

# Swadeshi

## PATRIKA

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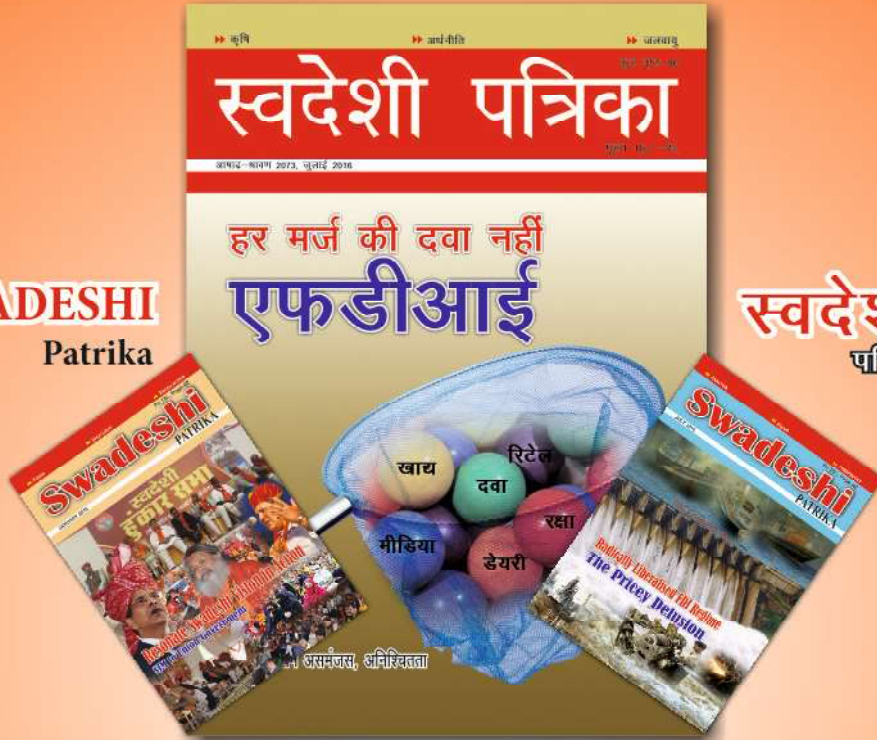
**Imperative to Ban**  
**Glyphosate**





# VOICE OF SELF RELIANT INDIA

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Patrika



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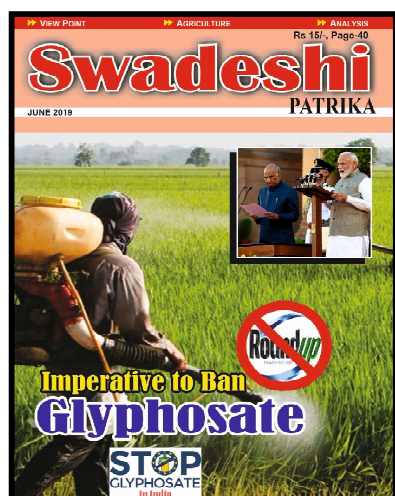
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# पढ़ें और पढ़ायें



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## Withdrawal of GSP Preferential Trade Program

*The Trump administration has withdrawn the General System of Preferences (GSP), the preferential trade program given by the United States to developing nations. The GSP exempted Indian goods from import duties to of approximately \$5.6 billion. Trump has said that "India is not providing fair and equitable market access to US Companies". The American dairy farmers and medical devices exporters have been unhappy over higher tariffs being imposed by India. Not only that US is unhappy over India policy stance over Ecommerce and data protection. India has exported \$54 billions of merchandise and imported only \$33 billion which suggests India is indeed having trade balance skewed towards India.*

*Indian exporters such as leather, engineering goods made-ups and tile users have been the beneficiaries of GSP. According to experts, chemical, leather pharma exports are likely to get affected. Out of 18,770 tariff lines India exports 5111 got benefits of GSP. Further 2165 tariff lines have duties of more than 4%. Relatively, The impact of GSP on Indian market is minimal. The net impact from the GSP was estimated to be around \$190 million according to some sources.*

*While India should bargain hard on restoring the GSP preferential trade program, India should not forget its own interests. India has a huge market which it can leverage and should not come under pressures of United States. One should also note that India has not retaliated the increase of Aluminium and Steel tariffs by the US. India has been postponing the increase of tariffs on imports of American goods worth \$200 million. Further, also by not granting the waiver from importing the Iran oil, India is at further loss due to US decision. US cannot bully India into doing things which are not in the favour of United States.*

— Harsha Vardhan, Hyderabad, Telengana

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The views expressed within are those of the writers and do not necessarily represent the views of Swadeshi Patrika. Swadeshi Patrika often present views that we do not entirely agree with, because they may still contain information which we think is valuable for our readers.

## Quote-Unquote



**I have no hope but I am confident that Modi Government will write new dimensions of success and development in the coming 5 years.**

**Ram Nath Kovind**

President of India



**India does not need to become anything else. India must become only India. This is a country that once upon a time was called the golden bird.**

**Narendra Modi**

Prime Minister, Bharat



**I bow to Veer Savarkar on his jayanti. He was a courageous freedom fighter who also made many efforts to reform our society. Savarkarji's courage during the freedom movement and his contribution to this great nation will continue to inspire coming generations.**

**Rajnath Singh**

Defence Minister of India

## **BRI Pushing Poor Nations to Debt Trap**

China claims BRI to be a mega infrastructure initiative through which it is intended to give a boost to international trade by improving connectivity, between different countries of the world through road, rail and maritime routes. This proposal is being linked to historical 'Silk Road' concept, which Chinese claim that the route was first developed by Han Dynasty nearly 2000 years ago. Apart from this, this BRI will pave way for number of corridors in the world. In this initiative there is Silk Road Economic Belt primarily which would connect China with central and south Asia and subsequently with Europe. Along with this there will be a new maritime 'Silk route' which would connect China to South-East Asia, Gulf countries, East Africa and up to Europe. Six economic corridors are being planned which would connect other countries with this belt and road. How far this initiative will fructify and what shape it will take, is still being talked about? Countries which are proposed to be partners in BRI constitute nearly one-third of the GDP and international trade of the world, while two-third world population lives in these countries. 20 to 25 percent population in many of these countries lives under the state of poverty. In the absence of infrastructure resources in these countries are not fully utilized and therefore their development is impacted. It is being claimed that with building of this infrastructure, constraints to trade would reduce and therefore welfare of the people in these countries may improve.

It is being told that with completion of this project, not only road, rail and maritime connectivity between different countries would improve, even the transportation of goods would become easier and cheaper. Along with this lot of time will also be saved. At present, to make goods reach from China to central Europe, it takes nearly 30 days through sea route. This time would now reduce by half through rail. When it takes longer to reach goods from factory to the destination, obviously it causes impediment to trade. The supporters of BRI claim that this would encourage growth in the world through trade. Success of BRI would make trade easier in different corridors of the world, they claim. As per the proposals BRI is expected to have participation of nearly 70 countries including China. Since this proposal is yet to take its full shape, it is difficult to estimate conclusively that, how much investment would be required for this project. However, a broad estimate says that investment in BRI may be between 1000 billion dollars to 8000 billion dollars. Apart from this there will be investments from governments of different countries and also the private sector. But all said and done, this investment is expected to be so very big that nobody is ready to say anything about the financing part of the same. However, if we see the benefits which are being attributed to BRI are not realistic. Even if we facilitate the transportation of goods through road, rail and maritime routes, there is no guarantee that trade will improve automatically. A recent research by World Bank shows that trade may remain inhibited due to host of reasons. We must understand that building of this big an infrastructure involves several trillions of dollars of investment, which China cannot finance on its own. Moreover this project looks to be too risky for other countries to finance the same. Most of the countries where this infrastructure is supposed to be built are so weak economically, that they would excessively be dependent on other countries, including China. Proposed borrowing for these projects may increase their debt burden. The World Bank says that the Debt/GDP ratio of poorer BRI countries may impact their sovereignty. For this reason also they are scary of participating in BRI. According to World Bank, in most of these BRI countries legal system is too weak to protect the rights of the investors. To make this mega project to takeoff, these countries may have to make structural changes, which will not be an easy task.

Generally sovereign nations decide to undertake infrastructure projects on their own. However, when these decisions are taken under influence from other (powerful) countries, it may impact their sovereignty, as sometimes they have to compromise their national interest. One such example was seen in Sri Lanka recently. When China undertook the construction of Hambantota port in Sri Lanka, causing billions of dollars of debt on Sri Lanka; that it had to surrender its port to China on 99 years of lease. This had caused a huge irritation to Sri Lankan people.

India had boycotted BRI from the very beginning, saying it in clear term that this project may push most BRI countries to unsustainable debt levels. Moreover, major opposition of India has been with regard to China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) being constructed by China on Pakistan occupied Kashmir (POK). India has said "We are of firm belief that connectivity initiatives must be based on universally recognized international norms, good governance, and rule of law, openness, transparency and equality. Connectivity initiatives must follow principles of financial responsibility to avoid projects that would create unsustainable debt burden for communities; balanced ecological and environmental protection and preservation standards; transparent assessment of project costs; and skill and technology transfer to help long term running and maintenance of the assets created by local communities. Connectivity projects must be pursued in a manner that respects sovereignty and territorial integrity."

This Belt Road Initiative was introduced before the world with much fanfare. However, cold response from most big and rich countries, especially those, from where major investment is expected, towards BRI, is raising question marks on the possibility of success of this initiative.



# Imperative to Ban Glyphosate



In the year 2015, International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC), an agency of the World Health Organization, had found in its research that 'glyphosate', which is an active ingredient in Monsanto's RoundUp, is "probably" carcinogenic. The review, conducted by WHO's International Agency for Research in Cancer, found that glyphosate increased risks for Non-Hodgkin lymphoma as well as DNA and chromosomal damage. A Working Group of 17 experts from 11 countries met at the International Agency for Research on Cancer

(IARC) on 3-10 March 2015 to review the available published scientific evidence and evaluate the carcinogenicity of five organophosphate insecticides and herbicides: diazinon, glyphosate, malathion, parathion, and tetrachlorvinphos.

IARC also concluded that there was "strong" evidence for genotoxicity, both for "pure" glyphosate and for glyphosate's mixtures. IARC reviewed about 1000 studies. Some of the studies looked at people exposed through their jobs, such as farmers. Others were experimental studies on cancer and cancer related effects in experimental systems.

Recently, a jury from Auckland, USA, ordered Bayer-Monsanto to pay \$ 2 billion (Rs. 14000 crores) to a couple who had suffered from cancer after using herbicide called 'RoundUp'. This is the third case of such damages on the company. It is worth mentioning that two months ago, the State's court of Alameda County had ordered the company for a compensation of 80 million dollars (Rs. 560 crore) to a person. Similarly, in another lawsuit, the State court of San Francisco had ordered compensation by the same company for a school's groundskeeper to the tune of \$200 million, which was later reduced by another court to \$ 78 million (Rs. 546 crore).

Therefore, we find that successively in three law suits, different courts in USA have accepted the allegations of the victims of cancer, that their cancer has been caused by the herbicide called RoundUp, produced by Monsanto and has accordingly provided for compensation of significant amounts to the victims. However, matter doesn't stop here as thousands of such cases are pending in various courts of USA. It's notable that last year Monsanto Company was taken over by Bayer Company and since then Monsanto is known as Bayer-Monsanto.

## Rising use of glyphosate in India and the world

On the one hand not only cases of cancer caused by glyphosate are coming



*It is imperative to ban the usage of the 'Cancer causing glyphosate' which has been proved worldwide.*

**Dr. Ashwani Mahajan**

in light, but the courts have also been giving relief to the victims in this regard. Today, not only in the USA, the incidence of cancer is increasing worldwide. The World Health Organization's agency IARC, have conclusively said that glyphosate, which is active ingredient of the RoundUp, is probably carcinogenic or in other words cancerous. According to a recent study, the risk of cancer increases by 41 percent due to glyphosate. This finding is corroborated by the increasing incidence of cancer worldwide.

Whereas the people around the world are reeling under the risk and suffering due to glyphosate, the makers of the weed killers with glyphosate as main ingredient are not ready to accept the fact. Despite being convicted by the court every time, they continue with legal appeals due to their strong financial muscles. The reason for this is that all their business hinges on these weed killers and herbicide tolerant GM crops. It is worth noting that most GM seeds are herbicide tolerant (HT).

Notable, that the world has used 8.6 billion kg of glyphosate by 2014, since 1974. In 1995, the total use of glyphosate was only 51million kg, it increased to 775 million kg in 2014 i.e. a 15 times increase. Even in India, 8.7 lakh kg of glyphosate had been used by 2014.

### **Why do farmers use glyphosate?**

The weeds and unwanted vegetation have to be removed because they are not good for the crop as well as for the growth of it. They can be removed by two ways. The first method is the man-

ual process of identifying and removing weeds. Second method is to use the herbicide to destroy the weeds. The farmers prefer herbicide because it is a cost-effective method. The farmer is not aware of the health hazards associated with the use of herbicides. Moreover, herbicide manufacturing companies intentionally hide the health hazards associated with them. In America it was proved in various courts that the companies intentionally hide the dangers associated with the use of glyphosate.

### **GM crops and glyphosate**

It is a well-known fact that Monsanto and Bayer have been trying to promote the GM crops. Recently, seed companies illegally introduced herbicide tolerant (HT) BT cotton seeds in the market. According to some estimate, HTBT Cotton is being cultivated in approximately 1 lakh hectares. It is obvious to understand that this is being done to increase the market for RoundUp and glyphosate in India. It is also clear that this is entirely beneficial for companies selling RoundUp in the market. The main aim of these companies is not the welfare of the farmers, but their own selfish interests. It is imperative to stop the production of GM crops in India since it promotes the use of cancer-causing glyphosate.

### **Imperative to ban glyphosate**

After being conclusively proved that glyphosate causes cancer, many countries have taken a decision to ban it. Following the IARC report in 2015, more than 400 cities and towns have banned Glyphosate in Argentina. In the similar manner, glyphosate has been banned in many towns and cities in Australia. Many EU coun-

tries including France, Belgium, Greece, Luxemburg, Slovenia, Malta and European Union have raised concerns about the ill effects associated with glyphosate. Thereafter the process of banning has been initiated by many countries. Bermuda has put a ban on private and Agricultural usage of glyphosate but has permitted its usage on sides of roads by government. Brazil has put a ban on the registration of chemicals made of glyphosate. And also, 8 states in Canada have banned glyphosate in one or the other way. In the same way Columbia, Czech Republic, Denmark, El Salvador, Germany, Greece, Netherland, New Zealand, Portugal, Scotland, Sri Lanka, Sweden, Vietnam etc. either banned or limited its usage.

In India as well, many states attempted to ban glyphosate. In Punjab the sale of glyphosate has been prohibited in October 2018. Similarly, in February 2019 Kerala has prohibited the usage of glyphosate. Andhra Pradesh and Telangana have already prohibited the use of glyphosate. Maharashtra is also attempting to ban glyphosate. In many states, companies are trying to oppose the ban on the argument that only Central government has a authority to register and ban the glyphosate. But, the Central government hasn't initiated the process to ban the use of glyphosate.

But the supporters of ban have contended that the government has permitted the use of glyphosate only for Tea Gardens and non-agricultural purposes. And in the absence of Tea Gardens, states are allowed to ban it. It is imperative to ban the usage of the 'Cancer causing glyphosate' which has been proved worldwide. □□

## Stunning Modi victory whets people for more; Must redraw the economic contours

The BJP, no Narendra Modi, has stunned the world. Resounding victory touching 352 plus is a rare feat. The spread is stunning as the fortress West Bengal collapses. The surprise is not his victory. It is the poll management despite in real terms not so bright economy. Yes, Modi stressed on populist measures that touched the poor – Pradhan Matri housing, Ayushman health care, toilets in every house, job ruses of MUDRA or skill India and about 431 other programmes. The programmes in the post-election scenario look to have touched the hearts of millions. May be in their gratitude they voted Modi back to power.

That may possibly explain a uniform phenomenon of the rout of the caste-based parties like that of Mayawati's BSP, with support base among dalits; Ajit Singh's RLD bases on Jat support; Mulayam-Akhilesh's SP a hardcore Yadav-OBC party; Chandrababu Naidu's TDP, a party of OBC and fringe castes but with a slightly wider base; Sharad Pawar's NCP, strong Maratha sugar-lobby party or Laloo Yadav's RLD, a Yadav party.

The economic packages lured the voters of these combine to vote for a Modi, who sells dreams to the fringe classes. That is possibly Modi's new political economy. It does not serve the elite voters, who certainly no political party can trust for loyalty. The best instance is Modi's one time chief economic advisor Arvind Subramaniam. Modi could trust him but Subramaniam could not understand Modi and chose a different path.

Modi's macro economy functioned different from his targeted-vote economy. Dole-based economy succeeded politically to break the caste arithmetic, a shrewd move. But his macro economy so far has been a continuation of the hardcore Manmohan Singh's principles called Manmohanomics. So Modi had to



*People have lost faith in the caste and one-man parties as the Indian electorate has matured and process for democratic correction has begun.*  
**Shivaji Sarkar**





bear the brunt of criticism that had seen ouster of Manmohan Singh.

This had put the spanner in the progress of the nation led to joblessness, industrial slowdown, lack of demand, high bank NPAs, crisis in the public sector like giants BSNL/MTNL, ONGC, petro companies and Maha Navaratnas.

That was before polls. Would he now have a new policy? Modi did not promise much in concrete. But If Modi continues the same policy and the nation continues to go downhill, it would neither suit him nor the nation.

It is not the public sector alone the Hindustan Lever the largest consumer goods producer had the poorest show in 18 months in March 2019 of 7 percent. Unnerving was its CEO Sanjiv Mehta's statement, "Consumer essentials are recession resistant but not recession-proof". From carmakers to tooth-paste sellers every firm has lousy start this year. Every eye is now fixed on Modi's new policies. Would he be breaking away from Manmohanomics to pave a super highway of growth or his team would continue to struggle for a policy.

India has to come out of this recession else the aspirational voters might behave in the most frustrated manner. During the last two years farmers' distress has increased and several times they marched to Delhi or Mumbai. All peaceful, but with extreme angst.

Literally, the new government is walking on the razor's edge. The BJP's popular Hindutva promises wonderful life as did the Marxism in Soviet Union. An aspirational voter believes in it because he feels he would have more than he can see.

The BJP now faces the toughest challenge. Mere booth manage-

***Modi's Swachha Bharat, Ujjwala and Pradhan Mantri Awas schemes and Cash-Support to farmers instilled confidence among the poor.***

ment does not win polls, it realized in the three state polls in December 2018. A correction today has paid seat dividends but now the young voter wants better industrial show, action and result that would ameliorate their lot.

The 2019 is an aspirational vote, a process of social synthesis. The caste divide in Indian social system has been obliterated by a strong Modi. Poorer people, having got the basics of food, cash support, house and toilet, would be more demanding.

India is entering the middle income category of countries around \$ 2,000 per capita income. Newly emerging consuming classes are driven by aspiration rather than feudal style dole outs. Even less-demanding rural youth vie with the urban youth.

Economy needs a boost. The last five years have seen a benign environment where food prices recorded a modest increase. Now a global economic slowdown is visible. There are incipient signs of stress on the price front while global trade wars, may be even real wars, are breaking out. Brexit may change European economy and those dependent on it.

He has also to work in education, its funding and linking it to industry and manufacturing. He also has to work on a new short-duration syllabus that saves nation's money and churns out skilled people faster. Public universities are in crisis and private in a morass. The youth is unhappy. The system needs cash and policy lubrication.

The tax system needs reform as the one nation GST has hit many sectors like education, NGOs, small traders and entrepreneurs. Income tax reduction is awaited. It is a tough task as people's purchasing power has to be increased as also the government's revenue.

The stock market is in a thaw. Occasional boom is stated to be self-managed.

The economic vision has to be redrafted. The NITI Aayog has to be invigorated. It has to find out solutions to inflation, slowdown and joblessness. The Aayog has to function as think tank but is unable to even suggest way to come out of flip-flop policies on taxing fuel or high tolls or cost on working out tax component. Over 5 percent of corporate expenses are on working out the taxes and satisfying tax raiders.

The country has repoused trust. It wants to be paid back. It cannot wait for another term to deliver. Indira Gandhi till today is ridiculed for failure of her *garibi hatao*. A lion of a Modi cannot repeat that. It would devastate the people. He has to function to invigorate the faith in leadership.

The aspirations today are more than it was in 2014. Indians believe Modi has the magic wand to solve the problems and make India the leading economy. It hopes next five years would be shining. □□

# The intolerance of Time

It is unproductive to speculate why, but a vocal section of the Western commentariat is showing an increasing intolerance towards strong and nation-centric leaders in the rest of the world. Three notable examples are Vladimir Putin, Xi Jinping, and Narendra Modi. Putin won in May 2018, Xi Jinping can't be toppled, and Modi is currently fighting for reelection. This is therefore an opportune moment for venomous attention from underworked writers.

Smack in the middle of a heated election, the burdened white men of *The Economist*, London, intoned, "Under Narendra Modi, India's ruling party poses a threat to democracy. Voters should turf it out, or at least force it to govern in coalition" (May 2, 2019). The magazine asserted that while Modi had not been as good for India as his cheerleaders had promised, nor as bad as his critics had imagined, "today the risks still outweigh the rewards. Indians, who are in the midst of voting in a fresh election, would be better off with a different leader".

India's swift retaliation for the Pulwama massacre of Central Reserve Police Force jawans seems to have provoked of *The Economist's* ire. It notes, "... sending warplanes to bomb India's nuclear neighbour earlier this year was not so much an act of strength as recklessness that could have ended in disaster". Predictably, it disapproves of anti-terrorist actions in Jammu and Kashmir.

A week later, *Time*, New York City, USA, published a cover story, "Can the World's Largest Democracy Endure Another Five Years of a Modi Government?" (May 8, 2019). A portrait of a grim, unsmiling Modi frowns at viewers even as writer Aatish Taseer describes India's ruling dispensation as "rabble". Glossing over the unequal treatment of communities under Nehruvian secularism, he says, "Nehru's political heirs ... established a feudal dynasty, while outwardly proclaiming democratic norms and principles. India, under their rule, was



*Western media is averse to a strong and nation-centric leader like Modi and we need to highlight the failed policies of Congress which were injurious to the education of minority community under Sonia Gandhi.*  
**Sandhya Jain**



clubbish, anglicized and fearful of the rabble at the gates. In May 2014 those gates were breached when the BJP, under Modi, won 282 of the 543 available seats in Parliament, reducing the Congress to 44 seats, a number so small that India's oldest party no longer even had the right to lead the opposition".

Modi, claims Taseer, belongs to the brand of populists who are of the people they represent, like Erdogan (Turkey) and Bolsonaro (Brazil). Son of a tea seller, "his election was nothing short of a class revolt at the ballot box... [it revealed] a cultural chasm. It was no longer about left, or right, but something more fundamental". Worse, "The cherished achievements of independent India – secularism, liberalism, a free press – came to be seen in the eyes of many as part of a grand conspiracy in which a deracinated Hindu elite, in cahoots with minorities from the monotheistic faiths, such as Christianity and Islam, maintained its dominion over India's Hindu majority". Taseer dubs Modi's victory an expression of that distrust.

Actually, non-deracinated Hindus from the same educational and professional backgrounds led the revolt against the Nehruvian order. We may call it the return of the heirs of Tilak, Aurobindo, Bose, and others given short shrift by the historians and hagiographers of independent India's new masters. There is no yawning economic chasm between supporters of the Bharatiya Janata Party and Congress, as Taseer insinuates; no French Revolution-style upsurge of have-nots against feudal lords. Beginning with founder KB Hedgewar, the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh, from which most BJP

leaders come, has comprised largely of urban middle class professionals (doctors, lawyers, teachers, engineers) – not exactly an under-proletariat.

But Taseer has an agenda. One objective is to exonerate the Congress for the targetted killing of Sikhs after the assassination of Prime Minister Indira Gandhi. He writes, "The Congress leadership, though hardly blameless, was able, even through the selective profession of secular ideals, to separate itself from the actions of the mob". This is simply untrue. Rajiv Gandhi ("when a big tree falls, the ground shakes") took HKL Bhagat and Jagdish Tytler (named in many citizens reports) into his cabinet. However, Taseer blithely blames Modi for the Gujarat riots of 2002, even though Modi had been sent to the State only months ago, to supervise relief and reconstruction after the Bhuj earthquake (2001). This is the context in which Modi arrived in Gujarat; any analysis that ignores this is intrinsically flawed.

Taseer's article reads like the "report of a drain inspector", as Mahatma Gandhi called Katherine Mayo's diatribe on the position of women in India. For honest reporting, he could have asked the Union Ministry of Human Resource Development for statistics regarding the special scholarships for minority students, including for study abroad; and the free coaching for minority (read Muslim) aspirants for IAS. Above all, he could have checked their mark sheets to see how many made the grade through (inflated) marks during interviews.

India's majority community had some legitimate expectations from the government in 2014. One

was scrapping the atrocious Right to Education Act imposed by the erstwhile regime, under which the State refused to improve education in government schools and made the Hindu middle class pay for underprivileged children in private schools. Worse, Sonia Gandhi exempted minority-run institutions from giving free education to Economically Weaker Section (EWS) children from their own community, leaving them free to mint money.

The free education quota for EWS forced the closure of thousands of small, cash-strapped private schools that catered to aspirational EWS families. Their children were pushed into non-functional government schools, while only a miniscule number could be admitted to private schools. In all honesty, the idea of a minority institution is defeated if it does not cater to the community to which it belongs; in fact this should be a *condition* of minority educational institutions.

Taseer laments that Modi may win again because, "the opposition, led by Rahul Gandhi, an unteachable mediocrity and a descendant of Nehru, is in disarray". The Congress has little to offer other than the dynastic principle: "India's oldest party has no more political imagination than to send Priyanka Gandhi – Rahul's sister – to join her brother's side". Modi, he concludes, "is lucky to be blessed with so weak an opposition – a ragtag coalition of parties, led by the Congress, with no agenda other than to defeat him". It is astonishing that *Time* published these incoherent ramblings as a cover story. □□

*(The writer is Senior Fellow, Nehru Memorial Museum and Library; the views expressed are personal)*

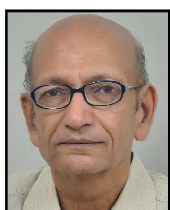


# Missed Opportunities & the Way Forward

NDA's win appears to be anchored on Pulwama and strong administration. The alliance has won despite many missed opportunities. The only economic achievements have been in the areas of electricity generation especially solar power and construction of highways. NDA must change course of economic policies to make India into a global economic power. Pulwamas will not make India a global economic power, and strong implementation of wrong policies will ultimately weaken the country.

The first missed opportunity has been in the relations with Sri Lanka, Nepal and Bhutan who have moved towards greater cooperation with China. NDA could not come up with an alternative to the huge funds provided by that country for development of infrastructure to these neighbours of ours. Relations with Pakistan and China have only become more strained. We had to accept the establishment of the permanent headquarters of the New Development Bank in China. In return we got only the small concession of the first head of the bank being from India.

China has moved to establish the Belt Road Initiative and integrate her economy with the countries of Asia, Africa and Europe. We have opposed it because the Initiative passes through Pakistan Occupied Kashmir. Our relations with the United States have improved but only at a huge economic cost. The US has imposed punitive import duties on our exports and asked us to reduce to imports oil from Iran. The only silver lining in our foreign relations is that our relations with Maldives, Afghanistan and Bangladesh have remained positive. The way



*NDA's win appears to be anchored in Pulwama and strong administration.*

**Dr. Bharat Jhunjhunwala**





*The way forward  
is to increase  
government  
investments and  
reduce  
government  
consumption and  
revenue deficit.*

forward is to launch a massive program to subsidize supply of trained teachers and scientists to the developing countries. That will spread goodwill for India and also help solve our educated unemployment problem. We must skirt the POK problem and join China's Belt Road Initiative and use it to open up our trade with the three continents.

The second missed opportunity was of controlling fiscal deficit and reducing government investment in order to attract foreign investment. The NDA failed to realize that the demand for manufactured goods in the developed countries has become flat and Multinational Corporations are no longer willing to invest in India. The way forward is to increase government investments, allow fiscal deficit to increase but simultaneously reduce government consumption and revenue deficit.

The third missed opportunity was that of the failure to privatize Public Sector Banks and other Public Sector Undertakings like the ailing Air India. It was necessary to make pig ticket investments in emerging areas like Artificial Intel-

ligence, large data processing and space. Instead we spent our precious revenue to prop up corrupt bureaucracies of these PSUs. The way forward is to privatize and get rid of these headaches and use the money for research and providing manpower assistance to the developing countries.

The fourth missed opportunity was in the failure to promote the services sector. The "Make in India" campaign has failed to attract foreign investments. Instead it has resulted in the transfer of the business of SMEs to large businesses without any additional production taking place. Thus the growth rate is unchanged while the Sensex is booming. The way forward is to provide deep incentives to labour-intensive production even by large companies. The SMEs should be revived by allowing cash refunds of GST paid on inputs under the compensation scheme. Two, impose high import duties on goods that hit at our employment intensive sectors such as toys and garments. Three, we have to promote exports of internet-based services such as online tuitions and medical advice.

The fifth missed opportunity was in the area of environment. The NDA has made it a mission to develop solar power. The United Nations honoured him for the same. However, the record of NDA on water, air and biodiversity have been wholly failing. We are ranked at 117 among 120 countries on the Environment Protection Index. Our carbon emissions continue to increase. Nearly one-half of the world's worst polluted cities are in India. Our rivers are dying. Their water is being wholly extracted for irrigation for the cultivation of water-guzzling export crops like sugar and red chilies. The rivers are also dying because we are making hydropower dams and obstructing the downstream flow of sediments and upstream migration of fishes.

The way forward is to reduce the consumption of electricity to reduce the coal-based generation of electricity and to remove hydropower projects. We should start volumetric pricing of water used for irrigation and compensate farmers for the resulting increase in price of their produce. Let us hope for the best. □□

# Rise of BJP in West Bengal

BJP's storming of West Bengal in 2019 Lok Sabha elections with a tally of 18 seats as against just two in 2014 and a vote share of whopping 40.5 percent (17 per cent) has been a matter of great pride and pleasure for all BJP supporters and nationalist forces, not only in the state but also across the country. It is a victory of Hindu Nationalism which is set to usher in a change entailing real development over lackluster development, a fallout of the Trinamul Congress's (TMC) hoax slogan of Ma Mati Manus.

Lackluster development because TMC supremo Mamata Banerjee has deprived the people of the state of the benefits of several Central Government Schemes like Ayushman Bharat, Pension scheme for the unorganised labour, the direct income support to the farmers and the like. Instead, her government has squandered Central funds on distribution of patronage in an arbitrary manner to benefit a chosen few, the thrust always being the appeasement of the minorities. She is singularly responsible for creating demographic imbalance in the districts bordering Bangladesh and thus disturbing the social harmony in the border villages. In most Muslim-dominated villages, the Hindus have been terrorized by TMC goons, all Muslims, who have forcefully prevented the Hindus from performing the Pujas and celebrating their festivals, and worse, threatening the dignity of Hindu women with assault and atrocities. The land of spiritual gurus like Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa, Ma Sarada, Swami Vivekananda, Sri Aurobindo and many others has been reduced to a land of deceit and dishonesty, crime and violence. The Lok Sabha election result for West Bengal therefore is not simply a political win but also a victory of the socially and economically deprived people who through ballots have recorded their protest



*Mamata Banerjee is singularly responsible for creating demographic imbalance in the districts bordering Bangladesh and thus disturbing the social harmony in the border villages.*

**Dr. Dhanpat Ram Agarwal**





against the misrule of Mamata's government and party.

West Bengal has been on a downhill journey for nearly half a century now, ever since the beginning of Naxalite movement in 1969, followed by 34 years of misrule by the Left Front Government and, the worst of all, the past eight years of anarchy unleashed by the Mamata-led government. Syndicate raj and tolabbaji (extortion) championed by all her men have not only thrown up law and order problems but also economic uncertainty as is evident from the lack of investment and industrialization in the state. Despite her holding high voltage Biswa Banga Sammelans (Business Meets) in Kolkata for successive years and undertaking several foreign trips to attract investments, few dared to put in their money in the state. Such is the reputation of the West Bengal Government. The financial bankruptcy of the state can be gauged from the huge borrowing of the state government, as much as Rs four lakh crore, even as the state government employees including teachers and others are not paid salaries and dearness allowance they can legitimately claim. The implementation of the Seventh Pay Commission is a distant dream.

There is another problem. TMC was born out of the womb of Congress and therefore no wonder that it has imbibed the dynastic culture of the mother organization. For the past few years, Mamata has been pushing her nephew Abhishek Banerjee to the top position in the party hierarchy and vested him with the huge powers which naturally have gone into the youngman's head. He has become a billionaire overnight

through rampant corruption and the story of Sarada and Narada scams is too well-known all over the country to be repeated. Power without ability and accountability can be dangerous. This is exactly what happened to Abhishek whose high-handedness is being resented not only by common people but also a section of top leaders within the party.

BJP's success has not come without a price. More than 100 party workers have sacrificed their lives in their fight with the TMC goons and the fight continues even after the declaration of election results. For example, Chandan Shaw, a BJP supporter in Bhatpara, has been killed and the assailants are all TMC men. There have been many such killings. TMC, which has lost several of its heavyweights (Dinesh Trivedi, Subrata Mukherjee, Madan Mitra to name a few) in the elections, will not give up so easily. Mamata's job in this regard has been rendered easy by the inaction of the state police which has totally surrendered at her feet. How long can this continue? The TMC leadership should know that there is little it can do against the tidal surge of people's Will favouring BJP.

In addition to sacrifices of scores of party workers and supporters, BJP's victory has also been due to the able guidance provided by leaders like Kailash Vijay Bargiya, the national general secretary, and Mukul Roy and Shri Shiv Prakashji, the strategists. For the past four years, the focus was on micro-level management — from the state unit to the mandal unit and further to booth level committees for all assembly segments. Capping it all, there was

continuous monitoring of each morcha and cell. As many as 23 seats were identified for the win and all support, financial and others (such as support to digital media and office infrastructure), was extended to party functionaries.

The 18 seats which BJP has won in West Bengal are spread over both North Bengal (Cooch Behar, Alipurduar, Darjeeling, Raiganj, Balurghat and Malda North) and South Bengal (Barrackpur, Hooghly, Asansol, Ranaghat, Bongaon and Bardhaman-Durgapur), and the non-Muslim tribal belt in the western part of South Bengal (Bankura, Bishnupur, Jhargram, Medinipur and Purulia). BJP successfully mobilized the Matua community (Dalit Hindus belonging to Namashudra sect) hoping Bongaon, Krishnanagar and Ranaghat seats where Matuas are concentrated would be won. The results show that except Krishnanagar, the two other constituencies have gone to BJP. Another interesting development is that BJP has won in several Muslim dominated constituencies like Raiganj, Malda North and Balurghat thus demolishing the myth that it is only a party of the Hindus. An estimated nine per cent of the Muslim votes has been cast in favour of the party.

By and large, BJP did well in districts but poorly in and around Kolkata. During the road-show of Amit Shah on the last leg of the election campaign, TMC goons demolished the statue of Pandit Iswar Chandra Vidyasagar, perhaps the tallest figure of the Bengal Renaissance. The statue was in Vidyasagar College located on the street covered by the road-show. Mamata and her men created hue

[Continued on page no. 20]

# Lawmakers must radically reform the food systems



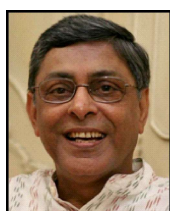
Healthy diets, diverse foods during pregnancy, at birth, infancy and early childhood can tackle both under and over nutrition, offset epidemics of non-communicable diseases. If the recommendations of a recent KPMG report to Karnataka State Rural Livelihood Promotion Society are acted upon, India's children will end up consuming low cost, fortified, unhealthy processed foods as flavoured sweet or sour powders or biscuits. Targeting families with Rs 1,000-60,000 monthly income, with intense above the line (ATL) and below the line (BTL) marketing, these families will want to

buy and consume these unhealthy foods. The KPMG report claims to deal with India's malnutrition, stating lack of availability of such foods has direct correlation with under nutrition. "No Low-cost Fortified Energy Food presently available in the market, there is no defined route to market." The report proposes multiple manufacturing units to tap the market. States are already grabbing such ideas as "Tata Trusts" and "Mars Foods" have already partnered to sell high protein crunchy snacks, again unhealthy ultra-processed foods for children called "GoMo Dal Crunchies".

According to global experts, malnutrition and unhealthy diets are important risk factors for NCDs that claim 71% of global deaths (41 million) each year. Every year, roughly 5.8 million Indians die from heart and lung diseases, stroke, cancer and diabetes.

Malnutrition, for the benefit of readers, includes both under-nutrition and over nutrition, both are caused by unhealthy, poor quality diets, and are linked to NCDs. Only one out of ten of India's children (6-23-month age group) eats a diverse minimum acceptable diet e.g. fruits/vegetables, and two out of five children receive healthy diet during the first six months in the form of exclusive breastfeeding. India's over 35 million of underweight children under five years of age and rapidly rising obesity among middle and higher-income groups are both a problem India has to tackle urgently.

According to India's National Family and Health Survey (NFHS 4), in the past 10 years, the number of obese people has doubled in India. India has the second highest number of obese children in the world, with 14.4 million reported cases, according to a recent study published in The New England Journal of Medicine. Epidemiologic studies indicate that overweight and obesity are important risk fac-



*Unhealthy ultra-processed food perpetuates all forms of malnutrition and non-communicable diseases.*  
**Arun Gupta**

tors for Type 2 diabetes (T2DM), cardiovascular disease (CVD), cancer and premature death.

Food systems are to respond to this problem.

India has the dubious distinction of having the maximum number of undernourished children both at birth and first two years of age. India, with its rapidly growing market economy, is the target of the food companies to boost the sales of processed foods; without any concern for the long-term health of consumers. Corporations use aggressive marketing as a key strategy for selling unhealthy foods, including selling on discounts, use of health claims etc., and are legitimised by academics, celebrities and organisations with interest. Such marketing undermines healthy eating and displaces real foods and is linked to obesity.

India's plan of action to deal with NCDs calls upon ministries to work with the private sector. The private food sector, because of its vested profit interest, gets on to the policymaking table. The food system prioritises on promotional campaigns and individual choices rather than delivering healthy, un-processed foods.

Such a food system has to be fixed with radical reforms including both what and how food is produced, marketed and consumed.

We hear TV commercials on a daily basis by a biscuit brand claiming "Healthy India banayenge" (making India healthy). Other brands push sugary beverages or health/energy drinks without even letting people know the amount of sugar they gulp in a single helping and mostly in association with celebrities. Unless the food system

fixes and regulates to end such marketing it will be futile to expect healthy eating. Other reforms, which are required, include disincentives to produce unhealthy foods and incentive for healthy foods, taxing unhealthy foods, mandatory labels on unhealthy foods easily understood by the public, better/healthy standards for foods in schools, hospitals and institutions, enforcing the existing Infant Milk Substitutes Feeding Bottles, and Infant Foods (Regulation of Production, Supply and Distribution) Act 1992, and Amendment Act 2003 and ending all inappropriate promotion of foods for infants and young children.

Many steps are under way but more needs to be done.

The KPMG report is proposing to produce ultra-processed foods and market these intensively using celebrities. Those who argue entry of the private food sector, don't want to talk of aggressive promotion tactics, including surrogate marketing and the harm it may cause, because it is linked to the bottom line. As people buy and consume foods under the influence of intense marketing, it cannot be said to be an "individual's choice". Policymakers are to understand that marketing of unhealthy foods (with high sugar or salt, and or highly processed foods) increases their consumption and is therefore harmful.

Authors of a new report in the Lancet concluded: "Dietary policies focusing on promoting healthy eating can have a more beneficial effect than policies advocating against unhealthy foods." This is exonerating the food industry, obviously helpful to the industry, quite a strategic move. This report

of the EAT Foundation and Lancet is backed by several food industry giants or their associations and supported by the SUN (scaling up nutrition) movement, which distorted the definition of conflicts of interest to accommodate private sector and has a business network. The Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition (GAIN), who had been claiming to benefit 600 companies, is a partner with FSSAI in the India launch.

Point is made to the policy-makers for radically reforming the food system. Availability of real and healthy foods including safe drinking water is one of the answers and wiping off unhealthy foods from the plate.

Governments and FSSAI may disband existing partnerships with private food sector that supplies/provides unhealthy foods. Otherwise, you will be seen as a partner in crime; making choices that are detrimental to health.

More can be done by banning all celebrity endorsements of unhealthy foods, the double bonanzas or discounted foods as part of the radical reforms.

In the end, two questions. Will the political parties make healthy policy choices while aspiring to be on the driver's seat for governance? Will a Parliamentary committee interrogate FSSAI and the private food sector on this matter? You have the power to shift the direction, otherwise, what Irwin Corey said, "if we don't change the direction soon, we'll end up where we're going", will be the unfortunate future for India. □□

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<https://www.sundayguardianlive.com/news/lawmakers-must-radically-reform-food-systems>



# Now address the issues and Implement Swadeshi Model



*Tax and supportive system should help rural products compete with corporate products at least within the area of district and meet the demands within so to give benefits of low price to consumer and profit to rural entrepreneurs.*  
**Anil Javalekar**

**BJP** has finally won the Lok Sabha elections that too with majority on its own. It is the expert's prerogative to analyze the Lok Sabha results and debate on why BJP or NDA won and or why Congress and others lost. Honorable Prime Minister Modi has rightly tweeted that 'Sabka Sath+ Sabka Vikas+Sabka Vishwas= Vijayi Bharat'. Vijai Bharat means not the high GDP growth rate nor the military win over Pakistan. Vijayi Bharat means 'sabka Vikas'. Sabka Vikas is also not only 'aarthik vikas' but 'sarvangin vikas' of all constituents-individuals and institutions in all respect.

BJP is better placed to complete this task of 'vikas' as it has base level organization with selfless volunteers, has capable leaders, including PM, has support of its NDA partners and has clear mandate for governance. 'Sarvangin Vikas' include addressing of certain issues that are divisive in nature that divide Indian society leading to socio-economic conflicts in society. 'Sarvangin vikas' also include addressing of issues that are becoming hindrance to the socio-economic progress of India. Honorable Prime Minister Sri Narendra Modi has himself outlined the important priority issues. BJP government now need to address these issues appropriately.

## Contain the Issues that are helping divisive forces

Honorable PM has rightly highlighted the issue of minority communities in India mainly Muslims who are being pushed in fear psychosis for political reasons and has emphasized the need to gain their confidence. Therefore, BJP leaders and its followers including cadre, should stop coining false definitions of nationalism and desirable they emphasize on the ideals of the inclusiveness of Indian majoritarian society and Indian culture. It is also desirable that the party cadre take the government schemes and programmes to all deserving people for that alone will build the confidence. The Viswas of minority community can be gained only by the fair treatment and not by good intentions and framing of good policies for the purpose. In this connection, it is necessary that all communities should be allowed to follow their religious worshiping practices and government and Indian courts should avoid interfering in these worship beliefs and practices. The religious practices include the worship methods and protecting of the religious places and its linked practices. The issues like Sabarimala and Mosque entry are important in this connection.

## Do more to bring good days to Indian commons

The issues of commons are important.

**1. Equality before law is important:** Presently, the governance system, including justice system treat Indian commons differently and this unequal treatment is on rise. The government functionaries, Law and order machinery and justice system still treat citizens differently and need some revamping. Registering of FIR, its proper investigation and Speedy trial of cases is prime to justice and need reforms. Present system is for delay and deny. This need a change. As honorable PM has rightly said VIP culture should go.

**2. Implement Swadeshi Model to protect the interests of Rural commons:** The survival opportunities available to Indian rural commons, including farmers, artisans, local small traders, entrepreneurs and labourers are reduced substantially with the urban oriented development. The self-sustaining economic survival cannot simply be assured by loan disbursements or cash benefits or providing food gains at lower prices. The need is to reorient economic model that help farmers and other local producers including traders and labourers earn income locally that too for a longer period so to have a happy lifestyle. Today's economic model of development through foreign trade and or through urban based technology dependent industrial sector cannot provide this. The model that can make people earn locally is the swadeshi model and that need to be given a chance. NITI Aayog need to frame policies based on 'swadeshi model' and not on west-

ern models that give more income to industries than to labourers, farmers, traders or artisans and local entrepreneurs. Remember, unless Farmers and local village industries get the market for their products and at a cost-plus price, Indian commons of villages cannot survive. The tax system and facilitating support need to be organized accordingly. Swadeshi model alone can help in this matter for its alone talks of development based on use of local resources by local people and for the local people.

***The self-sustaining economic survival cannot simply be assured by loan disbursements or cash benefits or providing food gains at lower prices.***

**3. Empower local governance:** Indian governance is corrupt, inefficient and discriminatory and therefore not supportive to Indian commons particularly rural commons. Local commons and local participatory governance system, therefore, need to take over the centralized system of governance whether it is state level or federal level. Tax structure and local governance system need to be reorganized accordingly. It is important that the entire system of law order maintenance, investigation of crime and corruption should be free from any interfer-

ence at any level.

**4. Review Indian institutional setup and its structure:** Indian institutions are on verge of collapse and almost every institution is facing crisis. It is important to understand the way present institutions are being treated and questioned. The way justice system is being questioned or election commission been treated recently by opposition or the way media is playing its role, the way fruitless education system is being run are few examples. Indian system of institutions thus needs a review. This review should cover entire setup of institutions- education to justice to media to election to administration to politics.

**5. Improve Indian Defense and security system:** India is still facing the problem of terrorism in J&K, insurgency in North east and left-wing extremism in certain areas. Indian defense and security system need to be alert. Indian preparedness though remarkable, the weaponry and other equipment including the ammunition etc. cannot be said as sufficiently developed or made available. Indian government need to do more for this preparedness. It is not enough to have Indian armed forces within. The needs of defense and security also need to be met within. All policies thus need to be reoriented accordingly.

## Help rural economy to expand and earn

Indian economy is growing and may reach to the new heights, but rural sectors is struggling for survival. The agriculture, rural industries and local products, handloom and handicrafts, labourers are not gaining from rising GDP

growth rates. The rural credit sector is also on verge of collapse. Rising rural demand is helping corporate and MNCs to grow more and earn more. This need to be changed. Unless rural sector meets the expanding rural demand, rural commons will not benefit. The tax structure and supportive market system including credit system need to do more for rural commons. It is to be remembered that urban orientation of development that too with the help of and for the help of corporates and MNCs will not absorb rising employable rural youth.

Skill development programme and mudra loans will also not be sufficient to meet the needs of rural sector. Tax and supportive system should help rural products compete with corporate

products at least within the area of district and meet the demands within so to give benefits of low price to consumer and profit to rural entrepreneurs.

### Understand the problem and act fast

It is necessary to understand Indian economic problems not from the perspectives of world economic players and or with reference to the economic crisis issues highlighted in the form of GDP growth and fiscal deficit or current account deficit but from the perspective of Indian people and India as nation. Many times, these concepts override the main issues and seek solutions from outside players. Priority is to have an economic system that creates opportunities of progress to all with jus-

tifiable treatment to weak and small even it means low GDP growth rate and low-level income- price stability. Priority is also to live within capabilities of a nation even it means low budget and low investments and slow progress.

Therefore, BJP need to give up the chasing for high growth rate model based on heavy investments of borrowed funds (foreign capital), a model where strong is preferred and promoted with all facilities and concessions. Instead, prefer a model that ensures sustainable progress of all particularly small and marginal- people and sectors. For this, priority is not of international trade and internationally competitive service sector but agriculture and manufacturing with helpful infrastructure development. Swadeshi Model is an answer. □□

[Continued from page no. 15]

## Rise of BJP in West ...

and cry alleging that the vandalism was done by BJP's supporters. She took this opportunity, raised her voice against the attack on Bengal culture, icon and heritage and laid the blame squarely at the doors of BJP. Fortunately, all this had little impact on the voters of the area.

It is a pity that Bengal which once occupied the top position in trade, industry, education and culture and many other spheres gradually slipped from its position of pre-eminence and dropped to the bottom of the list of the economically weaker States. The unemployment rate is highest in the country, there is dearth of good educational

institutions and proper medical facilities. The precious savings generated in the State are getting transferred to the other states for investment. Since a sizeable section of the population of the state has good disposable income, trading is flourishing and the bulk of traded items like garments, edible oil, even fish, eggs and mutton are brought from outside the state. The purchasing power of the rural people is low and therefore their standard of living leaves much to be desired.

The farmers do not get remunerative prices for their produce and the condition of potato

growers is particularly bad. West Bengal is a major potato-growing state. The ruling party has no time for MSME sector which is languishing. The flight of talent outside the state as well as outside the country in search of education and jobs has created a void difficult to fill.

Yet, this trend, it is also felt by many, can be reversed through proper planning and policies; after all Bengal has tremendous potential for growth. The need of the hour is to transform the potential into concrete results. The Bengali diaspora can play a meaningful role in this regard provided the judicious policies are backed by a strong political will and a credible leadership. Fortunately Prime Minister Narendra Modi is providing it and Bangla will reemerge as "Sonar Bangla" a long cherished dream. □□

*The author is National Co-Covener, Swadeshi Jagaran Manch & Director, Swadeshi Research Institute, Kolkata.*



## The saga continues to haunt

**I**llegal Bt brinjal, a genetically modified food crop cultivation, was discovered by alert activists recently in the Fatehabad district of Haryana. It appears that other illegal Bt brinjal plots exist in the region. This is the first GM food crop entering the food chain in the country, being consumed by unaware citizens for some months now. This appears to be the next episode of the tried and tested strategy of the biotech industry of “leak the seed, spread the illegal cultivation and then get an approval”. Deployed across several countries, this is an established strategy to circumvent national legislation and consumer resistance that presents a fait accompli, followed by approvals and market manoeuvres to ultimately establish the monopoly of some seed giants.

In 2002, regulators faced with the fait accompli of illegal Bt cotton growing in large tracts of Gujarat were forced to approve Bt cotton. In 2009, it was Herbicide Tolerant (HT) cotton. HT cotton is a triple whammy — illegal GM crop, illegal use of the deadly chemical glyphosate (it has resulted in its manufacturers dragged into many legal suits for its lethal health impacts) and displacing poor rural women from the work of weeding the fields.

The regulators turned a blind eye to the spread of such HT cotton until it reached lakhs of hectares across all the major cotton growing states, allowing the biotech industry to reap the benefits of booming glyphosate sales. After public pressure, the action came in the form of four states stopping the sales of glyphosate. In November 2017, GM soy was found getting harvested in Gujarat. To this day, it is not clear what action has been taken against the seed suppliers, though the farmers’ produce has been confiscated, and kept at local police stations.

Instances of violations of biosafety norms during field trials abound too. The norms require produce from field trials to be carefully collected and de-



*No scientific and independent studies have been taken up on the long-term impact of Bt brinjal.*

**Kavitha  
Kuruganti**



stroyed. There have been some instances of the produce being sold to unsuspecting consumers.

Last year, the Centre for Science and Environment presented their lab-testing based findings on many unauthorised GM packaged foods having entered our supermarket shelves already, often times without being labelled so, and in all cases, illegal. The story is no different when it comes to regulating imports of commodities like soy or corn, which are coming in from countries that predominantly grow only the transgenic versions of the crop. There are numerous regulations being violated in these instances too, but there has been no deterrent action, as yet. Our regulators have neither the capability nor the commitment to keep tabs on this uncontrollable, irreversible living technology.

It was nine years ago that the then Union Minister for Environment Jairam Ramesh, after a comprehensive process of nationwide public consultations, placed Bt brinjal commercial release on an indefinite moratorium “till such time independent scientific studies establish, to the satisfaction of both the public and professionals, the safety of the product from the point of view of its long-term impact on human health and environment, including the rich genetic wealth existing in brinjal in our country”.

The consultation process brought out several strong reasons for this moratorium. Public scientific scrutiny of Bt brinjal’s biosafety dossier by many independent scientists, very clearly pointed out that Bt brinjal cannot be concluded to be safe for cultivation or consumption.

Brinjal is, of course, a popu-



***Many unauthorized GM packaged foods have entered our supermarket shelves already and illegally.***

lar vegetable consumed in large quantities, more or less directly in all parts of the country. There are human health implications from this. As seen in the case of Bt cotton, the target pest (fruit and shoot borer or FSB) will certainly develop resistance to the toxin produced in Bt brinjal. There is the matter of hundreds of varieties of brinjal that grow in India. This poses a threat of irreversible contamination if Bt brinjal is allowed.

From the information in the public domain, no further scientific and independent studies have been taken up, leave alone on long term impacts of Bt brinjal. The moratorium continues to be in place — for the obvious reason that Bt brinjal has not been proven to be safe.

The government of India and the Haryana government have to work in unison to locate all Bt brinjal cultivating plots and destroy them immediately, while compensating farmers. The seed supply network has to be traced fully, and cracked down upon. This requires deterrent penal action. India should also complain to the Secretariat of Cartagena Biosafety Protocol, which mandates that the transboundary movement of GM material cannot take place without prior informed consent.

Regulators have to take the responsibility of preparing front-line department functionaries to watch out for illegal GM seeds cultivation, and it is easy enough to zero in on suspected plots, and conduct preliminary tests.

If civil society can stay alert, so can responsible authorities from the government. It is not surprising that reports from Bangladesh (which approved Bt brinjal in 2013) indicate that Bt brinjal farmers are having to contend with a new pest and disease ecology in their crop. What is ironical and incomprehensible is how safer, effective and sustainable solutions are ignored time and again. There is evidence of effective FSB control with pheromone traps used not as surveillance, but control tools of the pest. There are several other more comprehensive pest management practices. Why is it that this is not promoted with farmers?

Most importantly, it is the responsibility of the government to take sustainable agro-ecological practices to farmers, since the market-driven input industry is not likely to provide such extension advisories. This will protect farmers from misadventures with illegal seeds smuggled in. □□

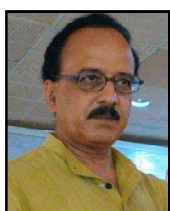
Author is with Alliance for Sustainable and Holistic Agriculture  
<https://www.dnaindia.com/analysis/column-the-saga-continues-to-bannt-2745346>

## Towards an organic future

At a time when global temperatures are soaring, a study by a French think tank – Sustainable Development and International Relations (IDDRI) – has shown that agro-ecological farming has the potential to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in Europe by 47% and thereby keep the global temperature rise below 2°C. The study comes at a time when the UN's Food and Agricultural Organisation is already talking of green direct payments to organic farmers who opt for sustainable farming practices. At the Regional Symposium on Agro-ecology for Sustainable Agriculture and Food Systems for Europe and Central Asia-2016, one recommendation was to shift 30% of the European budget on agriculture to green direct payments. The study shows that agro-ecological farming will bring down pesticide consumption by 3.8 lakh tonne per year in European farming.

And yet, most climate mitigation studies point to more crop intensification, which will lead to freeing up larger proportion of cultivable lands and thereby claim to ensuring there is no drop in production. It is a push for a hyper-intensive farming system that leads to more toxic soils, more water mining sucking aquifers dry, and leading to more contamination of the food chain. This flawed assumption was essentially behind the launch of the New Vision for Agriculture at the World Economic Forum 2009, aiming at increasing production, decreasing greenhouse gas emissions per tonne, and reducing rural poverty by 20% each, every decade.

The 17 agribusiness giants that would spur the launch of New Vision includes Archer Daniels Midland, BASF, Bunge Limited, Cargill, Coca-Cola, DuPont, General Mills, Kraft Foods, Metro AG, Monsanto Company, Nestlé, PepsiCo, SABMiller, Syngenta, Unilever, Wal-Mart, and Yara International. In other



*The transition to sustainable, chemical-free farming is imperative and need for climate-resilient agriculture.*

**Devinder Sharma**





words, it is more of the same leading to more catastrophic outcomes in the future.

The study provides hope at a time when the UN-sponsored TEEB initiative — Economics of Ecosystems and Biodiversity — for agriculture and food, has in its latest study, warned of a significant contribution to gas emissions emanating from farming practices. Accordingly, the entire farming systems, from cutting down of forests for making land available for cultivation to food waste dumped in landfills, account from 47 to 51% of global gas emissions. This factor alone plays a prominent role in the climate going topsy-turvy, which returns to haunt farming community reeling under the impact of climate change. The challenge is how to reduce the emissions, which becomes a surer form of mitigation for farmers from the chaotic implications from climate aberrations haunting them in the years to come.

What is of paramount importance is to bring in policies that help farmers transit to a more climate-resilient agriculture. In its earlier study, along with the UK-based Soil Association, the IDDRI has in a report entitled 'Ten Years of Agro-ecology in Europe' showed that it is possible to feed Europe a healthy, sustainable diet by transiting to natural farming systems. Earlier, an International Assessment for Agricultural Knowledge, Science and Technology for Development report, which was ratified (India included) during an intergovernmental plenary in Johannesburg in 2008, had warned that 'business as usual' is not the way forward.

Over the years, a consensus



***A consensus has developed around agro-ecology for an inclusive approach and reduce the damage being done to planet.***

has developed around agro-ecology, which alone has the potential for an inclusive approach and the ability to reduce the damage being done to the planet. In India, a major initiative was launched when elders of Punukula village in Khammam district of undivided AP joined hands to stop the use of chemical pesticides. This was over 15 years ago. This initiative led to the introduction of non-pesticides management (NPM) under the Community Managed Sustainable Agriculture, expanding to 3.6 million acre without pesticides. After its bifurcation, Andhra Pradesh launched zero-budget natural farming (ZBNF) to bring its nearly 60 lakh farmers under the fold by 2024.

Surprisingly, there is no drop in productivity. Just a year after the introduction of ZBNF, a study by Azim Premji University showed that yields had gone up from 11 to 79%-11% in paddy and 79% in brinjal. Since wheat is not grown in South India, the impact on wheat yield can't be known. But surely farming practices can be evolved that keep productivity on par. Punjab, ironically the country's food bowl, imports a significant proportion of its wheat requirement. Much of the atta, considered to be free of chemicals, is imported from MP. Why can't Punjab focus

on organic wheat production?

This will require a paradigm shift in the way farm research is conducted. Crop varieties have been evolved based on their response to fertilisers and pesticides. It's time to move to organic breeding, developing future varieties responding to organic manure, less water and needing no chemical pesticides. This has to be followed by reforms in markets, providing a higher price for organics and also providing for exclusive procurement of produce, coupled with policies that encourage farmers to make the transition. With soaring demand for safe food, mainline agriculture research has no option but to keep pace with the changing times.

As per Friends of Earth, in Europe alone, climate change has taken the lives of over 1.15 lakh people since 1980, causing a loss of 453 billion euros. In the global south, floods, drought, heatwaves and other extreme climate-related events/disasters result in hundreds of thousands of people dying every year. Instead of just blaming the weather gods, the time has come to reform farming systems, so as to move away from intensive cultivation that has denuded soils, mined groundwater and is leading to desertification.

<https://www.tribuneindia.com/news/comment/towards-an-organic-future/766290.html>

## Alcohol has Extremely Tragic Health Impacts

There is growing worldwide concern at the escalating costs of alcohol consumption in terms of very serious health problems. There is more evidence than ever before of very serious health risks from alcohol but despite this the overall trend in the world from 2005 to 2025 is of a significant rise in liquor consumption. This is the overall conclusion of the World Status report on Alcohol 2018 prepared by the WHO and released in September 2018.

The per capita per year pure alcohol consumption at the world level increased from 2005 to 2016 and is projected to increase again from 2016 to 2025. However the world level increase rate is much lower than the very fast rate of growth of liquor consumption in India. India. The world level increase is driven above all by the rising trend in two highly populated countries, India and China. The rate of increase is higher in India than in China.

In India the per capita per year pure alcohol consumption increased from 2.4 litres in 2005 to 5.7 litres in 2016, a more than double increase in roughly a decade. This is projected to increase to about 8 litres in 2025 when for the first time since records are available the average consumption in India at 8 litres is projected to be higher than the world average of 7 litres.

According to the WHO Status report, in 2016, the harmful use of alcohol resulted in some 3 million deaths (5.3% of all deaths) worldwide and 132.6 million disability-adjusted life years (DALYs) – i.e. 5.1% of all DALYs in that year. Mortality resulting from alcohol consumption is higher than that caused by diseases such as tuberculosis, HIV/AIDS and diabetes. Among men in 2016, an estimated 2.3 million deaths and 106.5 million DALYs were attributable to the consumption of alcohol. Women experienced 0.7 million deaths and 26.1 million DALYs attributable to alcohol consumption.



*Although the highly adverse impacts of alcohol consumption are very well-known, the alcohol industry has been trying for quite some time to somehow spread the myth that moderate levels are not a problem.*

**Bharat Dogra**





***“The number of patients with ALD is rising at an alarming rate in China”, study says.***

This recently released report tells us that in 2016, of all deaths attributable to alcohol consumption worldwide, 28.7% were due to injuries, 21.3% due to digestive diseases, 19% due to cardiovascular diseases, 12.9% due to infectious diseases and 12.6% due to cancers. About 49% of alcohol attributable DALYs are due to non-communicable and mental health conditions, and about 40% are due to injuries. 13.5% of all deaths among those who are 20–29 years of age are attributed to alcohol.

Explaining the situation further this report tells us that the health and social harms from drinking alcohol occur through three main interrelated mechanisms: 1) the toxic effects of alcohol on diverse organs and tissues in the consumer's body (resulting, for instance, in liver disease, heart disease or cancer); 2) development of alcohol dependence whereby the drinker's self-control over his or her drinking is impaired, often involving alcohol-induced mental disorders such as depression or psychoses; and 3) through intoxication – the psychoactive effects of alcohol in the hours after drinking

According to research works consulted for preparing this status report alcohol consumption has

been shown to increase the risk of HIV/AIDS by increasing the risk of transmission (resulting from an increased risk of unprotected sex) and by increasing the risk of infection and subsequent mortality from tuberculosis and lower respiratory infections by suppressing a wide range of immune responses via multiple biological pathways, particularly in people who engage in heavy episodic drinking or who chronically consume large amounts of alcohol.

The harmful use of alcohol is associated both with an increased risk of acquiring HIV infection and with negative effects on people living with HIV/AIDS in terms of treatment outcomes, morbidity and mortality.

Further the WHO status report informs us that alcohol consumption has a synergistic effect with viral hepatitis in the progression of liver disease. In addition, alcohol is a well-known causal factor for non-infectious liver diseases, including hepatitis and liver cirrhosis, and the latter is associated with high mortality.

Coming to cancer this report says that there is an established causal link between alcohol use and cancer development in the oropharynx, larynx, oesophagus,

liver, colon, rectum and the female breast. The risks are generally higher for females than males. Even moderate alcohol intake, corresponding to daily consumption of no more than 25 grams of pure alcohol, has been shown to increase the risk of developing female breast cancer.

This report informs us that the causal relationship of alcohol consumption and liver diseases is well established, and alcohol has been shown to have an ability to cause hepatocellular damage through ethanol metabolism-associated mechanisms and malnutrition. Alcohol is one of the most frequent causes of liver disease; alcohol-involved subtypes of liver disease include alcoholic hepatitis, steatosis, steatohepatitis, fibrosis and cirrhosis. Acute alcoholic hepatitis and liver cirrhosis are associated with high mortality (which can reach 50% in acute alcohol hepatitis), and the median survival time of patients with advanced liver cirrhosis can be as low as 1–2 years.

Giving an example from China this report mentions the Beijing 302 Hospital which is a large hospital treating patients from most parts of China, including over 40 000 patients per year with liver disease. Those treated for liver disease at the hospital are thus reflective of trends in liver disease in China. In the period 2002–2013, the distribution of types of liver disease changed at the hospital, with the proportion of alcoholic liver disease (ALD) more than doubling. Throughout this period, most of the patients with ALD (about 98%) were male. A study reporting this remarked that “the number of patients with ALD is rising at an alarming rate in China”.

The WHO report refers to expansive literature which shows that alcohol intoxication can increase dysphoria, cognitive dysfunction, impulsivity and intensity of suicidal ideation. People have approximately seven times increased risk for a suicide attempt soon after drinking alcohol, and this risk further increases to 37 times after heavy use of alcohol. The alcohol-attributable fraction for suicide was estimated to be as high as 18%. It is also known that the presence of AUDs (Alcohol Use Disorders) at least doubles the risk of having depression.

This report points out that the potential effects of alcohol include impairment in attention, cognition and dexterity (which are important for such activities as driving a car); aggressive impulses and loss of behavioural control (important for criminal violence); and alcohol poisoning (which can be fatal).

Further this report tells us that alcohol poisoning is a consequence of drinking large amounts of alcohol in a short period of time. Drinking too much in a short period of time can affect breathing, heart rate, body temperature and gag reflex and may result in a coma and death. In comparisons with other psychoactive substances, alcohol is among the most lethal in terms of how close the amounts used for psychoactive effects are to the median amount that is lethal. While poisoning clusters from contaminated alcohol often receive global press coverage, poisoning with ordinary beverage alcohol – usually in concentrated form such as distilled beverages – is an everyday reality in many societies, although it is often under-recorded in health statistics.

***Compared to  
abstinence, just  
one drink a day  
can lead to  
1,00,000  
additional deaths  
each year.***

The harmful use of alcohol is a component cause of more than 200 diseases and injury conditions, the most notable being alcohol dependence, liver cirrhosis, cancers and injuries, the latest causal relationships established are those between alcohol consumption and incidence of infectious diseases such as tuberculosis and HIV/AIDs.

However, the alcohol industry and its lobbyists have worked overtime to ensure that the massive adverse impacts of alcohol consumption are not reported adequately and properly so that people do not become aware about the full dimensions of these tragic impacts. A recent study led by scientists at the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine and Sweden's Karolinska Institute has concluded that the alcohol industry "uses denial, distortion and distraction to mislead people about the risks of developing cancer from drinking, often employing similar tactics to those of the tobacco industry."

However, the WHO says that drinking alcohol is a well established risk factor for a range of cancers including tumors of the mouth, liver, breast, colon and bowel, and the risk of cancer rises with the level of alcohol consumed.

Earlier also heavy drinking was linked to damage to brain, adverse impact of memory and dementia, but recent findings by researchers of Oxford University and University College London (published in British Medical Journal) has found that this damage is possible also at much lower alcohol consumption. This is also confirmed by another study involving 1300 women in the USA. Brain damage is likely to be higher in the case of binge drinking, particularly binge drinking involving adolescents.

Although the highly adverse impacts of alcohol consumption are very well-known, the alcohol industry has been trying for quite some time to somehow spread the myth that moderate levels are not a problem.

However an extensive study based on 195 countries which was published in the prestigious medical journal The Lancet (August 2018) concluded clearly that not even one drink a day is safe.

Max Griswold, lead author for a group of over 500 experts said, "There is no safe level of alcohol," "Overall, the health risks associated with alcohol rose in line with the amount consumed each day."

Compared to abstinence, just one drink a day can lead to 1,00,000 additional deaths each year. In the 15-49 age-group, alcohol is responsible for over 12% of deaths among all. Deaths in this age-group is generally believed to cause more distress in households.

Considering 24 health problems, this study found that five drinks a day can raise severe health consequences by 37%. In Romania male drinkers average 8 drinks a day, while in Portugal and Ukraine they average 7 drinks a day. □□



## Emerging Trend of Education Import Bill in Widening Trade Deficit

The trade deficit is the amount by which the import exceeds the export. It is the difference between the value of export and the value of import of a country within a given financial period. A higher trade deficit means that a higher volume of money has flowed out from the domestic market into the foreign market in comparison to foreign market's money inflow into the domestic market. Such a situation is also called a distorted balance of trade or a negative balance of trade in financial parlance.

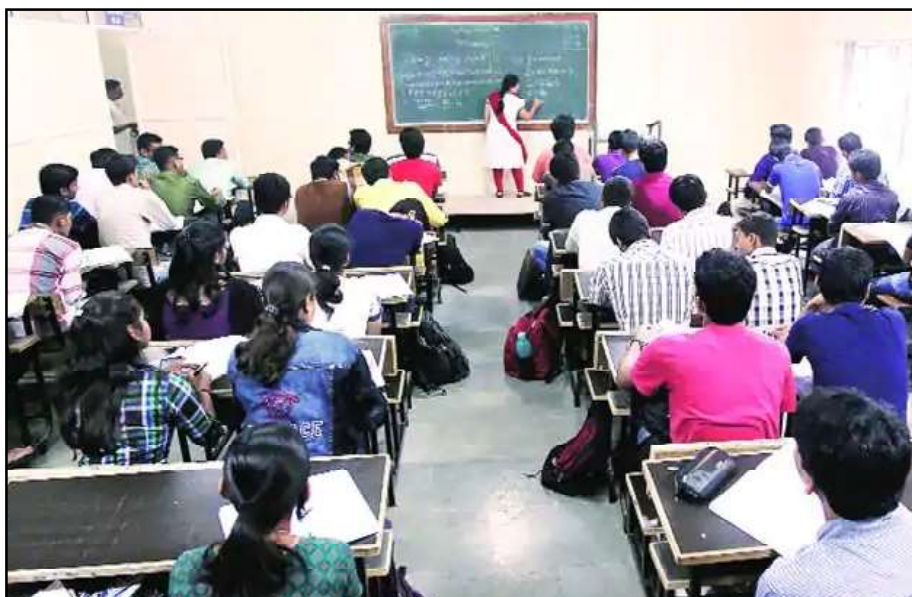
The difference between the import bill of education and export bill of education is alarming. The import bill of education can be understood as the expenses bearded by a domestic student studying abroad and the export bill of education can be understood as the expense bearded by a foreign student who is studying in India. The table below is the data regarding inflow and outflow of foreign exchange expenses in the education sector.

Education Related Foreign Exchange Expense			
Financial Year	Inflow (Million \$)	Outflow (Million \$)	Deficit (Million \$)
2013	409	1632	1223
2014	442	1931	1489
2015	519	2467	1948
2016	557	1980	1423
2017	504	2643	2139
2018	479	2776	2297

Source: Reserve Bank of India



*For a middle class, the two biggest investment of life is education expense and real estate purchase. For many of them, education expense has become life's biggest investment.*  
Alok Singh



The source of the above data is Reserve Bank of India, which has been taken from live Mint- it is a news- website which is mostly referred by corporate practitioners. According to it, the education-related foreign exchange expenses and the education-related trade deficit is widening at an alarming rate. For education-related expenses- the inflow of foreign exchange in the financial year 2013 was \$ 409 million while outflow was \$ 1632 million; in the financial year 2014 the inflow was \$ 442 million and outflow was \$ 1931 million; in the financial year 2015 the inflow was \$ 519 million and outflow was \$ 2467 million; in the financial year 2016 the inflow was \$ 557 million and outflow was \$ 1980 million; in the year 2017 the inflow was \$ 504 million and outflow was \$ 2643 million, and in the financial year 2018 the inflow was \$ 479 million and outflow was \$ 2776 million. The inflow had an increasing trade till the year 2016 although at a very small rate but it started to decline from 2016 onwards while the outflow is consistently growing at a higher rate. The education trade deficit in the year 2013 was of \$ 1223 million but has increased to \$ 2297 million by 2018.

There are two important stakeholders involved in the education system. One is the students and the other is the educational institutes. One is the service receiver and the other is the service provider. The students spend their money and time in an educational institute with a purpose. The purpose of the students vary – one group of students priorities value for money and time and the second group of students priorities to gain experience and legacy.



***As per ministry of external affairs of govt. of India, the total number of Indian students studying abroad is 7, 52,725, followed by Canada and Australia.***

Sometimes the student is able to get both purposes fulfilled and sometimes they have to trade off between these two purposes. For example- a student might be interested in studying a particular course at a particular institute but in case if the objective is not fulfilled then they have to trade off between course and institute i.e. either to change course or to change institute. The ministry of external affairs of the government of India says that the total number of Indian students studying abroad is 7, 52,725, as published in the leading newspaper 'The Hindu' on 27 July 2018. The Indian students are studying in almost ninety countries and the highest number of them is in US universities, followed by Canada and Australia. While during the year 2017, the total number of foreign students studying in India was around 69322.

The educational institutes admit students based on certain objectives and every educational institute owns certain key characteristics. There are educational institutes which are centuries old and have gained and retained legacy over a period of time. There are certain young institutes which have earned credibility in as low as two decades of their operating. The

readymade frameworks on which students rely are the rankings of the institutes by various agencies. Times Higher Education is one of the agencies involved in world university rankings. In the rankings of 2019 - the best ranking from India is of Indian Institute of Science, Bangalore and is ranked among a group of top 250 to 300. There is no Indian university in top 200, and a total of 49 Indian Universities finds a place among top 1000 rankings of Times Higher Education. The parameters of world rankings are faculty profile, research output, employment opportunities, and student's perception apart from others.

All the fundamentals of economics and finance play a role in the educational product in the same way as it plays in other products. If the foreign market enters the education sector of India then the competition to domestic education suppliers increases, it's the same way as if any domestic product faces competition from foreign producers. The entry of foreign market in the education sector can be understood as the number of Indian students studying in foreign-owned universities or other educational institutions irrespective of whether the campus is located in



India or abroad. If the campus is operating in India then trade balance has an advantage. If the campus is located outside India then it has a multiplier effect on the trade deficit. An Indian student studying in a foreign university in a campus located outside India not only pays to a foreign market for tuition fees but also for living expense.

Any country imports a product if the product is not available in the domestic market or production of domestic market fails to meet the quantity demand of that product in the domestic market. The reason can also be quality of the product apart from the quantity. In the case of petroleum products- mostly it is about quantity, but in the case of educational products- mostly it is about quality.

The young and aspiring India which has seen a lot of families moving from middle-class status to higher middle-class status and are investing their life's savings in children's education. For a middle class, the two biggest investment of life is education expense and real estate purchase. For many of them, education expense has become life's biggest investment. The young population aspires to study in the best universities in the world,

***Two decades is enough time for an academic institute to earn credibility.***

get the best training, and compete among the best of their peers. The objective of students is to derive maximum value for money, and at the same time, there are other groups of students who wish to get educated in an institute which earns them a legacy.

Contemporarily, India has a lot of educational institutions which are centuries old. They do attract the best talent of the nation, whether it is faculty or students. But in the current scenario- the domestic education suppliers, whether it be publicly funded or privately funded face tough challenges from their foreign peers as the students who are the future of running their alma mater have new choices.

To attract or to retain talented academicians and students - has a cost to an institute. The cost is not necessarily monetary in nature. Apart from revenue, the character of the institute attracts the talent- for example, the research policy,

promotion policy- i.e. time bound or merit bound, securing contributions from corporate, and allowing alumnus to contribute academically as well as financially and their participation in strategic decision making. The tuition fees can't be raised beyond a point, it's just a price and the price conscious Indian students will measure tuition fee on tough parameters. If the educational institutes raise their fee beyond a limit to bear the cost of matching the quality of their foreign competitors then the students prefer a foreign location in comparison to a domestic location. The way ahead is challenging. Few of the alumnus has worked hard and has contributed generously to establish few departments in Indian Institute of Technology, few universities- for example, Ashoka University at Sonapat, Haryana is catering the needs of students who aspire for quality and ambiance similar to that of the world ranking foreign educational universities. Two decades is enough time for an academic institute to earn credibility. India is a young nation and every year higher number of new youngsters are entering the university system. The income of India is rising and affordability of educational expenses has increased for the middle class. Education import is an emerging challenge to manage the balance of trade. □□

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# Bhakti Saints of Deccan and Bengal: Historical Prospective

## South India

It was in the south that the new Bhakti movement originally started, and we saw how it spread to the north and changed the religious panorama of north India. In the south the devotional movement was much more closely tied to the strong theological traditions and the sects than in the north. But the devotional popular movement expressed itself in the vernaculars.

In Tamil-land the hymns of the Alvars and the Nayanars continued to dominate the scene, and they soon gained the status of divine scripture and became part and parcel of temple worship as well as of popular devotional life. The first great poet to follow them is kampan (twelfth century), author of the famous times of the Cholas. The Mahabharata and the Bhagavata Purana also found their Tamil translators. Much of the Vaishnavite effort, however, went into Sanskrit compositions, and even much of its vernacular literature derived closely from the Sanskrit, and preferred the puranic approach and style.

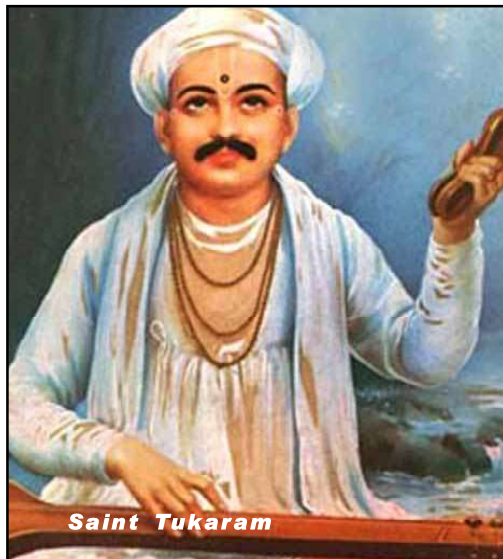
The Saivites produced a new devotional literature by the hymnodists called Siddhas. Their innumerable songs gained great popularity and they protested against the powers of orthodoxy.

The earliest Kannada literature was predominantly Jain, but the Hindu renaissance was inaugurated by Basava towards the end of the twelfth century. He founded the sect of the Virasaivas of the Lingayats, characterized by its numerous monasteries and by the large measure of its social equality, which had of vernacular literature, the vachana. Meant for the people and inculcating bhakti to Siva. For over three also left collections of hymns, and a hagiographic literature in praise of their saints.



*Bhakti movement  
in Deccan ,  
Southern India  
and Bengal grew  
out of famous  
poet-saints who  
composed in  
vernacular  
language and  
formed a popular  
base.*

**Prof. Nandini  
Sinha Kapur**



**Saint Tukaram**



**Chaitanya Mahaprabhu**



Vaishnava literature in Kannada really started from the sixteenth century, during the Hindu kingdom of Vijayanagara, first with translations from the Sanskrit classic, the Mahabharata, the Ramayana and the Bhagavata Purana. These were then followed by popular songs composed and sung by the dasas, or mendicant singers, inspired by Madhvacharya and stimulated by the visit of Chaitanya to the south in 1510. This tradition continued for centuries, producing songs in praise of Vishnu, some venerating him the form of the Vithoba of Pandharpur, thus linking up with the Maharashtrian tradition.

Telugu literature follows closely the pattern of development of Kannada literature, starting with Jain texts, and then moving on to a Hindu renaissance by tradition from the Sanskrit. The starting-point is Nannaya (eleventh century), who translated part of the Mahabharata, later continued by the great Tikkana (1220-1300), and finished by Yerrapragada (1280-1350). The Ramayana and the great Puranas too were soon transposed into Telugu.

### Maharashtra

Among the Indian vernaculars devotional bhakti first appeared in Marathi. It started in the thirteenth century with Jnanesvara (1271-96, also known as Jnanadeva), who wrote a long Marathi commentary on the Bhagavad Gita, called Bhavarthadipika, more commonly known as the Jnanesvari the fountain-head of Maharashtrian devotionism.

Jnanesvara was initiated in the Natha sect, which explains his leaning towards monism, but his bhakti was due to his connection with the

***The membership cuts across the whole caste structure, and their most important aid to religion is the society of saints.***

Varkari sect, which instituted the regular popular pilgrimages to the shrine of Vithoba in Pandharpur.

The Jnanesvari forms a transitional stage in the development of devotional mysticism. It is still greatly influenced by the traditional commentary style of the theologians, but breaks new ground by using the vernacular. Thus was revived that contact with the masses that the great tradition of Hinduism had lost. It innovated also by using a form meant for kirtan chanting, by addressing itself to the mass of the people, and by drawing from the simple life of the village for examples and metaphors. The movement lasted till the seventeenth century.

Namdev (1270-1350) was a contemporary of Jnanesvara, but outlived him by over fifty years. A tailor by caste, he was surrounded by other low-caste hymnodist-saints: Gora the potter, Samvata the gardener, Chokha the untouchable, Sena the barber, Janabai the maid. The object of his devotion was Vithoba, the form of the great god Vishnu residing in the Pandharpur temple. The Vithoba was the god of the Varkari-Panth, a sect that has an important place in the history of Maharashtrian devotionism. It differs from most other

sects in several ways. Its members are householders, and have a strong aversion to asceticism. Their main cult is the twice-a-year pilgrimage to Pandharpur, when thousands of Varkaris walk from village to village, from town to town, singing the praises of Vithoba. The membership cuts across the whole caste structure, and their most important aid to religion is the society of saints, by which term is meant their brothers and sisters in the faith and the saints who have died but left their immortal songs behind. The spread of this intensely devotional movement over the whole of Maharashtra was connected with the names of Jnanesvara and Namdev.

It was Eknath (1533-99) who revived the inspiration and the tradition, he was a Brahman born in a family of celebrated saints. As a scholar, he published the first reliable edition of the Jnanesvari, and thus gave the Marathi Gita back to his people. By writing a commentary on the Ramayana, the Bhavartha-ramayana, he also presented Rama's story to them. This mystical teachings found their supreme expression in his famous commentary on the eleventh book of the Bhagavata Purana, in which he obviously modeled himself on the great master Jnanesvara.

Every day he practiced kirtan, and his songs are part of the Marathi heritage. They have a strong moral basis, are concerned with the simplest aspects of life, and yet often soar to great heights of personal mysticism.

Tukaram (1598-1650) was no doubt the greatest bhakti poet Maharashtra produced, and has high claims to be the greatest in the whole of India. Tukaram's hymns are the glory of devotional poet-

ry, the favorites of the Varkari pilgrims. Tukaram was a mystic overpowered by the love, by the presence or the absence of his Lord.

This poet was of the people, talking their language, using their similes, talking about their life, urging them to become pilgrims of the interior life, to disregard the pomp, deception superstitions of official Hinduism, and to contemplate the mysteries of the love of God.

Ramdas (1608-1), orphaned as a child, left home and, after long years of spiritual training and wandering, he settled down on the banks of the Krishna where he built a temple to Rama. This last of the great Maharastrian hymnodists is in several ways quite different again. His main work, the Dasabodha is not written in the commentary form, but is rather a compilation of his writings and sermons produced over many years.

## Bengal

Medieval devotionism in Bengal has different roots from that of Maharashtra, and developed in quite a different way. Two distinct streams of religiosity determined its growth. On the one hand there is the influence of the Vaishnava tradition, and on the other the non-Vaishnava influence from Buddhist and Hindu sources. The Vaishnava impetus came first of all through the Bhagavata Purana with its glorification of the Krishna-lila. This came to Bengal under the Pala kings and found its typically Bengali literary transformation in Jayadeva's passionately lyrical Gita-Govinda brings into Bengali Vaishnavism a new aspect, derived from another source than the Bhagavata, namely the prominence given to Radha, the favourite of Krishna. The erotic-mystical theme of the love of Krishna

and Radha occupies here the centre of the stage, and henceforth dominates Bengali devotionism.

Chandidas (fourteenth century) is the first great name in Bengali Bhakti literature. His poems, which include poems to the Mother Goddess and to Krishna and Sahajya doctrines. He holds that the only way to salvation is the love of God and that this love must be based on an earthly passion for a particular person.

For three centuries Krishna and Chaitanya remained the main inspiration of high Bengali culture. The seventeenth century produced a new crop of hymnodists, the greatest of whom was Govinda Das. Orders of Sadhus sprang up in the Chaitanya tradition, but they came strongly under the decadent influence of the Tantric orders. The Chaitanya movement had a great impact on Bengali life as a whole. □□

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## SJM to write to PM Modi on Monsanto 'violations'



The government may have come back with a resounding majority that frees up its arm considerably but there is unlikely to be any let-up in the persistent nudges from the Swadeshi Jagran Manch (SJM).

The new Narendra Modi government has just taken charge and the SJM is preparing to write its first letter to the prime minister pointing out the violations of rules by 'powerful MNCs' like Monsanto. NSE 0.25%, the slow pace with which the Competition Commission of India (CCI) is allegedly deciding on cases against them and the negligent attitude of the agriculture ministry. While the Manch's first communication to the new government will go out this week on the CCI and Bt Cotton issue, a bigger agenda is being set. ET has learnt that next on SJM's target is the strategic disinvestment plan for Air India and the increasing tendency of government departments to deploy big foreign consultants.

Both are issues that the Manch is preparing to take up strongly with the government at all levels over the next few months. The SJM is already using social media to alert the government and its new ministers against the alleged 'business' rather than philanthropic interests of top global charities in India, deep discounts by Amazon and Flipkart hurting Indian e-commerce start ups and US 'bullying' the new government through withdrawal of special trade status.

SJM was unsparing to the first Modi stint as well. It strongly criticised the Niti Aayog and its first chairman Arvind Panagariya for its approach and kept the pressure lobbying for price control of medicines and medical devices, red flagging the Gates Foundation in India and the impact of global e-commerce giants on the Indian retailers. Under Modi 2.0, first up on the Manch agenda, however, is Monsanto and the

delay in action against it. SJM is likely to seek PMO's intervention to ask CCI to expedite the process and punish the company for its violations. ET first reported how CCI had recently submitted a confidential report confirming that Mahyco Monsanto Biotech Ltd (MMBL) had abused its dominant position in the market for Bt Cotton technology by charging unfair licence fee and entering into pricing agreements directly aimed at overcharging farmers who use Bt Cotton seeds. MMBL is an equal joint venture of Maharashtra-based seed company Mahyco and Monsanto Holding Pvt Ltd which has been acquired by German drugmaker Bayer.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/politics-and-nation/swadeshi-jagran-manch-to-write-to-pm-modi-on-monsanto-violations/articleshow/69626689.cms>

## U.S. trying to 'bully' India, says SJM

Terming the Trump administration's decision to end preferential treatment to India an attempt to "bully" the country, the Swadeshi Jagran Manch (SJM) said the U.S. wanted India to tweak its policies in the interests of Walmart and Amazon. The U.S. has said it will withdraw incentives to Indian exporters provided under its Generalised System of Preferences (GSP) programme with effect from June 5. "What the U.S. is trying to do is bully India on certain issues, where India cannot take a decision in favour of the U.S.," SJM co-convenor Ashwani Mahajan said.

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/us-trying-to-bully-india-says-sjm/article27406926.ece>

## Ladakh gives mandate to young BJP leader Jamyang Tsering Namgyal

Ladakh, India's largest parliamentary seat geographically, enthusiastically elected young dynamic leader Jamyang Tsering Namgyal as its new representative in the Lok Sabha. Namgyal, the incumbent Chief Executive Councilor (CEC) of Leh Council, defeated his rival, Independent candidate Sajjad Hussain



Kargili, who was backed by National Conference, PDP and influential Islamia School Kargil (ISK).

Mr. Namgyal has been raising the issues of Ladakh for quite a long time and has established himself as undisputed leader and voice of Ladakhi people this Lok Sabha elections. People voted for Jamyang Tsering Namgyal across religious and ideological lines. Bharatiya Janta Party made inroads into Shia Muslim-dominated Kargil district, where it secured 10,348 votes, as compared to 3,302 votes during the 2014 Lok Sabha poll.

Ladakh seat has been very much important for Bhartiya Janta Party geographically. A grass root organic leader such as Jamyang Tsering Namgyal carved his way to Parliament through hard work and commitment towards Ladakh. He put his best efforts while he was earlier elected as youngest CEC and was always focused to take Ladakh district to a new height of development. Mandate for Jamyang Tsering Namgyal also brings a new era of youth in politics with a fresh change. As a party, Bharatiya Janta Party proved once again that it rewards the deserving karyakartas. The young leaders' electoral win is seen as an encouragement to the youth.

"This is a big achievement for BJP, given the margin of victory on a seat having such small number of voters. The issue of Union Territory (UT) for Ladakh was the top priority for me and this election was between the parties favouring UT demand and those against it. People have voted for the UT status because it is the BJP that has always been supporting this demand at regional, state and national level," Namgyal said.

"This election was a one-way traffic as Congress was a divided house in Ladakh while the Independent candidate's influence was limited to a few pockets only," he added. With young Jamyang Tsering Namgyal, Ladakh will surely discover a new place in national prominence. Hope this new generation of young BJP MPs will bring a positive change in the outlook of youngsters towards the politics.

<http://thecharticle.in/ladakh-gives-mandate-to-young-bjp-leader-jamyang-tsering-namgyal/>

## Monsanto abused dominant position in India: CCI probe

The investigation arm of the competition watchdog has found Mahyco MonsantoNSE -1.54 % Bio-tech Ltd (MMBL) has abused its dominant position in the market for Bt Cotton technology by charging



unfair licence fee and entering into pricing agreements directly aimed at overcharging farmers who use Bt Cotton seeds. MMBL is an equal joint venture of Maharashtra-based seed company Mahyco and Monsanto Holding Pvt Ltd which has been acquired by German drugmaker Bayer. It sells genetically modified seeds to many Indian companies and charges a licensing fee called 'trait fee', or technology fee.

The Competition Commission of India (CCI) has asked the company and the complainants, including government of India, Telangana government, All India Kisan Sabha and Nuziveedu, to file their replies. The commission will consider the report of the investigation arm as well as the response of various parties before taking a view on the matter.

In 2015, the agriculture ministry and Nuziveedu group filed a complaint with the CCI against Monsanto Group alleging abuse of its dominant position in the Bt Cotton technology market, after which the investigation was started. Challenging the role of CCI, Monsanto had filed cases in the Delhi High Court.

"It has been shown that trait fee was linked with the maximum retail price of seed packets by MMBL just to extract surplus as much as possible from the end consumer of Bt Cotton seeds i.e. farmers," said the report by the director general (DG) of CCI, which has been reviewed by ET.

CCI and Monsanto India did not respond to emailed queries at the time of going to press. The report also says there are multiple instances where MMBL abused its dominant position in this market, most notably by charging higher trait fees from seed producers in Haryana, Punjab and Rajasthan compared with others as there was no price regulation in these states.

"Charging different prices in different geographic



locations in the light of local conditions especially when such variation is not related to costs can distort competition and is in the nature of third degree price discrimination exercised by a monopolist. There is no evidence of welfare enhancement of consumers on account of the price discrimination,” it said. Further, MMBL also charged a higher trait fee in states such as Maharashtra and Andhra Pradesh where the government had fixed trait fees “on the pretext of pendency of litigation”.

The investigation also found that the trait fees charged by MMBL were not based on high costs incurred by MMBL as it is “merely a licensing entity with very limited fixed costs”. It noted that MMBL also does not undertake any research and development activity which could push up its costs.

MMBL abused its dominant position to prevent the entry of competition by mandating that producers using its technology and provide notice to MMBL before entering into agreements with any provider of competing technologies, according to the report. Further, the report notes that Monsanto sought to deliberately exclude certain seed companies which fulfilled all requirements prescribed by Monsanto from time to time and expressed willingness to meet further requirements. DG CCI also found that MMBL’s requirement that sub licensees dispose of all inventory within two years of the termination of their licensing agreement was in contravention to the Competition Act. Further, the report states that this clause was not applied uniformly which “put many seed companies in a disadvantageous situation as compared to the competitors”.

The reports also said restriction imposed by MMBL that seed companies only use proprietary germplasm for production has affected the development of innovation and increased cost of seeds for farmers.

“MMBL, which holds patents for Bt Cotton, insisted that partner organisations use proprietary hybrids and not public (government) released varieties. By doing so, the company tried to hold control not only on their technology but also the plants so that farmers cannot reuse them. This made farmers and the local companies perpetually dependent on them,” said GV Ramanjaneyulu, executive director, Centre for Sustainable Agriculture.

[https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/elections/lok-sabha/india/power-of-democracy-andhra-bpl-card-holder-makes-it-to-parliament/articleshow/69513311.cms?utm\\_source=ETMyNews&utm\\_medium=ASMN&utm\\_campaign=AL1&utm\\_content=9](https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/elections/lok-sabha/india/power-of-democracy-andhra-bpl-card-holder-makes-it-to-parliament/articleshow/69513311.cms?utm_source=ETMyNews&utm_medium=ASMN&utm_campaign=AL1&utm_content=9)

## Millions of songbirds vacuumed to death every year during Mediterranean olive harvest



Millions of songbirds are vacuumed out of trees and killed each year during the nocturnal Mediterranean olive harvest, researchers have warned. Vast numbers of legally protected birds from central and northern Europe seek refuge in the Mediterranean basin during winter months. At night they roost in olive bushes, just as intensive harvesting machines start stripping trees of their fruit (the harvest runs from October to January). The light of the machines dazzle and disorientate the birds, who end up being sucked into them “on a catastrophic scale”, researchers warn. There can be as many as 100 dead birds in each harvest trailer.

In Andalusia in Spain, 2.6 million birds are killed by harvesting tractors every winter. Iconic British birds like robins, greenfinches, warblers and wagtails are among the highest casualties.

“The machinery is perfectly fine if used during the day, as birds are able to see and escape while they are operating,” lead researcher Vanessa Mata from the Portugal-based Research Centre in Biodiversity and Genetic Resources told The Independent.

“However, during the night they use very strong lights which confuse the birds and lead to their death as they are ‘sucked in’ by the tractor.”

Trees are stripped at night because cooler temperatures help preserve the olives’ aromatic flavours, according to the correspondence, which is published in Nature. Ninety-six thousand birds die in Portugal every winter as a result of this intensive farming technique. France and Italy also carry out the practice but specific numbers are not known.

Martin Harper, the RSPB’s director of conservation said, “Numbers of farmland birds in Europe have plummeted by 55 per cent over the last three

decades and this is another shocking example of how modern agricultural practices are impacting our bird populations, including some UK species passing through the region.” Andalusian officials have recommended the practice stops but unless legislation is passed in the next few months the “massacre” will start again in October, researchers warn. France, Italy and Portugal are yet to take any action.

“Local governments and local, national and international communities urgently need to assess the impact of the practice and take steps to end it,” said Dr Mata.

<https://www.independent.co.uk/environment/songbirds-death-toll-millions-mediterranean-olive-harvesting-winter-a8916471.html>

## Pepsi withdraws Indian potato farmer lawsuits after political pressure



PepsiCo Inc has agreed to withdraw lawsuits against Indian potato farmers it alleged infringed a patent by cultivating a variety grown exclusively for its Lay's potato chips.

The U.S. snack food and drinks maker, which in addition to filing the lawsuit against the four farmers in April had sued five other potato growers, had said it wanted to settle the issue amicably.

“After discussions with the government, the company has agreed to withdraw the cases against the farmers,” a PepsiCo India spokesman said on Thursday, adding that this applied to all nine.

The decision comes at a particularly sensitive time in India, which is about halfway through a 39-day general election in which its rural population still has a dominant voice.

It also follows intervention by an influential Hindu nationalist group with close ties to Prime Minister Narendra Modi's ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP)

said PepsiCo was coercing the farmers.

Modi and the BJP are seeking a second term and most political strategists think they are likely to succeed.

PepsiCo, which did not disclose details of its consultations, had previously said the farmers must either sell their potatoes to the New York-based company or stop cultivating the FC5 variety. In return, PepsiCo would withdraw the lawsuit.

PepsiCo, which set up its first potato chips plant in India in 1989, supplies the FC5 variety to a group of farmers who in turn sell their produce to it at a fixed price.

Ashwani Mahajan, who heads the Swadeshi Jagran Manch (SJM), which is the ideological parent of Modi's BJP, welcomed PepsiCo's move as a moral victory for Indian farmers.

“MNCs (multi national corporations) need to understand that they must honour Indian laws,” Mahajan said.

PepsiCo maintains that it developed the FC5 variety of potato, which has a reduced moisture content to make snacks such as potato chips, and registered the trait in 2016.

The April lawsuit was filed in Ahmedabad, the business hub of the western state of Gujarat, requesting that the court restrain the four farmers from growing the FC5 variety.

PepsiCo had also sought more than 10 million rupees (\$143,000) each from the farmers.

The state government of Gujarat, ruled by Modi's BJP, had assured the farmers that it would help them while the opposition Congress party had also criticised PepsiCo's action.

“The company remains deeply committed to the thousands of farmers we work with across the country and towards ensuring adoption of best farming practices,” the PepsiCo spokesman said.

PepsiCo, the second large U.S. company to face such patent issues in India, is keen “to find a long term and amicable resolution” of the issues involving seed protection, he said.

Stung by a long-standing intellectual property dispute, seed maker Monsanto, now owned by German drugmaker Bayer AG, withdrew from some businesses in India over a cotton-seed dispute with farmers. (reut.rs/2ncBknn)

<https://in.reuters.com/article/us-india-pepsi-farmers/pepsi-withdraws-indian-potato-farmer-lawsuits-after-political-pressure-idINKCN138171>

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## ***SJM Petition on change.org. Please sign and share*** **Ban Glyphosate and its formulations** **including RoundUp**

### **Imperative to ban Glyphosate**

On May 14, 2019, a jury from Auckland, USA, ordered Bayer-Monsanto to pay \$ 2 billion (Rs. 14000 crores) to a couple who had suffered from cancer after using herbicide called 'RoundUp'. This is the third case of such damages on the company. Two months ago, the State's court of Alameda County had ordered the company for a compensation of 80 million dollars (Rs. 560 crore) to a person. Similarly, in another lawsuit, the State court of San Francisco had ordered compensation by the same company for a school's groundskeeper to the tune of \$200 million, which was later reduced by another court to \$ 78 million (Rs. 546 crore). A few thousands such cases are pending in different courts of USA.

### **RoundUp Causes Cancer: World Health Organization's Agency**

In the year 2015, International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC), an agency of the World Health Organization, had found in its research found that 'Glyphosate', which is an active ingredient in Monsanto's RoundUp, is "probably" carcinogenic and increased risks for non-Hodgkin lymphoma as well as DNA and chromosomal damage.

IARC also concluded that there was "strong" evidence for genotoxicity, both for "pure" glyphosate and for glyphosates mixture. IARC reviewed about 1000 studies. Some of the studies looked at people exposed through their jobs, such as farmers. Others were experimental studies on cancer and cancer related effects in experimental systems.

Whereas the people around the world are reeling under the risk and suffering due to glyphosate, the makers of the weed killers with Glyphosate as main ingredient are not ready to accept the fact. Despite being convicted by the court every time, they continue with legal appeals due to their strong financial muscles. The reason for this is that all their business hinges on these weed killers and herbicide tolerant GM crops. It is worth noting that most GM seeds are herbicide tolerant (HT).

Notable that the world has used 8.6 billion kg of Glyphosate by 2014, since 1974. In 1995, the to-



tal use of Glyphosate was only 51million kg, it increased to 775 million kg in 2014 i.e. a 15 times increase. Even in India, 8.7 lakh kg of Glyphosate had been used by 2014.

The farmers prefer herbicide it is a cost-effective method for weeding in the short run. The farmer is not aware of the health because hazards associated with the use of herbicides. Moreover, herbicide manufacturing companies intentionally hide the health hazards associated with them.

### **GM crops and Glyphosate**

It is a well-known fact that Monsanto and Bayer have been trying to promote the GM crops. Recently, seed companies illegally introduced herbicide tolerant (HT) BT cotton seeds in the market, coming nearly one lakh hectare land. This is being done to increase the market for RoundUp and Glyphosate in India. The main aim of these companies is not the welfare of the farmers, but their own selfish interests.

### **Ban Glyphosate!**

After being conclusively proved that Glyphosate causes cancer, many countries have taken a decision to ban it. Following the IARC report in 2015, town and cities of several countries many countries have banned Glyphosate. In India as well, many states have banned Glyphosate. In Punjab the sale of Glyphosate has been prohibited from October 2018. Similarly, in February 2019 Kerala has prohibited the usage of Glyphosate. Andhra Pradesh and Telangana have already prohibited the use of Glyphosate. While, Maharashtra is also attempting to ban Glyphosate.

***We demand Government of India imposes ban on the usage of Glyphosate.*** □□



# Swadeshi Activities

Pictorial Glimpses



**Jal Mitra Sangam, Bhilwara (Raj.)**



**Swadeshi Gosthi, Mumbai**



**Thengdi Ji Vyakhanmala,  
Kurukshetra (Haryana)**



**Jansampark Abhiyan, Jamshedpur (Jharkhand)**



**Jansampark Abhiyan, Sakchi Nagar (Jharkhand)**





## Swadeshi Activities

### Pictorial Glimpses



**Swadeshi Vichar Goshthi at Delhi**



**Zila Sammelan, Kathua (J&K)**



**Privar Milan Program, Chandni Chowk (Delhi)**



**Intellectual meet at Jaipur (Raj.)**



