

Swadeshi

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G20 Summit 2024

amidst global challenges



Swadeshi Mela (Hyderabad)



Swadeshi Mela (Delhi)





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Lessons for India from Russia-Ukraine conflict

The Russia-Ukraine conflict offers good lessons to India: it underlines the strategic imperatives of alliances, energy security, and economic resilience. All these point to strategic alliances type, India must undertake with like-minded countries to counter regional threats and strengthen interoperability and security cooperation, especially within the wider Indo-Pacific agenda. It also underlines the imperative for energy security, because Moscow's weaponization of energy exports throws world markets out of kilter; India's quest for diversified energy sources has necessarily had to follow investments in renewables and long-term contracts with multiple suppliers.

The economic implication also demands self-reliance; India needs to focus on the growth of domestic industry and reduce imports in the fields of defense and technology, which initiatives like "Make in India" support. It is also due to this humanitarian implication of the war that India is reminded of the power of soft power diplomacy, as efforts at the political-diplomatic level and humankind can better its position in the global spectrum and show its commitment to peace.

— Nishant Chaturvedi, Researcher, Swadeshi Shodh Sansthan, Delhi

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Quote-Unquote



In our diverse country, our many languages are a treasured part of our heritage. It is essential not only to speak in these languages but also to preserve them.

Narendra Modi, PM, Bharat



Many technologies developed within ISRO are now accessible to industries for further development into products, services, or software.

S. Somanath, Chairman, ISRO



Out athletes are the pride of the nation, and it is essential for them to have access to tools that support clean and fair competition.

Mansukh Mandaviya, Sport Minister



India's point about globe is very clear: we believe there has to be cooperation not hegemony, we have to make this world a better place to live.

Dr. Ashwani Mahajan

National Co-convenor, SJM

Triumph of Trump's Nationalism

Donald Trump has been elected President by defeating his rival Kamala Harris in the much talked about presidential election of the United States of America. In such a situation, speculations are ripe all over the world about what major changes can happen in the economic and social policies of America. Last tenure of Trump had been full of path breaking changes in US policies. Due to globalization, terrorism and religious fanaticism, wars and economic turmoil, nationalism is on rise all over the world. The results of the current US presidential election can also be seen in the same light. It is worth noting that when Trump became President for the first time, he repeatedly reiterated that he wanted to restart the rusting factories caused by indiscriminate import of Chinese goods. He also wants radical changes in the US immigration policies so that the jobs of Americans can be protected. He even said that he wants to build a wall across the entire US-Mexico border to stop illegal infiltration from Mexico. He stressed that America has to end armed intervention in far-off countries to save itself from wasteful expenditure.

Trump extended a hand of friendship to a country like Russia with which America never had cordial relations and his friendship with Russian President Putin was much talked about. Due to these policies, Trump has been able to win People's faith and has become President again due to his popularity among the majority of Americans. America First has been the mantra of the Trump administration. That is, overall, the magic of Trump's nationalism is at its peak in America. Nationalism has rising fast in Europe too. After the Second World War, European countries started adopting liberalism first and then globalization and even open immigration policy. Worried about their economy, society and future generations, European countries are riding high on nationalism. Nationalist governments have already been established in six major European countries; namely, Italy, Finland, Slovakia, Hungary, Croatia and Czech Republic; and in many other countries nationalist parties are gaining further strength. In Sweden, the existence of the present regime depends on the support of the nationalist party Nationalist Sweden Democrats. In the Netherlands, the anti-Islam party of Geert Wilders is playing an important role in power equations. In Germany and France too, the influence of nationalist political parties is increasing unprecedentedly. As appeasement of minority communities increased in the name of secularism, extremism also increased. Recently, horrific scenes of this extremism were also seen in France and England. All these incidents have changed the mood of the people, not only in Europe and America but all over the world.

Whether it is Europe or America, the victory of nationalism has many implications. First of all, it has to be understood that this is a big defeat of so called liberal forces, who had been directly or indirectly favoring Wokeism, leftist ideologies and even extremism in US or in the neighborhood. Trump has praised Hindus a lot in his election speeches and appreciated their role in America, and has even described himself as a big fan of Hindus. No American President has done this before. On the other hand, although Trump is not against Muslims, he has clearly said that those Muslim immigrants who support Hamas will be deported from America. That is, Trump is against any kind of extremism.

Secondly, It is worth noting that the Biden administration had supported the Canadian government that supports extremist forces; the incoming Trump administration is not going to follow the suit. It is important that while extremists, leftists, wokes supporters appear to be standing on Democrats' side, Trump clearly gave the slogan of American nationalism (America First) and won. This is proof of the fact that Trump's victory is also, in a way, the defeat of extremists, leftists, wokeism. The role of Elon Musk, a prominent industrialist and billionaire of USA, was also important in the American elections. It has to be understood that Elon Musk has personally been a victim of Wokeism. It is not just a coincidence that although Elon Musk was against Trump earlier, later became his staunch supporter. After buying the Twitter (now X) social media platform, he reinstated Trump on Twitter and not only this, leaving his indifferent stance, he directly came in support of Trump. Elon Musk is said to have played an important role in Trump's victory. It can also be understood that this election is also an election against wokeism.

We understand that this election was fought on the issues of Wokeism, extremism, freedom of expression versus censorship apart from economic issues, where Trump had been reiterating his resolve to make America great again by protecting and promoting domestic businesses, restricting immigration and deporting undocumented immigrants, working in the United States, to protect jobs for Americans. But what Trump's victory means for India is a big question. Given the US-China tensions, which are likely to aggravate, Trump's coming to power may encourage foreign firms, who see India as an alternative manufacturing hub. This may give India an opportunity to strengthen its domestic manufacturing through its Atmanirbhar Bharat initiative. Although India may also be concerned about losing exports to the US due to Trump's protectionist stance and tariff hikes, on the other hand a possible reduction in taxes on individuals and businesses, as anticipated, could improve US growth, benefiting India's exports. The US may tighten H1B visas, which could create problems for Indian technology and services sector companies as their cost of operations may increase. In all we have to wait and watch about likely fallouts of Trump's victory.

G20 Summit 2024 amidst global challenges

Last year, India hosted the G20 Summit as the chair of the G20 group. This summit was unprecedented in many ways; especially, despite the ongoing challenges, disputes and conflicts at the global level, a consensus declaration was made. Before India assumed G20 presidency, final declaration of G20 Summit under Indonesia's presidency, criticised Russia in the context of the Russia-Ukraine war. In the 2023 summit under India, we could not only skillfully avoid controversial language about Russia, but also paved the way for open discussion on all the issues facing the world, especially changes in the capital structure in global financial institutions including multilateral development banks, cryptocurrencies, management of global debt problems, issues of financing related to climate change, etc. The G20 group came into existence during the global financial crisis of 2008. The G20 Summit in India was organized with great fanfare. Not only its physical preparations, but also intellectual preparations were done with utmost seriousness.

Based on the principle of 'Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam', the Summit's theme of 'One Earth, One Family and One Future' had threaded together the ongoing disputes, conflicts, challenges and issues at the global level. There was a special task to take these objectives forward in the G-20 Summit held in Rio, the capital of Rio Brazil. So it is important to see the discussions and consensus reached in the G-20 Summit in Brazil in that light as well. The theme of the summit held in Rio, was 'A Just World and a Sustainable Planet'. At the G-20 Summit, Brazilian President Lula da Silva said that the G-20 Summit 2024 was inspired by India's presidency last year and an attempt has been made in this summit to match India's efficiency in organizing the summit.

At the G-20 Summit, the President of Brazil called upon the member nations to raise their climate goals. The G-20 Summit Declaration stressed the need to end the deadlock on climate financing, but this declaration failed to provide clear way forward about its solution. It has to be understood that this deadlock on environmental financing continues, which is not only unfortunate, but also depicts the insensitivity of developed countries to the extremely serious issues like global warming and climate change. Although the Summit Declaration says that it is necessary to increase climate finance from all sources, from billions to trillions of dollars rapidly and adequately, there is no concrete strategy or sensitivity about it. Addressing the first session of the G-20 Summit, 'Social Inclusion and the Fight Against Hunger and Poverty', Prime Minister Modi said "India has lifted 25 crore people out of poverty in the last 10 years. We are providing free food grains to 80 crore people. 55 crore people are benefiting from free health insurance. We have given \$20 billion (' 1.68 trillion) to farmers so far. India is contributing to global food security. Recently, we have provided assistance to countries like Malawi, Zambia, and Zimbabwe."

Prime Minister, in his speech reiterated the relevance of theme of G20 Summit 2023, one earth, one family and one future. Not only this, he also talked about



In times of war, economic challenges and various other conflicts, the need of the hour is to make greater use of these platforms for solving problems related to world peace, environmental problems, fiscal challenges, technology etc.

Dr. Ashwani Mahajan

including the African Union in the G20 conference. It has to be understood that this was a significant achievement for the G20, to make it more inclusive and representative. The Prime Minister said that due to the war, there has been a crisis of food, oil and fertilizer in the world and the developing nations (Global South) have been affected the most by the same. It was also underlined in the Prime Minister's speech that the discussion of the G20 will be successful only when we keep in mind the challenges and priorities of the Global South. Not only this, there was no concrete talk on environmental finance in the G20 conference 2024. People concerned with the subject of environment, are also worried about the fact that nothing related to reducing the use of fossil fuels could come in the declaration. It is worth noting that there is no consensus in the world on the issue of ending the use of fossil fuels. While countries like India are stressing that not only should the use of coal be reduced, but equal emphasis should also be laid on the use of petroleum oil. But most developed countries including the US and Arab countries are also cleverly advocating only the reduction of the use of coal. On the other hand, in the COP-28 conference held in Dubai, countries had agreed to reduce the use of fossil fuels, but environmental activists feel that as there is no mention of the use of fossil fuels in the G-20 declaration, this issue will become even weaker in COP-29.

Important meetings

India's leadership in any international conference is not limited to the conference only. Such Conference, also give an opportunity to



discuss important bilateral issues with other countries, resolve some unresolved matters, strengthen our ties with friendly countries and advance the country's interests through direct talks with the heads of government of various countries. On this occasion, the Prime Minister of India and various members of the Indian delegation used this opportunity well. Under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, talks were held not only with the President of Brazil, but also with the Prime Minister of Italy Giorgia Meloni on issues like defense, security, trade and technology. Not only this, his meeting with US President Joe Biden was also in the news. Talks were also held with UK's Prime Minister Keir Starmer on issues like technology, green energy, security, innovation and emphasis was laid on working together on these areas; and there was also talk of re-starting the talks on the free trade agreement with the UK. Apart from this, bilateral talks were also held with the leaders of France, Norway, Portugal and Indonesia. The Prime Minister also met the Norwegian Prime Minister.

Another interesting thing was the bilateral talks between India and China, in which India's Foreign Minister Jaishankar held talks with

his Chinese counterpart. After the decision to withdraw troops from two disputed posts on the India-China border, this is the first time that any official talks have taken place with China on border disputes. It can be understood that this will improve bilateral relations between India and China and bring stability in this region. It is worth noting that there has been a border standoff between India and China for more than 4 years starting from May 2020.

It seems that the importance of the G20 conference is increasing in the last few years and various countries are using the opportunity provided by the presence of heads of government in this conference very seriously to build a consensus on various issues. Be it the G20 conference or the BRICS conference, understanding their increasing importance at the global level, diplomacy experts have started considering them as important global platforms. New equations are also being formed. In times of war, economic challenges and various other conflicts, the need of the hour is to make greater use of these platforms for solving problems related to world peace, environmental problems, fiscal challenges, technology etc. □□

Trumponomics and De-Globalisation



It is essential to move towards a third alternative of a new economic model which is sustainable for mother earth and that is Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam or the whole world is a family which can lay the foundation for peace and prosperity for the entire mankind.

Dr. Dhanpat Ram Agarwal

Trump2.0 is likely to trigger a trade war with imposition of across the Board customs duties of 20% on all the imports and 60% for imports from China. It will be a matter of larger numbers of trade disputes and the retaliation from rest of the world on national first theory. China has already started tightening its belt as even during Jio Biden era, many import restrictions were imposed by US on China. Globalisation is a common phenomenon and it has been in existence even in the medieval era and it was more deeper when the movement of labour, goods, services, capital and technology including all the economic activities were integrated even until the beginning of colonialism in the 17-18th century and it was broadly unbridled till the end of the First World War or until the Great Depression of 1929-39 or until the beginning of the second World War. The Smoot-Hawley Tariff Act was passed by US Congress on June 17, 1930, that raised import duties to protect American businesses on the principles and Man-roe Doctrine of isolationism and had raised the average tariffs by 20 percent. Therefore what Mr Trump is planning is perhaps rewinding the clock to begin a new era of Mercantilism. This also fructify the fact that the American economy is in great trouble with mounting debt burden of US\$ 35.47 trillion as on 30 September, 2024 and which is projected to be US\$ 46.70 Trillions in 2029 as per the forecast of government Net Debt (Source: ceicdata.com).

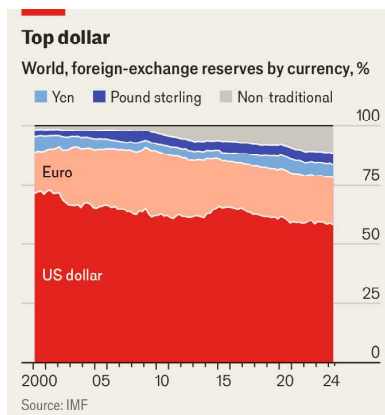
US was the main votary of globalisation in early 1990s through its package of economic reforms in the name of Washington Consensus and now it wants to reverse the gears as the Asia is growing and when China is emerging as a great economic power and in fact if we consider purchasing power parity for calculating the GDP, the recent published data by World Bank (Source: data.worldbank.org) says that China is at the top with its GDP of US\$ 34.64



trillion in 2023, US at top 2 position with its GDP of US\$ 27.36 trillion and India at the top 3 with its GDP in PPP terms US\$ 14.54 trillion. It may be interesting to note that on nominal GDP terms US is at the top and China is at top2 and India at top 5 but on the intrinsic purchasing power of the respective home currencies, there is substantial change in the position and Russian federation is the 4th largest economy on PPP basis with US\$ 6.4 trillion as against Japan which has US\$ 6.2 trillion although Japan is at the 4th position on the nominal value of US Dollar. Germany's GDP on PPP terms is only US\$ 5.8 trillion.

Therefore it is important to understand what would be the global implications when the world is moving towards de globalisation and de dollarisation. Trumponomics may turn out to be rhetorical and less practical as in today's era of knowledge driven economy, technology is enabling a borderless world and the physical boundaries can have very limited role in restricting the physical movement of goods. E-commerce has already created several challenges for imposition of customs duties and any harsh steps by US administration will have retaliatory actions from the rest of the world and may require drastic changes in the international rules of trade in WTO which is a very lengthy process.

We should give a fresh look at the present global economic system. The share of OECD countries which is a club of the developed countries with high income group, is declining in the global GDP and the share of the Emerging economies of middle income group economies is increasing. The



latest Report of World Economic Outlook published in October 2024 by IMF shows that OECD group or the Advanced countries share in the global gdp on PPP basis is gradually declining. OECD shares 40.7 and Emerging market shares 59.3 per cent of the global gdp in 2023 and it further says that the declining trend is continuing since 2017 when share of OECD was 44 and declined to 42.3 in 2021. On the other hand the Emerging market economies share in 2017 was 56 and in 2021 increased to 57.7.

President elect Trump has understood that the present century belongs to Asia. Globalisation is helping the emerging economies and in future with the advancement of technology, the concept of physical boundaries are going to be blurred. It is the Human Resources and the intellectual resources which will take precedence over the capital resources and therefore both China and India are bound to prosper. China has already taken over America in the field of technology. The latest WIPO Report 2024 shows that the share of China in global filing of patents is 47.2% as against USA which is 16.8% and that of Japan, 8.4% out of the total number of applications of 35.52 lakhs. The Artificial

Intelligence is another challenge which is going to have different parameters of manufacturing and the services sector. There is no need for physical presence for rendering cross border services. The hegemony of US can be counted in limited number of years as the world is moving towards a new economic order where the digital economy will replace the physical value of US Dollar. In the recently held BRICS meeting in the last week of October, the member countries are contemplating for developing a BRICS currency to replace dollar and the role of US Dollar as an international currency of reserve has started declining as will be evident from the chart presented by IMF team.

In conclusion, it may be said that in coming years the World economy will face several challenges arising out of overspending and as a result overburdened debt situation which has grown to US \$315 trillion as per latest IMF data which is 333% of the global GDP of US\$ 105 trillion. The other major challenges are growing inequality across nations and across individuals coupled with the increasing problem of global warming and climate change. The geopolitical environment is heating up with wars around several parts causing bottlenecks for logistics and supply chain management and leading to food security and energy security. It is therefore essential to move towards a third alternative of a new economic model which is sustainable for mother earth and that is **Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam** or the whole world is a family which can lay the foundation for peace and prosperity for the entire mankind. □□

Trump 2.0 Not a change, a paradigmatic shift



If **Donald Trump's** narrow win shook the United States in 2016, the scale of his victory now has amazed the country into silence. Equally amazing is how the US market reacted to his win now as compared to 2016. And how did the economists trash him in his first term and how silent are they now.

Unravelling these conundrums will bring out that the explosive pro- and anti-Trump campaigns are not just a battle between two economic or political ideas but a larger war. A war between two Americas – the America of its founding fathers and the America that breaks their statues. It calls for a deeper and at the same time a high helicopter view to demystify the forces at work in the US.

Villain becomes hero

In 2016, Trump was universally seen by liberal media and economists as a villain. No surprise therefore that when the news of his victory trickled in on 7th November night, US stock futures plummeted, Dow Jones dropped 800 points, markets went into a tailspin. But shockingly in the next 24 hours they rebounded to higher than 48 hours before. From November 9, the stocks began the famous “The Trump Rally” that lasted till early 2017.

Once a villain, Trump became a hero. The rally, said economists, was because the market was positive to Trump's declared policies of tax cuts, infrastructure plans, and deregulation to spur economic growth. But Trump had declared all this ad nauseam during his long campaign. Why then did the stocks collapse on the 7th night? That was the blinding impact of the vicious political campaign of the entire US and Western media against Trump as one who had come to destroy America in the name of making it great again!

Market economics was fooled by ideological politics for 24 hours. But Trump's victory this time saw the US stocks rise on the day he emerged winner and post “their best weekly performance all year”. Learning from its experience on 7th November, 2016, and refusing to be fooled by the anti-Trump poison, this time the market immediately celebrated his policies like they did after 24 hours in 2016.

Trump's policies in 2024 are the same as they were in 2016. The whole world is in debate now on where the US economy is headed under Trump 2.0. Before answering this question, a look at the US economy shows that it performed as well or as badly under Trump 1.0 as it did under Obama earlier and under Biden later. Trump or no Trump, the US economy seems to do what it will anyway.



Trump or no Trump, the US economy seems to do what it will anyway. Why?

Look at the fundamental strengths of the US as a nation.

S. Gurumurthy

Why? Look at the fundamental strengths of the US as a nation.

Strength – Geography and resources

The US economic power does not seem to depend on any President. The (deep) State in the US is stronger than the elected President. Its economy is stronger than the state. It is stronger because the US is a unique phenomenon in human history. Why? Just a look at its geography, history, demography and politics will provide the answer.

The US land mass is three-and-a-half times India's with a fourth of the latter's demography. It has expansive 95,000-km long coastlines, fertile land, fresh water, oil and coal. Its natural resources are matchless. It has 45% of the world's water, over 22% of the world's coal reserves, over 6% of the world's land mass, over 10% of the world's farmland with just a little over 4% of world's population. It has 256 billion barrels of untapped oil — 20% more than Saudi Arabia.

The US, which was a net importer of oil till 2018, is now its net exporter. No nation has this kind and scale of strategic and economic resources. That is the greatest advantage of the US. And most importantly it has no enemies on the border who can take an inch of its territory or a gram of its resources. Its adversaries are far away — Iran 11,500 km away, China 5,900 km away. Russia is nearer in geography yet, as a physical threat, very far away. Surrounded by seas and bordered only by its surrogate Canada, the physical security of the US is its matchless strategic asset. No other country has this geopolitical luxury.

A US with a border with China or Pakistan like India has or with Russia like Europe, can't afford the liberal politics and economics it is so proud of and preaches to all. But this advantage could be turned into economic power only by demographic expansion of America through immigration. It added to its economic power in the past; it is now dynamiting its polity. The increasing economic returns of the US from immigration are now equally increasing the political risk with its borrowed demographic strength tearing it apart. Unless that history is traced, the rise of Trump cannot be understood.

Weakness – Demography and polity

Now come to the US political history and demography. It is the only large country in the world which has no baggage of history. Contemporary America had wiped out all natives in its geography — over a 100 million — by the dawn of the 17th century. They are now just 0.8% - mere curios in their own land. In 1610, the non-native, colonist US population as recorded by the US Census Bureau was just 500. It rose to 2.78 million in 1780. Eight years later, a new nation, the United States of America was born in a clean state populated by only the white race from Europe with black slaves.

Within that, the homogenous Anglo Saxons constituted 80%. In 100 years, by 1900, the numbers rose to 76 million. Clearly intending to be White dominant, the US limited naturalised citizenship to only “free white persons” with property, not to women, non-whites. With white population hovering a couple of points below

90% from 1870 to 1950, the US rose as an integrated and powerful White nation.

Only after the civil rights movement (1960s), US immigration laws became multiracial. American economy prospered because of multiracial immigration. But that gradually first and expeditiously recently, began impacting on the White — the Anglo-Saxon — identity of the US. The share of the Non Hispanic White (NHW) population in the US crashed by almost 32% to 58% by 2020. Asian Hispanics and mixed races rose to 34% with Blacks down at 13%.

The sharp drop in the NHWs from 72% in 2000 to 58% in 2020 — 14% in 20 years — shook the US. Samuel Huntington foresaw this and warned the US of the loss of its core identity — White Anglo-Saxon-Protestant (WASP). With the projection that by 2030 NHWs will be down to 56% and by 2060 to 44%, the US risks becoming a non-White nation. The Hispanic White population will be 27% by 2060 — three-fold rise in six decades — blacks 15% and the Asians 9.1%. Demographic expansion by immigration that strengthened the US, thus eroded the US polity and turned it into a divided nation.

Added to that was the rise of anarchic Woke liberalism which is destroying the remains of the disintegrating US families and communities. In the background of the depressing domestic polity, the euphoric globalisation that wore off with the US financial meltdown in 2008. China's rise as a challenger undermined the hegemonic economic and geopolitical status of the US. That set the compelling stage for the advent of the Trump

phenomenon in the US with his slogan, Make America Great Again (MAGA).

Made a fool of detractors

As Trump unveiled his policies in the 2016 Presidential race, Obama's chief economic adviser Larry Summers said, "Under Trump, I would expect a protracted recession to begin within 18 months. The damage would be felt far beyond the United States." Citigroup warned that "A Trump victory could cause a global recession." The Washington Post wrote, "President Trump could destroy the world economy." Steve Rattner, an economics guru, said: "If Trump wins you will see a market crash of historic proportions.

The markets are terrified of him." Simon Johnson, an MIT economics professor, wrote, "Trump would likely cause the stock market to crash and plunge the world into recession." When Trump was seemingly winning and the markets were plunging the day after the poll, Nobel Laureate in economics Paul Krugman said, "We are very probably looking at a global recession, with no end in sight."

Even after he won, a headline in the UK's Independent in January 2017, read: "Donald Trump's first gift to the world will be another financial crisis." In the face of these catastrophic predictions, Trump, who had promised 3.5 per cent growth, delivered it along with the lowest unemployment rate few presidents after Ronald Reagan could achieve. Trump made his detractors look like fools as he rewrote the domestic rules of the US.

Rewrote US-Rest relations

Many haven't noticed that Trump has also once and for all

rewritten the relations of the US with the rest of the world. When the Berlin Wall collapsed, along with it the Soviet Union, the US became so euphoric that it concluded that the Western liberal democracy and market capitalism had finally won against the Rest. It clamped on the One-Size-Fits-All world order — globalisation — symbolised by WTO and its siblings that rested on the assumption of its financial, technological, systemic and military superiority over the Rest.

But the US did itself in by declaring and admitting the autocratic China as a market economy into its and global markets. In less than two decades, autocratic China exploited the transparent US and global markets and emerged to challenge the US itself. Even before Trump filed his nomination papers for the 2016 elections, the US and the EU had to file applications in the WTO, believe it, to declare China as not a market economy!

When Trump came, he launched an assault on China, levied tariffs on the EU and even India. If China were declared as a market economy, it would not be easy to levy the punitive anti-dumping duty on it. He threatened the WTO that if it did not declare China as a non-market economy, the US would leave the WTO.

He refused to appoint judges for the dispute settlement mechanism of WTO; so questionable US levies on China, EU and others could not be disputed. Trump declared that globalism was no more on the US agenda. It was America first. Result, after the pandemic and the Ukraine war, even the chief protagonist of globalisation and

anti-Trump crusader, The Economist magazine, has declared globalisation as dead.

Biden followed Trump

Joe Biden who came to power after Trump, declaring him as the destroyer of the US and the global economy, did not change a line of core Trumpism but followed it. Trump invoked national security provisions to impose a 25% tariff on steel and 10% on aluminium from India and the EU, breaking the policy of not targeting friendly nations. Biden kept talking with India and the EU but would not lift the tariffs.

Trump disabled the WTO's dispute settlement mechanism and castrated the WTO. Biden promised to revive it but did not during his entire tenure of four years. Trump's protectionism grew, not eroded, under him. Trump waged his famous tariff war on China citing unfair trade practices. Biden followed him, increased the tariffs on Chinese electric vehicles (EVs) from 25% to 100% this year, and on certain steel and aluminium products from 0-7.5% to 25% citing the very theory enunciated by Trump. Why couldn't Biden undo what Trump did? Why did he follow him instead? Trump or no Trump, Trumpism will last. That is the message of the US for the world.

What Trump symbolises is not just an electoral change but a paradigmatic shift that was brooding in the US for over a decade and has exploded as the Trump phenomenon. What is the consequence of it to the US and the world? Only the future can tell. □□

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<https://www.svindianexpress.com/opinions/columnists/s-gurumurthy/2024/Nov/13/trump-20-not-a-change-a-paradigmatic-shift>

Adani Saga: Beyond the Obvious

The narrative seems very familiar. Media breaks bad news for Adani group, the group denies charges, politics goes on overdrive, even Parliament is disrupted. But times have changed. Earlier the accusations, unproved, came from a private analyst firm, Hindenberg. Now the charges are levied by SEC, America's powerful market regulator; it has bigger potential impact. Already, Adani's partners, financiers, and even governments have sought to review their relations with the group. Besides, the charges now are bribery and false declaration; this can have, if proven that is, more potential damaging effect than now dismissed, private allegations of round tripping money for boosting group stocks. Incidentally Adani is not alone; many big corporate names – Siemens, Petrobras, Haliburton.... have had an adverse engagement with SEC. But for a multi country conglomerate like Adani, with ever rising ambition and footprints globally, this certainly does not augur well. Funding will suffer, for one, for a company that invests in capital intensive projects. Incidentally Trump 01 had wanted to scrap the Foreign Corrupt Practices Act since it, according to him, hurts American companies doing business abroad. It is to be seen what stand Trump 02 takes. The pattern remains simple. Allegations, sometimes true and other times unproved, fly high all the time that businesses seek to game a (in theory) a rule based system which (in practice) the politicians and bureaucrats mould, for a consideration, in favour of capitalists. The incentives on both sides being mouth drooling, the game will continue to be played, notwithstanding a conviction here or there.

The charges, yet unproved, need to be taken seriously. The Adani group is among the top 3, Ambani, Adani, and Tatas. What happens to it affects the stock market and the broader economy. All the concerned regulators now need to investigate the allegations raised in a transparent and time bound manner. A BJP spokesperson's claim that all this could be a part of geopolitical dynamics - an issue we will examine later in the piece- could very well be a true allegation that there is an attempt by powerful forces to undermine India's economic advancement; yet, an investigation is a must.

Let's focus on bigger canvass than merely on Adani saga.

For one, the present controversy will act as a marker for India Inc's global ambitions; these could hit a barrier against imperfectly designed and non harmonized regulations and variance in law enforcement. Assuming that minimum standards of law are met for individual jurisdictions, corporations will have to design and execute the acceptable corporate governance norms. Competition being fierce and cut throat both in same breath, a multi nation operation can survive only if you excel at entrepreneurship, Innovation, and governance - this is the required clause for gaining access to markets and finance. And yet, the chances of default grow with the diversity of business environment an entity encounters, be these governance or green norms. You have to be sensitive to each new market you



While the latest SEC charges against Adani merit investigation, the issue goes beyond what meets the eyes immediately. Geopolitics and national reputation being at stake, for instance.

KK Srivastava

enter; there are no common set of rules, laws are enforced with varying degree of strictness, violations may or may not be condoned depending on field of operation. And to top it all the business environment- dictated by political and economic forces- is very dynamic. Witness Trump 02 era and possible changes, including the foreign corruption Act. It is impossible for business-

es to keep pace with new evolving structures and timelines. And yet abide they must to prevent running afoul of regulation and laws. Business has to be culturally flexible, adaptable, and consequently attuned to adopt new values that are needed for operating successful in international arena.

Good corporate citizenship is based on twin factors, doing it right and communicating it effectively to stakeholders, including consumers, invertors, regulators, and all else.

Second, for all we know the Adani group may come out unscathed from the accusation. Indeed, as we said earlier, it remains an open question if Trump implements the changes he has promised once he occupies the President's seat. Yet, until that happens, the group will suffer the ignominy. Especially because it works in sectors where the ability to raise money and tackle political adversity is a must. But more importantly, the controversy is a matter of national concern since the reputational damage transcends merely the Adani group. For instance, others would also seek market and capital abroad; Vedanta has already paused a planned dollar bond sale.



Thus it is essential to restore faith in the Indian corporate system and its fair functioning. No disclosure gaps, for Instance, can be permitted. So the incidence must be thoroughly probed by Indian authorities too. Else, trouble in one group can affect the bigger Indian story.

Finally, the issue of alleged geopolitical dynamics. Some political analysts have opted to highlight certain regulatory decisions in the background of recent developments in global geopolitics. It is certain that Trump will replace certain key attorneys, including, allegedly, the attorney handling the arraignment of Adani. These replacements, according to some observers, coincide with increased scrutiny of select international businesses. So there is a whisper that Adani's energy business is being put in the dock since the project challenges Chinese dominance in the global markets. The question therefore is: Was it a targeted attack? It is true that Adani's, investments, when fructified, will go a long way towards cementing India's energy security by reducing reliance on imported fuel. This will affect the global energy leaders adversely since their competing

Interests will suffer. Incidentally, Azure, the whistleblower, is a direct competitor to Adani; it is reportedly backed by foreign investors. For all one may know - but not established - that Azure may be involved in game of blame shifting on to a soft target. This context raises questions about the impartiality of the allegations.

Most crucially it is imperative to distinguish between allegation and proven fact. Many such accusations in the past have culminated into no criminal conviction even after lengthy investigations. For example, Google and Meta have not faced much repercussions despite intense scrutiny. Certainly actions, like the present one, demonstrate regulatory vigilance but they often lack conclusive outcomes.

Interestingly, but perhaps not intriguingly, a notable disparity exists while dealing with Chinese business. This in face of well highlighted concerns relating to intellectual property theft, market dominance, global surveillance, and other charges against Chinese businesses. Questions then arise whether the enforcement is applied uniformly, consistently, and without bias against all global players irrespective of their country of origin. Equitable treatment should be a norm, but perhaps is not presently, in order to ensure spirit of innovation and healthy competition.

The norms for being a global corporate citizen must be applied yes, but uniformly across all corporations and all nations. In the long run this will make a better sense, economically - if not necessarily politically! □□

Can Maidan 2.0 derail Georgia elections?

Georgia's Prime Minister Irakli Kobakhidze led his Georgian Dream party to a stunning victory in the parliamentary elections of October 26, 2024, securing 54.24 percent of the vote, taking around 89 of 150 parliamentary seats, and a clear mandate to form the next government. The various opposition parties received 3% to 11%. The immediate consequence was political instability and fears of a Maidan-style coup that had derailed Ukraine's elected government in 2014.

The pro-West President Salomé Zourabichvili, who once served as the French ambassador to Georgia and acquired citizenship in 2004, immediately cried foul, as did the United States, European Commission president Ursula van de Hayek, among others.

President Salome Zourabichvili was quoted on X (Twitter) as saying, "We can't demonstrate there was any fraud in the election, but that doesn't matter." The opposition parties gathered at the presidential palace as President Zourabichvili announced, "I do not recognize these elections. Recognizing them would be tantamount to legitimizing Russia's takeover of Georgia... We cannot surrender our European future for the sake of future generations."

Zourabichvili denounced the polls as "a Russian special operation – a new form of hybrid warfare waged against our people and our country" and urged citizens to protest on October 28 evening on the capital's main street, Rustaveli Avenue. Thereafter, there was a large demonstration outside the parliament building in Tbilisi on the evening of October 28. Zourabichvili, who spoke at the rally, said she had spoken with representatives of the West, who promised her not to recognize the past elections. The leaders of opposition parties demanded a new vote under "international administration."



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Sandhya Jain





Exit polls had suggested that the four main opposition groups headed by the United National Movement would win a majority; these parties allege that the election was rigged and said they would not join the new legislature. Tina Bokuchava of the pro-Western Unity-National Movement (UNM) party which won a little over 10% of the votes, accused the central election committee of “stealing the European future” of Georgia. Nika Gvaramia of the ‘Coalition for Changes’ party also refused to recognize the results.

International observers complained of an uneven campaign playing field, but refrained from calling the elections fraudulent. The Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) reported that it had observed no systemic voting irregularities, but claimed to have observed incidents of vote-buying and pressure on public sector employees. However, it praised the diversity of choices on the ballot.

The 2024 elections are significant as Georgia is moving towards a fully parliamentary system. Later this year, the President will be elected indirectly by an electoral college comprising members of the new

The Georgian Dream founder Bidzina Ivanishvili recently accused the opposition groups of ‘provoking’ the 2008 Georgian war against Russia. The party is committed to winning back the breakaway regions of Abkhazia and South Ossetia, which may be unrealistic, but requires close cooperation with Moscow.

parliament and regional and local authorities. As the Georgian Dream controls the Parliament, a new President is almost certain.

Georgia is a Christian, conservative country that wishes to join the European Union on its own terms. In 2024, its Parliament approved laws that allow NGOs to be labelled as ‘foreign agents’ and banned LGBTQ ‘propaganda’ to minors, both of which were perceived as reflecting Moscow’s influence, and led to protests. The

law bans same-sex marriages, adoption by same-sex couples, gender-affirming care, public endorsement of LGBTQ+ relations and people, and depictions of them in the media. It outlaws Pride events and public displays of the rainbow flag, and censors them in films and books. The Georgian Dream party leaders said that the law was necessary to safeguard the country’s traditional moral standards.

The bill was voted through on September 17, 2024, and vetoed by President Zourabichvili, but her decision was overturned in parliament. Bulgaria and Hungary have also recently passed anti-LGBTQ+ “propaganda” laws.

Georgia’s June 2024 law on ‘foreign agents’ imposed stricter controls on international organisations, particularly pro-Western civil society organisations, that angered a section of society. The Georgian Dream had declared that if it wins a constitutional majority in parliament (113 of 150), it would ban the collective National Movement or main pro-Western opposition groups from further political participation. It has failed to secure this super-majority, but the pro-West core of Georgian civil society is now in an existential fight for survival.

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Georgia drew closer to Russia after the military operation in

Ukraine in 2022. This prompted Washington to suspend US\$ 95m in aid, and curbs on defence co-operation are now likely. Georgia's accession to the European Union is already on hold due to its adoption of controversial legislation (on NGOs and LGBTQ+). The July 2024 NATO Summit did not even mention Georgian membership prospects.

The US has threatened Georgia with "consequences." At a press conference on October 28, 2024, US State Department spokesman Matthew Miller said the election was held in an "environment shaped by the ruling party's policies including misuse of public resources, vote buying and voter intimidation." He urged "Georgia's governing officials to consider the relationship they want with the Euro-Atlantic community rather than strengthening policies that are praised by authoritarians." Western governments warned Georgia that its recent policies could hamper the country's aspirations to join the EU.

Chinese government spokesperson Lin Jian, at a press conference on October 29, 2024, said, "We noted that the election in Georgia has been held smoothly. China as always respects the choice of the Georgian people and sincerely hopes for stability and prosperity in Georgia. China stands ready to work with Georgia to continuously move forward bilateral relations."

Amidst reports that the West has sent snipers trained in Ukraine to Georgia, Hungary Prime Minister Viktor Orbán, who holds the rotating presidency of the EU Council, made a surprise visit to Tbilisi on October 28, 2024. In-

Orbán supported Georgia's keenness to join the EU, and said the country would be ready for membership "by the end of the decade." He appreciated the fact that Kobakhidze "did not allow your country to turn into a second Ukraine."

formed official sources told RIA Novosti that, "Westerners, in an attempt to shake up the internal political situation in Georgia after the elections on October 26 and provoke another "colour revolution" do not shun anything: snipers trained in Ukraine are arriving in the republic to organize provocations during mass protests."

TASS had previously reported that Kyiv had sent an extremist group coordinator to Georgia including former "Azov" militant Avaliani Zakro Nodarovich, a Ukrainian citizen born in Mariupol in 1997. Four people in military uniforms with Georgian and Ukrainian chevrons were spotted among the protesters outside the parliament building in Tbilisi.

In Tbilisi, Orbán praised Georgia's elections as "free and democratic", even as 13 EU countries, including Germany and France, denounced his visit as "premature" and lacking the mandate to speak for the European Union. Undeterred, Orbán pointed out that the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe had noted that the elections were "well organised and orderly" but found a "tense environment" and "widespread reports of pressure on voters", including cases of intimidation, coercion and vote-buying that "compromised"

the secrecy of the vote. Speaking to the media, he said, "I read the assessment of international organisations and I see that nobody dares question that this election was a fair and democratic election. Alongside all the criticism nobody dared go that far."

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Hungary's Minister of Foreign Affairs, Peter Szijártó, supported the election verdict, saying, "Nothing new under the sun: on Saturday, it wasn't Brussels' or the liberal mainstream's designated winners who took the election in Georgia, but the sovereign, peace-focused, family-oriented ruling party that openly prioritizes national interests." He said that after the clear defeat of the liberals, the usual attacks began with claims that the election wasn't fair, that democracy in Georgia is lacking, and so on. What was especially notable, he said, is that one of the leading critics is the Lithuanian foreign minister Gabrielius Landsbergis, whose party just lost the Lithuanian polls (October 27, 2024). □□

<https://sandhyajainarchive.org/2024/11/04/can-maidan-2-0-derail-georgia-elections/>

Bharat's needs to improve upon its Trade Account

Bharat has achieved a remarkable trade surplus from 151 trade partners (countries and territories) vis-à-vis a trade deficit with 75. Bharat's trade account shows a mixed picture, while this indicates some strength, it also highlights opportunities for growth and improvement, particularly in addressing the trade deficit and enhancing overall financial stability.

Bharat's Impressive Trade Performance in H1 2024

Bharat's trade performance in H1 2024 reflects its growing stature in the global economy, with a strong export base across key sectors. According to recent data from the Global Trade Research Initiative (GTRI), Bharat has achieved a trade surplus of USD 72.1 billion with 151 countries in the first half of the year, representing 55.8% of its exports and 16.5% of its imports. The USA and Netherlands emerged as key contributors, with trade surpluses of USD 21 billion and USD 11.6 billion, respectively.

This rising trade strength is indicative of Bharat's expanding influence in global markets, particularly in sectors like technology, pharmaceuticals, and agriculture, which are crucial to both its economic growth and soft power on the world stage. With the USA and Netherlands being key partners, Bharat is not only diversifying its trade relationships but also strengthening its strategic alliances with major global economies. However, despite of these achievements, Bharat faces a trade deficit of USD 185.4 billion with 75 countries as well, including China and Russia.

Why trade deficit is a matter of concern?

India's Rupee has depreciated significantly from approximately 3.30 INR/USD in 1947 to 83.93 INR/USD in 2024, primarily due to the country's persis-



Bharat's impressive trade surplus with 151 countries demonstrates its growing economic prowess, but the significant deficit with key partners, particularly China, necessitates strategic intervention.
Jaya Sharma



tent trade deficit. This deficit, driven by high imports and sluggish export growth, has reduced the Rupee's value. A balanced trade account is crucial to stabilize the Rupee.

In the first half of 2024, India's trade deficit stood at USD 185.4 billion, accounting for 44.2% of its exports and a staggering 83.5% of its imports. This indicates that while Bharat is exporting more to certain countries, it is increasingly reliant on imports as well, particularly industrial goods and energy resources.

The largest trade deficits were recorded with China (USD 41.88 billion), Russia (USD 31.98 billion), Iraq (USD 15.07 billion), Indonesia (USD 9.89 billion), and the UAE (USD 9.47 billion). These countries are major suppliers of products like machinery, chemicals, and oil, with China alone accounting for a substantial portion of Bharat's trade deficit.

While importing energy resources is unavoidable, relying heavily on industrial goods from countries like China undermines nation's economic sovereignty and national security.

Bharat's Industrial Import Vulnerability

One key observation from the GTRI report is that country's import of industrial goods, particularly from China, poses a risk to the economic sovereignty. The report suggests that while imports of crude oil and coal primarily from countries like Saudi Arabia, Iraq, and Angola are necessary for India's energy security, the growing reliance on imports of industrial goods needs more scrutiny.

China is the biggest source of trade deficit, with Bharat import-

ing a wide range of industrial products, from electronics to machinery, contributing significantly to the trade imbalance. The report emphasizes that Bharat must work towards reducing this dependency by ramping up domestic production and improving its manufacturing capabilities. This will help in facilitating long-term economic independence and reducing vulnerabilities to external shocks.

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GTRI Report Finds Oil Deficit Manageable

India's trade deficit with countries exporting oil, such as Saudi Arabia, Iraq, and Australia, is less of a concern, according to the GTRI. These countries are essential suppliers of crude oil and petroleum products, which are integral to India's energy needs. The deficit in this area is considered manageable, as these imports are necessary for sustaining India's energy infrastructure and meeting the growing demand for power, transport, and industrial activity.

Cutting Import Dependence

To tackle India's growing trade deficit and create a more resilient economy, it's crucial to focus on reducing dependence on imports, especially in sectors that

Deficit Breakdown by Key Countries

(in USD Billion)	
Country	Deficit Amount
China	41.88
Russia	31.98
Iraq	15.07
Indonesia	9.89
UAE	9.47
Saudi Arabia	9.43
Switzerland	8.46

are vital to the country's long-term economic and strategic interests. By focusing on boosting domestic manufacturing, we can reduce our reliance on imports in critical sectors. A well-coordinated push toward self-reliance backed by strong policy support will be essential for driving sustained growth and addressing the trade imbalance over the long term.

Countries like China and the USA, strategically retain their natural resources for domestic processing and economic growth. Bharat can reap greater benefits by adopting a similar approach; instead of exporting natural resources, prioritize processing it and using within our own industries. This strategic shift would boost domestic manufacturing, job creation, reduce dependence on foreign processed goods, optimize natural resource utilization for national benefit and enhance economic competitiveness globally. By minimizing exports of natural and mineral resources to other nations, we can preserve them for future and strengthen our position in the global economy.

Regional Analysis

The GTRI report provided analysis, revealing varied trends in trade deficits. The report highlight-

ed the widening trade gaps in emerging economies such as India, Brazil, and South Africa, primarily driven by rising import bills and sluggish export growth. In contrast, East Asian nations like China, Japan, and South Korea maintained their trade surpluses, underscoring their competitive manufacturing advantage. The report also pointed to a shift in trade dynamics within the European Union, where Germany's and Italy's trade surpluses narrowed, while Poland's and Spain's trade deficits expanded. Sector-wise, the report emphasized the significant impact of the global semiconductor shortage on trade balances, particularly affecting nations reliant on electronics imports. Further, the report predicted a moderate recovery in trade volumes for the Americas and Asia-Pacific regions, driven by

resilient demand and easing supply chain bottlenecks.

Challenges and Strategic Focus

To address this issue of economic autonomy, primarily its reliance on foreign industrial goods with key partners—particularly China. A multifaceted approach needs to be adopted—First, reducing dependency on Chinese imports, strengthening domestic manufacturing capabilities, promoting the “Made by India” initiative, can help decrease reliance on foreign industrial goods. Second, diversifying energy sources is imperative for energy security. This involves balancing traditional energy imports, such as crude oil and coal, with an accelerated push towards renewable energy investments, including solar, wind, and green hydrogen. Third, expanding export markets will be key to sustaining

growth. Bharat should seek to diversify its export portfolio by targeting emerging markets in Africa, Southeast Asia, and Latin America, while boosting high-value exports like technology services, pharmaceuticals, etc. Lastly, strategic trade agreements and policy reforms are essential to enhance India's global trade standing. Pursuing both bilateral and multilateral agreements will ensure better access to global markets, while domestic policy reforms focused on simplifying trade procedures and improving the ease of doing business will further strengthen India's export competitiveness.

In conclusion, Bharat's impressive trade surplus with 151 countries demonstrates its growing economic prowess, but the significant deficit with key partners, particularly China, necessitates strategic intervention. □□

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Govt Must Debate And Discuss With All Stakeholders Before Finalising Policy Document On GM Crops

Around three decades back, I was invited to speak at the first World Food and Farming Congress, entirely an agribusiness industry event, in London. In the inaugural session where I spoke, the very first speaker, late Dr Per Pinstrup-Anderson, a former Director General of the International Food Policy Research Institute in Washington DC and later a World Food Prize laureate, painstakingly explained how important it was for the world to accept and adopt genetically modified (GM) crops. He illustrated his talk with an example from China, which had then introduced GM cotton. Calling it a 'silver bullet, he talked of the potential the new technology comes with.

In my address at the opening session of the two day conference, which brought the elite from the governments and the industry besides the scientific establishments and the World Trade Organisation (WTO), I devoted considerable time to analyse how the new-found love for genetically modified (GM) crops is not going to be of much help to developing nations. In the years to come, the claims by the GM Industry wouldn't hold, as by then reports pointed out at how claims about reductions in pesticide usage were coming untrue (later, Dr Pinstrup-Anderson himself acknowledged that the 'silver bullet' in China had bitten the dust).

I knew I was stepping on wrong toes but regardless of the pressure group I was pitted against, I thought it was important to stand by what you strongly believe in, based on available scientific evidence.

Nevertheless, it was on the second day that a GM scientist, chairing an US autonomous institute, began his talk by pointing to my presentation in the inaugural session. That was fine but the shocker was when he linked my name with the militant Islamic organisation, Al Qaeda. If I remember correctly, he said something like this: "yesterday you heard Mr Sharma speak about GM crops. Those who oppose GM crops are linked to Al Qaeda."

Before I could raise any objection, an African delegate to the WTO stood up, telling the chair that he took strong exception to the disparaging remarks against an invited speaker and wanted the chairperson to either direct him to withdraw or tender an unqualified apology.

Another WTO delegate (hailing from a neighbouring country) stood up endorsing the serious objections that had been raised by his fellow-colleague. To cut the long story short, the speaker was made to apologise before he could proceed any further. It tells you the low to which the scientific establishments can come down to.

That was almost 28 years ago.

But surprisingly, if you follow X it is interesting to see how Brian Dowd-Uribe, editor of a social science journal, has been relentlessly questioning claims by GM scientists. In one of his latest tweets, put out a few days ago, he asked a



Brian Dowd-Uribe, editor of a social science journal, has been relentlessly questioning claims made by GM scientists.

Devinder Sharma

GM scientist: 'Still trying to hunt down the reference(s) for your yield improvement and pesticide reduction claims.' This courage to relentlessly challenge the scientific claims reminds me of the Tank Man of Tiananmen Square.

So when I read news reports based on a collaborative investigation by some strong voices in international media, saying that certain US agencies, including those which are supported by taxpayers, had been funding 'private social networks' to throw garbage at the public profiles of some of the better-known critics of GM crops and chemical pesticides, I wasn't surprised.

While the investigation had named some of the powerful voices, including two UN experts, Hilal Elver and Bascut Tuncak, and also Michael Pollen, Vandana Shiva, Mark Bittman and Nnimmo Bassey, among others.

It only showed that the basic idea behind the derogatory initiative is to silence these voices. And if these voices still cannot be silenced, enough of mudslinging will reduce their credibility in the eyes of the public.

The report said that private social networks had been formed to counter resistance to pesticides and GM crops in Africa, Europe and other parts of the world, while also denigrating organic and natural farming systems. Hilal Elver, a member of the UN food security committee, was quoted as saying: "Instead of understanding the scientific reality, they try to shoot the messenger. It is really hard to believe."

Backed by the ruling establishments and the scientific community, the thrust of the smear campaign by the 'private social net-

works' is aimed at maligning the image of the leading voices. As per a report in the pan African weekly newspaper The Continent, nearly 3,500 profiles on people and organisations, and that includes of prominent activists, journalists and academicians who have been critical of pesticides and GM crops, have been made branding them as 'opportunistic stakeholders' in a 'protest industry'.

Accordingly, these tainted profiles are shared in Bonus Eventus group, which was created by a former Monsanto employee, to which membership is only by invitation. The body is for officials of the powerful regulatory agencies, multilateral funding agencies, agribusiness corporations and academia.

Mariam Mayet, who heads the African Centre for Biodiversity, and has been in the forefront fighting against corporate interests that aim to taking over African agriculture, said: "They will not tolerate any kind of dissent – they don't want any honest conversation. They don't want criticism."

This is true, and as Mayet further added: "They believe there is only one narrative, and it's their narrative. They don't want to engage with us on these issues."

Rightly said, while the agribusiness industry would decry any public criticism of the faulty claims, it is not very often that it agrees for a public debate. In India, civil society groups have often challenged the industry organisation for an open debate, but haven't got any positive response. After the recent split verdict on GM crops, the Supreme Court has now directed the Union government to come up with a national policy on GM crops after a wider consultative process.

First of all, many people have questioned how can a national policy be developed when the fundamental question of the need for accepting GM crops, knowing its harmful impact on health and environment, still remains uncertain?

Secondly, what is generally getting understood is that parleys are being held behind the scenes with the GM industry and pro-technology scientists. It wouldn't be surprising to see the final draft prepared in secrecy and then placed before stakeholders, including farmers.

The better option should be to have a series of public debates across the country where not only the proponents but also activists and experts, who criticise the technology, are also invited for an honest no-holds-barred debate followed by qualitative discussions. What comes out of these deliberations needs to form the nucleus for a policy document. It can't be left to mandarins in the government echelons to frame a policy favouring people and environment.

Despite the US pressure to force open the developing country markets for GM crops and pesticides, surveys by the respectable Per Research Centre shows that there is a widespread scepticism about the safety of GM foods, worldwide. It is primarily for this reason that covert global smear campaigns are underway to silence the sensible voices. And don't be cowed down by these campaigns, there will still be powerful efforts to discredit and damage the reputation of respectable voices of reasoning. Beware and be warned. □□

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

<https://www.bizbgwz.com/news/opinion/govt-must-debate-and-discuss-with-all-stakeholders-before-finalising-policy-document-on-gm-crops-1341681>

Hindus Must Come Together To Fight Adulteration Menace

When was the last time anyone heard of churches serving contaminated holy water? Churches worldwide have been at the centre of numerous controversies, but they have rarely, if ever, been accused of giving contaminated holy water or adulterated wine (in Catholic churches) to their congregants. Similarly, why isn't haram (non-Kosher) meat served at Muslim religious events or Sufi feasts? Would a Muslim supply haram meat to a mosque? Another way to put this is: imagine how appalled the Islamic community might feel if they discovered someone was supplying haram meat or food at their religious gatherings. I leave their responses to your imagination. But the looming question is, what do we Hindus do when our rituals and temples are contaminated, often by other Hindus? The answer, unfortunately, is often very little.

The case of Tirupati Laddoos being made with animal fat-adulterated ghee served in the temple to millions of devotees and even to the deity, is a serious internal assault on our religion. Today, food adulteration has reached its peak, and now even our gods and religion are not spared. With no fear of punishment, greedy food processors have crossed the Rubicon. Most know that, in the worst-case scenario, they may face minimal fines or scapegoating of factory workers, while the top management of ghee manufacturers—profiting the most from this adulteration—will likely go almost unpunished. Our regulatory bodies once again risk setting a damaging precedent: food adulterators may go scot-free, even when they tamper with our religion. This will not only bring disrepute to our government but will also contribute to the erosion of Hindu culture, one temple at a time.

Open any news source and you'll see that food adulteration is on the rise. From Gujarat to Odisha, cases of adulteration in milk products and mawa are skyrocketing. Everything from tomato ketchup to wheat flour is now heavily contaminated. The problem has become so severe that the Yogi Adityanath government enacted a special law with strict penalties for those involved in food adulteration and spitting. Toxic adulterants in our food are linked to various diseases, including cancer, kidney ailments, and neurological damage. The UP government has been highly proactive in apprehending food adulteration offenders, targeting both large corporations like Nestlé and smaller operations such as flour mills mixing in white stone powder. Recent raids on tomato ketchup plants uncovered 800 kilograms of fake sauce laced with formalin and other synthetic agents. Yet, many continue to evade detection.

Let's examine ghee. In our scriptures, ghee is revered as Amrit, yet today it has become one of the most adulterated products. From Tirupati to recent reports in Hathras, it's clear that we face a serious challenge in regulating ghee purity. Since the 1980s, India has battled this adulteration crisis, and it is disheartening to learn that even pooja ghee is now highly adulterated and neglected. This is the very ghee most Hindus offer to deities. Such contamination casts a dark shadow over our Amrit Kaal ambitions.



From contaminated ghee in Tirupati laddoos to toxic turmeric in everyday rituals, food adulteration is quietly poisoning Hindu practices.
Indra Shekhar Singh

The second item is milk. Milk is essential to our pooja rituals, whether it's for making ghee, prasad, milk sweets, or offerings. Yet, most milk supplied to cities is adulterated with urea, synthetic agents, harmful chemicals, and hormones, all of which are detrimental to human health. When such adulterated milk finds its way into our temples as offerings to the gods, it compromises the purity of our rituals.

Another crucial item in religious ceremonies is turmeric. Turmeric is not only a common household spice with medicinal properties but also holds a significant role in our rituals. However, rampant adulteration is evident even in turmeric, with synthetic colours, chalk, and other additives freely mixed into FSSAI-approved brands. The quality of turmeric used specifically for pooja is often much worse.

Then there's the case of mustard and sesame oil. Until June 2021, the FSSAI allowed anonymous blending in edible oils, only retracting this rule after pressure from farmers. Despite the rollback, adulteration remains widespread in mustard and sesame oil. Pooja item manufacturers are often unconcerned, knowing these oils won't be directly consumed, resulting in lax quality standards. It seems FSSAI does not prioritise monitoring items used for pooja.

Apart from the oil, yellow mustard seeds are also used in various protection rituals within the Hindu system. Introducing GMO seeds in mustard risks contaminating India's native varieties permanently. Many Hindu spiritualists are concerned, asking whether GMO ingredients in our rituals could affect their sanctity. If we look at chandan (sandalwood) and sindoor in the local

markets, especially in smaller towns and cities, most of the products lack any real sindoor or chandan in them. They are instead poor mixtures of chemicals and synthetic colours. Yet, every day, millions of Hindus are compelled to use these for offerings to our gods.

Adulterating Hindu Rituals

As a thought experiment, consider the rituals within the Hindu belief system to be true. For example, look at Hindu mourning rituals practised in the Uttar Pradesh region. The person who cremates a deceased relative offers pind daan (ritual offerings of rice and milk) for ten days. Each day, turmeric, cotton thread, sindoor, khush, Bhiringraj, ghee, and other items are offered along with milk and rice. These items are believed to play a direct role in the departed soul's reincarnation, with each day's offering recreating a different body part. Pundits ensure that the spherical pind daan of milk and rice has no cracks or blemishes, as these would result in deformed body parts in the next life.

Following this spiritual logic, if a simple blemish or crack can impact a soul's reincarnation, what might happen when adulterated and toxic materials are offered to the departed or to gods in our yagnas? One wonders—the outcome surely cannot be favourable.

Given the dismal state of food safety, it's common knowledge that materials marked for pooja are often of the lowest quality. Rather than ensuring that pooja food ingredients like turmeric, ghee, mustard, barley, and sindoor are free from adulterants, the FSSAI falls short. This could be addressed by promoting local, organic self-help groups (SHGs) or

local producers through incentives and regional marketing, rather than allowing corporate giants to dominate the pooja market.

Hindu rituals were perhaps designed to promote social cohesion; deconstructing them reveals that a funeral ritual, for example, relies on the contributions of farmers, potters, honey makers, barbers, cattle farmers, and others. Each ritual item involves different members of the village economy, fostering interdependence within the community. We should strive to honour this original intent in our policy considerations as well.

Indians are well aware of food adulteration, yet due to economic pressures or scarcity, they often have no choice but to buy what is available in the market. This situation is harming the health of our society and the future of our children. The Uttar Pradesh government has taken bold steps to address this issue, but the real question is: where is the FSSAI? Where are the other states? Why, despite being operational for over a decade, has the FSSAI failed to prevent toxic adulterants from infiltrating our pooja and food systems?

In conclusion, if Hindus don't care about their rituals, who will? Let us recall 1857 when our civilisation rebelled against the East India Company's attempt to force beef and pig-fat cartridges upon us. Today, when Hinduism and our religious practices face even graver profanities, we remain silent. It's high time concerned Hindus come together to fight this challenge of adulteration, for without purity in food, Hindus risk losing their health, spirituality, and the rituals that connect them with their gods. □□

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<https://www.news18.com/opinion/opinion-hindus-must-come-together-to-fight-adulteration-menace-9110428.html#>

Dr. Bibek Debroy, from the lens of the Third way

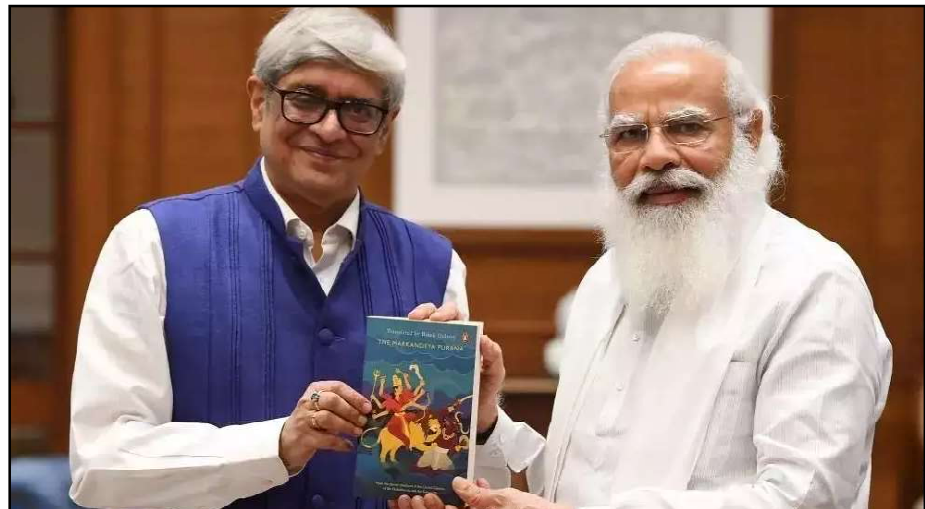


The need for Swavalambi Bharat, the want for Atmanirbhar Bharat, and the wish for VishwaGurur Bharat are possible because of the genuine efforts of people like Dr. Bibek Debroy, who could understand and differentiate it with autarky.
Alok Singh

Dr. Bibek Debroy was a polymath. His article, published four days before he breathed his last, reflects his inner soul. It reflects that he was a self-satisfied human being. He titled his last article, “There is a world outside that exists. What if I am not there? What indeed?”. This article captures many things about Bibek-da -as youngsters popularly refer to him. His thirst for reading new books, carefully analyzing television debates, his contribution towards trade works of 1980, law reforms of 1990, State work of 2000, railway reform of 2015, resignation from the Rajiv Gandhi Foundation in 2005, and he has left for others to consolidate his contribution since 2015.

In this article, he also wrote his applied academics will and expected to complete his unfinished projects so that only his core teammates could decode what he meant by ‘Puranan Project.’ This article also reflects the nostalgia through which a family passes: the children staying abroad today and parents are septuagenarians, parents of today’s septuagenarians staying in a distant city within the country when these septuagenarians were then young. He meant to remind the old Bollywood song ‘Kahee Der na Ho Jai’ in various contexts. He related the real world using keywords like Geeta, Janaka, sub-consciousness mind, and hallucination. His last sentence in that article is that he thinks for the better.

He mentioned in the article the landscape of the hospital buildings, the patients’ rooms, and the way patients perceive them. If he had had the opportunity to add a few lines after his demise, he might have written about the experience of sharing the last medicine. The doctors usually declare that the medicines are not working and then wait till the last moment to inject the last medicine, as the last medicine is risky, and wait for a miracle to happen or the ultimate cardiac arrest. He had mentioned the standard operating procedure of the hospital up to four



Dr. Bibek Debroy's message is that the world will continue to face challenges, good and evil will have to fight consistently ...

days before he breathed his last. This article also reflects the urge of a patient to go home even at the cost of risking their life when the mind starts accepting that the medical treatment is running out of alternatives. He was also discharged from the hospital and later breathed his last at the hospital. He knew that, so he penned it to the maximum in his last article.

Many of Dr. Bibek Debroy's articles synchronize very well with the "Third Way" idea scripted by DattopantThengdi Ji, the founder of Swadeshi Jagran Manch. His articles always tried to link contemporary problems with the solutions that existed in our traditional knowledge system. Such contributions strengthen Bibekda's polymathic abilities. He can discuss economics, Vedic scriptures, public policy, and sociology, among many other dimensions of knowledge.

His choice of words, his creation of sentences, and his ability to link experience with the future forecast in the present time demonstrate his purity of heart and originality of work and his personality as a fun-loving individual who does the severe work of national interests. His resignation from the Rajiv Gandhi Foundation is a testimony that he lived and worked on his terms and was always will-

ing to bear the price for his audacious behavior.

All his articles are an asset for many of his followers who think the way he used to think. Reading Bibekda excites the thought process, and it encourages readers to accept the power of the relevance of Bhartiya philosophy and Bhartiya knowledge system to the contemporary and almost blind world where the shelf life of trade policy and, to a great extent, public policy is decreasing consistently.

Dr. Bibek Debroy's message is that the world will continue to face challenges, good and evil will have to fight consistently, and the philosophy of actual development and true wealth lies in the Bhartiya knowledge system. On numerous occasions, he has leveraged his understanding of Vedas and Puranas to explain the tough-to-understand situations of life, whether it be economics or sociology.

It will not be easy to find an individual who understands economics, Sanskrit, sociology, trade, family values, and traditional knowledge systems, is willing to pay the price for original thoughts, and is heard by the country's decision-makers.

Bibek Debroy Ji has the commitment of a policy maker whose policy recommendations cared for long-term sustainable growth whenever the occasion demanded a trade-off with short-term popularity gains. Bibekda's work matches the 'Third Way' idea presented by DattopantThengdi Ji. The 'Third Way' focuses on long-term sustainability and emerged as an alternative path to Communism, Capitalism, Socialism, and Marxism.

Bibek Debroy Ji himself was

a travel-loving individual and a well-read person interested in many things beyond his professional area of education. He spent time for his likes of spirituality, researching traditional knowledge and presenting it to the broader world using articles and columns in newspapers and magazines as well as volumes of well-documented heritage books through translation into the English language. These are his contributions towards sharing knowledge. It will not be an exaggeration if his translation or re-presentation of Sanskrit text in English creates new knowledge for those who do not understand or care about the Sanskrit language.

In the last few decades, Bibekda has knowingly or unknowingly acknowledged DattopantThengdi Ji's thoughts on the meaning of sustainable public policy. His work on Sanskrit texts and correlating them with public policy wherever possible reminds many of Dr. Madhukar Govindrao Bokare, who authored the book Hindu Economics. Bibekda's work is in the same direction.

Bibekda has advocated for different varieties of self-reliance, such as self-reliance in products that we consume a lot, self-reliance in products that we source from a single foreign destination, and self-reliance in products that are constrained by supply shocks.

The need for Swavalambi Bharat, the want for Atmanirbhar Bharat, and the wish for VishwaGurur Bharat are possible because of the genuine efforts of people like Dr. Bibek Debroy, who could understand and differentiate it with autarky. □□

(Alok Singh has a doctorate in management from the Indian Institute of Management Indore and is a promoter of Transition Research Consultancy for Policy and Management).

Vikasit Bharat@2047: Way towards Self-Reliance

“VIKASIT BHARAT@2047: Way Towards Self-Reliance” edited by the eminent faculty members from the Central University of Karnataka viz Dr. S Lingamurthy, Dr. Shivakumar M Belli and Dr. Basavaraj M S, published by Samvit Prakashana & Media Pvt. Ltd., Hyderabad with ISBN 978-84-976091-3-8, priced Rs. 600/-.

Honorable Vice-Chancellor of Central University of Karnataka Prof. Battu Satyanarayana, in his preface, rightly pointed out India's strength, attractiveness as a global Investment destination with a low-cost workforce, demographic dividend, soft and hard power, IT and hardware capabilities, space technology advancement, **and utilizing digital technology**. He also stressed new strategies in agriculture and the MSME sector to address the problems of climate issues, poverty at the grassroots level, job creation, unemployment elimination, etc. The book has presented outstanding contemporary arguments in 5 parts;

PART-I: Transforming Economy – articles in the first part include the influence and capacity of UPI across the world, the Significance of Digital Payment, solutions for innovative research, the advantage of having vibrant young propulsion (economic powerhouse) and empowering creative youths, were discussed. Since its inception of digital payments (2016), it has offered secure real-time payment and a platform and prioritized inclusive growth. The Bharat has attracted international attention to tackling unemployment, unequal distribution of wealth, and discrepancies in financial literacy among women and rural areas to attain economic sovereignty. Further, time management, skill training for the Bharatiya workforce, ensuing all-round cooperation among stakeholders, methods of ensuing socio-cultural-economic progress, etc., ultimately achieve the aim of Vikasit Bharat.

PART-II: Entrepreneur's Insights - Second part discussed practical experiences of entrepreneurs, about Artificial Intelligence, FDI, improved infrastructure, alleviate the impacts of climate change, adoption of sustainable renewable energy, intense focus on manufacturing and service sector to promote balanced and sustained economic growth of Bharat.

PART-III: Tech Mobility - in third part analyzing the impact of Electric Vehicles (EVs), using advance battery technology, erecting quick and instant charging centers, technological breakthrough ideas to address the problems of road safety, traffic congestion, pollution. Further, the ideas like reducing greenhouse gas emissions, enhance public health in accordance with set goals of Vikasit Bharat were properly discussed.

PART-IV: Cultural Economy – the fourth part is dedicated to Cultural Economy and Cultural Nationalism. The role of temples in building samruddh (Self-sufficient) Bharat economically and promoting a cultured, civilized economy and society. Temples are the source of abundant cultural and moral values with economic integration. The contribution of temples with Sanatan (Ancient) traditions helps to support socio-cultural activities for leading a happy and satisfied life. Temples in Bharat play a critical role and help generate significant reve-



The Book Vikasit Bharat @ 2047 – Way Towards Self Reliance gives insights to interested Scholars to work in the right direction.
Mahadevayya Karadalli

nue through cultural tourism. Temple Mela is a platform for doing business for rural artisans and women entrepreneurs, for cultural activities such as play homes for children, drama, and music concerts, Bhajan teams are also the source for various economic activities, creating job opportunities for the people, where even government cannot provide jobs such as beggars, orphans in rural areas temples offer them food, dress, and shelter in the form of 'Dasoha.' Thus, temple 'Darshana' and tourism can boost all types of economic activities.

Part-V: Economic Revival of the States - In this section, research studies highlight the significance of quality governance in providing vital insights to policymakers to promote inclusive growth for Vikasit Bharat. To enhance self-sufficiency in all fields and build Swalambi and Swabhimani Bharat. This section also addresses the equal importance of every state performing along with the country in all sectors of the economy.

The focus of various central government schemes such as PM Kisan, MSME, the Vocal for Local, 'Make in India', and Atma Nirbhara Bharat for the upliftment of the poor and downtrodden was discussed. Further, it has analyzed the performance of various sectors, such as the public and private sectors, and fiscal trends.

The Vikasit Bharat is a comprehensive strategic plan with Yuganukul Bharatiya Thought Process, the Cultural Nationalism to ensure economic stability, sustainable development, and an eco-friendly environment to make Bharat a Vishwa Guru. Sanatana Bharatiya values such as *'Let all be*

happy', 'let all be free from disease', 'let all see auspicious things', and 'Let nobody suffer from grief' is the ideal thought for the whole world (daily prayer), and 'Loka Smasta - Sukhino Bhavantu' is to be practiced.

Bharat's ideal Model of Development ensures acquiring of wealth and fulfillment of desired without violating Dharma the righteousness. Artha (acquiring of Wealth) Kama (fulfil desires). inclusive of Dharma which leads to Satisfaction, Happiness and contentment. Artha and Kama are to be fulfilled in tune with Dharma which are necessary to achieve peace and harmony among society and nations. The concept of 'Sarva Saprashi and Sarva Vyapi' development is a Holistic approach of Samagra Vikas. In Shikshavali Om Sahana vavatu, Sahanau Bhunaktu, Saha viryam Karavavahe, Tejasvina Vadita Mastu. Om Shanti Shanti Shanti. "May God protect us together, May God nourish us together, may we work conjointly with great energy, may our study be vigorous and effective, may we not hate anybody, Let there be peace, peace and peace. To achieve Samagra Vikas, that is, Vikasit Bharat conditions enumerated in Kautily's Artha Shastra, the Ruler Shall feel happiness in the happiness of the people's Happiness King's welfare in the welfare of the People. King shall consider the interest of his people as his interest. Following the footprints of our Sanatan thought process, we will use the Bharat the Vikasit, i.e., Shining Bharat for the welfare of Mankind.

The learned contributors presented the ideals of Vikasit Bharat through self-reliance through their articles in a thought-provoking and easy-to-understand style. We hope

This compilation of Vikasit Bharat @ 2047 and the efforts of the Economic Department and central universities will be a landmark/milestone in the history of building the Bhavya Divya Bharat. The basic aspect of Samagra Vikasit Bharat is to safeguard the interest of mankind of the whole world. The essence of Samagra Vikas lies in a stateless society that is in existence in the hoary past as described: "There was neither kingdom nor the king, neither punishment nor the guilty to be punished, People were acting according to Dharma and thereby protecting one another." I hope future Researchers work on the project by adding values like Ahimsa (Nonviolence), Satya (truthfulness), Asteya (not acquiring illegitimate wealth), Shaucham (purity), and Indriyanighrah (control of senses) (Manu smriti).

The Articles were edited and arranged in a systematic manner for a better understanding of the Vikasit Bharat concept, which is the brainchild/vision of our beloved Prime Minister Sri Narendra Modi. Further, PM nourished his thoughts in multiple dimensions. This book shall be a stepping stone to understanding the thoughts of the Central Government and ways to achieve the goal at the earliest.

The Book Vikasit Bharat @ 2047 – Way Towards Self Reliance gives insights to interested Scholars to work in the right direction. This compilation may be a reference book for those who want to work continuously on the subject. Articles in Each Part may become stepping stones to move ahead. Making value additions to the Vikasit Bharat @ 2047 model will make the Bharat Vikasit model more acceptable to all developing nations. □□

FTA negotiations opaque

Last month, the department of commerce announced its decision to take a break from negotiating several free trade agreements (FTAs) in order to review its extant strategy in respect of these agreements. However, this decision would not adversely affect negotiations with partners like the European Union (EU) and the UK that are at advanced stages. The ostensible reasons for the government to press the “pause” button on FTAs, according to media reports, are to avoid granting “unintended concessions” to non-members of FTAs, monitoring third-country goods entering India via FTA partners, and providing assistance to domestic industries so as to enable them to improve their presence in the markets of the partner countries. The government is also putting in place standard operating procedures (SOPs) for the new FTA strategy. Once the SOPs are adopted, so the government has assured, the process of negotiating new FTAs would be put back on track.



The absence of transparency in the process of FTA negotiations stands out in contrast to the government's approach in the World Trade Organization (WTO) negotiations, where it has systematically been putting its negotiating positions in the public domain.
Biswajit Dhar

The SOPs that the government is proposing to develop should essentially draw upon India's two-decade-long experience of engaging in FTA negotiations involving several of its major trade partners. Going by the narratives created around the FTAs that are either being implemented or are currently being negotiated, it is clear that the negotiating processes of these agreements were fraught with weaknesses. Consequently, soon after the FTA with the Association of South-east Asian Nations covering the goods sector was implemented, it became obvious that not only had the intended benefits for India in terms of enhanced market access for its products not materialised, but its trade balance was also deteriorating due to consistently rising imports. Not surprisingly, once the National Democratic Alliance (NDA) government assumed power, it called for review of existing FTAs, besides putting on hold all the FTAs that were being



negotiated by the United Progressive Alliance government, with the EU, Canada, and Australia.

But it made one major exception: the NDA government decided to remain engaged with the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) negotiations. Thus, even when it was deeply concerned about the outcomes of three existing FTAs with its East Asian partners, the NDA government was persuaded to join the RCEP negotiations. What was more, throughout the process of RCEP negotiations, the government appeared oblivious to the travails of several manufacturing industries in the country, which were ill-prepared to face competition from their counterparts from the East Asian region, especially China. The concerns of the Indian industry seem to have been taken on board as India opted out of the RCEP negotiations in 2019, as the government decided to adopt a more well-considered approach towards the FTAs. However, two years hence, the government announced that it was making a major push on the FTA front by negotiating 13 FTA, including those that were stalled from 2014. Two of these agreements are currently being fully implemented, namely, with the UAE and the European Free Trade Area (EFTA) comprising Switzerland, Norway, Iceland, and Lichtenstein.

There are two facets of India's involvement with bilateral trade agreements. First, as is evident from the above, is a stop-start approach to FTA negotiations, or absence of consistency. The second is the lack of transparency in the negotiating processes. The priorities of the government in each of

The absence of transparency in the process of FTA negotiations stands out in contrast to the govt's approach in the WTO negotiations, where it has systematically been putting its negotiating positions in the public domain.

these FTAs and the benefits that it is seeking to achieve through the formalisation of these agreements were never put in the public domain; in other words, the agreements were negotiated/are being negotiated in secrecy.

The absence of transparency in the process of FTA negotiations stands out in contrast to the government's approach in the World Trade Organization (WTO) negotiations, where it has systematically been putting its negotiating positions in the public domain. This helped trigger discussions among public interest groups, whose interventions on key issues such as food security and access to affordable medicines are particularly significant. Importantly, arguments presented by these groups have stood the government in good stead during the ensuing negotiations. Given the advantages it has reaped through greater transparency in the WTO, it is difficult to understand why FTAs are negotiated in secrecy.

In contrast, some of India's FTA partners have been forthright in putting their negotiating proposals in the public domain. For in-

stance, the EU had made public its entire negotiating position on the proposed FTA with India soon after the negotiations were relaunched in 2022. The EU had clearly enumerated its demands, making it easier to negotiate and to effectively safeguard its interests. Through this process, the probability that the outcomes of the FTA negotiations would spring surprises on the stakeholders reduces considerably.

Thus, there cannot be an alternative to conducting FTA negotiations in a transparent manner for this can allow a better assessment to be made of the likely effects of the agreements on different sections. Promoting an engaged public discourse on the possible effects of the FTAs in undoubtedly a better approach than the behind-the-curtains "stakeholder consultations", which have been the preferred approach of the government thus far.

Therefore, one of the major learnings from India's experience with FTAs is that lack of transparency in the negotiating processes have not served the country's interests well. Adoption of a more transparent process in which the government puts in public domain its negotiating proposals, facilitating effective participation of all stakeholders, needs to be one of the more important elements of the SOPs. Such a step can help avoid imbalances in market access commitments as in the East Asian FTAs, or prevent amendment of the Indian patents act, as has been done in the agreement with EFTA, for this can seriously undermine access to affordable medicines in the country. □□

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<https://www.financialexpress.com/opinion/fta-negotiations-opaque/>
3657387/

The Untold bravery to save Kashmir - 2

After the assembly elections in Jammu and Kashmir, the National Conference Government under the Chief Minister Shri Omar Abdullah has been formed while its ally Congress is not the part of his government. However, there are terrorist attacks on army camps, convoys, police force, Hindu migrant labour have intensified by sheer desperation in the Pakistan extremist and terrorist organisations, Pak army establishment and the terrorist handlers & sleeper cells in Kashmir.

People must know and have right to know the truth and ground reality of the circumstances prevailing at the time of partition.

This part of the article appeared in the magazine - Organiser – Oct. 27–Nov 3, 2019 – The Sangh Connection – Page – 34 to 38 – by Shri Arun Kumar, Former Sangh Pracharak of Jammu and Kashmir, Akhil Bhartiya Prachar Pramukh of Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh. This is the second part of the article. I have taken liberty with pride to search this article for Swadeshi Patrika. It is honestly submitted that nothing is mine in this part of article.

Service work

The second stage of the RSS work started after creating a successful history of sacrifices. The challenge lay ahead after the ceasefire came into being of our looking after those who had come as migrant and displaced after losing everything and near and dear ones, in Jammu and its vicinity.

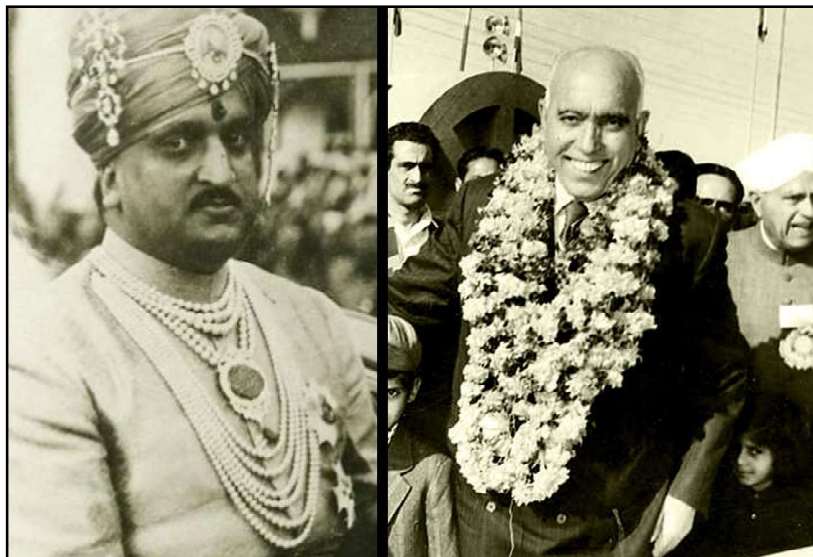
Sheikh Abdullah did not allow even the state's own people to stay in Kashmir and pushed them towards Jammu. It was a travesty that Jammu has remained a land of these displaced people even today. RSS asked help from the



People must know and have right to know the truth and ground reality of the circumstances prevailing at the time of partition.

Vinod Johri





society for the urgent necessities of these people and started working on priority issues like food, shelter, security and medical help. The swayamsevakas yoked themselves to the service of these migrants and displaced, without thinking about themselves, as they stood firm like a wall before the enemy during the time of Pakistan's aggression.

Praja Parishad and its agitation

Disturbed by the Pakistani atrocities against his subjects, Maharaja Hari Singh even accepted the illogical demand of handing over the power to Sheikh Abdullah and signed on the letter of annexation. Immediately after assuming charge, Sheikh Abdullah started dealing with the stern hand with his political opponents. People of Jammu were considered to be the supporters of Maharaja and they were attacked as well. This situation forced the people of Jammu to form their own political party. Jammu Praja Parishad was formed by projecting Shri Prem Nath Dogra equal, a consensus personality who was worse the Deputy Commissioner of Muzaffarabad.

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Its President and the minister Shri Hari Wazir and Shri Hansraj Sharma respectively, were young but its functioning and organization were backed by the belligerent leadership of Sri Balraj Madhok.

The Praja parishad spread its wing all over the state in no time. Praja parishad took many efforts to resolve the problem. Its leadership put forward the actual position before Sheikh Abdullah in the state and Sardar Patel and Prime Minister Pandit Nehru in Delhi. Infuriated with this, Sheikh expelled

Sri Madhu Madhok, his parents and his family from Jammu and put Pandit Premnath Dogra in jail.

The opposition was growing and Sheikh's also brutality also. The administration was inflicting free-willed atrocities against Praja parishad workers and supporters. The developments like Delhi accord happening under Sheikh Abdullah's pressure, the announcement of a Sadr-e-Riyasat after changing the President-approved head of the state etc. created an atmosphere of uncertainty and distrust in the state. As a result, the Praja Parishad was forced to move towards a decisive agitation.

Heat of agitation in Delhi

The agitation was at its peak in Jammu. The agitators were facing canes and bullets every day. Processions supporting the agitation started in Delhi too and a series of protests went on. The police caned the agitators brutally in Hauz Kazi in which 60 persons were injured. The teargas shells were also thrown. This instigated the protests even more. Annual meeting of Bhartiya Jan Sangh was on at the time in Kanpur. The Jan-Sangh announced an eight-member fact-finding team to be sent to Jammu but the Bhartiya Government did not allow it to go there.

Jan Sangh, Hindu Mahasabha and Ramrajya Parishad announced their decision to observe March 5, jointly as Jammu day. The section 144 was imposed at all major places in Punjab and Uttar Pradesh. At a big rally was organised in the ground in front of Delhi station that was presided by Karpatriji Maharaj. Jan Sangh President Dr. Shyama Prasad Mookerjee addressed the rally. The police arrest-

ed Dr. Shyama Prasad Mookerjee, Barrister Nirmal Chandra Chatterjee, Nandlal Sharma and Vaidya Gurudutt in the midst of the crowd.

A satyagrah was announced in Delhi and Pathankot against the arrest of Dr. Shyama Prasad Mookerjee and police atrocities. Praja Parishad is credited with providing a platform for the citizens in Jammu and Kashmir, who wanted to associate their identity with Bharat. The agitation of the nationalist forces under its leadership foiled the British conspiracy to break Kashmir away from Bharat and the ploys of Sheikh Abdullah to become Kashmir's Sultan (*emphasis is mine*). It was also successful in attracting the nation's attraction on this point and create a strong public opinion.

Dr. Shyama Prasad Mookerjee's Martyrdom

When the people of Jammu were struggling for their survival under the leadership of Praja Parishad, the national leader and Jan Sangh President Dr. Shyama Prasad Mookerjee, who was former Industry Minister in Nehru cabinet, went to Jammu with three other MPs namely Shri V.G. Deshpande, Shri Ram Narayan Singh and Barrister Uma Shankar Trivedi in August 1952. Dr. Mookerjee gave a strong boost to the agitation, which was on with the slogan "one law one ruler and one flag". Addressing a rally during this time, he announced "Either I will obtain the law or sacrifice myself".

A unanimous resolution in this regard was passed in the first session of Jan Sangh at Kanpur in December 1952 under which, it was decided to extend full support to the Praja Parishad's agitation and

make it nationwide. It was also proposed to get cooperation from other nationalist organisations.

There was no restraint to Sheikh's tyranny in Jammu while Pandit Nehru was adamant in Delhi and he would trample agitation with the canes and bullets. Not only the opposition leaders and parties, even ruling party members could do little more than watching the watching on helplessly.

Satyagraha in March and April rocked Delhi. The Satyagrahis work coming from all over the country and getting arrested themselves. They were mistreated not only on the roads but in jail also. The trampling by government was in full swing. On this background, Dr. Shyama Prasad Mookerjee announced as the last measure on May 7, 1953 "I will go to Jammu tomorrow".

It is notable here that when the agitation in Delhi was in full swing, two other members of Lok Sabha Barrister U.M. Trivedi and Hindu Mahasabha's General Secretary Vishnu Ghanshyam Deshpande had announced their visit to Jammu. They were arrested in Jalandhar on April 17, 1953. However, the Supreme Court acquitted and released them. The Bhartiya government learned from this that if he were arrested with Supreme Court jurisdiction, he would also be released. Thus, Nehru and Sheikh's plans would not bear fruit. Until then, Jammu and Kashmir was not in the jurisdiction of Supreme Court of Bharat. Hence, he was arrested in Jammu and Kashmir borders (*emphasis is mine*).

According to former Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee, who accompanied Dr. Mookerjee, then as journalist, the Deputy Commis-

There was no restraint to Sheikh's tyranny in Jammu while Pandit Nehru was adamant in Delhi and he would trample agitation with the canes and bullets. Not only the opposition leaders and parties, even ruling party members could do little more than watching the watching on helplessly.

sioner of Gurdaspur himself came to him and said they would arrange everything for his visit. He said they didn't want to stop him. There would be no hurdle in his travel because of him. They were ready to make his travel comfortable. However, as they reached halfway on the Madhopur bridge, Jammu and Kashmir police arrested him.

The government did not allow Barrister Uma Shankar Trivedi, who had gone to file a petition in Jammu and Kashmir High Court against the arrest, to meet him. He could meet Dr. Mookerjee only when Jammu and Kashmir High Court allowed him to do so. The verdict on Barrister Trivedi's petition was scheduled on June 23, 1953. Everyone expected that Dr. Mookerjee would be released on this day. However, he died in suspicious conditions just on the eve of that day (*emphasis is mine*). His colleagues arrested with him were released. Dr. Mookerjee's sacrifice bore fruit and the permit system was abolished. Many provisions of the Bharat's constitution were enforced in the state. □□

(But not the author of this article)

Matallurgy in Ancient India

Archaeology

Dilip Chakrabarti (1976) has identified six early iron-using centres in India: Baluchistan, the Northwest, the Indo-Gangetic divide and the upper Gangetic valley, eastern India, Malwa and Berar in central India and the megalithic south India. The central Indian region seems to be the earliest iron-using centre.

According to Tewari, iron using and iron "was prevalent in the Central Gan-ga Plain and the Eastern Vindhya from the early 2nd millennium BC."

The earliest evidence for smelted iron in India dates to 1300 to 1000 BCE. These early findings also occur in places like the Deccan and the earliest evidence for smelted iron occurs in Central India, not in north-western India. Moreover, the dates for iron in India are not later than in those of Central Asia, and according to some scholars (e.g. Koshelenko 1986) the dates for smelted iron may actually be earlier in India than in Central Asia and Iran. The Iron Age did however not necessarily imply a major social transformation, and Gregory Possehl wrote that "the Iron Age is more of a continuation of the past than a break with it".

Archaeological data suggests that India was "an independent and early centre of iron technology." According to Shaffer, the "nature and context of the iron objects involved [of the BRW culture] are very different from early iron objects found in Southwest Asia." In Central Asia, the development of iron technology was not necessarily connected with Indo-Iranian migrations either.

J.M. Kenoyer (1995) also remarks that there is a "long break in tin acquisition" necessary for the production of "tin bronzes" in the Indus Valley region, suggesting a lack of contact with Baluchistan and northern Afghanistan, or the lack of migrants from the north-west who could have procured tin.

Indus Valley Civilization

The copper-bronze metallurgy in the Harappan civilization was widespread and had a high variety and quality. The early use of iron may have developed



The first form of crucible steel was wootz, developed in India some time around 300 BCE.

**Prof. Nandini
Sinha Kapur**



from the practice of copper-smelting. While there is to date no proven evidence for smelted iron in the Indus Valley civilization, iron ore and iron items have been unearthed in eight Indus Valley sites, some of them dating to before 2600 BCE. There remains the possibility that some of these items were made of smelted iron, and the term "krs-na-ayas" might possibly also refer to these iron items, even if they are not made of smelted iron.

Lothali copper is unusually pure, lacking the arsenic typically used by coppersmiths across the rest of the Indus valley. Workers mixed tin with copper for the manufacture of celts, arrowheads, fishhooks, chisels, bangles, rings, drills and spearheads, although weapon manufacturing was minor. They also employed advanced metallurgy in following the cire perdue technique of casting, and used more than one-piece moulds for casting birds and animals.[30] They also invented new tools such as curved saws and twisted drills unknown to other civilizations at the time.

Metals-Copper

Copper technology may date back to the 4th millennium BCE in the Himalaya region. It is the first element to be discovered in metallurgy, Copper and its alloys were also used to create copper-bronze images such as Buddhas or Hindu/Mahayana Buddhist deities. Xuanzang also noted that there were copper-bronze Buddha images in Magadha. In Varanasi, each stage of the image manufacturing process is handled by a specialist.

Other metal objects made by Indian artisans include lamps. Copper was also a component in the

razors for the tonsure ceremony.

One of the most important sources of history in the Indian subcontinent are the royal records of grants engraved on copper-plate grants (tamra-shasan or tamra-patra). Because copper does not rust or decay, they can survive indefinitely. Collections of archaeological texts from the copper-plates and rock-inscriptions have been compiled and published by the Archaeological Survey of India during the past century. The earliest known copper-plate known as the Sohagaura copper-plate is a Maurya record that mentions famine relief efforts. It is one of the very few pre-Ashoka Brahmi inscriptions in India.

Brass

Brass was used in Lothal and Atranjikhhera in the 3rd and 2nd millennium BCE. Brass and probably zinc was also found at Taxila in 4th to 3rd century BCE contexts.

Gold and silver

The deepest gold mines of the Ancient world were found in the Maski region in Karnataka. There were ancient silver mines in northwest India. Dated to the middle of the 1st millennium BCE, gold and silver were also used for making utensils for the royal family and nobilities. The royal family wore costly fabrics that were made from gold and silver thin fibres embroidered or woven into fabrics or dress.

Iron

Recent excavations in Middle Ganges Valley show iron working in India may have begun as early as 1800 BCE. In the 5th century BCE, the Greek historian Herodotus observed that "Indian and

the Persian army used arrows tipped with iron." Ancient Romans used armour and cutlery made of Indian iron. Pliny the Elder also mentioned Indian iron. Muhammad al-Idrisi wrote the Hindus excelled in the manufacture of iron, and that it would be impossible to find anything to surpass the edge from Hindwani steel. Quintus Curtius wrote about an Indian present of steel to Alexander. Ferrum indicum appeared in the list of articles subject to duty under Marcus Aurelius and Commodus.[9] Indian Wootz steel was held in high regard in Europe, and Indian iron was often considered to be the best.

Wootz and steel

The first form of crucible steel was wootz, developed in India some time around 300 BCE. In its production the iron was mixed with glass and then slowly heated and then cooled. As the mixture cooled the glass would bond to impurities in the steel and then float to the surface, leaving the steel considerably purer. Carbon could enter the iron by diffusing in through the porous walls of the crucibles. Carbon dioxide would not react with the iron, but the small amounts of carbon monoxide could, adding carbon to the mix with some level of control. Wootz was widely exported throughout the Middle East, where it was combined with a local production technique around 1000 CE to produce Damascus steel, famed throughout the world. Wootz derives from the Tamil term for steel urukku. Indian wootz steel was the first high quality steel that was produced. □□

(This article is based on Wikipedia.)

Swadeshi JagranManch celebrates 300th birth anniversary of Ahilya Bai



The Swadeshi JagranManch (SJM) organized a grand event to commemorate the 300th birth anniversary of the legendary Ahilya Bai Holkar, an iconic figure celebrated as the “Women of Justice.” The program paid tribute to her extraordinary contributions to governance, entrepreneurship and women empowerment, highlighting her timeless legacy that continues to inspire generations. The event emphasized Ahilya Bai’s commitment to empowering women and creating a society rooted in equality and justice. Her policies and initiatives were forward-thinking, laying the foundation for the socio-economic progress of women, which remains relevant even today.

Rajesh Goyal, SamnvayUttarkshetraSwavlambi Bharat Sachiv Board of Technical Education Haryana was the chief guest on the occasion while Amita Sharma, MahilaSamnvayPramukh was guest of honour. Dr Munish (SamnvaySwavlambi Bharat) and Anita Sharma (PrantMahilaPramukh) also graced the occasion.

Keynote speakers at the event shed light on Ahilya Bai’s achievements, from building temples and public works to her role as a guardian of culture and commerce. They also drew parallels between her progressive vision and the ongoing need to promote self-reliance and female leadership in India.

Through the lens of Ahilya Bai’s inspiring life, the Swadeshi JagranManch reaffirmed its commitment to strengthening local enterprises, fostering economic independence, and encouraging women to take up leadership roles in all spheres of life.

Speakers at the event urged the youth to draw inspiration from Ahilya Bai’s leadership and to work towards building a self-reliant and equitable society. They emphasized the importance of women stepping into leadership roles, not just in governance but

across business, education, and social sectors, echoing Ahilya Bai’s progressive legacy

On the occasion, Satish Kumar Gupta, Dr K K Tiwari, and artisan Rekha from Ramnagar were honoured. Others present were Dr Raj, Shakuntla, Abha Sharma, Megha Raina, Kamlesh, Anu Suri and Raj Kumari. The whole event was coordinated by Suman Bansal, Neena Gupta, Advocate Shakti, Advocate Pooja, Dr Nidhi and DeepaliHanda.

<https://www.dailycelstior.com/swadeshi-jagran-manch-celebrates-300th-birth-anniversary-of-ahilya-bai/>
#google_vignette

DattopantThengadi played vital role in India’s economic philosophy: VC KUK



The University Institute of Engineering and Technology, in collaboration with, the Swadeshi JagranManch and Swavalambhi Bharat Abhiyan, Kurukshetra, organised Swadeshi SwavalambhiDiwas “District conference” on the occasion of the birth anniversary of DattopantThengadi.

KurukshetraUniversity Vice Chancellor Prof SomNathSachdeva said DattopantThengadi played a vital role in India’s economic philosophy and his vision shaped India’s social and economic fabric. Prof Sachdeva said the youth had to come forward with self-reliant ideas and be vocal for local to lead with skill development, startups and entrepreneurs and further said there were 37 crore youth in the country and the way the youth were moving forward with entrepreneurship, India’s economy would reach \$10 trillion by 2030.

The keynote speaker of this programme, Director Dr BR Ambedkar Study Centre, KUK, DrPriyam Singh said in his lifetime, DattopantThengadi established the Swadeshi JagranManch, BhartiyaKisanSangh, BhartiyaMazdoorSangh, All-India Consumer Panchayat and world-class forums.

During the programme, painting, slogan writ-

ing, and poetry recitation competitions were organised in which the winners were given cash prizes and certificates.

<https://www.tribuneindia.com/news/haryana/dattapani-thengadi-played-vital-role-in-indias-economic-philosophy-vcuk/>

Educationist Dinanath Batra Ji passes away at 84



Prominent educationist Dinanath Batra, known for his advocacy of value-based education and his contributions to India's educational reforms, passed away on November 6, 2024, at the age of 84.

Batra was widely recognized for his work in shaping the Indian educational system, particularly in promoting the integration of Indian culture, heritage, and values into the curriculum. He was a staunch proponent of teaching Sanskrit and incorporating moral education to instill patriotism and traditional values among students.

Dinanath Batra is the national convenor of the Shiksha Bachao Andolan Samiti and the founder-president of Shiksha Sanskriti Utthan Nyas.

Born on March 5, 1930, in Rajanpur district, Dera Ghazi Khan (now in Pakistan), Batra began his teaching career in 1955 at DAV School in DeraBassi, Punjab. He later served as the principal in Kurukshetra from 1965 to 1990.

Batra's influence extended to textbook revisions, where he campaigned for a more accurate representation of India's history and cultural identity.

BJP leader P Muralidhar Rao took to X (formerly Twitter) to mourn the passing of prominent educationist Dinanath Batra, calling the news of his demise "extremely sad." Muralidhar Rao posted on X: "The news of the demise of Shri Dinanath Batraji, former General Secretary of Vidya Bharati and National Convenor of Shiksha BachaoAndolan is extremely sad. His support and active cooperation during the work in Swadeshi Jagran Manch will always

be remembered. I pray to God to give a place to the departed soul in his lotus feet and provide strength to the bereaved family."

Ashwani Mahajan, National Co-convenor of Swadeshi Jagran Manch, expressing deep sorrow over the passing of Dinanath Batra, lauded his efforts in revising text books and syllabi to incorporate the ideals of nationalism and the contributions of India's great leaders. Mahajan wrote on X: "Saddened by the demise of Shri Dinanath Batra, President of Shiksha Sanskriti Utthan Nyas, and a prominent educationist. His endeavors in amending textbooks and syllabi, incorporating nationalism and contribution of our great leaders, will be greatly remembered. A great national loss."

<https://www.livemint.com/news/india/educationist-dinanath-batra-passes-away-at-84-11730991419432.html>

Swadeshi Mela concludes on a grand note at People's Plaza



State Minister Jupally Krishna Rao highlighted the importance of supporting local products, explaining how promoting and utilising locally made goods strengthens the State's economy and provides substantial employment opportunities to small, local businesses.

He said this while addressing the concluding day of the Swadeshi Mela, organised by Swadeshi JagaranManch and Swavalambi Bharat Abhiyan, on Sunday at People's Plaza in Hyderabad.

Jupally Krishna Rao attended as the Chief Guest, along with Satish, All India Co-Organiser of Swadeshi JagaranManch.

The Minister emphasised the Telangana government's commitment to expanding self-employment avenues and creating substantial market opportunities for locally produced goods to enhance Telangana's identity. Rao commended Swadeshi JagaranManch and Swavalambi Bharat Abhiyan for organising the Swadeshi Mela to promote indige-

nous products and assured full support from the Telangana government for future initiatives to boost local product consumption.

Satish Kumar, praised the event's spirit, aligned with the 'Vocal for Local' movement, noting that Swadeshi Jagaran Manch and Swavalambi Bharat Abhiyan are advancing a nationwide movement to promote indigenous products. The Swadeshi Mela aims to familiarise people with the uniqueness of local goods and connects various States by introducing local products from one region to another. He added that this cross State exchange through stalls not only encourages business growth but also supports local entrepreneurs. Moreover, he stated that Swadeshi Jagaran Manch actively anticipates potential challenges for Indian businesses on international platforms, making policy recommendations to protect India's interests.

This year's Swadeshi Mela featured approximately 350 stalls, showcasing a diverse range of indigenous products from across India, from Kashmir to Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, and more, bringing these unique offerings to the people of Telangana. Other notable attendees included Devendra Foundation Managing Trustee T Virender Goud, Dr S Lingamurthy from Swadeshi Jagaran Manch, Telangana State Convener Harish Babu, Swavalambi Bharat Abhiyan State Convener G Ramesh Goud, and Swadeshi Mela Convener Indrasen Reddy.

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/cities/hyderabad/swadeshi-mela-concludes-on-a-grand-note-at-peoples-plaza-917493>

India fires warning shot with rejection of \$300 billion finance deal at COP29

As COP29 wound up in the early hours of Sunday, India's fierce objection to the climate finance deal that was the summit's main outcome showed its resolve to act as a voice for the Global South in wanting more international support to step up climate action, diplomats and policy analysts said.

In a statement described as "bold" and "historic", India rejected the rushed approval of the new finance goal for 2026-2035, arguing that due process had not been followed, and sought "much higher ambition" from rich nations.

"The Global South is being pushed to transit to no-carbon pathways even at the cost of our growth...



other measures are being imposed by developed country parties to make this transition really not easy," Chandni Raina, an advisor with India's Department of Economic Affairs, said in an impassioned speech. "This amount is a paltry sum and not something that will enable conducive climate action," she said of the hard-fought deal on climate finance after it was gavelled through.

Rich nations on Saturday agreed to channel at least \$300 billion a year by 2035 for developing countries to ramp up climate action, after bad-tempered talks in which the most vulnerable pushed for a bigger slice of the pie.

The new goal replaces the existing annual target of \$100 billion, which was met two years late in 2022 and is widely seen as insufficient to meet rocketing needs among poorer nations for transitioning to clean energy and adapting to extreme weather and rising seas.

In Baku, poorer countries had pushed for that amount to be raised to at least \$1 trillion, with most of the money provided as grants.

The far lower final offer of \$300 billion, whose provision will be led by rich governments, is part of a wider effort agreed at COP29 to scale up finance to at least \$1.3 trillion per year by 2035 "from all public and private sources".

"We are disappointed in the outcome which clearly brings out the unwillingness of the developed country parties to fulfill their responsibilities. We cannot accept it," Raina told the final plenary, drawing loud cheers. Delegates from Cuba, Nigeria, Malawi and Bolivia also outlined their disappointment and frustration after the decision had been approved. □□

<https://www.climatechangenews.com/2024/11/25/india-fires-warning-shot-with-rejection-of-finance-deal-at-cop29/>

Swadeshi Activities

Swadeshi Meetings

Pictorial Glimpses



Jaipur



Odisha



Swadeshi Mela, Chhattisgarh



CWC, Meeting (Delhi)

Swadeshi Activities **Swadeshi Sangam** (18 October, Delhi)

Pictorial Glimpses

