainability, distinguishing it from China's often unilateral and exploitative approach. Through its balanced diplomacy, focus on capacity building, and respect for sovereignty, India has become a trusted partner for the Global South, advocating for both economic growth and the preservation of independence. In a world marked by shifting geopolitical currents, India's role as a bridge between the Global North and South positions it as a crucial player in creating a more equitable and prosperous global order.

(Shivesh Pratap is a seasoned technology management consultant, public policy analyst, author, and columnist. He holds a degree in Electronics Engineering and is an alumnus of IIM Calcutta, specializing in Supply Chain Management. Views expressed are personal)

India that is Bharat's Emerging Role as the Leader of The Voice of the Global South



Himanshu Rao Bharadwaj

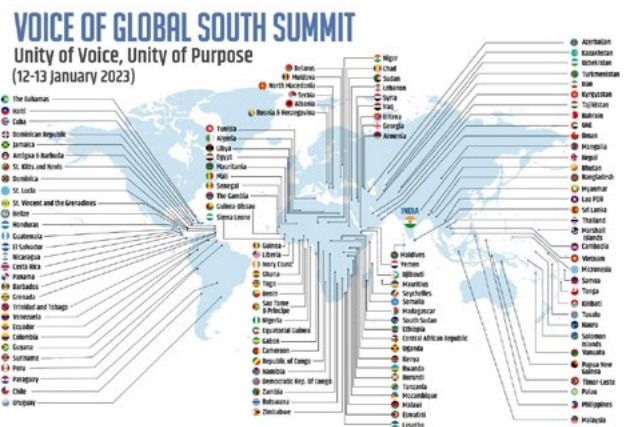
The Global South, encompassing nations in Asia, Africa, and Latin America, faces a range of challenges that hinder sustainable development and equitable growth. These include poverty, inadequate infrastructure, debt distress, climate vulnerability, limited access to technology, and geopolitical marginalization. As these nations strive for progress, Bharat has emerged as a leading voice and proactive partner for the Global South. Through strategic initiatives such as advocating for the African Union's inclusion in the G20, hosting the Voice of Global South Summit, and implementing impactful capacity-building programs, Bharat has solidified its role as a champion for the Global South.

In an era marked by shifting global power dynamics, Bharat has emerged as a pivotal voice for the Global South, championing the principles of equity, sustainability, and inclusivity. Rooted in the ethos that knowledge is for sharing, wealth is for caring, and power is for protecting, Bharat is redefining its leadership role by advocating for a human-centric Global Development Compact and fostering collaborative efforts to address development challenges.

Bharat's Vision for the Global South

Bharat's leadership in the Global South is driven by a deep understanding of shared challenges and aspirations. By prioritizing human-centric development, Bharat is:

- Promoting Inclusive Growth: Ensuring that no nation or community is left behind in the march toward progress.
- Championing Collaboration: Building coalitions for shared prosperity and mutual benefit.
- Advocating Sustainability: Balancing economic growth with environmental and social responsibilities.



Key Challenges Faced by the Global South

1. Economic Inequality and Debt: Many countries in the Global South struggle with high levels of poverty, unemployment, and debt burdens. The lack of equitable access to global financial systems exacerbates these issues, leaving these nations vulnerable to external economic shocks.
2. Climate Change and Environmental

Degradation: The Global South bears the brunt of climate change despite contributing minimally to global emissions. Rising sea levels, extreme weather events, and resource depletion pose existential threats to these nations.

3. **Technological Disparities:** Limited access to advanced technologies and digital infrastructure hampers innovation, economic competitiveness, and access to essential services.
4. **Geopolitical Marginalization:** The underrepresentation of Global South countries in major international decision-making bodies restricts their ability to influence policies that directly affect their development.
5. **Infrastructure Deficits:** Inadequate physical and social infrastructure, including healthcare, education, and transportation, stifles development and perpetuates inequality

Bharat's Leadership in Addressing Global South Challenges

Bharat has taken decisive steps to address these challenges and amplify the voice of the Global South on the international stage.

A Human-Centric Global Development Compact

Bharat's advocacy for a human-centric Global Development Compact reflects its commitment to ensuring that development finance does not become a trap for the needy countries but a ladder for progress. This vision aims to:

1. **Avoid Debt Traps:** Many developing nations face the double-edged sword of

needing financial aid for infrastructure and social programs but risk falling into unsustainable debt cycles. Bharat's approach emphasizes transparency, sustainability, and mutual benefit in development financing.

2. **Establishment of a Special Fund:** In a significant move, Bharat has announced the creation of a special fund worth USD 2.5 billion. This fund is aimed at providing targeted support to vulnerable nations, helping them build capacities and implement sustainable development projects without the burden of excessive borrowing. By prioritizing grants, concessional loans, and technical assistance, Bharat seeks to empower nations to chart their growth trajectories independently.
3. **Advocacy for Global Financial Reforms:** Bharat is pushing for reforms in global financial institutions to ensure fairer representation of the Global South. By amplifying the voices of smaller and emerging economies, Bharat is fostering a more equitable global financial architecture.

Advancing Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI)

Digital Public Infrastructure has become a cornerstone for modern development, enabling financial inclusion, efficient governance, and innovation. Recognizing its transformative potential, Bharat is leading efforts to share its expertise and resources with partner nations in the Global South.

1. **Sharing the Bharat Stack:** Bharat has pioneered the development of the

‘Bharat Stack,’ an open digital platform that integrates solutions such as Aadhaar (digital identity), UPI (unified payments interface), and DigiLocker (secure digital storage). In a landmark agreement, Bharat has committed to sharing the Bharat Stack with 12 partner nations from the Global South. This initiative aims to:

- Facilitate the creation of interoperable, scalable, and inclusive digital ecosystems.
 - Drive financial inclusion by enabling seamless digital payments and identity verification.
 - Empower governments to deliver public services efficiently and transparently.
2. **Social Impact Fund for DPI Development:** To accelerate the adoption of Digital Public Infrastructure in the Global South, Bharat has established a Social Impact Fund with an initial investment. This fund is designed to:
- Provide seed funding and technical assistance for DPI projects.
 - Encourage innovation and entrepreneurship in digital technologies.
 - Create long-term partnerships between public and private stakeholders to sustain DPI ecosystems.
3. **Capacity Building and Knowledge Sharing:** Beyond financial aid, Bharat is investing in capacity building by organizing training programs,

workshops, and collaborative forums. These initiatives aim to transfer technical expertise and foster local ownership of digital infrastructure projects.

Inclusion of the African Union in the G20

Bharat’s advocacy for the African Union’s inclusion as a full member of the G20 is a landmark achievement. By ensuring representation for Africa in one of the world’s most influential economic forums, Bharat has highlighted the importance of equitable global governance. This move enhances Africa’s ability to address critical issues such as trade, investment, and sustainable development on a global platform.

Hosting the Voice of Global South Summit

Bharat’s initiative to host the Voice of Global South Summit on a regular basis serves as a platform for countries to share perspectives, challenges, and solutions. The summit fosters collaboration and unity, allowing member states to collectively address issues such as economic recovery, climate action, and technology transfer.

Raising Issues Concerning the Global South

Bharat has consistently raised pressing concerns of the Global South in international forums, including the United Nations and G20. By advocating for debt relief, climate justice, and equitable access to technology, Bharat ensures that the priorities of developing nations remain at the forefront of global discourse.

Inauguration of DAKSHIN

The launch of DAKSHIN, a dedicated initiative for Global South cooperation, underscores Bharat's commitment to fostering south-south partnerships. This program focuses on capacity building, knowledge sharing, and technology transfer, addressing critical gaps in education, healthcare, and sustainable development.

Proposal to Launch a Satellite for the Global South

Bharat's proposal to launch a satellite dedicated to the needs of the Global South is a testament to its technological leadership and spirit of collaboration. This initiative aims to provide critical data on weather, agriculture, and disaster management, empowering nations to make informed decisions and mitigate risks.

Hosting an Event on International Taxation

By organizing a global event on international taxation with a focus on the Global South, Bharat addresses the inequities in global financial systems. This initiative seeks to build consensus on fair taxation practices, curbing illicit financial flows, and ensuring that developing nations receive their rightful share of global revenues.

Bharat-UN Capacity Building Initiative

Bharat's collaboration with the United Nations on capacity-building initiatives further strengthens its leadership role. By providing training programs, technical assistance, and resources, Bharat helps nations build institutional capacities,

enhance governance, and achieve sustainable development goals.

Conclusion

Bharat's commitment to the Global South is not merely a diplomatic stance but a reflection of its civilizational values and democratic ethos. By leveraging its technological expertise, economic resources, and moral leadership, Bharat is paving the way for a new era of equitable and sustainable global development.

Bharat's leadership in the Global South is rooted in its commitment to equity, sustainability, and mutual respect. Through initiatives such as the inclusion of the African Union in the G20, the Voice of Global South Summit, and innovative programs like DAKSHIN and satellite proposals, Bharat is addressing critical challenges faced by developing nations. By fostering unity and collaboration, Bharat not only amplifies the voice of the Global South but also sets a precedent for inclusive and human-centric global development.

In the spirit of "knowledge is for sharing, wealth is for caring, and power is for protecting," Bharat's endeavors underscore the transformative potential of unity and cooperation. As the world navigates complex challenges, Bharat's proactive approach offers a beacon of hope and a model for collective progress.

(The author is a techno-functional lead consultant with the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Government of India, and holds an MS degree in Artificial Intelligence (AI) from the University of Chicago. Views expressed are his own)

Dr Syama Prasad Mookerjee Research Foundation in collaboration with Buddha PG College, Kushinagar and National Association of Youth, organised a one-day national symposium on “Pali: India’s classical Language and Buddha’s Legacy”, on 18 December, 2024.



Buddha Triratna Mission in collaboration with Dr Syama Prasad Mookerjee Research Foundation organised a discussion on the ‘Challenges to Minority Security in Bangladesh’ at the SPMRF, New Delhi on 16 December 2024



Tribute Programme to Babasaheb Dr B.R. Ambedkar on his Mahaparinirvan Divas – Commemorating Classical Language Status on Pali by Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi – organised by Dr Syama Prasad Mookerjee Research Foundation, New Delhi on 06 December, 2024, New Delhi



A historic moment in Leh, Ladakh, as we celebrate Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi ji's transformative decision to confer the status of Classical Language on Pali on 27 November 2024



Bhasha Bhavan, Visva Bharati – Santiniketan, in collaboration with Dr. Syama Prasad Mookerjee Research Foundation, organized a National Symposium that brought together esteemed linguists to discuss: “The Government of India’s Declaration of Classical Language Status: Its Impact on the Language and Literature of Bengali, Marathi, Assamese, Pali, and Prakrit.” on 22nd November, 2024 at Lipika Auditorium, Santiniketan, Bolpur, West Bengal



The Maha Bodhi Society of India in collaboration with Dr Syama Prasad Mookerjee Research Foundation organised the conference on “Pali: India’s Classical Language and the Legacy of the Buddha” – in celebration of PM Shri Narendra Modi’s secession to confer the status of Classical Language on Pali at Bodhgaya, Bihar on 17th November 2024



SPMRF in Collaboration with Anagarika Dharmapala International Institute of Pali & Buddhist Studies & Maha Bodhi Society of India Organised 11th International Conference on “Pali and Buddhism” Held in Sarnath, Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh on 12th November 2024





**‘SPMRF Dialogue’
Conversation with Ambassador Veena Sikri on
“Current Situation in Bangladesh and Challenges”**

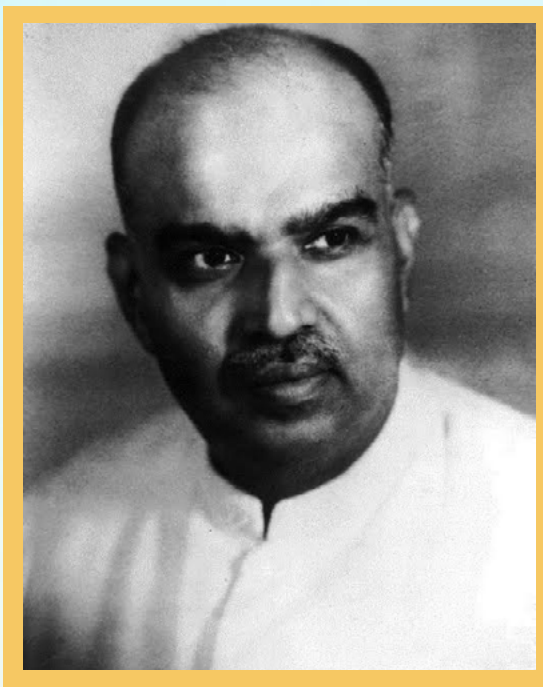
**Dr Syama Prasad Mookerjee Research Foundation
Policy Dialogue**

In Conversation with
Dr. Prabir De

Professor, Research & Information System for
Developing Countries (RIS), New Delhi

**“10 Years of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's
Act-East Policy & India-ASEAN- Bonhomie”**





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

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

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