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GM Mustard Need or Disaster

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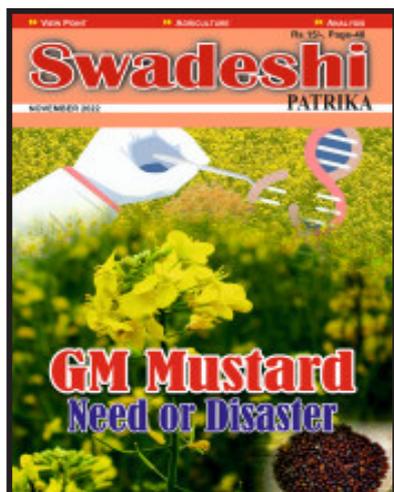
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EDITOR
Ajeay Bharti

ASSOCIATE-EDITOR
Dr. Phool Chand

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COVER & PAGE DESIGNING
Sudama Dixit

EDITORIAL OFFICE
'Dharmakshetra' Sector-8, Babu Genu Marg, R.K. Puram, N. D.-22
E-MAIL : swadeshipatrika@rediffmail.com
WEBSITE : www.swadeshionline.in

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Self-Reliance on Aircraft Manufacturing

With the recent news about the new aircraft manufacturing project in Gujarat for the production of C295 military transport aircraft by the joint collaboration between Tata Advanced Systems Limited and Airbus Defence and Space Spain, one correlated question about Passenger Aircraft manufacturing came into mind. India is among the five fastest-growing civil aviation markets globally but is among the least penetrated markets. With the Government working on the regional airport development with the aim of regional connectivity and making air travel affordable with scheme UDAN, there will be bound to exponential rise in air passengers and this will result in an increase in demand for passenger aircraft is expected to reach 2500 in number by 2038). We are currently importing most of this huge civil aircraft requirement. Because of the huge investment requirement for aircraft manufacturing, the number of companies in this sector is understandably limited (currently dominated by Airbus and Boeing). Additionally, the production of passenger aircraft is a complex, risky, and long-drawn process. However, with our technology absorption capabilities as shown in the Brahmos missile development program, and with constant government support to develop mass, skills, and R&D to achieve its full potential; we can build significant capabilities in aircraft manufacturing in the upcoming ten to twenty years. The objective of self-reliance in defense aircraft manufacturing is sufficient motivation to expect self-reliance in commercial and passenger aircraft manufacturing. The successful manufacturing of submarines and execution of tough infrastructure projects gives us enough confidence that the aircraft manufacturing project is doable for us and can be achieved sooner than assumed.

— Kumar Gaurav, Samastipur, Bihar

EDITORIAL OFFICE

SWADESHI PATRIKA

'Dharmakshetra', Sector-8, Rama Krishna Puram, New Delhi-22

■ Tel. : 26184595, E-Mail: swadeshipatrika@rediffmail.com

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Quote-Unquote



Aircraft manufacturing facility in Vadodra is India's giant leap towards becoming self-reliant in aviation sector.

Narendra Modi
Prime Minister, Bharat



Education in native languages will fully unlock India's potential. A person's intellectual capability has a better chance of sparkling brighter if education is imparted in one's mother tongue.

Amit Shah
Home Minister, Bharat



The claim that GM Mustard (DMH-11) is swadeshi & safe is completely untrue.

Dr. Ashwani Mahajan
National Co-convenor, Swadeshi Jagran Manch

Economic challenges before Rishi Sunak

With Indian-origin Rishi Sunak taking over the responsibility of the Prime Minister of the crisis ridden UK, the all of eyes are on how Rishi Sunak deals with this crisis? The British pound had hit an all-time low by 26 September 2022, at 1.076 per dollar, down by more than 27 percent in last few months. After that, though, it has improved by 6.5 percent in the last one month, England's foreign exchange reserves today are sufficient only for a few weeks' worth of imports. On the one hand, the pound continues to remain weak against the dollar, and it is becoming increasingly difficult for the Bank of England (the central bank) to stop pound from falling further due to the depleted foreign exchange reserves. In 1976, when a pound was equal to two US dollars, and it was weakening, England tried to stop it by taking a loan of \$ 3.9 billion from the International Monetary Fund. But now that the pound is moving towards parity with USD, UK does not seem to have the ability to stop its further depreciation.

UK economy had recorded a decline of 0.3 percent in GDP till the month of August, while according to the estimates of the International Monetary Fund, GDP growth is expected to grow at a maximum of 0.3 percent in 2023. GDP growth was 0.7 percent in the first quarter of this year, which declined to 0.2 percent in the second quarter, 0.1 percent in July and further to negative 0.3 percent in August. Inflation in the British economy has reached 10.1 percent last month, and fuel prices have risen up to three times as oil and gas supplies are disrupted due to Ukraine war. Britons will be bound to face difficulties in the coming winters. It is understood that 30 percent of the people of England have lost their savings and the government debt has also reached 95 percent of GDP, which is a record. A Think Tank has warned that in the next 50 years this government debt can go up to 320 percent of GDP. As soon as he was elected as the Prime Minister, Rishi Sunak said that his first priority would be to solve the economic crisis. Regarding the decisions taken by former Prime Minister Liz Truss, he said that mistakes have been made in the past, though, intentions cannot be doubted. He said that he has been chosen to solve these problems. He also said that he will run the government with integrity, professionalism and accountability. It is worth noting that former Prime Minister Liz Truss had taken some decisions to reduce the tax rates and increase government expenditure, supposedly to providing relief to the common people, due to which the government was all set to make further borrowing. This caused significant dent to the credit worthiness of the government. As of September 26, 2022, the yield on the 30-year bonds had risen to 4.95 per cent. However, in the last one month, it has come down to 3.75 percent.

Liz Truss presented a plan to give huge concessions in government taxes to give relief to the people from inflation in her budget. She said that this will give impetus to economic development and people will get relief from inflation. It was a tax cut of 45 billion pounds. In such a situation, the market forces did not approve the move, which led to turbulences in the market and recession. Rishi Sunak warned Liz Truss, even then, to curb spending and avoid tax cuts. Rishi Sunak says that it is not right to take the borrowing route to get out of inflation. Conservative Party MPs, who had earlier decided to hand over power to Liz Truss than to Rishi Sunak, the same MPs have now handed over the rein of power to Rishi Sunak. Not only the government debt, the recovery of the economy has also become difficult due to rising interest rates. On the other hand, the general public is already struggling with the declining purchasing power due to rising prices. Rising fuel and food prices have already spoiled the budget of the middle class. In such a situation, the recovery by mortgage companies is also endangered. This can also affect the health of banks and financial institutions.

Significantly, Sunak, a strong opponent of the policy of reducing taxes, increasing expenditure and borrowing, believes that it is not in accordance with 'conservative' principles and it is actually socialism. Sunak plans to reduce the basic tax from the current 20 paise per pound to 16 paise per pound (20 per cent reduction), reduce Income tax by 1 percent upto 2024, domestic fuel bill be cut and corporate tax be increased by 2023. Sunak's plan looks better than Liz Truss's policies in terms of market acceptability. It remains to be seen how he turn his plans into reality. But there is no doubt that the time ahead for Sunak is not smooth. On the one hand, he has to handle the British economy and on the other hand he has to maintain public support for his 'Conservative Party' in view of the rising popularity of the 'Labor Party'. Future will tell, that how he handles the economic and political fronts simultaneously.

GM Mustard: Need or Disaster

On October 18, 2022, a committee of the Ministry of Environment and Forests, Government of India, Genetic Engineering Appraisal Committee, that is, GEAC, has once again recommended, the introduction of DMH-11, a variety of GM mustard, in the farmers' fields. It is worth noting that earlier in May 2017 also GEAC had given its green signal to the same variety. But due to intense opposition from farmers and scientists, the government did not approve the recommendations of GEAC. It is being said that this variety has been developed by Prof Deepak Pental and is completely 'Swadeshi'. It is also being claimed that this GM mustard will give 26 percent more yield. It is also being said that the production of edible oils in the country is extremely deficient, due to which the country is losing valuable foreign exchange in imports of edible oil. It is also being claimed that GM mustard is safe for consumers, farmers and the environment.

But the falsehood of these claims of GEAC is becoming clear from the fact that GEAC itself has imposed certain conditions while allowing GM mustard, which proves that GEAC itself is not convinced about the safety of this seed. There is no proof, what so ever, about safety of GM mustard; and they want to avoid the responsibility of side effects by imposing conditions, that in future they can say that we allowed GM mustard only with certain conditions and since those conditions were not followed, they are not at fault. It is worth noting that it is not practical for the government to comply with the conditions imposed.



It can be said that in the country where there is no need for GM foods, the permissions given to them under the pressure of foreign powers can cause huge damage to the country's agriculture, environment, health and exports.

Dr. Ashwani Mahajan

This variety is not Swadeshi

There is no truth in GEAC's claim that DMH-11 is an indigenous discovery. In 2002, Proagro Seed Company (Bayer's subsidiary), applied for commercial approval for similar construct that Prof. Pental and his team are now promoting as HT mustard DMH-11. Bayer's application at that point of time was turned down because the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) said that their field trials did not give evidence of superior yield. As is well known the, hybridisation of GM mustard is achieved by means of the two genes barnase and barstar, derived from a soil bacterium called *Bacillus amyloliquefaciens*. The bar-



barstar-barnase gene is a patented technology of Bayer Crop Science, and Bayer is not a swadeshi Company. This fact has been hidden and in future the Bayer company can demand payment in lieu of its intellectual property rights and the farmer of India will have to pay through his nose.

False claim of high productivity

It is noteworthy that GEAC's claim of higher productivity about DMH-11 is not true as India's Mustard and Rapeseed Research Institute says that there are already varieties developed in the country, with at least 25 percent higher yield than DMH-11. Need of the hour is that the government should promote these indigenous hybrid non-GM varieties.

GM mustard is Dangerous

It is a matter of great regret that not only the foreign origin of this technology was hidden, but also the fact that GM mustard is herbicide tolerant was also concealed. It is worth noting that while testing the DMH-11, no test was conducted about its herbicide tolerance. When alert citizens and experts exposed this misdeed of GEAC, the committee imposed a condition that under no situation, any herbicide will be used by the farmers. Now since this variety is herbicide tolerant, naturally no government agency can stop the farmers from using herbicides, when herbicides are available in free market. A parallel example in this regard is in front of us that although the herbicide named glyphosate can be used only in tea gardens and non-crop areas, despite that this herbicide is sold indiscriminately across the country and its total sales in India is more

than Rs. 1200 crores. Understandably, this act of GEAC is indeed immoral. Significantly, the world is grappling with ill-effects of different types of herbicides. Due to these herbicides, cancer is increasing like a pandemic in USA and other countries, where such varieties are being used, and the litigation against the manufacturers of these herbicides is also increasing continuously. It is worth noting that only in USA, one lakh 40 thousand cases have been filed by cancer victims against Boyer, the company that makes Glyphosate/Roundup.

Thus, even with the understanding that the herbicide tolerant variety has not been properly evaluated, it is also a scientific hoax and a threat to public health.

Indian mustard is a boon in Ayurveda

Indian mustard is indispensable in many Ayurvedic medicines. Its aroma and taste are its distinguishing characteristics. Experts say that DMH-11 will neither have aroma nor taste, that is, there is no question of it having medicinal properties. Not only this, mustard leaves (Sarson ka Saag) is a unique cuisine of our country, especially Punjab, and is known for in the whole world for its unique taste. When DMH-11 is grown as a replacement for India's mustard using herbicide tolerant traits, not only sarson ka saag will disappear in the country, but other saag grown along with sarson ka saag such as bathua and palak will also disappear. Significantly, these greens are extracted almost free of cost by our women from the fields and they are a major source of iron for the women of India. Due to their elimination, the problem of anemia in the country may deteriorate further.

Export of food products may be hit

On the one hand, where it is being said that the import of edible oils in the country will be reduced, due to the introduction of this variety, which is not likely at all, but due to the introduction of this variety, the import of herbicides can definitely increase in the country. But the worst part is that after the introduction of GM in food items in the country, there can be a huge adverse effect on the food exports of the country. It is worth noting that till now GM is not allowed in food items in our country. All the food items produced in the country are non-GM. This non-GM tag in the country's food exports enhances the acceptability of our food products in many countries including Europe. The danger is that as soon as this non-GM tag is removed from India's exports, India's exports will be disrupted to a large extent, as Europe and many other countries want to buy from countries that do not produce GM. Significantly, today India exports food items worth 50 billion dollars. The country cannot afford to disrupt these exports. If these exports are disrupted, then the possibilities of increasing the income of the farmers will be exhausted and valuable foreign exchange will also be lost.

It can be said that in the country where there is no need for GM foods, the permissions given to them under the pressure of foreign powers can cause huge damage to the country's agriculture, environment, health and exports. In such a situation, it is the responsibility of the government to protect the interest of the country by bypassing the recommendations of GEAC in this matter. □□

Aggressive China and India's Interests

The 20th National Congress of the Chinese Communist Party has phenomenally reshaped the politics of China. This in turn has implications for the global strategic and economic order. Now the President of China Republic Xi Jinping will have absolute control over the party, military and the state as a whole. There are many fundamental changes – ongoing and fresh – that will be witnessed. For example, during the Deng Xiaoping regime there was a policy turn in terms of wealth creation through private capital, including global players. Now there will be greater role for the state, less role for the private sector, more central planning, and pursuing of common prosperity instead of concentration of wealth. In other words, the equation between the state and private capital will see a sea shift.

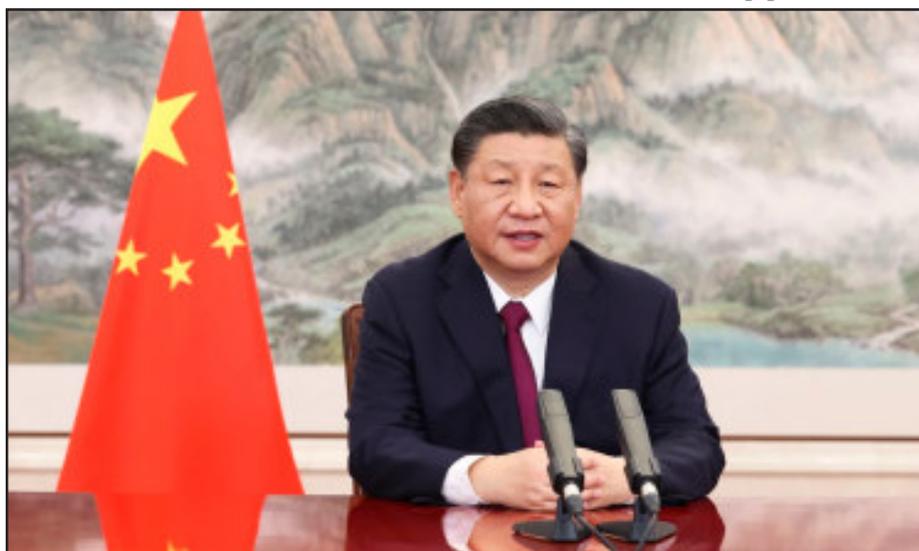
The zero covid policy has resulted in slowing of economic growth. More importantly, however, the government is sending out a clear signal that now onwards the state will dictate the economic agents. Earlier china focused for nearly three decades on achieving high economic growth. But now it wants to directly challenge the hegemony and superiority of the US; no more the approach of strategic neutrality. This could considerably alter trade and investment flows which were earlier aligned to a 'capitalist' China. We have to safeguard our interests.

The US had seen it coming; look at the focus on domestic semiconductor manufacturing, the new oil of the global economy. President Biden has sought to promote huge federal investment in R and D in technologies and manufacturing sectors where China currently dominates. It has placed embargo/controls on chip supplies to China. Of course there are dissenting voices from Tesla, Apple, and their likes since they have huge stakes in China (assembly and consumers). But then there is Intel which has committed \$20 billion for a new chip plant in Ohio.



The emerging China remains a formidable adversary for India; we need to prepare ourselves on many fronts.

KK Srivastava



India too has to safeguard its strategic and economic interests. While we can ill afford to antagonize our neighbor given a symmetric power of Chinese military and economic might, at the same time we can not surrender meekly. Chinese imports into India in 2021-22 were in excess of \$90 billion, notwithstanding our efforts to cut ourselves loose. Yet, to begin with, India has to go atmanirbhar in crucial areas like pharmaceuticals, for which China supplies nearly three fourth of active ingredients.

Today's China is certainly not communist, with state ownership of the means of production and the guiding principle being 'from each according to their abilities and to each according to their needs.' Yet there is a recalibration of China's economy with a clear and sharp statist turn. The ruling party has sent out a clear message (remember Jack Maa ?) to the realty, credit, and Fintech sectors that it will take regulatory and punitive actions, as it deems fit. But the fact is that Chinese economy is losing momentum. Between 2002-2012 (Hu Jintao) the economy grew at a CAGR of real GDP at 10.55%; this rate got reduced to only 6.55% during 2012-2021 (Xi period). Xi aims at making China a mid level developed country in the next decade. For this it needs an annual growth rate of around 5%. But due to adversities like shrinking population, declining productivity growth, and heavy debt burden, some estimate that it may actually grow at around 2.5%. This has many implications for the world as a whole, and India in particular. For example, it has no chances of becoming the world's largest economy (and therefore

In fact we face an adversary which has a hierarchical vision of the world. Only out higher national strength and external partnership can come to our defence.

dominant super power) in near future, since US will continue to occupy that position.

Also Chinese debt driven progress through Belt and Road Initiative (started in 2013) aims at being an engine of expanding its global dominance. But this loaded gun can back fire if the debtor countries (Sri Lanka being the current example) face economic hardships, in turn creating a crisis for China.

Xi has sought to reposition China as aggressive, revisionist world leader which wants to create a world community of shared destiny. But in effect it wants to reshape the world order that should be dictated by rules framed by China. This, however, is fraught with many imponderables, some of which we pointed out earlier. Thus while the economy is slowing down (and may continue to do so under the renewed focus on wealth distribution and check on wealth creation by involving private capital), adverse demographics is leading to aging population

with implications for supply to labour force. Besides, while earlier Xi could rule with an iron hand in the background of high economic growth, the Chinese population may opt to rise in protest if they see no gains. Lastly, it is a moot question if China will continue to remain innovation tech powerhouse, especially in face of US. China strategic rivalry. As far as India is concerned, India is unlikely to find peace with China. Hence the only approach it can have is to boost its domestic economy, reduce dependence on China, align its interests with like minded countries, and upgrade its defence preparedness. This is because China will continue to remain a formidable foe. Xi is carving out new fault lines thereby plunging the world into sea of confusion and uncertainty. But one thing is certain; Delhi will have to work harder and a lot more swiftly to blunt the challenges from new China to India's interests. Xi has decided to exercise tighter political control at home, increasing reliance of state against markets for the economic growth, and more assertive policies abroad in the name of shared destiny. Of course there are multiple contradiction due to the authoritarian rule of one man which are likely to surface. But in near term Delhi is likely to face a hostile China with a mighty military; the Chinese regime under Xi has made no secret about its expansive geopolitical ambitions. Given this there is not likely to be a benign phase in Sino-Indian relationship. In fact we face an adversary which has a hierarchical vision of the world. Only out higher national strength and external partnership can come to our defence. □□

Right to Abort: Beyond Legality

A recent Supreme Court judgment has brought single and unmarried women as well as victims of marital rape within the ambit of Medical Termination of Pregnancy (MTP) Act of 1971 thereby ensuring for them safe and legal abortion care up to 24 weeks of pregnancy. Of course there will be a need to ensure that these women can carry this right in actual practice. The court said that the rights of reproductive autonomy, dignity, and privacy necessitate that on unmarried women too must enjoy this right to choose. Similarly, though marital rape is not-yet-recognised as an offence under the Indian Penal Code, at least the Court has said that sexual assault by a man on his wife can take the form of a rape. Our Supreme Court has treaded on a more progressive path than courts in United states where regressive laws recently were passed relating to abortion. There the constitutional right to abortion was overturned by Supreme Court in June this year. In India, on the other hand, the court has recognized that the right to dignity, equality, privacy, and a dignified life together required reinterpretation of the contours of the MTP Act for all women who must be granted authority to take reproductive decisions, including the decision to terminate pregnancy.

To be sure, Indian women have had the legal right to have an abortion since 1971. The law was updated in 2021 in background of newer developments in science. Yet, due to patriarchal mindset and social stigma women especially unmarried and single – face great hurdles in actually exercising their right to abort. Even today 60-70% of abortions take place outside of the healthcare infrastructure. It is estimated that out of nearly 16 million abortions performed each year, up to 12 million are carried out outside a healthcare facility, most of which are done nonsurgically through pills. These medication are usually obtained by men. Far too many women lack access to safe and direct healthcare advice and support. Even 8-10% of surgeries are performed by unqualified personnel. No



While the recent Supreme Court judgement is laudable indeed, lot of ground will need to be covered before it actually benefits the targeted women.
Dr. Jaya Kakkar



wonder, unsafe and incomplete abortions account for about 8% of maternal deaths. When our primary healthcare system itself is in a poor shape, it comes as no surprise that there is a paucity of reproductive health services, more so in non urban areas.

Thus recognition of the Court of a woman's decisional autonomy to exercise intimate personal choices as a self governing individual is an important milestone in improving the status of women in a country – a country where in 2021 a massive 4,28,178 lakh crimes against women were recorded by National Crime Records Bureau. The actual figure may be much larger. But this is just about.

All Indian women need access to safe abortion performed by trained personnel. They also need access to information, guidance, and support on non surgical and surgical abortion. One step could be to extend existing family planning services to abortions. But it is not merely a medical issue. Improving awareness will help reduce social stigma around abortion. Putting law in place is a necessary condition but not sufficient to ensure its actual implementation.

The Supreme Court of India has demonstrated in recent times what women's autonomy should mean in practice. Thus it permitted a woman to terminate her pregnancy when her live in relationship broke down. Now the latest ruling has come in face of the court recognition that the law must evolve with the times. Thus women who are sexually active – married or otherwise – have the right to abortion if they so please. Women must have the discretion to decide about contraception,

number of children, or abortion without being influenced by social norms and values. The United States, interestingly, remains largely tilted against abortion. But many other countries often allow MTP decisions on grounds of women's mental and physical state, and not on normative value system.

The Court has also admitted to the possibility of intimate partner violence and the possibility of non consensual sex in a consensual relationship, thereby paving the way for understanding sexual violence further in a misogynistic culture that condones male coercion, presumably to safeguard the institution of marriage. Under the original Indian Penal Code (enacted in 1860) it was prescribed that sexual intercourse by a man with his own wife not being under fifteen years of age, is not rape. Women, who have struggled all this while to bring husbands who sexually assault them to justice as marital rape, now feel vindicated. However, currently marital rape is excluded from the ambit of the definition of rape under exception 2 to section 375 of the IPC. Since Supreme Court is hearing to remove the same presently, as of now marital rape is not criminalized, not yet at least. Human rights activists suggest that if a person (woman) is guaranteed equally, autonomy, and dignity under Indian constitution (Article 14 and 21) then marital rape must be termed as criminal offence. Earlier Justice Verma Committee has recommended that a marital relationship could not be allowed as a defence against sexual violation.

Coming back to the 'right to abort' judgement, the judgement has stated that the ambit of repro-

ductive rights is not restricted to the right of women to have or not have children. Reproductive rights, indeed, include the right to access education and information about contraception and sexual health, the right to decide whether and what type of contraceptives to use, the right to choose whether and when to have children, their number, the right to access safe and legal abortion, and the right to reproductive healthcare. But contrast this admittedly admirable, but normative, statement with stark realities. By government's own admission (May 2021), almost 70% of obstetricians and gynecologists posts remain vacant in India. A majority (nearly 55%) of abortions are performed in relatively expensive private sector facilities, making them inaccessible to poor. Worldwide nearly half of all abortions are performed in unsafe conditions, making them a leading cause of maternal death. As per a 2015 Lancet report in India annually about 16 million abortions take place. This means that on account of this factor alone 7-8 million women face health safety hazards.

Takeaway is clear. Legal change is definitely the needed first step. But we need to travel much beyond. We need to build capacity to ensure better quality of care so that first the abortion services become accessible on demand, and free for the most disadvantaged. Simultaneously there is the need to spread awareness and ensure a change in mindset of the male dominated Indian society so that it becomes objective, scientific, and compassionate towards a woman's right, unconstrained by her marital, social, or economic status. □□

Central Bank Digital Currency (CBDC): Pilot launching

The present era is digital era and a large part of the economic activities are digital. In other words we are moving towards a digital economy where a large number of the business transactions take place through internet enabled computer system or through mobile phones. Digital economy today account for about 15.5 per cent of the global economy and the digitalization is growing very rapidly. It has a direct linkage with the e-commerce and is thus creating more challenges for the small shop owners and the households. The Digital Economy Report 2021 issued by UNCTAD speaks about a divide between the developed and the developing countries as the income gap is increasing amongst nations on the basis of the availability of digital infrastructure or the ICT. The medium of exchange for the commercial transactions for the payments is also done digitally but through banking channels which are backed by the traditional tangible currencies.

However there is a shift in the mind set for shifting to digital currencies and large number of countries are contemplating to develop and adopt official digital currency which will be regulated through their Central Banking system. Almost 19 of the G-20 countries are on the verge of launching their digital currencies and China is one amongst them. In the meanwhile India has taken the lead and has become the first country in the world when Reserve Bank of India has launched the pilot digital currency on 1st November 2022 known as Central Bank Digital Currency (CBDC).

In order to understand the nature and nuances of CBDC, let us first understand the basic meaning of a digital currency. A digital currency is a form of currency which is available only in digital or electronic form. It is different from crypto currencies which are unregulated and generally issued by private agencies and has no legal recognition and is full of risk and volatility. Thus it can be said that all crypto currencies are digital but all digital currencies are not crypto. Thus it should be very clear in our mind that the CBDC is not crypto currency and is a



The CBDC may be a good start but the Government should move slowly for the retail segment as there is a very vast illiteracy in our country and almost 65 per cent rural population does not have adequate Internet facilities.

Dr. Dhanpat Ram Agarwal



legal tender issued by the Central Bank or RBI in a digital form.

In the Union Budget for 2022-23, the Hon'ble Finance Minister Smt Nirmala Sitharaman had made an announcement about introduction of digital currency and said, "Introduction of a central bank digital currency will give a big boost to the digital economy. Digital rupee to be issued using Block chain and other technologies by the RBI starting 2022-23."

Thus CBDC is not a surprise. The Government of India had decided in principle to issue digital currency and it has done it with a beginning and limited to participation by only few banks on wholesale segment only. RBI has said that "Use of e₹ -W is expected to make the inter-bank market more efficient. Settlement in central bank money would reduce transaction costs by pre-empting the need for settlement guarantee infrastructure or for collateral to mitigate settlement risk." It has further clarified that the use for this pilot is settlement of secondary market transactions in government securities. CBDC will help to enhance the digital economy by making currency management more efficient and less expensive. It is part of the Fintec Eco system. The existing UPI (Unified Payments Interface) a consumer payment system is already world class but it is supported by tangible currency not digital currency though digital enabled. Digital currency will also enhance financial inclusion at village level and will help fast transactions and increase our GDP with a multiplier effect.

The Reserve Bank of India had issued a concept note on CBDC on 7th October 2022 and has proposed to issue two versions



The Reserve Bank of India had issued a concept note on CBDC on 7th October 2022 and has proposed to issue two versions of Digital Rupee — general purpose or retail (CBDC-R) and wholesale (CBDC-W).

of Digital Rupee — general purpose or retail (CBDC-R) and wholesale (CBDC-W). Retail CBDC can be used by all including the private sector, non-financial consumers, and businesses. The CBDC in the wholesale segment will be referred to as "e₹ -W" and will be an additional option to the currently available forms of money. RBI has allowed nine banks including SBI and HDFC in the wholesale segment on pilot basis and will be gradually extended to retail sector which will be started soon. RBI has said that "The first pilot in Digital Rupee - Retail segment (e₹ -R) is planned for launch within a month in select locations in closed user groups comprising customers and merchants," It is a sovereign currency and holds the trust, safety, liquidity, settlement finality and integrity of RBI. The features of CBDC are similar to the existing currency and the liability for the same is not of the commercial bank but of the RBI. It is a legal tender which means every Citizen is bound to accept the same and is fully convertible against commercial bank money and cash. The CBDC will be fully covered by the

monetary policy of RBI, and the total quantity of money supply will remain same with simply change in the nomenclature in the Balance Sheet of RBI as a liability in cash currency and in digital currency.

The digital currency will eliminate the counterfeiting and fake currency in the market and will also bring more transparency in the financial system by curbing the illegitimate transactions. However it has the danger of data security. Some countries are ready with the technology for the digital currency but are still weighing the pros and cons. Japan has planned to launch it in 2026 and China is yet to announce its e-Yuan. The CBDC may be a good start but the Government should move slowly for the retail segment as there is a very vast illiteracy in our country and almost 65 per cent rural population does not have adequate Internet facilities. CBDC may be about 1 to 5 per cent penetration into our money supply and both types of currencies physical and digital will remain in operation in hybrid manner for at least a decade.□□

CA Dr. Dhanpat Ram Agarwal, National Co-Covener, Swadeshi Jagaran Manch

Temple – faith and economy: A study of Vemulawada in Telangana

India is the land of temples to worship the God and Goddesses and functioning as sacred institutions to perform a range of services and activities such as spiritual fulfilment of the people, dharmic (righteous) discourses, arts, music, dance, economy, education, tourism, a number of social and cultural functions to integrate the society. *Temples attracted generous offerings from the rulers in the past and society at present has made temples as huge stocks of wealth such as land, jewellery, and monetary resources, making these temples as powerful economic institutions in providing employment and livelihoods to millions of people directly and indirectly.* Historically temples played a significant role in the all-round development of human beings, be it mental well-being or material progress through economic activities based on Dharma. *Many small towns in Telangana like Vemulawada, Basara, Yadadri, Badrachalam, Ramappa, Kaleshwaram, Dharmapuri, Chilukuru, etc. are known as temple towns, economic activities developed around these temples very significantly over temple-based products business and gift items.*

Vemulawada Shri Raja-Rajeshwara Temple, also known as 'Dakshin Kashi' has its footprints on the society of at least four states which includes; Telangana, Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra, and Karnataka. Devotees and pilgrims from all these places come to have a 'Divine Darshan' at this temple. Outside of the core activities of the temple, the temple acts as an enabler for several other economies which are dependent on it. Most temples give rise to several commercial establishments around them ranging from florists, provision and gift shops, hotels, restaurants, etc, all of which are primarily dependent on the activities of the temple and the pilgrims and tourists visiting it. The number of pilgrims who visited Sri Raja Rajeshwara Swamy temple from 2018 to 2022 was 3.63 crores. The total number of pilgrims who visited Sri Raja Rajeshwara Swamy temple was 1.10 crores in 2018, 1.13 crores in 2019,



*As per a survey by
pew Indians of all
religious
backgrounds
compellingly say
they are very free to
practice their faiths,
as this can be seen
in Vemulawada.*

**Dr. S. Lingamurthy
&
Ms. Shivanjali
Shukla**



53.32 lakhs in 2020, 51.63 lakhs in 2021 and 34.04 lakhs in 2022 (as of 30-06-2022). In 2020 and 2021 the number of pilgrims declined due to the pandemic and the temple was completely closed for three months i.e., from March to May 2020.

The temple also stimulated the development of urban agglomeration and area expansion in Vemulawada. In the year 2010 Vemulawada town had spread to an area of 225 hectares which was less than Husnabad town of 228 hectares. But over 12 years, Vemulawada town has been extended additionally 205 hectares which is almost double the Husnabad town expansion of about 104 hectares in the year 2022. In addition, revenue to Husnabad RTC depot was 16.53 crores and Vemulawada depot was 25.22 crores in 2017-18, and it was 16.77 crores to Husnabad, 25.05 crores to Vemulawada depot in 2018-19, and it was 15.25 crores to Husnabad, 25.36 crores to the Vemulawada depot in 2019-20, and it was 10.58 crores to Husnabad, 14.58 crores to the Vemulawada depot in 2020-21, and it was 13.38 crores to Husnabad, 23.75 crores to the Vemulawada depot in 2021-22 respectively.

Moreover, the temple is also impacting employment. The temple is employing 501 persons in the form of temple staff at various levels, the temple is running a Sanskrit college for which it employed 13 persons, the temple is also running a Sanskrit school (Veda Pathashala) for which it employed 7 persons, in addition to this 7 people are employed in the PUC (intermediate) college, which is also managed by the temple authorities. So, the total direct employment pro-



Begging is considered a downcast activity and a sign of unemployment and poverty but begging is not regarded as a discouraging economic activity by the majority of temple followers, but rather as a component of ritual performance and vocation.

vided by the temple stands at 528.

In general, begging is considered a downcast activity and a sign of unemployment and poverty but begging is not regarded as a discouraging economic activity by the majority of temple followers, but rather as a component of ritual performance and vocation. All temple devotees seek to present cash or kind to the beggars as part of the wealth distribution in front of the temple. During this process, *an environment of economic inclusion has been created in front of the temple as some of the beggars didn't seem to be poor and the beggars were begging in the temple premises with a reason that they*

have taken "Deeksha" varying from 5, 11, 21 to 41 days and for the sake of their day to day living they are begging as a part of the tradition of Deeksha. This shows how wealth distribution is done in Bharat and beggary is not always a discouraging activity because generally maximum of the beggars are seen in front of temples, which has a relation with Alms giving during ancient times in Bharat.

According to the Pew Global Attitude poll, more than 25% of Indians said they had increased their religious observance over the previous four to five years. The pattern is consistent with other attitudinal studies and holds true for all major religions. In India, the proportion of respondents who said religion was extremely important rose from 71% to 80% between 2007 and 2015. The National Sample Survey Office (NSSO) data reveals that the average cost of religious travel has increased by more than twice as much throughout this time. Understandably, this is 'dharmonamics' that is fast growing and based on current trends, the possibilities are endless. Likewise, business activities are also impacted by the Shri Raja Rajeshwara temple and various direct and indirect activities related

to the temple. There are around 22 types of shops. The total number of shops during normal days is 1,204, the number of these particular types of shops increases three times during the peak season (festivals and some special occasions) as compared to the normal season. Shri Raja Rajeshwara Temple is completely funding two educational institutions namely Sanskrit Pathshala and SRR Intermediate and Degree College and both of the institutions are located in Vemulawada town with well-furnished infrastructure, faculty, and supporting staff. In these two educational institutions total of 295 students are studying and among them, 185 are male students accounting for 62.71 percent and the remaining 110 students are female comprising 37.28 percent. The entire business which is surrounded by the temple is completely dependent on the temple, even very tiny business persons (cart pullers, hawkers) get significant business every day and earn a profit of about Rs. 500-600 per day in a normal season and it will be three times higher during the peak season.

Vemulawada Temple Revenue for the year 2021-22 is 206.68 crores, which comes from hundi (28.96 Cr); temple Sevas (Rs. 43.96 Cr); income from temple assets (Rs. 16.43 Cr); return from temple properties (Rs. 90.91 Cr). For the last seven years (FY 2014-15 to 2021-22) accumulated revenue of the temple is 1056.76 Cr. Temple is paying tax to the Vemulawada Municipality Rs. 98.44 lakh every year and the temple is paying to the State Government as an Endowment and Administrative Fund every year @12% of total revenue. During 2021-22, the temple paid

Vemulawada Temple Revenue for the year 2021-22 is 206.68 crores, which comes from hundi (28.96 Cr); temple Sevas (Rs. 43.96 Cr); income from temple assets (Rs. 16.43 Cr); return from temple properties (Rs. 90.91 Cr).

Rs. 12.81 Cr to the Government of Telangana. The Vemulawada Municipality is getting surplus revenue through temple business activity of Rs. 1.5 Cr. Whereas, Vemulawada Municipality spends Rs. 60 lakhs per annum for providing basic amenities & services for the pilgrims. So, in totality Vemulawada temple is providing direct employment to 528 people and indirectly through business activities to about 1500 families and 2500 workers.

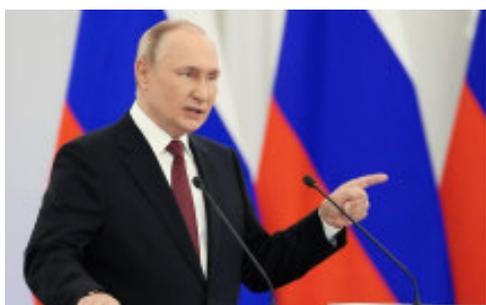
In consideration of the discussed figures the policymakers, academicians, intellectuals and civil society needs to consider the temples as an integral part of economic development, particularly in temple surrounding areas, and that too without any investment by the Government. There is a high scope of tourism development in and around Vemulawada temple and its network of temples inside Vemulawada and outside temple town such as Kondagattu Shri. Hanuman Temple, Komuravelli Shri. Mallikarjuna Swamy Temple etc. Therefore, the government of Telangana should consider development of this temple and promotion of tourism from across the

country. The government of Telangana should also invest the amount on temple development whatever the amount it is getting in the form of an Endowment Fund. So far, there is no return to the temple from the Government of Telangana, and Vemulawada Municipality is already getting a huge amount from the temple as tax, but there is no significant investment from the municipality to maintain the temple premises. Municipality authorities should provide all basic facilities with quality service to the devotees & pilgrims surrounding the temple premises. This will lead to a hike in the number of pilgrims and tourists to the Vemulawada, thus there is a positivity to earn more income through the temple. So, the government of Telangana should develop this temple by allocating a sufficient budget which will lead to the creation of livelihoods and quality of life for the masses and will lead to more economic and social development around the temple.

Bharatians believe their nation has fulfilled one of its post-independence ideals: a society where adherents of many religions may live and exercise freely many years after Bharat was freed from colonial authority. As per a survey by few Indians of all religious backgrounds compellingly say they are very free to practice their faiths, as this can be seen in Vemulawada. There is a Dargah inside Shri Raja Rajeshwara temple, but only Hindus offer prayers there; no Muslims visit it. This also provides convincing evidence of Hindus' tolerance for other religions. □□

Dr. S. Lingamurthy, Assistant Professor, Central University of Karnataka and Ms. Shivanjali Shukla, Doctoral Research Scholar, Central University of Karnataka
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Putin: Western hegemony collapsing



Accepting the accession of the Donetsk and Lugansk People's Republics and Zaporozhye and Kherson Regions, President Vladimir Putin made a frontal attack on the West and the threat it poses to the rest of the world, mentioning the Opium Wars (against China) and India's attempt to shake off British rule in 1857, and embraced Iran in a growing assertion against the domination of the United States and the United Kingdom. Directly accusing the Anglo-Saxons (US-UK) of sabotaging the Nord-stream pipelines, Putin taunted the United States of "in fact occupying Germany, Japan and South Korea", an allusion to its military occupation and domination of these countries after World War II.

Stressing the millennium-old historical ties with Donetsk, Lugansk, Zaporozhye and Kherson, Putin invoked Article 1 of the UN Charter (principle of equal rights and self-determination of peoples) to assert the legality of the referendums leading to the incorporation of these areas in the Russian Federation. Speaking in the Grand Kremlin Palace's St George Hall on September 30, 2022, Putin made it clear that these regions are henceforth non-negotiable. Ukraine president Volodymyr Zelensky immediately ruled out talks with Moscow.

The Russian President extolled the sacrifices of citizens who refused to accept the neo-Nazi coup in Ukraine in 2014, and died for the right to speak their native language (Russian), and preserve their culture, traditions and faith. He promised that Moscow would rebuild the destroyed cities and infrastructure, and restore the social security, pension, healthcare and education systems.

Addressing the controversial issue of partial mobilisation for the "special military operation", Putin said the fighters of Donbass and Novorossiia who went to military recruitment offices after receiving a call-up paper, and those who volunteered, their parents, wives and children, must understand what Russians are fighting for, the enemy Russia faces, and who is pushing the world into new wars and crises to benefit from the tragedy.

The West, he asserted, decided after the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991 that the whole world must permanently remain under its sway. It was confident that Russia would never rise again and would fragment further. Despite that miserable decade, Russia withstood the blows and took its rightful place in the world. The West, however, continued seeking ways to weaken and break up Russia, unable to digest the existence of a country with huge territory, natural wealth, resources and people with indomitable spirit.

Condemning the West's commitment to the neo-colonial system that enables it to live off the world, "to plunder it thanks to the domination of the dollar and technology...", Putin charged that the West's goal is total de-sovereignisation of nations. Hence its aggression towards independent states, traditional values and authentic cultures; and moves to undermine new global currencies and technological development centres outside their control.



Putin promised that Moscow would rebuild the destroyed cities and infrastructure, and restore the social security, pension, healthcare and education systems.

Sandhya Jain

While the ruling elites of some nations are willing vassals of the United States, Putin noted, others are bribed or intimidated; States that resist are destroyed. This unsatiable hunger for dominance “are the real causes of the hybrid war that the collective West is waging against Russia... they want us to be a colony... they want to loot. They do not want to see us a free society, but a mass of soulless slaves.”

Russian thought and philosophy are seen as a “direct threat” to this enslavement project; hence Russian philosophers are targeted for assassination, Putin averred, alluding to the recent attempt to assassinate Aleksandr Dugin, in which his daughter lost her life. Inflated with a sense of its own impunity, the West flouted strategic security agreements; denied agreements reached at the highest political level, including promises not to expand NATO to the east; and unilaterally dismantled missile defence, intermediate-range and shorter-range missile treaties under false pretexts.

Wondering about the talk of “a rules-based order”, Putin mused, “Who has ever seen these rules? Who agreed or approved them?” Russia will not live by such false rules. Having shunned the principle of inviolability of borders, the West is trying to pronounce “who has the right to self-determination and who does not”, and is enraged by the choice made by the people in Crimea, Sevastopol, Donetsk, Lugansk, Zaporozhye and Kherson.

Continuing the lessons of history, Putin said Western colonialism began in the Middle Ages, and was followed by the slave trade, genocide of Indian tribes in Amer-

ica, plunder of India and Africa, wars of England and France against China that compelled it to open its ports to the opium trade. Getting entire nations hooked on drugs, the West “exterminated entire ethnic groups for the sake of grabbing land and resources, hunting people like animals.” In contrast, Russia in the 20th century led the anti-colonial movement that offered many peoples the chance to progress, reduce poverty and inequality, and defeat hunger and disease.

The chronic Russophobia of the Western elites, Putin analysed, is because Russia “did not allow them to rob us during the period of colonial conquests and forced the Europeans to trade with us on mutually beneficial terms”. This was due to “a strong centralised state” based on the values of Orthodox Christianity, Islam, Judaism, Buddhism, and Russian culture; Putin thus subtly showcased Russia’s multicultural tradition.

Several plans were made to invade Russia, “during the Time of Troubles in the 17th century and in the period of ordeals after the 1917 revolution.” However, in the late 20th century, the West managed to seize Russia’s wealth. Putin reminisced, “they treated us like a colony, using various schemes to pump trillions of dollars out of the country. We remember. We have not forgotten anything.”

The United States, he emphasised, “is the only country in the world that has used nuclear weapons twice, destroying the cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in Japan.” And during WWII, the United States and Britain reduced Dresden, Hamburg, Cologne and many German cities to rubble, without “any military necessity.” The objec-

tive, “as with the nuclear bombing of Japanese cities: to intimidate our country and the rest of the world.” America scarred Korea and Vietnam with carpet bombings and use of napalm and chemical weapons.

In fact, Washington continues to occupy Germany, Japan, the Republic of Korea and other countries. Their top officials are spied on and offices and homes bugged; they swallow this disgrace “meekly” in the name of Euro-Atlantic solidarity.

In similar Orwellian-speak, America designates as “noble medical research”, the creation of biological weapons and use of human test subjects, including in Ukraine. These destructive policies, wars and plunder have created the current wave of migrants to Europe. Exposing Western double standards, Putin said that grain is being exported from Ukraine, ostensibly to ensure the food security of the poorest countries, but the bulk (95 per cent) is sent to Europe.

Lambasting Washington for demanding more and more sanctions against Russia, Putin charged that by pressuring the European Union to renounce Russian energy and other resources, it is “pushing Europe toward deindustrialisation in a bid to get its hands on the entire European market.” The European elites prefer to betray their own peoples. Now, unhappy over the ineffective sanctions, the Anglo-Saxons “have turned to subversion... causing explosions on Nord Stream’s international gas pipelines passing along the bottom of the Baltic Sea.”

Washington backs its diktat “by crude force,” via hundreds of military bases around the world, NATO expansion, and new

[Continued on page no. 20]

Can Sunak Restore Britain to its lost great-ness?



A Britain no longer great, a kingdom hardly united, has chosen a child of the empire to restore economic and political stability, even if not glory, in the 75th year of the jewel being plucked from its crown. Rishi Sunak, a person of Indian origin, is Britain's new prime minister.

After all the usual skulduggery and backstabbing long associated with the very British political coups, Conservative Party members of parliament seem to have been reminded of Shakespeare's cautionary words (Richard II): "Forget, forgive, conclude and be agreed/ Our doctors say this is no time to bleed."

Sunak would have done Thomas Babington Macaulay proud, as the product of a system that has produced "a class of persons, Indian in blood and colour, but English in taste, in opinions, in morals, and in intellect". However, it remains to be seen whether Sunak enters history books merely because of his race and religion or because he actually succeeds in putting humpty dumpty together again.

The crisis in Britain, political, economic and social, is structural.

- Brexit and Liz Truss's ideology driven policies have wrecked the economy.
- Within the short span of his term in office Boris Johnson presided over the drift that has since helped India climb up the global GDP ladder overtaking Britain to become the world's fifth largest economy.
- As if to rub that infamous Indian salt into those imperial wounds, a person of Indian origin now enters 10 Downing Street.

Even though the British parliament was the first institutional expression of liberal democracy, it took a long time for this race and class-obsessed nation to incorporate the values of its own enlightened thinkers. The election of Rishi Sunak, born of immigrant parents from the colonised empire, a practising Hindu, is a far greater victory for race relations in an increasingly bigoted and sectarian world than even the election of Kamala Harris as vice-president of the US.

Though, if circumstances place Harris in the White House during Sunak's tenure it would make for an interesting spectacle in the Anglophone world, with Leo Varadkar in Ireland and scores of people of Indian origin in governments of English-speaking nations.

The stakes for Sunak, his political party and his country are very high.

- Conservative Party appears to have acted in desperation.
- Labour Party is gaining ground and there is no magic economic formula available that would satisfy all.
- Sunak's own economic policy prescriptions are such that they may continue to divide an already divided nation.
- His fiscal conservatism stands in opposition to Truss's fiscal elitism.
- But there are few fiscal solutions to the structural problems of the economy.

The bottom line is simply this-Brexit was a stupid idea and having entered



*Behind 10
Browning Street:
Sunak was deemed
ok by English
upper classes who
control London's
financial centre.*
Sanjaya Baru

the maze the country does not know how to get out of it. After turning its back on Europe, Britain hoped the US would welcome it with open arms with a free trade arrangement. It did not. Beleaguered Britain is scouting around for markets, having applied for membership of the Indo-Pacific based Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP) and seeking an FTA with India.

Externally there is unlikely to be any change in Britain's view of itself and the world. It remains firmly entrenched in the Western camp, dependent on the US and jealously guarding its status in various multilateral forums and the Western security system.

While politicians come into office and go, the state often has

its own reasons for what it does.

- The British state-its security apparatus and the world of money and finance – remains firmly in the control of the English upper class.
- Even the Welsh, the Irish and the Scots, not to mention Britain's many minorities, know that.
- Sunak's professional rather than personal background may have won him the trust and support of those holding the keys to The City, London's financial district.

While many in India and even more so the people of Indian origin around the world would understandably rejoice in Sunak's victory, the fact remains that he has a constituency to serve and a nation to repair and his options remain limited. His foreign policy challenges

too are closer home, focussed on Europe, the US, Russia and China.

In dealing with India the first task for Sunak would be getting the FTA done and taking forward initiatives on defence and security cooperation. The hard negotiations that have gone on will continue and one should not expect any change in the approach of either government.

Finally, as in the case of Vice-President Harris so too in that of Prime Minister Sunak, their domestic support base includes most South Asians and coloured minorities. As political symbols of multiculturalism rather than majoritarianism, they represent a wider social constituency than India's governing elite of today. □□

*The writer served as Media Adviser to former PM Manmohan Singh.
Source: The Times of India*

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Putin: Western hegemony...

military alliances, such as AUKUS. It is trying to create a Washington-Seoul-Tokyo military-political chain. All states that possess or aspire to genuine strategic sovereignty and can challenge Western hegemony, are dubbed as enemies. The moves against Russia, China and Iran are well-known, Putin said, warning that next targets will be countries of Asia, Latin America, Africa and the Middle East, as well as current US partners and allies and CIS countries.

Mocking European leaders for asking people to eat less, show less, and dress warmer at home, the Russian President said people need food to eat and energy to heat their homes. He charged that

the West bailed itself out of its early 20th century challenges with World War I, and profits from World War II helped the United States to overcome the Great Depression and become the world's largest economy and impose the dollar as a global reserve currency. The 1980s crisis was overcome by appropriating the inheritance and resources of the collapsed Soviet Union. This neo-colonial model is now doomed, Putin concluded.

In a frontal attack on the West's "denial of moral, religious, and family values" and efforts to create a society in which parents are designated as "parent number one, parent number two and parent number three" instead of mother

and father, Putin asked if Russians want schools to impose on children, from kindergarten level, "the ideas that certain other genders exist along with women and men and to offer them gender reassignment surgery?" He warned that Western elites are targeting all societies, including their own citizens, in favour of "pure Satanism."

The tide of history, Putin mused, is creating new centres of power that will bring Western hegemony to an end. Issuing a clarion cry to "the great historical Russia", Putin said Russians must protect future generations "against enslavement and monstrous experiments that are designed to cripple their minds and souls." The fight is to ensure that no one can ever again attempt to try to erase the Russian people, language, or culture from history. □□

<https://www.sandhyajainarchive.org/2022/10/02/putin-western-hegemony-collapsing/>

Climate woes, farm distress and agriculture future in Meghalaya

As floods and incessant rain wreak havoc across the country, some reports indicated India lost Rs 60,000 crore due to rainfall and climate change. So I journeyed into Meghalaya to understand how does climate chaos affect India's wettest state? Previously, climate change had dethroned Cherrapunji as the wettest place on the Earth and made Mawsynram, 10 kilometres away, the wettest place. But what did the climate chaos mean for the farmers, agriculture and food security? I was soon to find out.

So the paddy shoots were about 10 inches high when I arrived in Khweng. It is a quaint village about an hour north from Shillong. Rains had been heavy, and most of the farmers were busy working on paddy fields. Now Khweng, is a highly agro-biodiverse village with over 319 food plants and mixture of plains and hill agriculture. Main crops range from paddy, ginger, corn to tapioca.

Here I met Rusillian Khyndeit and Margina Syiem, two women farmers. They first took us for a stroll into their farms familiarising me with medicinal and edible herbs and local vegetables. Post our biodiversity tour, the hill farms awaited us. Earlier the hill farms were community owned and one plot was passed around the community. But now I saw barbed wires and fencing, the community area is also individually owned.

We sat among ginger plants and began to talk. "Heavy rains have damaged cow pea plants. This year the rainfall has been heavy and untimely. Earlier there used to be 5-6 months of rain, but now all that is changing fast, we don't know when it will rain and how much," Margina said.

"Even in terms of agriculture, this hill land used to grow hill paddy varieties, but the old crops are dying and being replaced by monocultures — commercial broomstick or ginger farming. People grow lesser millets now," Rusillian told us.



Forest edibles including herbs, vegetables, tubers, etc. and have been important part of the Meghalayan diet.

Indra Shekhar Singh



It was during our conversation the forest edibles came up.

Forest edibles including herbs, vegetables, tubers, etc. have been important part of the Meghalayan diet. “The Khasi people have always been self-sufficient when it comes to food. This is because of the abundance in forest foods. In the summer months most people depend on forest edibles. But due to climate chaos all that is changing,” Margina said.

“Since our childhood, we have lost 20-30 per cent of forest edibles in our area. The reason is untimely and heavy rains, wash away the wild seeds and disturb the fruiting and seeding cycles of the wild crops. Of course deforestation and increasing population is also putting pressures on forest edibles too,” Rusillian added.

After getting a stock of things in Khweng, I journeyed into Lakadong turmeric land and reached Mulum, Jantia hills. Dressed in their traditional Khasi dress, men and women farmers awaited us. After the customary ‘red tea’, we stepped into their seed bank and our conversations began.

“Most people in the area also practice Jhoom agriculture, and we rely on our own native seeds and agricultural ways. The seeds we get from government failed in the area because of changing climate and it didn’t suit our taste. We grow native red rice and save our seeds in gunny bags, bamboo, etc.,” Konkitbak Suchiyan said.

Although Jaintia Hills is quite different from Shillong, it was also the victim of climate change. Frank Suchiyan, an elderly farmer explained, “The heat in these areas is much more and the rainfall has become highly inconsistent and un-

Although there is a ban on pesticides and weedicides, people through the black market are buying and spraying. This directly impacts forest edibles and agriculture. Our seeds burn with chemicals, and we lose crops. We only have 40% of forest edibles remaining now,” Frank said.

predictable. Both these factors have led to increase in pest and diseases. Our rice which was almost disease-free, now is attracting newer pests and we are suffering crop losses.”

“Even our forest foods are running dry, perhaps that is why monkeys are coming to attack our harvests now. Although there is a ban on pesticides and weedicides, people through the black market are buying and spraying. This directly impacts forest edibles and agriculture. Our seeds burn with chemicals, and we lose crops. We only have 40% of forest edibles remaining now,” Frank said.

Another indicator of climate related stress on forest fungi, HH Mohrmen, a pastor and agricultural scholar with four books under his name, explained, “The first effects of climate change in this area, can be seen on wild mushrooms. Meghalaya, apart from being the contender biodiversity for rice also hosts a diversity of wild edible and medicinal mushrooms. They will be part of our culture for a long time. But since the changing rainfall and heat, the mushroom growth has taken a massive hit. We are losing the wild mushroom varieties and even their yields are going down.” As an amateur mycophile, I was disheartened and returned to Shillong for the night.

The next day began with a 3-hour long drive through the misty mountains. I was two hours ahead of Smit when I reached Umasawar. It was raining when I arrived. The local women folk had gathered at the village community hall and were discussing their issues with local development organisation. I soon found out, this was primarily a village of farmers who grew rice, potatoes, millets, beans, vegetables, cucumber, yams, etc. The 90 households of Umasawar farmed, raised livestock and worked in the quarries, when they could. This was life for them.

Although the rain was heavy, wrapped in two raincoats, I ventured to see their village and forest. After two hours of walking, I was content. I had smelled their wild flowers, tasted their pork and drank from their fresh streams. It was now time to talk.

Walking back to the community hall, I found Sitamary, an elderly farmer. She narrated the story of her village, where almost nothing happened. Life had been the same for many generations. But the threat of climate change is stirring things up. “Since I was a child, it rained quite regularly. My mother and grandmother knew when to plant and when to go to the forest for edibles. Our community was working together with nature. But

now our agriculture is in trouble. The new seeds have brought new diseases with them. The rainfall is also unpredictable, resulting in heavy losses. Most farmers have left to either do mining or survive on very little,” Sitamary said.

I pressed further and wanted to know about the forests and climate change. “The wisdom of our grandmothers doesn’t serve us now. This new weather is upsetting everything. As a result people are engaging in illegal mining. The mine slurry then pollutes our waters killing fishes and making the water unsuitable for drinking. Our forest size has also reduced,” Sitamary said.

After spending another hour with the villagers, I started my drive back to Shillong. The next few days, I spent around Shillong exploring villages around it, trying to figure out the agricultural supply chains. It was shocking to hear that

Meghalaya imported most of its fish to vegetables from other states as far as Andhra Pradesh.

But for the final measure of things, I journeyed southward and reached Nongtraw, a primarily jhoom village. This community had mastered the art of living sustainably with nature. Here I met local resident and agricultural expert Pius Rani. Being a man in matrilineal world, he didn’t have any land title but nevertheless knew a lot of agriculture and effects of climate change on their community.

“Climate change comes to our communities in terms of excessive and unpredictable rainfall. Over the centuries our ancestors have worked with nature to make this entire mountain into a food forest, but climate chaos threatens all this. We have already seen lesser yields of forest edibles and our crops too. When I was a child, we

harvested more food, but now things are rapidly changing. Our pollinators and biodiversity both have drastically reduced,” Pius said.

We spent the day roaming about talking to other farmers too. It was nearly dusk now and I had a long way to go. Before leaving, I asked Pius about future of agriculture in Meghalaya? Especially as Meghalaya is battling with many climate issues. He looked at me and smiled, “There is always hope, till the time we stick to old ways of working with nature. These may be tough times, but nature teaches us to be adaptive. If we remain true and not go for environment degrading chemicals, there is a strong chance that our farmers will lead when it comes to fighting climate change.” □□

The writer is an independent agri-policy analyst and the former director, Policy and Outreach, National Seed Association of India. He tweets @Indrassingh. <https://www.firstpost.com/india/climate-woes-farm-distress-and-agriculture-future-in-meghalaya-11228301.html>

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How trickle-down economics making rich richer, poor poorer

A few months back, in January 2022, the India supplement of the Oxfam's latest report entitled 'The Inequality Virus' explained the huge wealth disparity that prevails. It mentioned that the increase in wealth of the top 11 billionaires in India in the pandemic years was sufficient to fund the MNREGA programme for ten years.

This compare and contrast essay did point out the vast differences – as contrasting as the brightness during the day and the dark nights – but somehow it didn't make the country sit back, think and deliberate. Knowing that MNREGA entails an expenditure of Rs 73,000 crore per year, the report certainly brought out the appalling wealth inequality that prevails. But perhaps, the comparison was more notional in a way that the contrast, as well as the gravity of the extreme inequality that it pointed to, was lost.

The rich were always known to becoming stinking rich while the poor have seen their incomes stagnate. For instance, in the US, 745 billionaires now hold more wealth than half of American households. In India, as the 2019 World Inequality Report had categorically mentioned that the inequality that prevailed "had no precedent in recent history", but not till when the Prime Minister talked of the "revdi culture" that a debate actually began about what constitutes freebies in a society where majority live in poverty and remains deprived of social safety and security.

More recently, as India emerged as the fifth largest economy in the world, economist Rathin Roy remarked: "Bangladesh as a country is much poorer than India, but its citizens are richer." He was commenting on the higher per capita income of \$1,962 recorded in neighbouring Bangladesh in 2020-21 as against India's \$1,935. This comes at a time when industrialist Gautam Adani has become the second richest person in the world.

Nevertheless, let's go back to discussing MNREGA, which is known to provide 100 day guaranteed income to rural households. A few weeks back,



The economic design world follows has perfected the art of sucking wealth from bottom to the top. This has to be reversed. MNREGA workers need more support than multi-billion dollar industries.
Devinder Sharma



writing in The Times of India senior journalist Swaminathan S Anklesaria Aiyar had talked of Rs 80,000 crore (\$10 billion) subsidy to be provided to the Vedanta-Foxconn's proposed silicon fabrication plant in Gujarat. In addition, Gujarat will be providing free land and other facilities for the plant, adding on to the enormous cost of freebies at tax payers' expense.

Interestingly, the Rs 80,000 crore subsidy to just one industrial plant is higher than the annual allocation that is made for MNREGA. Since the Vendanta's fab plant is unlikely create a large number of jobs, the money could have better used. It could have either been used for doubling entitlements under MNREGA or to double the wages of MNREGA workers. In both the cases, it would have garnered a thumping applause for doling out the much needed incentive. In either case, this amount would have helped create more rural demand, which many economists believe is the way forward to reignite the economy.

This step would have been in tune with the findings of a 2015 IMF study that had conclusively shown that more money into the hands of 20 per cent poor leads to a higher GDP growth. On the other hand, the study that analysed economic data of 150 countries over the period 1990 to 2012 had also shown that giving more to the top 20 per cent in fact lowers economic growth. I believe policy makers should treat this study as an economic mantra, and like Mahatma Gandhi's Talisman, engrave it in the corridors of the Finance Ministry.

Knowing well that the Trickle Down theory has failed, this mantra should enable them to focus on where the economic needs are. The

Since the Vendanta's fab plant is unlikely create a large number of jobs, the money could have better used. It could have either been used for doubling entitlements under MNREGA or to double the wages of MNREGA workers.

US President Joe Biden too has publicly acknowledged the failure of Trickle Down and has promised to put efforts in building the bottom and the middle. As the US public advocacy group Public Citizen tweets: "In the past 30 years, the richest 10 per cent have collectively added over \$59 trillion to their wealth. The poorest half of America have added only \$900 billion. It was never meant to trickle down to us – it's being siphoned from us."

This is what India too needs to accept, and shift the policy approach to pull the needy out from the clutches of poverty, hunger and malnutrition. Howsoever subtle, the winds of economic change are silently flowing. Only a few days back, in what appears to be an effort to boost economic growth, the right-wing UK Prime Minister Liz Truss had announced income tax cuts of 45 billion pounds. This would have benefitted the top 5 per cent (and to some extent the lower strata) with more tax savings and bonuses. Removing the additional tax rate of 45 per cent on earnings in the highest income bracket it was aimed at reining more freebies for the rich and mighty. In a surprise move, even

the IMF questioned the deal asking the UK treasury to re-evaluate the tax measures.

In a u-turn, the treasury chief abandoned plans to scrap the top 45 per cent rate of income tax paid on earnings above 150,000 pound sterling. Coming after the publicly disowning of the trickle down concept by Joe Biden, the withdrawal of the tax concessions to the UK super-rich by Liz Truss is indicative of a positive trend in economic rethinking, however small it may appear to be.

In another move, the US Federal Communication Commission (FCC) has rejected \$886 million subsidy package that Elon Musk's SpaceX venture had applied for. Even though SpaceX is crying foul, the fact remains that Elon Musk is the richest person in the world, whose wealth Bloomberg estimates at \$240 billion. Earlier, Musk had decried public subsidies but when it comes to getting a finger in the pie, he is now all for it. Whatever be the reason, I expect FCC to stay firm. After all, a person who makes \$81.25 million ever hour should give up on any right to seek claim over federal subsidies.

Corporate greed knows no bounds. It is quite obvious that wealth inequality is eating the world. The economic design the world follows has perfected the art of sucking wealth from the bottom to the top. This has to be reversed. MNREGA workers need more support than multi-billion dollar industries. That's the way to reach out to the masses, and realise the Prime Minister's vision of Sabka Saath Sabka Vikas. □□

(The author is a noted food policy analyst and an expert on issues related to the agriculture sector. He writes on food, agriculture and hunger)

<https://www.buzznews/opinion/how-trickle-down-economics-making-rich-rich-poor-poorer-1172234>

Education in Regional Language

Language has evolved since thousands of years and is still evolving. The language of humans, the language of birds and animals and it do not stop there only. Today we are in the civilization of machine level language. The technology is innovating machine level language which two or more different machines can communicate and understand. The Internet of things, automation and robotics has to work hard to innovate and customised languages to make machines work. The language is still evolving for machines. There is a strong need to preserve languages. It has been proved that the best machine level language can be written in Sanskrit. Sanskrit is such a beautiful language that if the positions of the words in a sentence are changed the meaning of the sentence do not changes.

The education in regional languages is a right decision to implement. The language is the treasure and learning in ones mother tongue adds exponential acceleration to the whole learning process. The government has introduced education of medical, engineering, legal and other faculties in regional languages. The most talked about faculty is of medical science where the students of medical science have to study the course only in English language and doctors prescribe in English language while the majority of the patients as high as ninety percent do not understand English.

The translation technology is handy today. The tools of Google translate is widely used by many people in day to day life. The engagement of this technology in translating the knowledge of foreign language in the regional language is effortless today. The translation of knowledge and information has been happening since ages before the birth of Google translate like tools.

Many politics has happened over language. The reorganisation of the states on the basis of language and the formation of separate country of Bangladesh are strong arguments that the language dominates over all the other factors of politics. The politics is usually carried on the basis of caste, class, region, religion, race, gender and language. The language has emerged as the most uniting and the



The education in regional languages is a right decision to implement. The language is the treasure and learning in ones mother tongue adds exponential acceleration to the whole learning process.
Alok Singh



most dividing force. It was the language which divided the East Pakistan from the West Pakistan, which are current day Bangladesh and Pakistan respectively. It is the language which among other reasons has provoked Russia to claim the territories of Ukraine. It is the common language culture of Kashmir which is motivating the people of Pakistan occupied Kashmir to look with hope to the people of the Kashmir of our side. It is the Tamil language which is an important reason for the unresolved issue of Sri Lanka with LTTE and our role is expected because we have more Tamil speaking people than those in Sri Lanka.

The motivation to our students to study in regional languages is many. Since decades the education in school are conducted in the regional languages. The students who study in their regional language medium school learn more than those who study in foreign language medium schools. Despite that the success in terms of job and securing admission in colleges of those students who go to English medium school are higher. This problem needs to be resolved.

The students educated in the regional language medium schools face huge challenge to compete with students who are educated in the English medium schools in those examinations which are conducted in English Language. Though the question papers for competitive examinations are offered in regional languages also but once the admission is taken the course is conducted in the English Language. It is good to see that the things are changing. The success of any school is measured in terms of

The regional language educated students had received a big impetus to excel in the government jobs and in the competitive examinations which were earlier conducted in English language only.

how good English the students speak. The poor students are at disadvantage as majority of the government schools conduct education in regional language. From admission process to Education process, the regional languages are getting their due credit. The rural youth are delighted with this policy of the union government.

The union government has done a lot to promote the regional language. In the year 2021 the Bharatiya Bhasha Samiti was constituted to promote regional languages in the education sector. It's not about promoting Hindi as the official language of the union of India but to promote all the regional languages of the country. Padmashree Chamu Krishna Shastry has devoted his life to the cause of Sanskrit and he is currently the chairman of Bharatiya Bhasha Samiti. According to Shastri Ji : 'There is need to create 'language harmony', to develop a conducive environment for learning more and more Indian languages apart from mastering one's own mother tongue, and an attitude and aptitude to love and enjoy the 'neighbouring language'.

The regional language educat-

ed students had received a big impetus to excel in the government jobs and in the competitive examinations which were earlier conducted in English language only. The government has announced that the all India competitive examinations for admission to various courses like engineering, medical science, and Law at undergraduate level or at postgraduate level will be conducted in the twelve regional languages apart from the English language.

The National testing Agency which conducts National Eligibility Cum Entrance Test for admission in medical colleges has offered the students to choose any language among English, Hindi, Assamese, Bengali, Gujarati, Kannada, Malayalam, Marathi, Odia, Punjabi, Tamil, Telugu and Urdu to compete at the all India level.

The Union Home Minister said that the government's commitment to promote regional language in education is a big gift to youth in the years of celebrating Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsava. The medical education of MBBS in Hindi has already been started in one medical college in the state of Madhya Pradesh. These commitments of the union government are not just theoretical speeches but the practical implementation, and it has also been executed. Once successful and accepted the replication is easier to spread. The scale will be natural to achieve. There are so many courses and so many languages. The poor students won't be deprived of their time. They will spend time to learn knowledge rather than spend time to struggle to learn translation to get a job. □□

(Alok Singh is a Fellow of the Indian Institute of Management Indore, a freelancer academician, and associated with AGET Business School, Jhajar.)

Blooming North East Blossoms Bharat

The North-Eastern states of India comprising Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Sikkim and Tripura, cover an area of about 260,000 square kilometres and are well-known for their abundance in natural resources, cultural diversity, flora, and fauna. Their location is also highly geopolitical with its proximity to international lands of Tibet, Bhutan, Myanmar, and Bangladesh. An intimate connection with the environment and an understanding of nature is more visible in this part than in the rest of the country. North-East India has its own development of a vernacular architecture that has evolved through the ages and is sensitive to its local climate, inhabitants, and materials as the environment has been an integral part of their lifestyles. Sustainability and its development have always remained an issue of utmost importance.

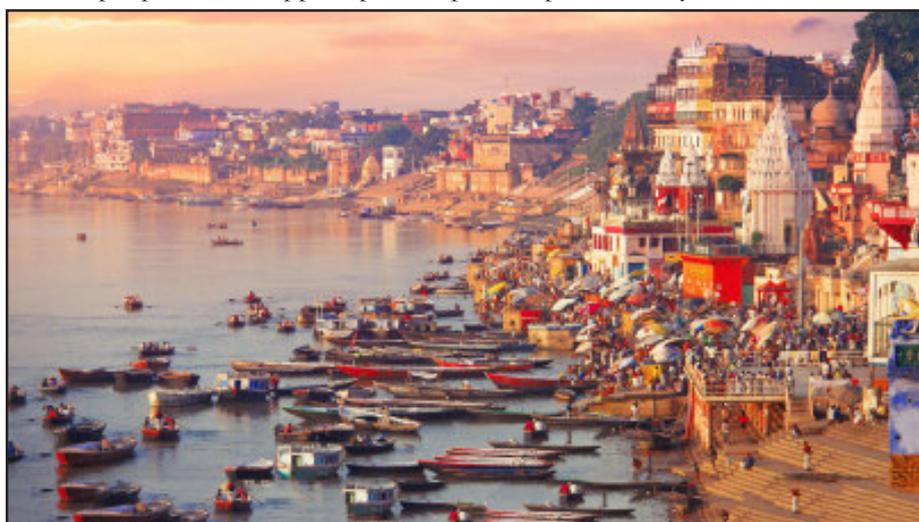
The north-east region, by way of its location, enjoys key advantages as much as it throws up challenges for businesses. Being close to international borders opens up market access, although difficult geographical terrain and uneven infrastructure development have until recently discouraged the scope for investments. The rapid urbanization of North-Eastern India is one of the most impactful transformations of the region and has given rise to nine cities embracing a smart city development plan. An inclusive governance was established to transform these traditional cities into smart cities through infrastructure and services to all sections of the population.

The important sectors in the region with huge scope of development are as under - ● Agro-based industry; ● Tea; ● Food processing; ● Crude oil and natural gas; ● Spices; ● Petrochemicals; ● IT/ITeS; ● Forest and mineral based industries; ● Chemicals; ● Handicrafts and textile; ● Tourism and hospitality industries; and, ● Horticulture.

Whereas tourism industry provides immediate massive growth to the region and the people, the untapped spice crops and spice industry can add the flavour



A concerted, joint and inclusive effort by all North Eastern States for agricultural, industrial, tourism, energy, hydro power and all traditional industries of the Region will certainly bloom the North east and blossom the nation with economic growth of our country.
Vinod Johri



to the growth for farmers and micro level entrepreneurship at local level. Textile is yet another industry which has great scope of growth on national level.

In the last two decades, economic growth in the Northeast has been satisfactory with an annual growth rate in excess of 8 percent. A spectacular rise in the service sector has helped in the sustenance of high growth in the region. Over the decades, however, agriculture has suffered very badly due to unpredictable monsoons and faulty mechanisation offers. As early efforts of unsystematic heavy industrialisation mostly failed in the region, manufacturing became dominated by SMEs in due course of time.

Assam is better in terms of entrepreneurship development when compared to the other states in the Northeast. With an upscale market and good road/rail connectivity, Guwahati is naturally placed to lead the entrepreneurial activities and attract large-scale investments. But it is also true that the rest six states also present favourable atmospheres for SMEs, as the concern for environmental degradation is quite high among the local population. The local residents prefer light industries, as opposed to heavy and polluting industries that create big tussles among the different stakeholders of the industries concerned and harm the ecosystem.

For decades, states in North East region (NER) had suffered, because of what an editor in New Delhi once described as “the tyranny of distance” syndrome. Our region was not only cut off from the rest of our nation geographically, but also at an emotional and psychological levels. Most of these

The government has worked persistently towards improving air connectivity and developing aviation infrastructure in the region, through the ‘UdeDesh Ka Aam Nagrik’ (UDAN) scheme.

stemmed from the lack of empathy and understanding on the part of former governments towards the unique socio-cultural, aspirational and developmental challenges and needs of the North East region.

Once Prime Minister Narendra Modi took charge of our nation in 2014, he declared the development of NE Indian states as one of the key priority areas for his government

Funding commitments

Fifty four Ministries/Departments under the Central government are today required to spend at least 10 per cent of their budget in the North Eastern Region.

In 2014-15 the yearly budget allocation for the development of NE states was Rs 24,819.18 crores, in 2021-22 it rose to 70,874.32 crores, marking an increase of over 285% in the past eight years alone.

The government has not only outlined a development vision for the North East, but our government has also provided adequate financial resources towards realising this vision. In the past eight years, our government has allocated over

Rs 336,640.97 crores for the development of NE Region, which is tremendously helping boost the regional economy and connectivity.

The six pillars of connectivity

The Union Government is focusing on the six pillars of connectivity for the North East : -

1. Air connectivity: The development of the North East region is of strategic importance and our nation is bound to grow only when all regions are performing at their best. The government has worked persistently towards improving air connectivity and developing aviation infrastructure in the region, through the ‘UdeDesh Ka Aam Nagrik’ (UDAN) scheme. From the financial years 2016-17 to 2021-22 a total of 28 air connectivity projects have been completed in the region at a cost of Rs 979.07 crore, and 15 more projects worth Rs 2212.30 crores are currently under the process of completion. This is helping boost regional connectivity and tourism sector in the region.

2. Rail connectivity: Since 2014, our government has embarked on an ambitious project to connect all the states in NE region with the national rail grid. Towards this, our government sanctioned 19 projects for a total length of 1,909 kilometres, with a budget allocation of Rs 77,930 crores, which are at different stages of implementation – planning, approval, execution. Up to March 2022, a total of 409-kilometre-length has been commissioned at an expenditure of Rs 30,312 crores. These include, 14 New Line Projects of 361-kilometre-length at an expenditure of Rs 27,458 crore; and five Doubling/Multitracking Projects cov-

ering a length of 48 kilometre at an expenditure of Rs 2,854 crore.

3. Road connectivity: A total of 3,099.50-kilometre road at a cost of Rs 15,570.44 crore have been constructed since 2014, and projects connecting 4,016.48 km costing Rs. 58,385 crore are currently ongoing in the region. The major ongoing Capital Road Connectivity projects in NER include an alternate two-lane highway from Bagrakote to Pakyong (NH-717A) (152 km) in the Sikkim-Kalimpong-Darjeeling region, four laning of Imphal – Moreh section of NH-39 (20 km) and 2-laning of 75.4 km in Manipur; the 4 Laning of Dimapur- Kohima Road (62.9 km) in Nagaland; 4 laning of Nagaon bypass to Holongi (167 km) in Arunachal Pradesh; and 2 laning of Aizawl – Tuipang NH-54 (351 km) in Mizoram. All these roads when completed will help provide tremendous boost to regional and national connectivity of NE states to the rest of India.

4. Power connectivity: Since 2014, the Ministry of Power has undertaken many hydro/thermal power generation projects, developed and modernized transmission and distribution networks. The Power Grid Corporation of India Ltd. (PGCIL) is executing two major Intra State power transmission and distribution schemes viz. (i) North Eastern Region Power System Improvement Project (NERPSIP) for the six states of Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Tripura and Nagaland at an estimated cost of Rs 6,700 crore; and (ii) Comprehensive Scheme for Strengthening of Transmission and Distribution System in Arunachal Pradesh and Sikkim sanctioned at an estimat-

ed cost of Rs 9,129.32 crore.

5. Telecom connectivity: Telecom connectivity or lack of it has been a major issue in the entire North East region. To address this the Department of Telecommunications has undertaken several projects in the North Eastern States for strengthening telecom connectivity in the region Bharat Net and Wi-Fi Connectivity for Village Panchayats in North Eastern Region. A total of 1,358 towers covering 1,246 villages have been installed and are providing services in the region.

6. Water connectivity: The 6 March, 2022 marked a historic day when MV Lal Bahadur Shastri docked at Guwahati's Pandu port on the southern bank of the Brahmaputra, carrying 200 metric tonnes of food grains for the Food Corporation of India (FCI) from Patna. This was made possible due to the tireless efforts of our government towards opening up and making use of the inland water transport system.

Our government is developing River Brahmaputra from Dhubri (Bangladesh border) to Sadiya (891 km) as National Waterway-2 at a cost of Rs 461 crore in five years (2020-2025). River Barak has been declared as National Waterway-16, and it connects Silchar, Karimganj and Badarpur in Cachar valley of Assam with Haldia and Kolkata ports through Indo-Bangladesh Protocol (IBP) Route. The facilities created and planned would cost Rs.145 crore in 5 years (2020-2025). This will help with faster transportation of goods to and from the national and international markets to the region.

Other Development schemes: In addition to the six

pillars of connectivity, the Ministry of Development of North Eastern Region (MDoNER) is implementing various schemes such as the North East Special Infrastructure Development Scheme (SIDS), Non-Lapsable Central Pool of Resources (NLCPR) Scheme, Special Packages of Assam Bodoland Territorial Council (BTC), Dima Hasao Autonomous Territorial Council (DHATC) and Karbi Anglong Autonomous Territorial Council (KAATC), Hill Area Development Programme (HADP), Social and Infrastructure Development Fund (SIDF), Schemes of NEC (North Eastern Council) and North East Road Sector Development Scheme (NERSDS), for the development of North Eastern Region. Under these developmental schemes/packages, 1,350 projects worth Rs.15,867.01 crore, including connectivity projects, have been sanctioned during the financial years 2014-15 to 2021-22.

As the world's largest democracy and one of the most significant economies of the world, India is a zone of hope. Its North-east region must be viewed from the same prism and should be supported and projected as the major growth corridor with close proximity to nature. In fact, the North-east region has all the reasons to be a zone of sustainable industrial development. A concerted, joint and inclusive effort by all North Eastern States for agricultural, industrial, tourism, energy, hydro power and all traditional industries of the Region will certainly bloom the North east and blossom the nation with economic growth of our country. □□

Vinod Johri: Retd. Additional Commissioner of Income Tax

Mewar as the Locus of Guhila State (Part-VI)

The administrative and military apparatus of the Guhila state evolved in the same period, as the state became complex, and the scope of administrative and military activities widened, as befits a regional (rather than local) power. Inscriptional evidences indicate that most of the important local and migrant Rajput chiefs had been integrated into the political structure by the tenth century in different capacities. It is important to locate the chiefs as officials at the strategic points. Secondly, there was the emergence of various departments of administration.

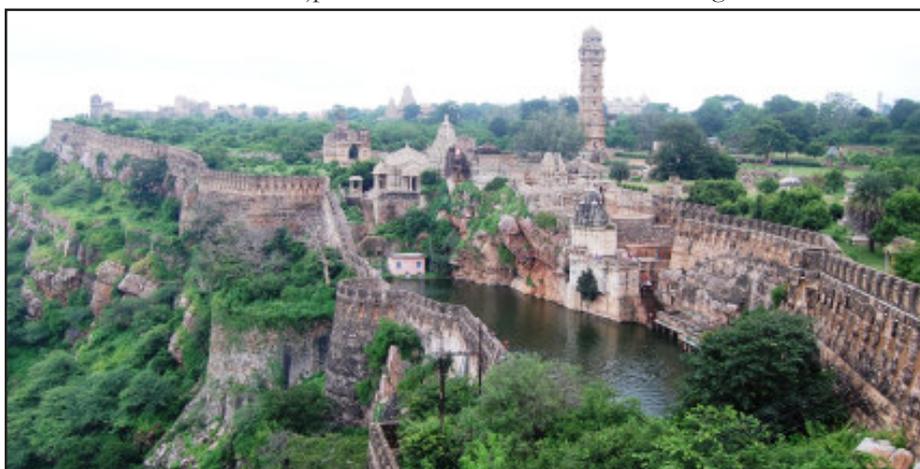
It is noteworthy that the centres of administrative importance for the Guhila state did not necessarily mean the capital town with its court, courtiers, fortresses and royal household. The centres of administrative for the Guhila state would also be the centres of exchange, mining and religious activities. Areas merging into tribal territory commanded importance for economic, ideological and strategic reasons. Chattopadhyaya points out the importance of fortresses as foci of control in the early phase of ascendancy of Rajputs. The possibility of a few small fortresses at strategic points such as beginnings of routes into forests and tribal territory cannot be ruled out. The exchange centres of importance in the Guhila state, as evident from inscriptional records, were Aranyaküpagiri, Ahada, Pratapgarh, Khohar, Sajjanpura, Talahati, Mount Abu, and Chittaurgarh. Inscriptional evidence for important religious centres map out the following sites: Aranyaküpagiri, Ahada, Pratapgarh, Paldi, Jagat, Chirava, Chittaurgarh. Centres of mining included Aranyaküpagiri near NägdaAhada, the copper belt of the Mewar hills, Dariba near Kankroli (zinc and lead mines), and Zawar (zinc-lead-silver concentrate, 40 km south of Udaipur city). While most of these important centres are in the Mewar hills, the rest lie in the upper Banas plain. Hence, the Guhila state seems to have had effective control not only of Nägda and Ahada but also of the centres listed above (inscriptionally attested). These centres would not have appeared in the records of the had they not been controlled.

Although the absence of direct inscriptional evidences do not permit us to locate the non-Guhila Rajput chiefs, references to the lineages and fathers of



The presence of kinsmen of some of the queens facilitated consolidation of Guhila power through the administrative and military network.

Prof. Nandini Kapur Sinha



some of the Guhila queens in the Atapura inscription indicate the presence of Caulukya, Cahamana, Rāstrakūta, Paramāra and Hūna chiefs at least at few of the strategic points. It may be assumed that some of these chiefs were entrusted with special responsibilities of negotiating with the local Bhil chiefs. These Rajput chiefs were indeed administratively crucial to the state. Some of these chiefs could be of local origin and might have territorially integrated into the Guhila domain. Rest of the chiefs could be migrants such as the Hunas from Hoshangabad. Undoubtedly, the presence of kinsmen of some of the queens facilitated consolidation of the Guhila power through the administrative and military network.

The sources of the period throw light on the important offices of administration and the nature of personnel at the seat of power, Ahada. The Saranesvara Temple Inscription of AD 953 refers to the members of a gosthika. Gosthikas were usually the administrators attached to religious institutions. In the case of royally patronized temples, the gosthikas seem to have been appointed by the state to administer the affairs of these institutions (Adivaraha, Visnu, Sūrya, Nanigasvami, and a number of Āiva temples constructed by the Guhila royal house). Pratihara and Hūna Rajputs appear as officials in the gosthikas at the temple of Adivaraha at Ahada.” The other important offices of administration evident from SaraGeúvara inscription are those of town gate-keepers or door-keepers (pratihāri) and managers of ecclesiastical affairs (dharma). Pratihāra Rudrahasa and Rahata

The sources of the period throw light on the important offices of administration and the nature of personnel at the seat of power, Ahada.

appear as Pratihāris. Hūna Kastika and Sridhara occupy the office of ecclesiastical affairs. Hūna Mattata appears as King Allata’s minister (amatya). Thus, important members of the Pratihāra and Hūna lineages were integrated through important administrative ranks.

Since Guhila Allata had a Huna queen from central India, matrimonial alliances of the Nagda-AhadaGuhilas in the early phase of their rise seems to have helped them organize a network of power.” Huna, the member of gosthika could be a kinsman of Queen Hariyadevi. Mayura and Samudra appear as a akcapatalas (accountants or depositories of legal documents) and Durlabharaja as sandhivigrahika (an officer for peace and war). While Naga figures as the chief bard, Rudraditya and Mammata appear as the chief of medical men and minister respectively. It is significant that someone named Hūnals and Yasahpuspo of Pratihāra lineage figure as members of this gosthika

Cahamanas appear as important officials in the eleventh century. It is evident from the Kadmal Plates that a dura (messenger) Ranadhavala,, son of Sagamda, was a Cahamānarajaputra, A Saulamki (Solamki) rajaputra figures as an important member of the gosthi-

ka in the twelfth century. The Paldi Inscription of AD 1116 refers to Saulamki Rajaputra Āri Salakhana, the son of Rajaputra ĀriUpala. As late as the early thirteenth century, Rajputs continued to occupy the top ranks in administration. It seems from the Chirava inscription that Bhimasimha and his son Rajasimha served Jaitrasimha and Tejasimha respectively as ministers (pradhanyamprāpya). It is also noted that Bhimasimha had to die fighting for the state of Me-war against Gujarat (ministers were diverted to military functions during external invasions), Two Kayasthas also figure, Pala and Vellaka, as the writers of Saranesvara Inscription of AD 953.

Given the extensive rural base of the state, local level administrative bodies can be expected to have expanded. However, the term pañcakulika figures in only one royal record of the period. The scribe of the Kadmal plates of Guhila Vijayasimha (AD 1083), Nagapala the son of Pandita Unhila, belonged to the pañcakulika caste,¹⁶¹ This stray evidence does not speak for the absence of the pancakulika throughout the expanse of the territory. The members in such corporate bodies were likely to be the notables of the rural society. Appointments made from amongst local population ensured continuity of tenures at the local level, irrespective of dynastic change. The rural notables of the earlier period such as kutumbins, vanikas, etc. (e.g. the list of witnesses in the Ki°kindha Guhila grants) may not have necessarily dominated the local administrative bodies in the later period, as pointed out by Chattopadhyaya in the case of early medieval Bengal. □

To

Shri Bhupender Yadav ji,

Hon'ble Union Minister for Environment, Forest & Climate Change,
Government of India, Indira Paryavaran Bhawan, Jor Bagh, New Delhi.

Dear **Shri Bhupender Yadav ji,**

Namaskar

This is about Genetic Engineering Appraisal Committee (GEAC) in the MoEFCC, the Government of India's regulatory body for gene technologies, which is continuing to function in an irresponsible fashion. In its last meeting on October 18th 2022, they have cleared a GM food crop for cultivation in farmers' fields in India, that too a herbicide tolerant mustard variety, after running the pretence of a review of GM mustard.

This is to bring to your notice that nothing has changed from May 2017 when GEAC's green signal for this unsafe GM mustard had to be stopped by the Government of India, keeping in mind various concerns and serious issues pertaining to this GM mustard. Not a single additional test has been done, nor a single question been answered scientifically about the safety or efficacy or need of this GM mustard.

Not Swadeshi

To begin with, the claim that GM Mustard is Swadeshi and has been developed in India is completely untrue. We would like to bring it to your kind notice that in 2002, Proagro Seed Company (Bayer's subsidiary), applied for commercial approval for similar construct that Prof. Pental and his team are now promoting as HT Mustard DMH 11. Bayer's application at that point of time was turned down because the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) said that their field trials did not give evidence of superior yield. As is well known the hybridisation of GM Mustard is achieved by means of the two genes barnase and barstar, derived from a soil bacterium called *Bacillus amyloliquefaciens*. The bar-barstar-barnase gene is a patented technology of Bayer Crop Science. Bayer is not a swadeshi Company. How can a product patented in their name is termed as Swadeshi. The fact that Bayer owns the patent of the genes used in Prof. Pental's Mustard has been deliberately concealed from the people of India.

Wrong Claim of higher Yield

Another aspect that we would like to highlight is the unsubstantiated and wrongly projected claim that GM mustard will increase domestic production and reduce our import dependence. The GMO mustard has no yield advantage compared to Indigenous hybrids. Data from Rapeseed Mustard Research (DRMR), Bharatpur clearly show that the claim of Prof. Deepak Pantel that his GM mustard would increase yield by 26 percent is deceptive and misleading as there are several existing hybrid varieties that outperform the transgenic variety DMH-11. In fact for reasons best known to the developer, the existence of better performing non-GM hybrids from his own stable has been concealed and he has chosen to falsify the data by comparing the yield performance of GM mustard with some of very old varieties having lesser yield. Fact of the matter is that existing non-GM varieties of mustard give at least 25 percent more yield than what is claimed Prof. Pental's GM mustard.

Wrong claim of expected savings in foreign exchange requirements

We would also like to bring to your notice that the condition of royalty payment by the developer to the Bayer has also been kept a secret. Not only that GMO Mustard is based on Bayer's patented Barnase-barstar-barnase gene system for which royalty shall be paid, it is said to promote usage of Glufosinate, an herbicide from which Bayer will benefit the most through its existing brands. Therefore it is evident beyond doubt that the nation would be seriously dependent upon MNC for usage of patents and import of herbicides causing greater outflow of valuable Foreign exchange from the country.

It needs to be remembered that GM mustard has never been tested as a herbicide tolerant crop at all, while even the development of this glufosinate-tolerant crop was in violation of India's pesticides regulations.



The yield data was rigged and evidence about this has been shared with the regulators by alert citizens and experts. Importantly, major mustard-growing states of India were opposed to GM crops in general, and this particular GM mustard had not even allowed for field trials to take place.

As you know, mustard is a very important crop in our agriculture and in our food chain. For lakhs of bee-keepers in the country, mustard crop is a source of livelihood, while mustard crop itself benefits from honeybees' activity in terms of yield improvements. Mustard is eaten directly too

in Indian cuisine and mustard oilseed cake is used in organic soil amendments. The fact that such a crop has been exploited for any genetic modification is in itself highly objectionable, and this has happened with DBT funding at that.

Scientific experts who have looked into the biosafety data submitted by the crop developer in Delhi University have clearly pointed out that while GM mustard has not even been tested rigorously and adequately also given that it is a herbicide tolerant crop, in the tests that were indeed taken up in a limited fashion, the lack of safety of GM mustard to the environment and human health was clearly captured. There are also numerous other implications including on Indian Systems of Medicine. What is also important to note is that glufosinate is a dangerous herbicide, like glyphosate. It is irresponsible for the regulatory body to recommend environmental release, and then ask for testing to be done post-environmental release, knowing fully well that GM technology is a living technology, irreversible and uncontrollable once released into the environment. For GEAC to say that the usage of any formulation of herbicide is not permitted for cultivation in the farmers' fields under any situation is ironical and objectionable, given that our regulators have proven their failure to regulate, time and time again, when it comes to illegal herbicide GM crops in India, and illegal use of herbicide on the same when it comes HT Bt cotton with which glyphosate is being used on large tracts of land. Just because GEAC lists down in its Minutes of Meeting several conditions does not mean that the clearance is acceptable, especially when several basic issues have been glossed over in an unaccountable fashion.

Danger of losing on exports of agriculture food products

It's notable that today India is exporting nearly 5 lakh crores of food products to the rest of the world. As our country has not allowed GM in food crops, non-GM tag on our exports helps us in fetching orders from European nations, where GM is banned. Moment, GM enters into our food crops, that non-GM tag would be lost and our country would lose on export front. You will appreciate that our country is striving hard to increase export of agri products, to earn valuable foreign exchange, and more importantly raising farmers' income.

Swadeshi Jagran Manch has all along been opposing this dangerous and unneeded GM mustard being brought in through the backdoor as a 'public sector' GMO. It is because of our raising of the key issues of concern about this GM mustard that the then Union Environment Minister has kindly intervened and took the right decision of keeping in abeyance the regulatory clearance in its operationalisation and seeking a review. However, the regulatory body, predictably, did not take up any such review worth the name. The regulators are joining hands with GM crop developers and are time and again compromising the regulatory regime quite seriously, and they have done so with this GM mustard also.

We are confident that as a person who has carefully studied the adverse impacts of GM crops and also published opinion pieces on the same in the past, you will intervene immediately in this matter, and ensure that no GM mustard seed is allowed to be planted, now or ever.

Dr Ashwani Mahajan, *National Co Convenor*

SJM oppose nod to GM Mustard



Opposing the central biotech regulator's decision to allow environmental release of genetically modified (GM) mustard for seed production and testing, Swadeshi Jagran Manch (SJM) and Bharatiya Kisan Sangh (BKS) demanded withdrawal of the decision with the former even writing to environment minister Bhupender Yadav seeking his intervention to ensure that no transgenic variety of mustard seed is allowed to be planted "now or ever" due to risks involved in its use. Both these outfits also questioned safety protocol being followed by the regulator, Genetic Engineering Appraisal Committee (GEAC), before taking the decision, and asked why the recommendation for environmental release was given even before the research has been done in the country about impact of transgenic mustard on bees and pollination. The BKS even flagged how the regulator's move was even against Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision of revival of self-sustainable agriculture.

"This is to bring to your notice that nothing has changed from May 2017 when the GEAC's green signal for this unsafe GM mustard had to be stopped by the government, keeping in mind various concerns... Not a single additional test has been done, nor a single question has been answered scientifically about the safety or efficacy or need of this GM mustard," said SJM to Yadav.

SJM alleged that the regulator, instead of taking up any such review, joined hands with GM crop developers and compromised the regulatory regime quite seriously. Referring to the latest decision, SJM said it was "irresponsible" for the regulatory body to recommend environmental release, and then ask for testing to be done post-environmental release, knowing fully well that GM technology is a living technology, irreversible and uncontrollable once released into the environment.

<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/rss-affiliates-oppose-nod-to-gm-mustard/articleshow/95155460.cms>

GM mustard neither Swadeshi nor safe: SJM

THE SANGH Parivar has opposed the move by a government committee to grant approval for field trials of genetically modified mustard, claiming it is "neither Swadeshi, nor safe". Swadeshi Jagran Manch (SJM) has also urged the government to take cognizance of the committee's action when it knows there is so much opposition to GM mustard introduction. The Genetic Engineering Appraisal Committee (GEAC) under the Union Environment Ministry has approved seed production "prior to commercial release" of India's first indigenously developed transgenic hybrid mustard. It opens up possibilities for India's first genetically modified (GM) food crop by farmers.

The country's regulator for GM organisms, at its meeting on October 18, recommended the "environmental release" of the transgenic mustard hybrid DMH-11, developed by the Centre for Genetic Manipulation of Crop Plants at Delhi University.

"The GEAC has been making such recommendations since 2016. They had first recommended for commercial release of GM mustard. Earlier also, during this government, field trial approvals were given by this committee for some other GM crops. They were not approved by the ministry. The government must not approve this also. We have opposed it earlier and we continue to oppose it. But the government must take note of GEAC actions as to why it comes up with such approvals when there is so much opposition to GM mustard for legitimate reasons," SJM told The Indian Express.

"GM (Genetically Modified) mustard is neither Swadeshi nor safe. It is neither good for health nor for environment. It is herbicide tolerant mustard and so there will be greater use of herbicides which have been proven to be carcinogenic. How can the GEAC give such an approval when it is proven that glyphosate is carcinogenic?"

The Swadeshi Jagran Manch has been steadfast in its opposition to GM mustard. It had similarly issued statements in 2017 and even written to Prime Minister Narendra Modi, asking him to withdraw the permission given in "undue haste" to cultivate GM mustard crop, insisting that it is "unscientific, toxic and anti-biodiversity".

<https://indianexpress.com/article/india/gm-mustard-neither-swadeshi-nor-safe-sjm-8231988/>

SJM slams Delhi govt ban on all kinds of firecrackers during Diwali



Swadeshi Jagran Manch (SJM) opposed the AamAadmi Party led Delhi government's decision to ban all kinds of firecrackers on Diwali calling the ban "inappropriate and unscientific."

The Swadeshi Jagran Manch said that the move could cause millions of workers to lose their jobs and others engaged in the production and distribution of fire crackers in the country. The SJM alleged that the Delhi government's complete ban on firecrackers was aimed at misguiding people and diverting their attention from the real cause of air pollution in the national capital. Government agencies have failed to solve the problem of stubble burning in Punjab, Haryana, Delhi and other parts of the country even though it is the "biggest source" of air pollution in the national capital and the surrounding northern states, the SJM said without naming anyone.

SJM, in a statement said, "The SJM strongly opposes the complete ban on firecrackers by the Delhi government during the festival of Diwali as it is inappropriate." SJM urged the state governments to look for a permanent solution to the problem of stubble burning and repeal the restrictions on firecrackers during Diwali. The burning of firecrackers "illegally" imported from China causes air pollution due to mixing of potassium nitrate and sulphur in them, not the green firecrackers manufactured in the country, SJM said.

"Potassium nitrate and sulphur are not mixed in green firecrackers made in India today. Other pollutants such as aluminium, lithium, arsenic and mercury etc., have also been reduced to the minimum," the SJM said. The Swadeshi Jagran Manch said that the green firecrackers cause 30% less pollution. The "last minute" decision of the Delhi Government and the Delhi Pollution Control Committee to ban even the green firecrackers is "highly deplorable", the SJM said.

Since the Union government has imposed "an effective ban" on the Chinese firecrackers, it is completely "unfair" to impose a blanket ban on all types of firecrackers in Delhi during the festival of Diwali, it said.

The ban on all kinds of firecrackers is not just "arbitrary, anti-people and bereft of any scientific basis, but also hurting the sentiments of the people on the occasion of Diwali", it added.

"The Swadeshi Jagran Manch also urges the Delhi Police to come clear on whether they will follow the arbitrary orders of the Delhi government of arresting people in Delhi if found in possession of or bursting firecrackers," the Swadeshi Jagran Manch said.

<https://www.indiatoday.in/india/story/rss-linked-swadeshi-jagran-manch-slams-delhi-govt-ban-on-all-kinds-of-firecrackers-during-diwali-2288511-2022-10-22>

Global Hunger Index report irresponsible, mischievous: SJM

Swadeshi Jagran Manch called the Global Hunger Index Report 2022 "irresponsible and mischievous" and urged the central government to take action against its publishers for "defaming India". India is ranked 107th out of 121 countries in the Global Hunger Index Report-2022.

According to the report, India lags far behind its South Asian neighbours, while the 'child wasting rate' (underweight for height) among children in India is 19.3 percent, which is the highest of any country in the world. Recently, the non-governmental organizations 'Concern Worldwide' (Ireland) and Welt Hunger Hilfe (Germany) have released this report.

SJM, reacting to the report, said, "The German non-governmental organization Welt Hunger Hilfe has once again released a ranking of 121 countries on the subject of the Global Hunger Index, which is highly unproven to defame India. -Responsibly prepared."

The forum said, "The report is far from reality and flawed. This is ridiculous not only from the point of view of statistics, but also from the point of view of analysis and methodology. Earlier in October last year, India was ranked 101 in the list of 116 countries. The platform alleged that the report clarifies the malicious intent of its publishers.

The statement said, "SJM expresses its objection against this report and urges the government to reject it and take appropriate action against those organizations which are destroying the country by spreading lies about India's food security, defaming."

<https://news-waali.com/global-hunger-index-report-2022-global-hunger-index-report-irresponsible-mischievous-swadeshi-jagran-manch-news-waali/>

'Future belongs to India': Putin



Russian President Vladimir Putin hailed Prime Minister Narendra Modi as a “patriot” who always defended India’s interests. Putin who made a major appearance at the annual Valdai discussion club Thursday heaped praises on PM Modi’s governance style.

“A lot has been done under the leadership of PM Modi. He is a patriot of his country. His idea of ‘Make in India’ matters both economic wise and ethics. Future belongs to India, it can be proud of the fact that it’s the largest democracy in the world,” the Russian President said.

Russia’s top head said, “Modi is one of those people in the world who is capable of conducting independent foreign policy in the interest of his nation despite any attempts to do some detente or limit something”. Putin, 70, also appreciated India’s progress with respect to development from “being a British colony to a modern state”.

Putin stated, “Almost 1.5 billion people and tangible development results give reasons for everyone’s respect and admiration for India”.

Further speaking about the closeness between India and Russia, Putin asserted, “We have a special relationship with India. It has been underpinned by a close ally relationship of many decades. We’ve never had any difficult issues and supported each other & that’s happening right now. I’m sure it’ll happen in the future”.

On agricultural trade between the two countries, Russian President Putin said, “PM Modi has asked me to increase the supply of fertilisers which’s very important for Indian agriculture. We have increased volume by 7.6 times. Trade in agriculture has almost doubled”.

“I am sure India has a great future and an increasing role in global affairs,” Putin added.

Additionally, Putin said there was no need for Russia to launch a nuclear strike on Ukraine, and denied his country had ever discussed the use of atom-

ic weapons in the war, now in its ninth month.

Putin claimed Russia has only used “hints” in response to repeated US and European discussions of a possible atomic conflict, telling an audience of foreign-policy experts that the West was trying to influence Moscow’s friends and allies by showing “how terrible Russia is.” Speaking at a conference of international foreign policy experts, Putin said it’s pointless for Russia to strike Ukraine with nuclear weapons.

“We see no need for that,” Putin said. “There is no point in that, neither political nor military.”

<https://www.livemint.com/news/india/future-belongs-to-india-russian-president-vladimir-putin-praises-pm-narendra-modi-s-governance-11666916258659.html>

Rishi Sunak all set to script history as Britain’s first Indian-origin Prime Minister

Former finance minister Rishi Sunak is set to be the next British Prime Minister, becoming the country’s third leader in less than two months.

Sunak takes the place of a resigning Liz Truss, who beat him in a Tory election just over a month-and-a-half ago. The 42-year-old is set to be the UK’s first British-Asian Prime Minister.

Truss was only in office for 44 days, having replaced a disgraced Boris Johnson, who himself quit three years into his term after multiple scandals threatened to topple his government.



The revolving door at 10 Downing Street can be traced back to the 2016 Brexit vote, after which the Tories came to power in a landslide victory, led by Johnson. Ever since, the British government has been in turmoil facing crisis after crisis, including the COVID-19 pandemic and the death of Queen Elizabeth II.

Sunak, a former hedge fund boss, is now tasked with fixing the economic situation in the UK, with the country sliding into a recession, dragged down by surging costs and a weak pound.

Sunak first hit the headlines when, at age 39, he

became Finance Minister under Johnson just as the pandemic hit Britain, developing the successful furlough scheme.

The politician has also divided his party, with many blaming his stepping down from the Johnson Cabinet as having triggered the collapse of the government.

“The United Kingdom is a great country but we face a profound economic crisis,” Sunak said in a brief statement declaring his candidacy to lead the Conservative Party, and thereby become prime minister.

Britain’s first Prime Minister of colour, Sunak traces his roots to pre-partition India, with his grandparents having originated from Gujranwala, in modern day Pakistan’s Punjab province. Sunak is also married to Akshata Murthy, the daughter of Infosys founder Narayana Murthy.

The finances of Sunak and his family came under intense scrutiny this year, with his wife’s tax affairs placed in the spotlight.

Sunak, a brief history:

- Sunak was born in Southampton in 1980
- He was educated at private boarding school Winchester College, Oxford University and Stanford University in California
- His political career began with winning a safe Tory seat of Richmond in Yorkshire in 2015
- He was catapulted to the post of Chancellor of Exchequer when his former boss, Sajid Javid, resigned in February 2020
- Sunak has two daughters with his wife, Akshata Murthy.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/international/world-news/rishi-sunak-named-british-prime-minister-after-boris-johnson-drops-out-of-race/articleshow/95065406.cms>

Isro’s heaviest rocket successfully places 36 OneWeb satellites into orbits

The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) successfully placed 36 OneWeb satellites, meant to offer global internet service, using its heaviest rocket - Launch Vehicle Mark 3 (LVM3 or GSLV Mk-3) - for the first time past midnight on Sunday in a 1.5-hour long launch. The launcher lifted off from the second launch pad at Satish Dhawan Space Centre in Sriharikota at 12.07am. It is the first multi-satellite mission to the low earth orbit (LEO) with the heaviest payload of 5,796kg on LVM3 till date. With this launch, LVM3 made its entry into the global commercial launch service market.

Around 20 minutes after lift off, the rocket successfully placed 36 OneWeb satellites into a circular low earth orbit of 601-km altitude.

After separation of the first four batches of 16 satellites from the rocket, which could be seen from Sriharikota, Isro chairman S Somanath said, “We have started Diwali celebrations already. Now the rocket is on its intended path.”

“Sixteen out of 36 satellites have been placed in the desired orbit as expected. This is a slow process, the satellite separation. It will take a long time. The rest of the 20 satellites will be separated and we won’t be able to see it from here. But we will get data. This is a historic launch as it is the second operational mission of LVM3 and first commercial launch,” the chairman said, adding that it was Prime Minister Narendra Modi who wanted LVM3 to enter the commercial launch service market. “We will place another 36 satellites in the next M3 mission.”

The C-25 or the cryogenic upper stage of the three-stage rocket reoriented and added velocity to ensure safe separation distance of the satellites. The mission was part of the commercial arrangement made between NewSpace India Limited (NSIL) and M/s Network Access Associates (OneWeb Ltd), a UK-based company. India’s Bharti Enterprises is a major investor and shareholder in OneWeb.

D Radhakrishnan, CMD of NSIL, said this is an extremely remarkable mission. “The GSLV has made the most remarkable entry into the commercial launch market. We have shown the world how to execute a launch mission within three to four months.”

Among the many firsts in this launch, Isro said it was the first Indian rocket to carry a six-tonne payload, first commercial launch of LVM3 with NSIL, first multi-satellite mission of LVM3 to LEO and first OneWeb mission with NSIL/DoS.

OneWeb satellites is a constellation of 588 satellites (150kg-class satellites) that will operate on the low earth polar orbit that will offer internet services. Satellites are arranged in 12 rings (orbital planes) with each plane having 49 satellites. The orbital planes are 1,200km above the earth inclined to be near polar at 87.8 degrees. Each satellite will complete a full trip around the earth every 109 minutes. The earth will be rotating underneath the satellites so they will always be flying over new locations on the ground. □□

<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/isros-heaviest-rocket-successfully-places-36-oneweb-satellites-into-orbits/articleshow/95039625.cms>

Swadeshi Activities **Swavlambi Bharat Abhiyan (SBA)**

Meetings

Pictorial Glimpses



Gaya, Bihar



Kashi Prant



Mau, Uttar Pradesh



Meerut, Uttar Pradesh



Muzaffarpur, Bihar



Swadeshi Activities **Swavlambi Bharat Abhiyan (SBA)** Zila Rojgar Srajan Kendra

Pictorial Glimpses



Swavlambi Bharat Abhiyan (SBA) (Entrepreneurship Encouragement Conferences)

