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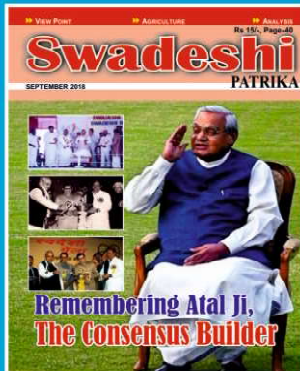
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PATRIKA

APRIL 2022

**Ukraine crisis:
The war that is
changing relations, rules**

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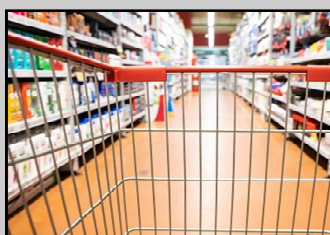
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Russia - Ukraine and Our Stand

In the ongoing Russia-Ukraine war, it comes as a welcome and pleasant surprise how India has clearly and firmly stated its non-involvement in this European war. India now has the good sense to keep quiet about everything that is not of immediate concern to its own national interests. What follows is the predictable criticism from various foreign policy 'experts' who simply couldn't believe that India might have, and is even entitled to have, a view that's different from NATO's (North Atlantic Treaty Organization). They tried all sorts of tactics: shaming, wheedling, cajoling, sweet-talking, and threatening.

The fact that India has stood its ground might mean that India is at a turning point, where it is confident of its own prospects. For instance, even though the war bleeds India on the oil front, but it also benefits us as India is a big wheat exporter. In fact, India should take initiative in forming an "organisation of food-exporting countries". After all, food is a basic necessity.

What this war proves is that if there will be a war going to happen between India and Pakistan, then there will not be direct intervention from the USA or any other countries. It will be no surprise if Modi Government will try to take back POK (Pakistan Occupied Kashmir) before the 2024 Lok Sabha election.

— Kumar Gaurav, Samastipur, Bihar

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Quote-Unquote



The nation takes great steps when there are bigger resolutions than dreams. When there is a sincere effort day and night for the resolutions, then those resolutions are also proved.

Narendra Modi
Prime Minister, Bharat



My dream is to make an electric highway between Delhi and Jaipur... We need to reform NHAI... The delay in decision making is one of the things where we need to improve NHAI.

Nitin Gadkari
Minister of Road Transport & Highways, Bharat



It is evident that while taking a decision that each food should be rated from half to five stars, the FSSAI has chosen to ignore consumer interest and has given undue importance to the opinion of large food processing industries.

Dr. Ashwani Mahajan
National Co-convenor, SJM

Need to save people from harmful packaged food

Recently the Food and Safety Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) has initiated the model of Front of Packing Label (FOPL) of food items. With this a debate has started on whether food packages should have a 'Health Star Rating' (HSR) about the quality of the food or a warning regarding harmful food. In this regard, FSSAI, under pressure from the ultra-processed food industry, has decided that each food should be rated from half to five stars. From the minutes of the meeting it is evident that while taking this decision, FSSAI has chosen to ignore consumer interest and has given undue importance to the opinion of large food processing industries.

Our country traditionally has a tradition of making and eating healthy and nutritious food. Proteins, vitamins, carbohydrates and other nutrients are found in a very balanced form in our food plate, so our diet has always been very balanced. But in the recent past, the trend of processed foods has increased and especially markets are flooded with ultra-processed foods. Scientists believe that these ultra-processed foods are causing many non communicable diseases (NCDs) including cancer. Not only this, companies use excessive amounts of sugar, salt (sodium) and saturated fats to entice customers and make children get used to their products or say addict them. In our country, diabetes, blood pressure, kidney and liver diseases are becoming common due to excess of sugar, sodium and saturated fats in the food. In our country due to lack of awareness among the people about nutrition and in this case due to absence of warning on food packets, people are unknowingly consuming these harmful food items, due to which these diseases are on rise, sometimes called lifestyle diseases.

If a warning is posted on such harmful foods stating that it contains sugar, salt or saturated fats beyond a threshold limit, consumers will be able to learn more about their side effects and make informed decisions about their food purchases. It is true that companies manufacturing these food items may face a decline in sales of these harmful food. However, this will improve the health of the common man, there is no doubt about it. This is not only a theoretical conclusion, but it has also been experienced in different countries. Realizing the importance of this issue, many countries including Chile, Brazil, Israel decided to put such warnings on food packets. Chile has made a law after fixing the threshold limits of this harmful food and also made a law mandating printing of warning about the same. After Chile's decision to put such warnings by law, there was a huge reduction in the sale of such harmful food there. We can understand how much benefit Chile must have got in the protection of public health due to this. Today, when we are in the process of deciding in our country, that how consumers should be educated in the selection of healthy foods, instead of warning the consumers about the harmful food, it wouldn't be proper to legitimize the unhealthy food by giving star rating to them.

In this regard a meeting of 'stakeholders' was organized by FSSAI on 15th February 2022, in which amongst participants, there were 17 members from food industry and their organizations, 1 from World Health Organization (WHO), 2 members were from Indian Institute of Ahmedabad (IIM) Ahmedabad, only 3 members were from consumer organizations, 1 member was from Centre for Science and Environment (CSE), a premier institution; 9 FSSAI officials; and 10 belonged to the experts' category. Instead of discussing international experiences, the meeting referred to a study conducted by IIM, Ahmedabad and Dexter Consultancy Pvt Ltd and pointed out that participants in this study have given the opinion that the system of health star rating (HSR) on food packets should be adopted. Significantly, two representatives of consumer organizations and a representative of Center for Science and Environment voted against this decision. But ignoring their opinion, it was said that the opinion coming from the survey of 20 thousand people is more important, so the stakeholders will have to give their suggestions on the health star rating only. Even according to the survey by IIM Ahmedabad, the warning option was rated better in terms of reducing the intention to purchase harmful food, due to presence of excess of unwanted nutrients. But despite this, the report recommending HSR as the preferred option, which does not even give the consumer an understanding of the health risks, is raising doubts about the impartiality of the authors of the report.

Not only this, that there was presence of large number of representatives of companies and their organisations, in the meeting of stakeholders, in which the decision regarding health star rating was taken; even among experts, there were many people who are associated with the companies. It is worth noting that Australia is the only country in the world, in which there is a system of Health Star Rating, whereas in most of the countries where there is a system of FOPL, there is a provision of warning rather than Health Star rating. According to HSR formula, if any nutrient such as fruit juice, is added to any harmful food product, then its star rating can reach even up to five stars. For example, if orange juice is added to a beverage with high sugar, it will get far more stars, and the consumer will inadvertently be consuming harmful foods, because they will not have the opportunity to know that it is a harmful food.

Today, when the country's food regulatory body is taking a decision in this regard, the health of the people of the country should be the first priority and not the profit of the companies. The presence of such a large number of food companies in this decision-making process and their long-standing partnership with FSSAI, puts a question mark on the objectivity of FSSAI's decision. It is the responsibility of the Ministry of Health that, keeping a close watch on these subjects, instead of adopting the Health Star Rating, harmful to the health of the people of the country, it should make a provision to give a clear warning regarding the food items, which are injurious to health.

Ukraine crisis: The war that is changing relations, rules

Having pushed Ukraine into war, the US does not know how to save it. Having started it, Russia does not know where to end it. Having been pushed into the war, Ukraine does not know how to come out of it. It accuses its adversary Russia saying it is an invader and charges that its friends are betrayers. The UN Security Council keeps on meeting without any result. The global TV network for which the war is a reality show, a boon, keeps demonising Russia and valourising Ukraine. What the desperate Ukraine needs is a ceasefire. It is running from pillar to post – from India to Turkey to France, to Israel, to Japan – pleading with them to talk to Putin for a ceasefire. Everyone is talking to everyone else.

But Biden is not talking to Putin and Putin is not talking to Zelenskyy. This is the sad state of the efforts to stop the war. Poor Zelenskyy. What he is now saying to end the war – that we will not apply to join NATO, we will remain neutral – had he said that before, the war would not have started. Russia has staked everything – its goodwill, its economy and its last atom bomb – like a jihadi, making the West shudder to think of taking it head on. But the war is bound to end. When is the only question. When it does end, Russia would have got all that it wanted and Ukraine would have given all that it had denied. And the West would have realised and the world would have known how needless the war was. But, what kind of world will the pointless war leave behind?

A world of distrust

The worst outcome of the Ukraine war is that it has shown that anything and everything can be politicised and weaponised – from financial transaction systems like SWIFT, to banks, private companies like Google to civilian airspace. SWIFT is a high security neutral financial network created by an NGO and used by 11,000 financial institutions in 200 countries. By jamming this critical network, the Ukraine war has destroyed the most basic of mutual trust among nations. Take India. The share of Google in Indian email accounts is 62 per cent. Were India to fall foul of the West, the entire country can be brought to a halt by Google.



Having pushed Ukraine into war, the US does not know how to save it. Having started it, Russia does not know where to end it.

S. Gurumurthy



Each nation or group of nations will now look for alternatives.

Another message is that even Switzerland, which remained neutral in the two world wars, can't remain neutral in a West vs others scenario. A telling message of the Ukraine war is that no country can trust even the global commons. It leaves behind a world of distrust. It will increasingly force each nation to be on its own — atmanirbhar being the Indian idiom for it, the very antithesis of globalisation. An alternative to SWIFT is already underway with some 63 central banks collaborating on a new payments system.

US leadership dented

The Ukraine war seems to have dented the US global leadership in more than one sense. First, it has delivered the most telling message that the US can't protect its own protégé. Next, that it had to solicit a virtual meeting between Biden and Xi Jinping (XJP) to get China to the US side or to end the war itself, exposed its weakness. Donald Trump would perhaps have handled Russia and Ukraine differently, not allowed China to be the proverbial monkey between two tigers, the US and Russia.

Anyway the two-hour talk Biden had with XJP did not go well for him. XJP reportedly snubbed Biden saying "those who tied the bell to the tiger must untie it," clearly blaming NATO for the war. XJP used the talk to advance China's claim to be equal to the US, saying they should jointly shoulder "international responsibilities" for world peace and tranquility. According to a Chinese report, XJP seems to have said that one hand cannot clap, suggesting that NATO should have a dialogue with Putin and address

India's growing stature – with an implicit pro-Russian tilt, was a calculated geopolitical risk India took at the very start of the Ukraine war. Subsequent developments not only won understanding but also acclaim for it.

his security concerns, implying NATO expansion as the issue. XJP, of course, has also spoken in support of the principles of sovereignty and territorial integrity of all states. He seems to have insisted on bringing the China-US ties under turmoil over a host of issues, including Taiwan, Hong Kong, Xinjiang and Tibet, on "right track" – something completely beyond the agenda of Biden on that day.

The US media had reported that Biden threatened XJP. On the contrary, he seems to have got snubbed. Biden's effort to wean China away from Russia has failed at the minimum. If this is what the US got from China, The Wall Street Journal reported that Saudi Arabia and the UAE declined calls from Biden to ease oil prices unless the US supported them in Yemen and elsewhere. Arab allies of the US have refused to toe its line. Israel did criticise the Russian attack but its stand was so nuanced as not to take the side of the West. Turkey's position is identical to Israel's.

Al-Jazeera even sees a strong alliance between Russia and UAE. Another collateral setback to the US is Syrian president Assad's visit (after 11 years) to UAE about which the US could only lament that it was "disappointed and trou-

bled". Syria and Russia are close. On top of it all, Saudi Arabia, whose oil has been priced in US dollars for five decades, is considering pricing it in Yuan for sales to China. One more important development. The Chinese foreign minister was invited for the first time to the meeting of the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation. These are not ordinary developments. The Ukraine war has undoubtedly eroded US influence over even its allies.

China's Taiwan angle

China seems to have gained far more than it has invested in Ukraine. By subtly encouraging the US vs Russia scenario in Ukraine, China had ensured that the focus of the Biden regime was more on Russia and Ukraine and less on containing China. Being surreptitiously privy to and supporting Russia on Ukraine action, Beijing has gained an IOU from Russia if in future it has to move on Taiwan. XJP's firm and equal dealing with Biden has dented the US capacity to confront China on Taiwan. If Biden had secretly conceded more to XJP on Taiwan as some reports say, China would have hit a jackpot.

Despite that, if the US had drawn a blank with XJP, it would have been a disaster for Biden. China's Ukraine strategy seems intended to advance its efforts to grab Taiwan – its greatest ambition and top most priority of XJP. The Ukraine war has exposed the limitations of the US and the West to step in to save its non-formal ally. The Taiwan Relations Act only ensures defence supplies by the US to Taiwan and nothing further. In comparison to Ukraine, which the US recognises as an independent

nation, Taiwan's status is much inferior. If China makes a decisive move against Taiwan, the US could do very little given its show in Ukraine — to say nothing of the Afghanistan debacle.

India's growing stature

Despite being part of Quad and with deep strategic partnership with the US, India's neutrality, with an implicit pro-Russian tilt, was a calculated geopolitical risk India took at the very start of the Ukraine war. Subsequent developments not only won understanding but also acclaim for it. A displeased America had to concede India was an exception among its allies. Surprisingly, amid the raging Ukraine war New Delhi became the centre of hyper diplomatic activity. Scott Morrison, the Prime Minister of Australia, a Quad constituent, had a virtual meeting with the Indian Prime Minister, promised investments and said that the Quad nations understood India on Ukraine. Fumio Kishida, Prime Minister of Japan, another Quad member, paid his first official visit abroad to India. And keeping aside the differences between the two on Ukraine, he signed six strategic agreements and committed to investing \$42 billion in the next five years. The Greek foreign minister was in Delhi on March 22 and 23 and the Oman foreign affairs minister was in Delhi for two full days, March 23 and 24.

China and India have had border clashes for the last two years. Surprisingly, its foreign minister Wang Yi is visiting Delhi on March 25 — a significant development. India's independent position on Ukraine is itself a message to China that India would with-

stand US pressure. If it can lead to some trust and understanding between China and India on the borders, that can pave the way for an informal Russia-China-India axis for future. Naftali Bennett, the Prime Minister of Israel, a US ally, is making a four-day long visit to India in April first week at the invitation of "his friend" Indian Prime Minister Modi. India is boldly going ahead with the purchase of Russian oil amid US sanctions on Russia.

Though India has not voted for Russia, it has taken a firm position on the discovery of a bio-weapon facility in Ukraine funded by America. And America, despite loosely calling India shaky on the Ukraine war, has not applied the CAATSA law to stop the sale of Russia's missile system to India. Undoubtedly, the Ukraine war diplomacy has shown India's rising stature. The greatest tribute to India's policies came from the most unlikely of quarters, Pakistan. Praising India's foreign policy as free and independent, Prime Minister Imran Khan said, "India is allied with America and is part of the Quad alliance and yet it is neutral on Ukraine, imports oil from Russia despite US sanctions, because its policy is oriented to the betterment of its own people."

Shift away from the dollar?

The war's collateral impact may be on the US dollar and the global financial order itself. With the dollar-based globalisation already under stress, the role of the greenback in the global financial system may decline. The dollar power enabled dominance of the financial economy over the real economy, particularly the commodity economy. The US sanctions which are

bound to affect the Russian oil sale, may also affect the US dollar.

The strength of the US dollar depended, said two Harvard economists in 2006, not on the laws of economics but on the laws of physics, which said a dark matter sustains the universe. The dark matter which sustains the dollar value, they said, is the insurance that the US system and geopolitical power provides to the dollar. That insurance is what is under stress since 2008. With the rise of Asia and China, the US dollar cannot be said to continue to have the same insurance value. The share of USD in the global forex reserves has touched a 25-year low of about 59 per cent.

If important nations shift to their own fiat currency based trade like the Rupee-Ruble arrangement between India and Russia and if an alternative to SWIFT can be found, the move away from dollar can accelerate. For instance, if India and China begin paying for their trade in their fiat currencies rated to the US dollar and at the year-end pay the net in terms of the dollar, the overall demand for the dollar will contract rapidly. It is the demand for the dollar that sustains its value. These kinds of developments post the Ukraine war can have a far reaching impact.

To end, in just weeks the needless Ukraine eruption has disrupted the world as if forever. Thanks to it, the post-cold war world already stands on its head — disrupting old relations, making new ones, undermining existing power centres, creating new, multiple influence centres. Its impact will keep unfolding for a long time. □□

S.Gurumurthy: Editor, Thuglak, and commentator on economic and political affairs
<https://www.newindianexpress.com/opinions/columns/s-gurumurthy/2022/mar/25/ukraine-crisis-the-war-that-is-changing-relations-rules-2434015.html>

Ukraine war and India's Balancing Act

The unipolar world is again likely to become a historical legacy. America can not afford to act as the sheriff of the global village, especially in face of increasing economic, political and technological might of ascending China. Many nations, most notably India, have refused to take sides at the prompting of the US and the West in the latest war. Delhi's challenges – and interests lie in preserving the balance, especially when the economic and military interests are aligned with Russia. No doubt the Ukrainian war has upset the global order. The west, including US has declared an economic war against the enemy. These sanctions adversely affect not merely Russia but other nations too, including India. Oil and commodity prices are going through the roof, payment channels have been obstructed, food shortages and inflationary pressures are becoming a reality, indeed the whole world order is under pressure. The west is weaponising finance and trade system against Russia. India is in a cleft, a catch 22 situation.

India is a lower middle income economy with 70% dependence on imported energy. Inflating energy prices come in the way of our nascent post covid recovery, especially when domestic wholesale inflation had touched 12% even before the war. Government can ill afford to lower fuel taxes since that will adversely tell upon our fiscal balance. India cannot thus be faulted when it approvingly looks at the Russian offer of discounted price oil supply.

The Ukrainian conflict is a product of Soviet Union's collapse, the failure to establish equitable security architecture in Europe, NATO's expansion eastwards, and a steady decline of US-Russian ties coupled with the breakdown of any constructive dialogue between the two nations. Russia was provoked when the US sought to expand NATO to cover Ukraine and Georgia. Russia termed it an immediate threat, an existential crisis for it. For India, though in principle India should have opposed Ukrainian invasion, realpolitik demands that India needs to take a nuanced stand, it must safeguard its strategic interests, including the critical Indo-Russian defence relationship. And don't forget the West's silence when Chinese forces made ingress into Indian territory recently.

Certainly if India has to opt between adhering to abstract and disembodied principles governing international relations on one hand and safeguarding own interests on the other, prudence demands that we lean towards the latter. Thus



Geopolitical considerations and national interest should be the guiding force while taking a stand as regards the Russian-Ukraine conflict.
KK Srivastava



India should logically, and perhaps without any fear of retaliation, ignore the moral grandstandings and veiled warnings of the west, including the US. May be in the event of Chinese aggression Russia would not side with India, since it is a junior partner in Sino-Russia 'no limits' friendship, but we must understand that these are the imperatives of foreign policy, points of divergence will remain. For both China and Russia, the growing relations are grounded in common and shared hostility towards the US. Equally noteworthy is the fact that while India's strategic and economic relationships with the US have deepened in the last two decades, our relations with Chinese kingdom are not exactly on best of terms. And it is no more the situation when the US used to lord over the whole world. Thus the US needs to be more accommodative, especially when the other two members of the Quad-Australia and Japan – have been more appreciative of the India's stand.

Russia will definitely merge as a shrunken economy with diminished power, in face of financial and trade sanctions. But India cannot ignore the hypocrisy of treating Indian oil imports from Russia differently from similar imports by Europe. The US worldview is not necessarily shared by other nations, including India. The world is increasingly moving away from being unipolar, especially due to the incessant rise of China. Dollar dominance is under threat, nations are building their own digital architecture, and west based institutions, including even the financial platforms like SWIFT, are looked upon with disdain and violations. India needs to maintain a delicate

balance, cultivating new friendship, without sacrificing the old ones, especially when it will continue to have long term external dependence in energy and military needs. Geopolitics is increasingly becoming more important. India must not be complacent, it must constantly calibrate its internal policy adjustments, maintain its external outreach, and keep its ambitions aligned with its capabilities. A true strategic partnership has to be based on mutuality of core interests. It is notable that while our abstentions don't adversely affect the western interests, out voting against Russia may imperil us. Hence the unambiguous stand of the Indian government, calling for a complete cessation of violence, resolution of differences through dialogue, and recognition and protection of territorial integrity of nation states. But no sacrifice of India's own national interests.

We must not forget the strong US support for India's economic reforms since 1991 onwards and the eventual US-India nuclear deal. In recent years India and US have been on friendly terms. American companies have led foreign direct investment in India. However, the touchstone on our ties with the US should be far wider than the position we have taken on Ukraine.

India needs to persist with its balancing act. Indo-Russian ties could assume crucial importance in a very fluid geo-political order. India has adopted a neutral stance so far against Russian aggression. But it must constantly evaluate whether, and purely in terms of national interest calculations, costs of continued neutrality began to outweigh benefits from it. India need not forget that while India depends

critically on Russian supply of arms, as the largest buyer from it, New Delhi too enjoys leverage over Moscow. Russia can ill afford to make arms supply scarce for India if it decides to take a more principled stand. Infact Russia needs Indian money even more given the cost of sanctions against it. Thus India does enjoy a bargaining power vis-à-vis both the west (in view of the fact that the EU nations continue to engage in both, sanctioning Russia on one hand and buying Russian energy on the other) and Russia (given its isolation in the world). India's primary concern thus ought to be geopolitical implications on the conflict. Indian position must be purely guided by cold blooded calculation of national interests in face of future Russian, American, and Chinese moves in the background and foreground of ongoing conflict.

India can hardly afford to alienate the US which is its top trading partner and by far the largest export market. Indian companies and banks have more exposure in the US than elsewhere. It can hardly ignore its large student community in the US nor can it shut its eyes towards the significant presence of US technology and finance in India. Yet, US needs us as much as India requires friendship of India. The Quad has been basically formed to provide a strategic and economic counterforce to Beijing's increasingly aggressive moves. Quad's agenda is confined to Indo-Pacific and the Chinese challenge, not security issues in the European theatre.

Thus India's stand so far successfully qualifies the test of acting in national interests without sacrificing the mutuality of core interests of all stakeholders. □□

Biodiesel will hit at food security

The war in Ukraine has led to an increase in price of fuel oil. There is a lurking danger that the price may increase yet more in the coming times if the war continues. This makes it necessary for us to look for alternative ways of ensuring our energy security. We are dependent on imports for the three major sources of energy, namely, fuel oil, coal and uranium. One alternative being suggested is to promote biodiesels which can be produced either from sugarcane directly or from seeds of jatropha that can be grown on degraded lands. Indeed it is possible to produce biodiesel from such use of lands. However, the same land has alternative uses. The question, therefore, is not whether we can and must produce biodiesel. The question is whether biodiesel provides more benefits than the production of other crops on the same lands. If, for example, we grow more sugarcane then we will grow less paddy and wheat. Or, if we grow more jatropha then we will grow less bajra and ragi; and we will plant lesser areas under natural forests. So we have to compare which of the two alternative crops is more beneficial for us.

The main point is that cultivation of sugarcane for biodiesel will lead to lesser crop production of food grains and it will directly hit our food security. In our attempt to ensure our energy security we will be pushing for ourselves into food insecurity. We will be getting out of the pan only to fall into the fire. We must remember that it is possible to live without energy but not possible to live without food therefore food security is much more important than energy security.

The production of biodiesel is also hugely water intensive. Sugarcane uses about 20 times more water per hectare of land than the cultivation of wheat. Our water resources are already depleting. The ground water table has been declining rapidly across the country. In such a situation, if we draw out more quantities of fossil water to produce sugarcane, the water table will decline further and



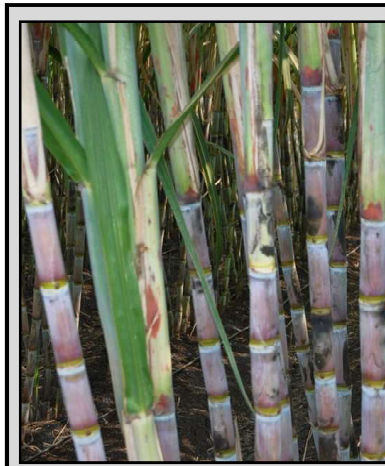
The war is Ukraine has led to an increase of fuel oil. There is danger of increase in price.

Dr. Bharat Jhunjhunwala



it will again imperil our food security. We should know that in the eastern part of our country, water at lower levels contains poisonous arsenic which is becoming a major health hazard. Therefore we will be imperiling the lives of our people by forcing them to draw the water from greater depths and consuming poisonous arsenic only because we want to produce use more water to produce sugarcane for biodiesel. The second negative impact is on agricultural biodiversity. The cultivation of sugarcane on large areas of cultivable land will hit at the cultivation at a number of crops such as wheat, paddy, ragi, bajra, menthe, chilies, bananas, etc. We need to cultivate multiple crops to protect ourselves from the effects of global warming. As the temperature of the earth increases, certain crops will fail to adapt and it may not be possible to cultivate them; while other crops may adapt to higher temperatures and it may be possible to continue their cultivation. If we reduce the cultivation of multiple crops then we may find that we have ceased the cultivation of crops that could have adapted to global warming. Therefore, it is necessary to produce multiple crops rather than any single crop especially a non-food crop like sugarcane.

The case for biodiesel is actually made by the policy makers because it serves the rich. A paper published by the World Bank titled "Review of Environmental, Economy and Policy Aspects of Biofuels" says that the demand for biofuels is largely from the richer sections of society. Here we have a clear admission that biodiesel is used mainly by the rich; whereas, the biomass such as straw is used



more by the common man. The cultivation of paddy and wheat provides straw which is fed to the livestock, which leads to the production of milk, which is then fed to the children. I did a study in Rajasthan and found that the health of children of farmers producing cash crops deteriorates because less cash income is used for milk and other nutritious foods. The production of sugarcane for biodiesel may indeed provide more cash to the but that cash is used for buying goods like bikes and television rather than for milk. The result is that the cultivation of cash crops lead to lower health for the common man. It appears that biodiesel is been promoted not because it is beneficial for the country but because it is beneficial for the rich who use most of the biodiesel that is produced.

The experience of Brazil is often invoked in favour of biodiesel. Indeed, Brazil is producing large amounts of sugarcane and directly producing biodiesel from the same. However the land and water availability in Brazil is much more than in India. Brazil has 32.5 hectares of land per one thousand persons while India has only 1.48 hectares. Brazil has 29,006 cubic

The experience of Brazil is often invoked in favour of biodiesel. Indeed, Brazil is producing large amounts of sugarcane and directly producing biodiesel from the same.

meters of renewable sources of water per person against only 1,152 cubic meters in India. This means that while Brazil can divert some of its lands and water for the production of biodiesel without affecting its food security while we cannot do the same because we do not have enough land to continue to produce food after diverting lands for the production of biodiesel. Another argument in favour of biodiesel is that the production of bagasse after extracting juice from the sugarcane can be used to produce electricity. This argument does not hold because the cultivation of wheat and paddy also leads to the production of straw, which can be used not only as a fuel for production of electricity but has multiple uses such as for feeding to the livestock as well as manufacturing paper and other goods. Therefore, production of straw is more useful since it has diverse uses. It is time that the Government to review its policy of promoting biodiesel and focus more on reduction of consumption of energy so that we do not put unnecessary pressure on the environment and imperil our food security. □□

Formerly Professor of Economics at IIM Bengaluru

Self-Reliance in international payments

Prime Minister Narendra Modi has recently said that self-reliance is the best suited strategy to deal with situations arising out of the Russia-Ukraine war. With regard to ongoing war between Russia and Ukraine, some people believe that if this war goes on like this and Ukraine's friends, such as America and European countries join this war, then this war may head towards the World War III. But apart from this concern, there are many other types of concerns in India and the rest of the world. Given these apprehensions, Prime Minister Narendra Modi has called for self-reliance as a strategy.

Inflation

It is noteworthy that Russia is the third largest producer of crude oil of the world; and if supply of crude oil is blocked by way of sanctions, the prices of crude oil in the world may increase further. Currently, amidst fluctuating oil prices, Russia has offered to supply oil to India at 25 percent discount. India has also accepted this proposal and import of crude oil has already started. But the road to importing oil from Russia is not easy. Though, US has said for the time being that this import of crude oil by India, doesn't violate sanctions, the issue of payments continues to be an area of concern. In this context we need to ensure that nothing comes in way of cheaper import of oil by India, to keep away oil price inflation in the country.

Blocked payments

US and European countries have blocked Russian banks from the international payment gateway, SWIFT, used in global financial transactions. Finding a solution to this problem, India and Russia have decided that they will settle their transactions in Rupees and Rubbles, that is, India will not only buy oil 25 percent cheaper, but payment for that oil will be made in rupees.

The question is, what will be the impact of blocking of SWIFT on India and the world? With the blockade of SWIFT, India and the world will have to create alternative payment systems. Payment can also be made through China's payment system called the Cross Border Interbank Payment System (CIPS). However, India and Russia have decided to exchange in Rupee-Ruble. On the other hand,



Whatever the process, whether barter or linking of different payment systems or use of digital currency, we will have to achieve self-reliance in payments.

Dr. Ashwani Mahajan



Discussion

Indian banks can do business with Russia by registering with China's payment system CIPS, but since CIPS uses the RMB as currency, it would be good for India to create an alternative payment system which is based on Indian Rupee.

One of the options for India is to integrate its UPI payment system with Russia's MIR system to make payments easier. Russian banks can open their accounts with the Reserve Bank of India and where Russian banks can keep deposits of Indian Rupees. But here the difficulty may come that since India has a trade deficit in the trade of India and Russia, the deposits of Indian Rupees with Russia will increase. In such a situation, Russia can pay in rupees for imports coming from other countries that accept payment in rupees. Apart from this, another option is that of payment through digital currency of the central bank.

Shattered trust

Central banks of different countries keep foreign exchange in other countries. For example, the Reserve Bank of India keeps its foreign currency in the Central Bank of America (Federal Reserve), similarly other countries also keep reserves of dollars in the Federal Reserve, which includes Russia. Russia's access to their foreign exchange reserves has now been blocked due to US and European countries blocking Russian banks in SWIFT. In such a situation, while Russia has definitely lost confidence in the US Federal Reserve; other countries of the world are also now thinking that their deposits in central banks of other countries are not safe.

No doubt, Russia is in trouble due to economic and other sanctions imposed by US and its

allies, though there is no immediate threat, such sanctions may also be imposed on India, on one or the other pretext. India had been the victim of such sanctions in the past as well. We would need to deal with such an eventuality. Recently, the Reserve Bank's governor has also said that even if there is no reason for economic sanctions on India, we still think that all countries must now rethink about their foreign exchange reserves. India has already started diversifying its foreign exchange reserves and today we are keeping our reserves in many other currencies including gold, dollars, euros etc.

Since the world's trade is dominated by dollars and dollars are kept only in American banks, because the sovereign currency of any country can be kept only in the banks of that country. E.g. Euros can be kept in European banks, Dollars in American banks, Yuan in Chinese banks and Indian Rupees in Indian banks only. Nostro account is opened for mutual transactions, owned by residents of another country. It would be useful for India that India should have its own payment system which is based on Rupee.

The way forward: Self-reliant payment system

Countries on which economic sanctions have been imposed, finding it difficult to sell their goods, are ready to sell goods cheaper than the market to India. Due to the war, oil prices in the international market have increased significantly, but not only Russia but also Iran is ready to sell oil at cheaper prices and on our terms (in exchange for payment in rupees). For imports from such countries, we can make payments

in our currency under the barter system. But we have trade deficit with many countries, so barter is not always practical.

For a more viable payment system, we can create linkage between our payment system (UPI) and payment systems of different countries, and can circumvent SWIFT system under the influence of USA and European countries. For example, India can establish self-reliance in international payments by establishing a linkage with the payment systems of other countries including Russia's Mir payment system and China's payment system.

Not only this, nowadays the trend of digital currency has also increased. However, due to the huge fluctuation in the value of private cryptocurrencies, it would not be advisable to use them for payments. India has recently decided to launch its own digital currency through our central bank, that is, the Reserve Bank of India. This is called Central Bank Digital Currency (CBDC). Experts believe that international payments can also be possible through use of this digital currency.

Today, when India is moving forward towards the goal of self-reliance in all spheres of the economy including defence goods, electronics, telecom, chemicals, consumer goods etc., with regard to international payments, we should not be subject to the whims of countries like US and Europe in payments also. For this it is necessary to achieve self-reliance in international payments as well. This we will have to achieve by any means. Whatever the process, whether barter or linking of different payment systems or use of digital currency, we will have to achieve self-reliance in payments. □□

Work From Home-A future trend setter

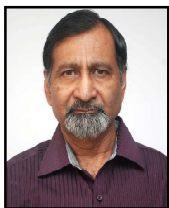
The great impact of Covid-19 pandemic has been on the work culture. The pandemic forced workers stay at home and do the office work. Almost all sectors of economy world over adopted the culture of work from home (WFH). This changed the outlook of companies and workers together and now even after pandemic is over, the companies and workers are preferring to continue the system. The studies are being undertaken and assessments are being made to check the future of this culture of WFH. Definitely, the WFH culture is there to stay and family life may have to adjust to the culture.

Work From Home

‘WFH’ means employees are supposed to work from their house, apartment, or place of residence, or from anywhere, even during travels, rather than reaching to offices and working there for fixed time schedule. Employees are given laptops, cell phones, and access to the corporate network to enable them to perform work. Meetings take place via conferencing systems instead of in conference rooms. Documents are shared electronically instead of printed. Workflows are enabled via IT systems instead of physical interaction. Some companies are entirely virtual with no physical office at all, or maybe just a small space for company leaders to meet. Other companies have virtual workforce setup for functions like customer service. The sectors like agriculture and manufacturing or physical delivery type services, however, remained out of this ‘WFH’ culture.

WFH is not new concept

‘WFH’, however, is not a new concept. Before the Industrial revolution, most were family enterprises and all types of work was performed at home. India’s world-famous handicraft, jewellery making of stones, carving work in ivory, wood, stone and marble, work of ironsmith, spice production etc were all family enterprises and were performed from home. Even before many companies implement ‘WFH’ in an unprepared manner, many had some sort of experi-



The pandemic forced workers stay at home and do the office work. Almost all sectors of economy world over adopted the culture of work from home (WFH).

Anil Javalekar



ence before the pandemic. The companies like the IT and Software firms such as Tata Consultancy Services (TCS), Infosys, International Business Machines (IBM), Cognizant etc. have used this system for quite some time.

Work away from home

Post industrial revolution, the production process shifted from household to big factories and workers moved from their home-based enterprise to the factory shop floor. This phenomenon continued for over three hundred years. The industrialization started with the workers coming together and working at a place called office or factory and almost all type of employers offered job on this condition of coming to the place of work. For this, employers made all arrangements that helped employees perform better including the providence of food by operating canteens and creating other associated amenities even welfare related activities. This was a cost to company in addition to the wages. All were happy with the system.

Covid-19 discipline forced changes

Covid-19 pandemic has changed all and the employer and employees both seems happy with the change. The change helped companies to reduce expenses on infrastructure like office place and all other necessary supportive amenities and facilities. The employees also got the freedom to work from home and helped avoid travel, escape from travel hassles and reduce travel expenses apart from helping them to give time to family and be supportive to housework.

The idea of WFH was basically to save human life from pandemic and still do some office work and continue the job and help companies to serve their purpose.

Is WFH worth

The idea of WFH was basically to save human life from pandemic and still do some office work and continue the job and help companies to serve their purpose. There was not much in the beginning nor the ideas to save company expenses nor help employees to get the freedom of flexibility in work system. The pandemic forced to adopt the 'WFH' culture simply to survive. However, the idea was successful and helped both companies and employees beat the pandemic. This can be said that it served the purpose during the pandemic. The experiment was worth and was helpful. It helped mitigate air pollution and reduced Traffic congestion. WFH arrangement also provided a unique opportunity for women and other disabled hitherto not fully integrated in the workforce.

Problems with WFH culture

Major concern is of measuring productivity and performance management of employees and it is found that the productivity was less when work is done at home. Data Security, a threat to Intellectual Property Rights and issues of Cyber-security are the other major

concerns. Many researchers feel that face-to-face meetings are essential for developing new ideas and keeping staff motivated and focused. From employee's side, Internet connectivity and uninterrupted power supply is major problem. There are Issues associated with Female employees in India as sick family members, household chores need their attention. Perhaps the most challenging aspect of working from home for parents with younger children is managing their kids. This apart, there are problems of feeling of loneliness, anxiety and depression due to social isolation. Some employees were reluctant to telecommute because of the perception that working remotely hinders promotional opportunities.

Future of WFH culture

Covid-19 has brought most of the economic activities at sudden standstill barring some essential services in India. The WFH was not a voluntary choice for many of the companies and most tried to devise ad-hoc arrangements. It is true that WFH is not viable in manufacturing, government, law/order, Agri-based or infra-based operations and there are many issues that need consideration before accepting the WFH as normal culture.

1. if WFH becomes dominant as a work culture for the talent, very few engineers or technicians might choose to work in industries requiring on-site office attendance and that may result in residual talent going for office work which is not expected.

2. In WFH, the corporate values of gender diversity, ethnic inclusion etc. may face redundan-

cy as people are forced to focus on output only and not the process thereof. That would be regressive for a progressing society. More than that, it is important to understand that the collective survival is a pre-requisite for success and find common ground for productivity and performance and that is possible only through processes of interaction and engagement. In WFH this becomes secondary and even if organizations consciously retain their values of inclusiveness, the opportunities to engage will be drastically reduced and that will harm real progress.

3. It is proven that WFH is especially hard on women for culturally it will add to their burden as they may be doing more housework. It is impossible for women to disconnect entirely from the housework while working from home. This is a big reason why

women have dropped off the workforce in WFH environment. This is a cultural nuance which needs a mature recognition, particularly in a country like India.

4. For the young generation, WFH may be possibly a disaster. Real learning happens in proximity with leaders or in open environments where observation is an excellent source of learning. Similarly, leaders observe their team to spot signs of growth and over time groom talent and leadership. In WFH environments, these markers are harder to spot and are also easier to fake. This increases the cost of talent for companies as there are less learning and coaching opportunities and more probability of going wrong. The young may likely to lose more from WFH culture.

5. WFH is here to stay and has already set a future trend.

Smart organisations will use it as an incentive to recruit rare talent or to combine transactional work tactically. Alternatively, some non-core segments of the company may adopt this model for cost management and/or operational flexibility.

Work from office will win

The one outlier possibility here is the deployment of Augmented Reality in office spaces – as holographic or 3D meeting rooms become the norm and augmented realities give the exact cognitive experience of being in an office space with colleagues and customers, it is likely that the physical meeting places will get dismantled. However, that only goes to prove that “Work from Office” will always win over “WFH” – just that it will become “Mind in Office Body at Home” culture. □□

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Imperatives of Indianising our Education

Recently the National Medical Commission has recommended that modified Maharishi Charakshapath should replace the Hippocratic oath for an entrant to medical education. These guidelines mention, from Charakshapath, a disciplined life and action that is free from envy, that the patients be served with humility without monetary/selfish gains, that the practitioners should dress appropriately that they should engage in appropriate, truthful conduct, etc. etc. The new guidelines also recommend a 10 day yoga foundation course. An attempt towards Indianising Indian education?

The new 'historians' want to present history differently from how it has been. They don't mind imbuing historiography with the ideas of divinity. According to their own admission theirs is a genuine attempt to correct the errors of omission up until recently. Indian history wasn't what we had been told, even according to the eminent Marxist historian DD Kosambi. He had written that Europeans are fundamentally wrong when they say that India has had some episodes, but no history. These Europeans actually lacked grasp and intelligence to study the Indian past. They only focussed on some, not all, episodes – lists of dynasties and kings, tales of war and battle spiced with anecdotes. History writing cannot be left to Sundry foreign 'scholars' and their Indian acolytes. When we are trying to Indianise history, it should not be similarly based on anecdotes and mythology, should not be merely argumentative, rather it should be evidence based so that it is completely convincing. It should be hard to disprove this 'new' account of history.

Recently, the Vice President of India, M. Venkaiah Naidu voted in favour of a major overhaul of the Macaulay system of education. He rightly observed that it is dominant as well as damaging. It leads to generation of a sense of inferiority among Indians. It has replaced our traditional education in the bhashas with the unfamiliar curriculum of the English. It gives us a colonial mindset. It has made us drift away from our own heritage. Most importantly, under the influence of the



*If Indiaianising
our education
implies retelling
our ancient
knowledge and
wisdom, there is
nothing wrong in
it.*

Dr. Jaya Kakkar



present education system we have been consciously driven away from useful and productive ideas and philosophies that form the core of our ancient civilization.

Tagore, at Visva Bharti, had caused to start a National Education Movement and fashioned an innovative nationalist curriculum in protest. Even pre independence there were protests against enslavement of Indian minds by western education which was leading to englicizing tendency and denationalization of the young generation. It was suggested, as early as in 1888 by Abu Maulvi that literate and sciences be taught in the vernaculars and Indian languages so that these tendencies can be taught against. Thus the debate about Indianisation of education is not new nor it has been opened by the right wing scholars only now.

The Macaulay system of education has led to uncritically accept and adopt the alien concepts. Time for us to join the debate about Indianizing the Indian education system; time to do away with Macaulay's damaging legacy and reconnect with our heritage. Macaulay visualized 'brown sahebs' and their 'production' through English Education. The English Education Act sought to systematically remove 'useless' Sanskrit and Persian learning in our path shalas, gurukul and madrasas; it made a systematic effort, instead to replace it with 'useful learning'. The aim was an organized effort to annihilate our ancient wisdom. Baudhayana, Pingala, Aryabhatta, and Bhaskaracharya were to be consigned to vestiges of history; instead Euclid and Pythagoras replaced them. Indian student knows about four seasons of Europe, but

does not recall the six Indian seasons? If at all, modern Indian education has incorporated merely a colonial interpretation of India's antiquity and culture.

Alas, in order to please the then masters, even post independence the history was interpreted and written in colonial traditions. While indigenous heroes like Cholas and Lalitaditya have been consigned to near extinct spaces, the pages are replete with the history of our invaders. An English speaking elite may easily name 50 states of the US but is likely to fail if asked how many states are there in the Northeast India. He may be familiar with Shakespearian dramas, but what about the Kalidas poetry?

Hindu religion, and we are not talking about the latest fanatic interpretation of it, is essentially more liberal than western and Middle Eastern approaches to religion. Mahabharata and Ramayana, the two giant epics of our land, were taught even in madarsas before the advent of Britshers. Indian Muslims and Christians, along with all Hindus, believe in dharma and karma, as a recent Pew survey has uncovered. We advocate teaching of Indian (not merely Hindu) saints, sages, philosophers, writers which must connect us with 'our' roots, and not foreign roots. Thus moral science should have stories from Bible, but not at the expense of stories from Indian sources. All students must read Mirza Ghalib, Vyasa, Amir Khusro, and Valmiki. Kaaba and Kashi both must enlighten us. It is high time we shed our disdain from our ancient and medieval culture, and again embrace our local wisdom infused heritage. As Dr. Radhakrishnan had advocated, a typical class day

should begin with a few minutes of silent meditation. This should be followed by imparting of knowledge about teachings of great thinkers, including Kabir, Nanak, Jesus, Ramanuja, Buddha . . . We affirm that Mr. Naidu's saffronisation must be liberally interpreted to have an all inclusive list of great thinkers. We need to develop a critical thinking faculty among the disciples; the aim should not be indoctrination of a particular way of thinking. They must feel proud of our heritage without looking down upon the diversity of narratives called out from other great civilizations. Indeed, inclusivity is the key while learning about cultural diversity of India.

No doubt India's ancient culture needs to be recovered, reconstructed, and reaffirmed for us to become proud Indians. But the attempt for cultural assimilation should not follow a thin and toxic agenda; rather it should be a substantive philosophical response to Macaulay by invoking the vast repository of Indian knowledge and wisdom as gleaned through a systemic exploration of our ancient wisdom and culture. It should have space for challenges to Brahmanical traditions. It should accept the marvels of Mughal architecture. And it should encourage the study of both Bhakti and Sufi movements. Indianization of education should not be narrowly interpreted, identifying it with a specific ideology, color, or thought process; rather it should be truly nationalistic in its thinking, incorporating the best of both the worlds, oriental and occidental. Knowledge and wisdom is not the sole prerogative of either East or West; it is universal. □□

Covid, conflict and China

Predictive conclusions on the economic impact of the Russia-Ukraine conflict run a high error risk. A “sudden stop” to the conflict, through ceasefire or other means, would negate any assumption that present volatile trends would impact the future economic course of the world. Further, and where a lot of extant predictive analysis is getting it wrong, there is an attribution problem as to whether a particular negative economic effect is due to the pandemic or to the conflict.

Take oil prices; they started rising on April 28, 2020, and were 400 per cent higher by the end of October 2021. The 2022 rise has only continued this trend – the conflict caused a very temporary rise in prices before they reverted to trend. Oil is now back to less than \$100 a barrel.

The conflict also impacts prices of food, oil seeds, and fertilizers, since both Russia and Ukraine are major producers of these. But the Food and Agriculture Organization’s price indices of food, (aggregate) vegetable oil, and cereals have been rising continuously since mid-2020, so the conflict at this time at best accelerates, not establishes, this trend. Among fertilizers, the prices of urea, muriate of potash, and phosphoric acid have all risen dramatically over the past year. But 90 per cent of this rise happened before the conflict began.

If the conflict continues without a political settlement that enables resuming logistics and trade arrangements, then this will stoke global inflation and impact access to basic needs of millions of people. But this would be an accelerator effect; the problem was with us before the conflict except that the world was too busy working in partitions to recognize it for what it was.

There is, therefore, little analytical merit in analyzing the impact of the conflict from a purely economic lens. But using a political economy lens, the question of impact depends quite critically on where it is being posed.

For the countries of Europe, the conflict poses existential questions. In contemporary times, Europe has thought itself a cultured fortress of democracy,



For the countries of Europe, the conflict poses existential questions.
Rathin Roy



human rights, and peace – this fiction is now at an end. Russia's withdrawal from the Council of Europe, Germany's rearmament, and significant movements of European refugees within Europe bring back memories of the 18th, 19th, and 20th centuries, when conflict among Europeans had spillover effects across the world.

The rest of the world is, therefore, legitimately worried about the spillover effects of yet another age of European conflict, particularly since the repeated assertions, across Europe, about the distinctiveness of European refugees from an ethnic and civilization perspective, establish that European commitment to universalism was a matter of epochal convenience. But a militarizing and parochial Europe is no longer the centre of the global economy. The United States, China, Japan, and, to a lesser extent, India, Brazil, and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations have economic systems that are relatively insulated from European woes. European energy dependence on Russia is going to result in greater use of coal in the short run, and a difficult time for European governments in controlling inflation but the effects are unlikely to be contagious. None of the above non-European countries is critically dependent on Russia. Nor is this conflict an existential one for them.

China, unnoticed, is a step ahead. Shortly after the pandemic wrought economic havoc, China massively increased its imports of corn, barley, and soyabean, among other things. It published a new draft law highlighting the need to enhance its "grain stockpile security", a policy it continued through 2021, which, combined with sub-



China, unnoticed, is a step ahead. Shortly after the pandemic wrought economic havoc, China massively increased its imports of corn, barley, and soyabean, among other things. Enhance its "grain stockpile security."

par agricultural output in Brazil, Argentina, Ukraine, and Thailand, in part drove the above-mentioned rise in food and cash crop prices.

To be sure, the conflict will cause suffering in other parts of the world. Central Asia will see a collapse in remittances and employment opportunities in Russia. The MENA (Middle East and North Africa) region will be negatively impacted by rising wheat and vegetable oil prices; much of the African continent will suffer the costs of rising prices of oil, food, and fertilizers. But this suffering will only be exacerbated by the conflict; the pandemic had already impacted the lives and livelihoods of many in these regions, and the refusal to extend the vaccination programme universally, as a public good, to low-income countries has taken a toll on their populations; this conflict will only add to that toll. The recent US Congress decision to divert Covid assistance to Ukraine compounds this error.

From all this, there are three analytical inferences the world outside Europe should make. First, the end of peace in Europe will not have spillover effects as it did in the past and attempts by Europeans to make it seem so should be taken with a pinch of salt. Second,

the conflict should not hinder emerging economies' recovery from the scarring caused by the pandemic as long as macroeconomic management is skilled enough and China and the United States do not try and extract too much political leverage from emerging economies as they navigate a return to growth. It is likely, however, to exacerbate low-income country distress.

Finally, the enigma of China. It has actively prepared for a period of geopolitical turmoil, maintained relations with Russia, and sought to improve relations with Ukraine in anticipation of a post-war political settlement. China is in a position to enable the developing and emerging world to minimize the negative impact of the conflict and accelerate growth and prosperity to pre-pandemic levels. But the political and diplomatic price is too high for many Asian and African countries, already scarred by debt and dependence on Chinese inward investment and commodity demand. How China handles this is, therefore, the key to whether geographies other than Europe are likely to face more fraught geo-economic times, going forwards. □□

(The writer is managing director, ODI, London. r.nay@odi.org. Views are personal.)

West has weaponised sanctions. Here's what India should do

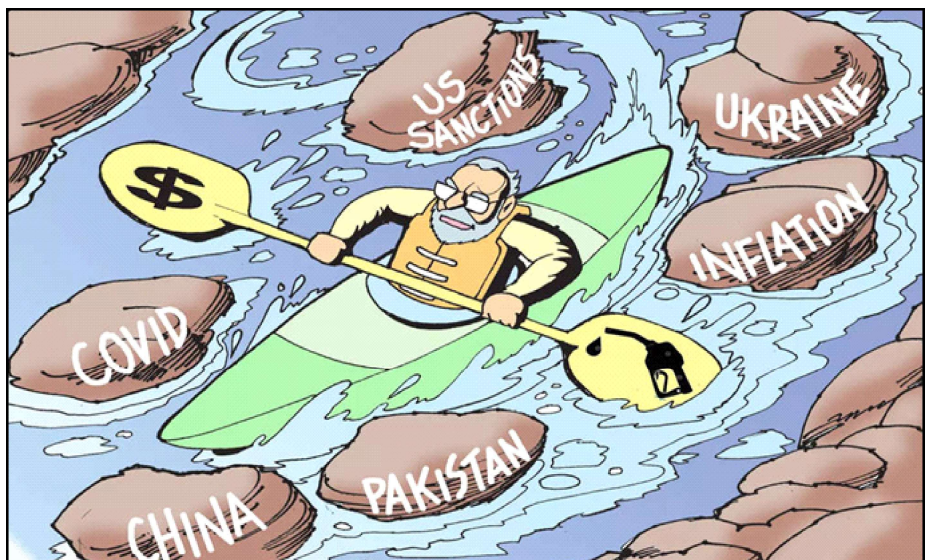
In his post-election victory address at the Bharatiya Janata Party headquarters last week, Prime Minister Narendra Modi pointed to what he viewed as an important message of the largely favourable electoral verdict. At a time when the world is in the grip of conflict, instability and mounting inflationary pressures, said the Prime Minister, the electorate, especially in the heartland of Uttar Pradesh, has voted in favour of political stability at home. Domestic political stability in the face of external threats and challenges has been an important concern and theme of successive Prime Ministers.

Mr Modi referred to the rising price of oil, gas, coal, fertilisers and vegetable oils on account of the current global security and economic environment. He claimed the Union budget had strengthened the foundations of his economic strategy of building an 'Atmanirbhar Bharat', an agenda that has gained traction given the new constraints imposed on economic growth by the global situation and western economic sanctions. The PM did well to flag India's own developmental concerns at a time when the so-called Big Powers have been focused on their own material interests in the name of democratic values.

While the BJP has demonstrated in Uttar Pradesh the ability to win an election without delivering good economic performance even this political model requires sustained economic growth to generate the revenues needed to fund welfare programmes, that reportedly delivered electoral victory in the state. Mr Modi's focus on new economic challenges in an impromptu, extempore address to party workers, at the end of what was for them a celebratory day, underline the seriousness of the challenge at hand. The PM has to perforce focus on inflation control, employment generation, external economic and security challenges and internal social and political stability at this time.



India should lead Global South in finding ways to moderate their impact.
Sanjaya Baru



The current East-West conflict has come at a time when developing economies have already been burdened by disruptions caused by the Covid-19 pandemic that has not yet gone away. In fact, there is every danger of yet another wave slowing down global trade and the movement of people. While the PM has made claims about a robust economic performance at home, he must privately worry that the target date for the economy reaching the US\$5 trillion mark has been pushed further back. For India to grow from the current level of \$2.7 trillion to \$5 trillion the economy would have to grow at 9.0 percent per annum over the next five years. A tough target in the extant situation.

The military invasion of a sovereign nation is not a phenomenon that the world has not dealt with before, even in recent memory. However, with the singular exception of the economic sanctions on Apartheid South Africa, that the West dragged its feet on, there have never been such sweeping sanctions imposed against a major G-20 economy. In this so-called Big Power conflict it is developing economies that would be hit badly. The unintended consequences of G-7 sanctions against Russia may impose greater collateral damage globally than the intended consequences of the Russian invasion of Ukraine.

While the military campaign in Ukraine has destabilised the European security order, economic sanctions on Russia imposed by the United States and the Group of Seven nations are already destabilising the global economic order. Their medium to long term consequences are yet not clear. It is in ev-

A Crisis offers the opportunity for new thinking. Stability and peace in our neighbourhood should be part of our strategy for building comprehensive national power.

everyone's interest that a ceasefire be immediately declared by Russia, but it is also equally in global interest that the US and EU step back from the reckless attempt to weaponise global economic links. At any rate, the G-7 must help insulate India and other low income developing economies from the consequences of their economic sanctions.

India must provide leadership to developing country voices that worry not just about rising energy costs and commodity prices, but also about disruption of the global payments systems and international trade. The Modi government has done well to resist US pressure seeking to prevent the purchase of Russian oil. Given India's external dependence in oil and gas, it cannot afford to ignore low cost options when they become available. The current crisis also draws attention to the need for a long term strategy to reduce external energy dependence. India has to expand its nuclear and renewable energy programmes.

Developed economies may have the internal shock absorbers that can withstand the pressure of G-7 economic sanctions, but low income developing countries do not. From rising commodity prices

to shrinking markets, from devalued currency to fiscal constraints at home, India and developing countries are going to pay a heavy price for Big Power conflict. Perhaps India's RuPay card deserves to be further promoted both at home and abroad as an insurance against potential threats to the SWIFT system.

It may be satisfying for the Indian political leadership to be seen in the company of the leaders of G-7 and other major powers, and Prime Minister Modi will get more opportunities to interact with them when India hosts the G-20 Summit next year, but India will have to sensitise them to the developmental concerns of the countries of the global South. India's core national security concerns remain those of a developing economy - economic growth and the enhancement of comprehensive national power through the building of economic, social and human capabilities.

When Big Powers are busy fighting each other, an improvement in relations with India's neighbourhood ought to be our foreign policy priority. It is just as well that foreign minister S Jaishankar reiterated last week that "neighbourhood first" is India's priority. This year began with an important relationship being established with the United Arab Emirates. India has renewed ties with Sri Lanka. The BJP has to get out of the groove that it has been stuck in with respect to Pakistan. A Crisis offers the opportunity for new thinking. Stability and peace in our neighbourhood should be part of our strategy for building comprehensive national power. □□

<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/when-west-weaponises-sanctions-/articleshow/90358951.cms>

Need India Post to replicate RuPay moments

The India Post has fault lines. It needs to be repaired. Despite having a huge network of offices, human resources, and warehouse facilities at prime as well as remote locations, they are losing consistently and have lost enough. It's time to adopt the strategy of the day for India Post. The coming together of India Post and Indian Railways for parcel delivery is inadequate to substitute the foreigners like Amazon and Flipkart.

The aggressive strategies of Amazon and Flipkart have threatened and encroached on the turf of India Post. The admission of this reality is the first step to come back again. These companies deliver many items to customers today. In fact, these companies have become so giant that they control the customer, the manufacturer, the supplier, and have created paths to sell at the cheapest price, it's unbelievable that they sell the product cheaper than the price at the factory gate of the manufacturer. Also, they don't pay appropriate taxes to the government.

Initially both the companies started as a company that does the business of book delivery at home. They can be labeled as e-commerce or e-retailer or e-marketplace or e-logistics or e-information companies. The tax collectors are still struggling to figure out who they are. The policymakers still have to come up with a robust e-commerce policy which is today a delayed work in progress; a policy that can be interpreted equally by the customer, the regulator, the company, the tax collector, and the members of the inbound and outbound supply chain. In the early phase of growth, these companies offered a platform for the publisher and the customer to come together and might be some courier companies partnered with them, then no one complained. But they created a key point for themselves i.e. point of money payment or the collection and later point of control.

A customer willing to buy a book usually orders a book to a publisher pays to the publisher, and the publisher would do the Book Post using the services of



India Post has fault lines. It needs to be repaired.
Alok Singh



the India Post. But these new-age companies worked as if the customer is buying books from Amazon or Flipkart. The change is here. Today the customer is buying from Amazon or Flipkart i.e. buying directly from the company which acts as a courier company, and not as a publisher. In the earlier system the book publisher came first and Courier Company later but today the courier company comes first and the publisher later. The coupling and decoupling of the publisher and the courier company over a period i.e. decades of the timeline are important to understand the controller of the business.

We understood the necessity of better banking transactions and developed our own United Payments Interface (UPI) which seized the market at a time when Google Pay and Paytm had already established themselves in the digital payments ecosystem, and both peer players are technology companies i.e. surprisingly non-bankers.

An analogy can be drawn that Amazon and Flipkart are not core courier companies but acts as home delivery company which has brutally killed the business of the Book Post of India Post. Daryaganj in Delhi is the best place to witness the killing of the Book Post business of India Post.

Daryaganj in Delhi is the hub of book publishers and booksellers. Any publishers who do good business have a presence at Daryaganj. They have offices spread at different locations but Daryaganj is the name for book publishers. If we visit any book publishers in Daryaganj we see that the people from Flipkart and or Amazon have a presence in the space of the



India post is the hope for the regulators to control the tax theft by foreign located data companies.

publisher's office. India post is missing the business model.

The one and only strategy are to understand the rules of the new game and adopt the changes in the organization. The homegrown RuPay system has caused nightmares for foreign-grown peers. India Post can replicate the success story.

Today's customers are demanding services and products from a courier company or a company that behaves like a courier company. Earlier the customer and the manufacturer were core drivers of the business. The colony retailers could take demand from the end-user consumer and pass the information to the manufacturer. The world is moving towards a single retailer shop, it needs to be stopped. The new business model is to be followed.

India post is the hope for the regulators to control the tax theft by foreign located data companies. Daryaganj will be a good place for India Post to start the business. India post receives a book parcel from the publisher and then it transports to the destination- this is the traditional way. The India post will have to change the process. Its book parcel division can't work the old way. The India Post

has to reverse the supply chain process. It has to develop a webpage and create awareness that it also takes orders on behalf of the publisher from the customer. India Post has to reposition its business practices, it has to emerge as an online retailer rather than just a parcel delivery company.

India Post can do the same to Amazon and Flipkart as RuPay had done to Amex, Visa, and MasterCard. India Post should transform itself and start as an online book-seller company. This is the first step to compete with Amazon and Flipkart. Later on, India Post can move along the path to provide an indigenous alternative to Amazon and Flipkart to domestic customers. The data privacy and the decentralization of data-related policies will favor India Post, as these new-age technologies will be forced to invest in data localization. The other example is the success of Mumbai Dabbawalas as a tiffin or logistics supplier which has earned awards worldwide. It's the right time to launch 'Online India Post Book Shop'. Right intent from policymakers is needed in the globalized world. □□

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Fix agriculture for sustained growth in Punjab



Emerging from the shadows of the iconic farmers' protest, the underlying message that has been delivered is loud and clear. Not to be lost in the din of the campaigns for the Assembly elections that followed, farmers had actually called for a systemic change in economic thinking. Instead of sacrificing agriculture for the sake of industries, the need is to revitalise agriculture and treat it as the second engine of economic growth.
Devinder Sharma

After a decisive people's mandate, which was basically a verdict for change, the challenges it brings for the new Punjab government are enormous. While the expectations are huge, and given the precarious fiscal situation that Punjab finds itself in, there is no denying that the task ahead is monumental. But business as usual is certainly not the way forward.

The socio-economic crisis that Punjab is saddled with, an outcome of more than three decades of misgovernance, certainly needs a new economic design to chart out a credible pathway. It cannot come alone from seeking investments for setting up new industries and expanding businesses. While the clamour for reviving industries and the need for 'industry-friendly policies' is growing, what Punjab desperately needs is to redefine economic growth, by adopting the principles of a double-engine economy — that focuses equally on reviving industries and at the same time revitalising agriculture.

Not to be confused with the political sloganeering of 'double-engine sarkar' which essentially means the same party forming the government at the Centre and the state, a double-engine economy relies on two thrust areas for economic growth — industry and agriculture — leading to a new but everlasting economic foundation. While economic reforms had focused solely on industry as the engine of growth, the neglect of agriculture over the years has only worsened the farm crisis. Nowhere is it as starkly visible as in Punjab, the food bowl. Even with a crop productivity of more than 11 tonnes per hectare per year, amongst the highest in the world, farm indebtedness has only grown over the years. Intensive agriculture has led to severe environmental crisis. Moreover, despite achieving record production year after year, Punjab has turned into a major hotspot of farmer suicides.

Emerging from the shadows of the iconic farmers' protest at the gates of New Delhi, the underlying message that protesting farmers have delivered is loud



and clear. Not to be lost in the noise and din of the electoral campaigns for the Assembly elections that followed, farmers had actually called for a systemic change in economic thinking. Instead of sacrificing agriculture for the sake of the industry, the need is to revitalise agriculture and treat it as the second engine of economic growth. Ignoring the powerful message would be like missing a great opportunity to bring about a healthy transformation.

Agriculture alone has the potential to reboot the economy, provided we fix the broken food system. A vibrant agriculture has the capacity to provide gainful employment, thereby taking away the pressure the governments face for creating job opportunities in the cities. Moreover, an economically viable and sustainable agriculture is the pathway to remove rural distress, move towards crop diversification, reduce groundwater depletion and also restrict international migration. It's time to realise that a healthy agriculture and rural sector is the first barrier against many of the social and environmental ills Punjab is faced with.

With more than 98.5 per cent of the cultivable area under assured irrigation, and with an elaborate agricultural marketing infrastructure, including a wide network of village link roads, a strong foundation for rural transformation already exists. Knowing that the AAP has already initiated efforts to focus on public health and education, adding agriculture to the list and linking it with non-farm activities will act like a booster dose for the economy.

To begin with, given the huge environmental fallout from inten-

***Agriculture alone
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sive farming, and that includes devastated soil health, alarming levels of groundwater depletion, stubble burning along with the growing emergence of lifestyle diseases, Punjab needs to move towards an 'Evergreen Revolution'. Defying all doomsday prescriptions that are bound to be raised by powerful lobbies, political determination to shift to an ecological farming system, taking in the right kind of steps at the right time, can make Punjab the seat of 'Evergreen Revolution'. This will require appropriate changes to be made in research and educational curriculum, and also calls for reorientation of agricultural extension activities. This must be accompanied with an evaluation of ecosystem services approach, a concept that helps incentivise those farmers who protect natural resources.

According to the UN Food Systems Summit 2021 Scientific Group, the real cost of producing food is almost three times higher than what a consumer pays. Without realising the harmful impacts, the society at large pays for it in the form of environmental and health damages. The 'ecological footprint' of producing food, especially in areas like Punjab which rely heavily on chemicals for increasing crop production, has to be reduced. The sooner we begin,

the better it will be.

While there has been a lot of discussion about crop diversification, expecting farmers to move away from the intensive wheat-paddy crop rotation, the absence of an assured price and an enabling marketing infrastructure for the crops that are suggested as alternatives, has stood in the way. Let's first look at vegetables and fruits. Learning from the experience of Kerala, a system where the state government assures a minimum floor price which covers production cost plus 20 per cent profit for 16 vegetables and fruits, and steps in whenever the prices fall below this band, should be introduced in Punjab. While Kerala has set aside Rs 35 crore for the purpose, Punjab being a bigger state should begin by allocating at least Rs 250 crore. In addition, like the vast Mother Dairy depots network in Delhi, Punjab can also plan for retail sabzi outlets.

Shifting to millets, pulses and oilseeds has also to be planned on similar lines. A lot more needs to be done, but given the constraints of space, let's leave it for some other day.

No agricultural reforms would be viable, unless Punjab first sets up a State Commission for Farmers' Income and Welfare with the mandate to ensure that the average monthly income from farm operations alone (excluding non-farm activities) should not be less than Rs 25,000. If farming becomes economically viable and sustainable, I see no reason why Punjab — adopting the double-engine economy approach — cannot be the harbinger of a new economic revolution. □□

<https://www.tribuneindia.com/news/comment/fix-agriculture-for-sustainable-growth-in-punjab-378670>

‘Indian Rivers are in ICUs, Drying up Fast’—Waterman Rajendra Singh



On World Water Day, a rhyme haunts our country—the one that gnawed at Coleridge’s ancient mariner. “Water, water everywhere...” But most of us live far from the limitless sea, in concrete jungles that survive on borrowed water. So, what does water mean to people in Indian cities? Here in the National Capital Region, water up to 20 KL consumed by households is free. Yet a litre of bottled water costs up to Rs. 30. What does Rajendra Singh, the Waterman of India, think about this odd situation? “Twenty-one Indian cities are going to be waterless very soon,”

Rajendra Singh tells me in an interview for NewsClick conducted last week in Delhi. Singh is alluding to a prediction in a Niti Aayog report on water. He says, “It means that the underground and surface water availability will become zero.” Another report says 72% of water reservoirs are in overdraft.

Singh says in the interview that 70% of Indian rivers are dry and dead, while the other 30% have nitrates, acid, chromium and other heavy metals flowing in them. Their water is not compatible with drinking or bathing. In fact, they are causing cancer in large populations. “The Ganga river, when it goes past Kanpur is filled with sewage and toxic chemicals. Meanwhile, Agra’s Sharda river is burdened with sugar mills’ wastes,” he says.

But what if we swerve southward, are not rivers there better off? Singh has walked over 1 lakh kilometres leading numerous campaigns to protect and preserve water sources, so he is no stranger to any region of India. He confidently answers, “The Cauveri river is a good example of how to destroy a river. Its surface water is undrinkable.” He says bluntly that all Indian rivers are in the ICU, drying up fast. “The Tamraparni river is another case of how industries are off-loading effluents and killing a river,” he says.

The situation is such that the polluter-pays principle seems to be protecting polluters in India. “You see murderers get punished, but river polluters are killing millions with slow poison, yet no one even goes to jail,” he says. To Singh, who has tirelessly campaigned against policies that hurt rivers, those who pollute water and serious criminals must be seen as equally culpable in their distinct domains. “Without jail time and severe punishment for polluters, I feel millions more will die,” he says. Singh takes no pleasure in harsh words; he looks grim as he speaks of stiff action.

Naturally, the next question is the solutions the State is proposing for the water crisis, for instance, the Ken-Betwa link project. Singh summarises the project



The well-known activist says commodification of water in response to the water crisis will destroy what is left of it

Indra Shekhar Singh

as “a waste of money, water and resources”. He says the system will be complicated to run when the link is up and running. The reason is that the Ken-Betwa catchment areas fall in the same agro-climatic zones and have similar rainfall patterns. Plus, the river flow data used for the project is outdated. “They are extrapolating the model on redundant data sets. Given that climate change has impacted rainfall in the region it covers, it is unscientific to think these rivers will have the same water and rainfall levels ten or twelve years from now,” Singh explains.

Singh feels the water from this project will get captured by cities and industries, as in the past. The poor and farmers, who are told they will benefit from such projects, ultimately are the ones to lose. “Corporates will earn the benefits from linking rivers—it will become a den of such corrupt practices,” he says. But Singh also knows there is an alternative way to handle the water crisis. If we need water for farmers in parched regions and people need clean drinking water, then traditional water conservation techniques are a viable approach. “The regeneration of ponds, reservoirs, and traditional water systems can save ten times more water, and in a fraction of the cost,” he reminds. But these options are largely ignored, I tell him.

Further, does India’s Waterman think is our government could be lying about the benefits of river linking? And also, what does he feel about the Jal Jeevan Mission—will it be what it purports to be? Singh is forthright as ever. “Of course, the ghar ghar me nal [a tap in every home] scheme will suc-

ceed—because big budgets will fill the coffers of the giant corporates who get involved in it.” He points out that the profits of big corporates grew manifold during the Covid-19 crisis, when the rest of the country, especially the poor, suffered tremendously. Corporatisation and the Jal Jeevan Mission—what is the connection, you may wonder.

Probed further, Singh says, “It’s a simple case of selling plastic pipes and plastic taps. Let me tell you, there is a dearth of water today, and the future will be waterless as per the government’s own admission. This commodification of water will not help but destroy water.” In other words, to industry, there is no difference between the plastic water bottle and the plastic pipes that will bring water to households. If bottled water is a multi-crore business, the piped water scheme is the same thing, just done differently. “Commodification of water and the Jal Jeevan Mission is not about preserving life or even water. They are missions that will raise the fortunes of a few; the government thinks privatisation and sustainability are synonyms, sadly they are not,” he says.

The picture Singh paints is not bleak but alarming. After all, water transforms into food through the agricultural process. Will we not end up commodifying food even more as a result? Put another way, what do agriculture and farmers gain from such projects? “All government schemes such as river-linking, the irrigation schemes, etc., are corporate and contractor-driven. Ask yourself—who are the water schemes benefiting? The farmers are not, for sure,” he says.

In the watershed manage-

ment schemes, which were decentralised and helped the smallest farmer, the money did not go to big contractors. Singh regards this scheme as a lifeline, especially for farmers in rain-fed areas. “However, when the Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchai Yojana [an irrigation scheme] was started, money started trickling into contractors’ pockets,” says Singh.

Singh explains the dangers of the path India is on. He believes the government should pay serious attention to sewage management because waste destroys limited water supplies and sources. He reminds us that climate change and industrial chemicals will work together to sicken soil and underground and surface water. “These water sources are limited and shrinking. As a result, there is growing displacement in about seven agro-climatic zones. Further corporatisation and water shortages will create massive migrations of farmers.”

Is there something we can do on World Water Day and after, or are individual actions immaterial to avert such a gigantic crisis? Singh responds with a mantra of sorts, “Water is not a private entity, it does not belong to any government or society. Water needs to be conserved and we must be disciplined in our use of it.” What works, he insists, is for India and the world to adopt decentralised water models. “We must help regenerate water. We cannot only waste and exploit it as we have done in the last century.” Before I leave, I ask Singh if there are hopes of succeeding? He smiles and says, “There is always hope”. We can hope India fares better than Coleridge’s mariner. □□

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<https://www.newsdick.in/Indian-Rivers-ICU-Drying-Fast-Waterman-Rajendra-Singh>*

Future Fuel - Hydrogen

Carbon free hydrogen is topmost in the global green agenda. It replaces today's transition fuel—natural gas—which though being cleaner than coal, diesel, or heavy fuel oil, fails to deliver the sharp reductions envisaged in carbon intensity to limit global warming to between 1.5 to 2 degrees above pre-industrial levels.

Hydrogen and ammonia are expected to be the future fuels, and production of these fuels using renewable energy is one of the major requirements towards sustainable energy security and reduction in fossil fuel imports for the country. Green hydrogen (GH) is generated by splitting water into hydrogen and oxygen in an electrolyser using renewable energy. The hydrogen produced can be combined with nitrogen to make ammonia, avoiding hydrocarbons in the production process. Green ammonia is used to store energy and in fertiliser manufacturing.

GH is not only a cleaner substitute for natural gas but is also fit for purpose as a store of energy, and, therefore, useful in balancing intermittent electricity supply from solar and wind. Presently, natural gas, our limited hydro power resources and coal generators fill the gap. GH can also replace coal in industrial applications in steel and fertiliser manufacturing. It is also a suitable fuel for shipping and other heavy road freight vehicles because its energy density is 3 times of diesel and 3.5 times of heavy fuel oil.

In November 2021 at COP 26 in Glasgow, Prime Minister Modi made five commitments—achieve Net Zero by 2070, and by 2030, take cumulative non fossil fuel generation capacity to 500 GW, meet 50 percent of energy needs from renewable energy, reduce the energy intensity of the economy by 45 percent, and reduce carbon emissions by 1 billion tons.

Bharat has a deferred strike date for turning Net Zero (2070 instead of 2050 for the advanced economies and 2060 for China). Our per capita carbon emission rates are low, so we have the carbon envelop to take a more measured view on the carbon transition than most advanced economies. But faced by green conditionalities being imposed—a green tax on goods entering the EU and the linking of the flow and cost of international finance to green business credentials, an early adoption of Green Hydrogen (GH) demonstrates commitment to global sustainability.

Government of Bharat notified first phase of its Green Hydrogen Policy as a step forward towards National Hydrogen Mission. The mission aims to make Bharat a green hydrogen hub and help to meet its climate targets.

National Hydrogen Mission

(Ministry of Power, Government of Bharat, Notification No. 23 / 02 / 2022 – R & R dated 17.02.2022)

“Hon’ble Prime Minister launched the National Hydrogen Mission on Bharat’s 75th Independence Day (i.e. 15th August, 2021). The Mission aims to aid the government in meeting its climate targets and making Bharat a green hydrogen hub. This will help in meeting the target of production of 5 million tonnes of Green hydrogen by 2030 and the related development of renewable energy capacity.

Hydrogen and Ammonia are envisaged to be the future fuels to replace fossil fuels. Production of these fuels by using power from renewable energy, termed as green hydrogen and green ammonia, is one of the major requirements towards environmentally sustainable energy security of the nation. Government of Bharat is taking various measures to facilitate the transition from fossil fuel / fossil fuel based feed stocks to green hydrogen/green ammonia. The notification of this poli-



Green Hydrogen is future fuel which will make Bharat atm nirbhar in energy needs, reduce imports of crude oil, meet global climate targets and will save our land from natural disasters caused by vitiated environment by excessive carbon emission.

Vinod Johri

cy is one of the major steps in this endeavour.

The policy provides as follows:

- i. Green Hydrogen/Ammonia manufacturers may purchase renewable power from the power exchange or set up renewable energy capacity themselves or through any other, developer, anywhere.
- ii. Open access will be granted within 15 days of receipt of application.
- iii. The Green Hydrogen / Ammonia manufacturer can bank his unconsumed renewable power, up to 30 days, with distribution company and take it back when required.
- iv. Distribution licensees can also procure and supply Renewable Energy to the manufacturers of Green Hydrogen/Green Ammonia in their States at concessional prices which will only include the cost of procurement, wheeling charges and a small margin as determined by the State Commission.
- v. Waiver of inter-state transmission charges for a period of 25 years will be allowed to the manufacturers of Green Hydrogen and Green Ammonia for the projects commissioned before 30th June 2025.
- vi. The manufacturers of Green Hydrogen/Ammonia and the renewable energy plant shall be given connectivity to the grid on priority basis to avoid any procedural delays.
- vii. The benefit of Renewable Purchase Obligation (RPO) will be granted incentive to the hydrogen/Ammonia manufacturer and the Distribution licensee for consumption of renewable power.
- viii. To ensure ease of doing business a single portal for carrying out all the activities including statutory clearances in a time bound manner will be set up by MNRE.
- ix. Connectivity, at the generation end and the Green Hydrogen / Green Ammonia manufacturing end, to the ISTS for Renewable Energy capacity set up for the

purpose of manufacturing Green Hydrogen/Green Ammonia shall be granted on priority.

- x. Manufacturers of Green Hydrogen/Green Ammonia shall be allowed to set up bunkers near Ports for storage of Green Ammonia for export/use by shipping. The land for the storage for this purpose shall be provided by the respective Port Authorities at applicable charges.

The implementation of this Policy will provide clean fuel to the common people of the country. This will reduce dependence on fossil fuel and also reduce crude oil imports. The objective also is for our country to emerge as an export Hub for Green Hydrogen and Green Ammonia.

The policy promotes Renewable Energy (RE) generation as RE will be the basic ingredient in making green hydrogen. This in turn will help in meeting the international commitments for clean energy.”

The policy is an important first step to enable a hydrogen ecosystem. It has tried to address some of the key demands of the industry in terms of open access, grid banking and single window approval mechanism.

The policy aims to increase solar installations and decreasing renewable power generation costs to produce low-cost green hydrogen / ammonia for exports. Further to this first phase of policy announcement, the government plans to introduce Green Hydrogen Consumption Obligation in petroleum refining and fertiliser production on similar lines of renewable purchase obligation. It will mandate the use of green hydrogen and ammonia as a certain proportion of requirements in a phased manner. Initially, the refineries and fertiliser plants would be required to use 10% green hydrogen, which would be increased to 20%-25% in three to four years. The mandate will support the deployment of green hydrogen manufactur-

ing until its cost comes down in parity with grey hydrogen.

The production cost can go down if electrolyzers are indigenously manufactured. Bharat is targeting 15 gigawatts of electrolyser-making capacity and is considering production-linked incentives to boost local manufacturing. Currently, alkaline water electrolysis technique is being used, which consumes more electricity to produce hydrogen, while use of polymer electrolyte membrane (PEM) electrolysis would bring down the electricity requirement resulting in further cost reduction for hydrogen production.

It is likely that the bulk of hydrogen manufacture will happen in states on the eastern and western seaboard, given the potential for the use of GH in shipping as also for exports. The MOP policy makes port authorities liable for making land available for setting up GH or ammonia bunkers. The bulk of the incremental RE is also likely to be solar.

To support this transition from grey hydrogen to green hydrogen and to cater to growing hydrogen demand, Bharat will have to invest continuously for innovation, R&D projects and demonstration projects to support commercialisation of upcoming technologies and accelerate cost reduction of green hydrogen production.

The Ministry of Power has done what it could to incentivise the production of GH. Other ministries are to yet to add their own incentives to the pot in this unique, modular style of policy formulation.

Green Hydrogen is future fuel which will make Bharat atmnrbbhar in energy needs, reduce imports of crude oil, meet global climate targets and will save our land from natural disasters caused by vitiated environment by excessive carbon emission.

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(Source :Union Ministry of Power Govt of India, Observer Research Foundation, Mint, Indian Express)
Vinod Johri: Sah VicharPramukh, Swadeshi Jagran Manch, Delhi Prant

Guhilas between the 7th and 10th Centuries, Part-III



It was the Guhilas of Nagda Ahad (Udaipur, Southern Rajasthan) who transformed themselves into the subregional power of Mewar by the tenth centuries. They had accomplished territorial, political, economic and ideological integration of Upper Banas Plain by then.
Prof. Nandini Kapur Sinha

While trying to consolidate their power, the Guhilas of Kiskindhā were in the process of integrating the chiefs of this locality. Incorporation of chiefs into the administrative apparatus is evident from the Dungarpur plates of Bhavihita. These are addressed to the following classes of subordinate chiefs and functionaries: rajan (subordinate king), rājaputra (son of a rajan), rajasthaniya (viceroys), pratihāra (guard of the palace or capital), pramatr (officer-in-charge of measuring the king's share of the grains), baladhikrta (commander of forces), caudroddharanika (police magistrate dealing with cases of theft), dandapāūika (head of a group of policemen), saulkika (collector of customs duties), prātisaraka (gate keeper and collector of tolls), gamagamika (messenger), cata (chief of group of paiks), bhata (paik), and sevaka (attendant). Dūtaka (messenger) of Dhulev plates of King Bhetti is Samanta Bhavihita. Besides functionaries, the chiefs in the Kiskindhā grants such as the 'nrpa', 'nrpasuta', 'rajan', and 'rajasthaniya', point towards incorporation of some local chiefs into a samanta circle (through distribution of ranks), and rest of them in the administrative hierarchy. One may assume that the chiefs addressed in the land-grant charters were of local origin, for, these land charters do not specify the chiefs by their place of origin or as land donees. Hence, the set of local Rajput chiefs seems to have consisted both of Guhila (royal kinsmen) and non-Guhila lineages.

The Guhila kings were addressing the entire circle of local samantas including administrative functionaries at the time of making land grants. Two important functions were being performed by the series of land grants made by the Kīpkindhā Guhilas. Firstly, the Guhila kings of Kiskindhā introduced themselves as the sovereigns of Kiskindhā to the various sections of rural population including chiefs and local notables. The royal standards and dues were going to be fixed by the Guhila kings of Kiskindhā. Secondly, the long list of addresses indicate the Guhila kings desired, and were in the process of, incorporating the chiefs. The point is further proved by one of the land grant charters of the Guhilas of Kīpkindhā which refers to the permission taken from a local samanta (SamantaB-



hartrvadda) before the Guhila king donated land in a locality called *tambulikanivesa*. It is natural that the Guhila kings acknowledged the chiefs of the locality of *Kipkindhā* by their royal titles such as *nrpa* and *rajan* in the initial stage of state formation. It is equally important to mention that the Guhila kings of *Kiskindhā* distinguished themselves at this stage, just like the Guhilas of *Nāgda-Ahada* and *Dhavagartā*, by referring to themselves as members in the royal lineage of *Guhila-Guhilanaradhipa-vam* se 16 and not simply as *nrpa* or *naradhipa*. When the Guhila kings of *Kipkindhā* addressed locally important chiefs as 'npa' during the process of political incorporation, distinction for the royal dynasty was sought through the title of 'guhilanaradhipavamse

The beginnings of royal patronage of local *Ūaivaâcāryas*, through the construction of temples of Siva and grants for their maintenance in the Guhila kingdom of *Kipkindhā*, can be traced back to this early phase of state formation. In the eighth century, King *Kadachi's* Queen *Vonnā*, at the instance of her preceptor, *Kutuk-kâcārya*, made a grant of 40 *drama* coins to a temple of Siva. Finally, one more important factor that contributed towards the making of these local states in Mewar seems to have been warfare. I need not go into the physical descriptions of warfare in the seventh century records of Mewar to suggest that military operations also contributed to the process of territorial incorporation at the local levels. As noted, the *Nāgda-Ahada* state had a military apparatus headed by Commander-in-Chief *Varahasimha*. It is equally significant that

Baladhikrta (commander of forces) repeatedly figures in all the charters of the Guhilas of *Kipkindhā*. *Samoli* inscription refers to the strength of Guhila king *Siladitya* of *Nāgda-Ahada* against his enemies." It may be important to point out that much later in the tenth century when a sub-regional state in Mewar under the Guhilas of *Nāgda-Ahada* was trying to establish itself, there are very few actual inscriptional references to battles being fought between the Guhilas and their opponents.

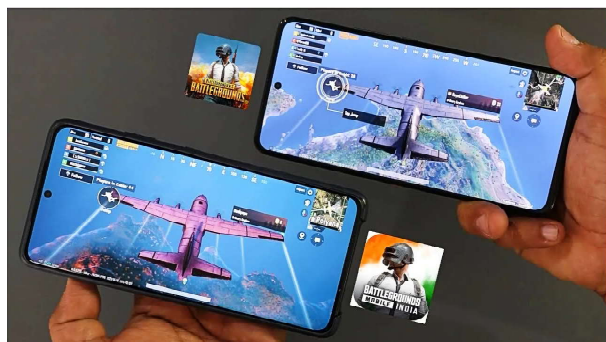
The above section surveyed the spatial distribution of the Guhila royal families on the map of early medieval Mewar, between seventh and tenth centuries. Three centres of Guhila power were located within Mewar. All these ruling families claimed descent from Guhila. It is obvious that by the seventh century the lineage of Guhila had acquired a prestigious status in western India. A number of ruling families even outside Mewar, in other parts of Rajasthan, started claiming descent from the Guhila. Secondly, evidence from *Kiskindhā* and *Nāgda-Ahadā* point to the beginnings of the political process of state formation, and integration of local chiefs into the emerging political structure. Thirdly, there is distinct evidence of increased agricultural activities as a foundation for these developments; at the same time, trade and commerce also appear to be getting more organized. Besides the Guhila ruling families, local notables and individual landholders characterized the rural society in Mewar in this period. Finally, the ideological dimension of state also appeared for the first time in the seventh century. The use of symbols of royalty such as

titles of *mahārāja* and *naradhipa*, and *prasastis* of the Guhila rulers testify to the formation of local states. The other important facet of ideological dimension, royal patronage of popular cults, also started in this period. (The tenth century in Rajasthan may be considered a crucial phase in the history of the Guhila dynasties as it witnessed the crystallization of a state apparatus among them. In order to highlight the integrating role of the Guhilas of *Nāgda-Ahada* in the process of state formation in Mewar, it becomes necessary to make a brief survey of the more important of contemporary Guhila families. The comparison would bring out the contrasts in the history of different Guhila ruling families in the period. Contemporary with the *Nāgda-Ahada* Guhilas were the Guhilas of *Chatsu* (near Jaipur, Jaipur district), the Guhilas of *Unstrā* (north-west of *Bagodiā*, Jodhpur district), the Guhilas of *Bagodiā* (north west of *Pipar*, Jodhpur district), the Guhilas of *Nadol* (Pali district) and the Guhilas of *Māngrol* (Saurashtra, Gujarat).

The Guhila dynasty that successfully transformed itself into a regional power by the thirteenth century. In this chapter, I will consider its changing material base, patronage of religious institutions and cults, genealogical structure and new political symbols, and administrative apparatus.

Finally the proliferation of branches of the *Nāgda-Ahada* Guhila royal family, its impact on the contemporary principality of the Mewar hills and other centres of Guhila power beyond Mewar hills will be discussed to examine the role of Rajput kinship structure in a period of state formation and growth. □

NGO Asks Chinese Billionaire To Answer Questions On Alleged Links Of His Company With BGMI Game



Prahar, a non-government organisation, wrote an open letter to Chinese billionaire and founder of Tencent Holdings Pony Ma, posing 10 questions including on allegations pertaining to his company's linkage with Krafton which runs the multi-player online video game, BGMI-PUBG, in India.

This comes days after the NGO urged the government to block the multiplayer online video game BGMI-PUBG on February 28, claiming it is "a new avatar" of the banned Chinese gaming app PUBG and that it poses "a grave threat" to the security, sovereignty and integrity of India.

SJM had also supported Prahar on the issue and said the government should thoroughly investigate "the antecedents and China influence" of the BGMI-PUBG app and take "immediate action if found in violation".

"Prahar has written an open letter to the reclusive Chinese billionaire Pony Ma, founder of Tencent Holdings, demanding answers to 10 pointed questions on the antecedents and covert linkages between Krafton, the company which is the current face of BGMI in India and Tencent the former banned owner of PUBG," it said in a statement.

In its letter, Prahar alleged that the Tencent's ties with Krafton goes "much deeper" and a "crafty facade" was created to fool the India and its government that PUBG and BGMI are two separate entities "Can you deny that PUBG mobile, called BGMI in India, was first developed by Lightspeed and Quantum which is an internal division of Tencent?" the NGO asked Ma, Chairman and CEO of Tencent Holdings.

In 2019, Techcrunch, a reputed tech publication, reported that Tencent replaced PUBG in China with a patriotic game called Game for Peace, and that this game was developed by Krafton and it is a replica of PUBG with focus on the Chinese Air Force, Prahar underlined and asked Ma, "Can you deny this report?" "The privacy policy of BGMI expressly allows user data to be shared with third parties whose solutions are used in the game. Is it true that BGMI uses third party solutions from the entities affiliated with Tencent?" it also asked.

Prahar alleged that Tencent is among the two biggest shareholders of Krafton.

"Tencent holds 15 per cent stake in Krafton through its 100 per cent subsidiary Image Frame (HK) Ltd. It is believed that Tencent indirectly hold additional stake in Krafton. This additional stake is undisclosed. Can you deny this?" it asked Ma.

The NGO alleged that Tencent Games continues to publish and runs PUBG mobile game in Pakistan, and dared Ma to deny his company's association with it.

<https://www.republicworld.com/india-news/general-news/ngo-asks-chinese-billionaire-to-answer-questions-on-alleged-links-of-his-company-with-bgmi-game.html>

RSS plans to reach UP villages by 2025

The Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) in Uttar Pradesh, is now working on expanding to reach all the villages in the state by 2025 and helping the government address the issue of unemployment.

Ashok Dubey, a senior RSS functionary, said that the plan for 'shakhas' at all villages could be completed by 2024 itself. The Lok Sabha polls are due in 2024 and the RSS will complete 100 years in 2025.

The RSS' rural expansion plan will hold the BJP in good stead ahead of the Lok Sabha polls, according to Dubey.

RSS chief Mohan Bhagwat is currently in Uttar Pradesh. He visited Gorakhpur where he had a meet-



ing with Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath.

After Gorakhpur, Bhagwat is scheduled to visit Varanasi, the Lok Sabha constituency of Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

Apart from setting up 'shakhas' in rural pockets, RSS functionaries said the Sangh cadres would also talk about the need for a caste-free society.

The caste-free society campaign is part of a long-standing RSS pitch to unite the Hindus into voting for a like-minded party.

"In Avadh Prant that has 13 districts, nearly 2,200 shakhas including weekly 'milan' (meets) and monthly 'mandalis' are being held," Dubey said.

He said that since 2017 when the BJP government was formed in the state, youths have shown a lot of interest in joining the Sangh.

At many places, school and college-going students are now holding the shakhas, he further said.

"This is the reason why the RSS has decided to involve its 'Swadeshi Jagran Manch' in finding out ways to provide for a place where job seekers get knowledge about the number and nature of jobs that are available and the skill sets, they require. A plan is underway to ensure a mutual win-win kind of situation for both job seekers and job providers," he added.

<https://telanganatoday.com/rss-plans-to-reach-up-villages-by-2025>

WTO Working On Limited IPR Waiver For Covid Jabs

The World Trade Organisation (WTO) is working on a 'compromise outcome' that includes a limited and conditional waiver from certain intellectual property rights just for Covid-19 vaccines for developing countries. Under the proposal, the waiver can only be availed of by developing countries that accounted for less than 10% of total global exports of Covid-19 vaccine doses in 2021.

India and South Africa had in 2020 proposed a comprehensive waiver of certain provisions of copyrights, industrial designs, patents and protection of undisclosed information in the Trade-Related aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS) agreement for available Covid-19 treatments, technology and vaccines to help countries fight the pandemic. The move is now sponsored by 65 WTO members.

"The 10% export criterion is a positive for India as it leaves out China and the European Union (EU), but the transparency requirements can be a big hurdle," said an expert on trade issues.



Biswajit Dhar, a professor at Jawaharlal Nehru University, expressed disappointment.

"It is a dilution from the high moral ground that India took in October 2020 which is essential to combat the pandemic. It is a disappointing proposal as 65 cosponsors are backing India including the Africa Group and more still joining us," Dhar said.

Swadeshi Jagran Manch, opposed the proposal. "Though this is not an official document but such a proposal is not acceptable and we need an all-encompassing, comprehensive waiver that goes beyond vaccines and includes trade secrets. We must protect our offensive interests."

The compromise, called the "outcome of the quadrilateral discussions," was reached after talks among a subgroup of WTO countries including India, South Africa, the US and the EU. The text is being considered by the EU. "The product scope is limited to vaccines with a commitment to decide on the extension of the solution to therapeutics and diagnostics within six months from the date of the decision on vaccines," as per the compromise outcome.

<https://vivetimes.com/wto-working-on-limited-ipr-waiver-for-covid-jabs/>

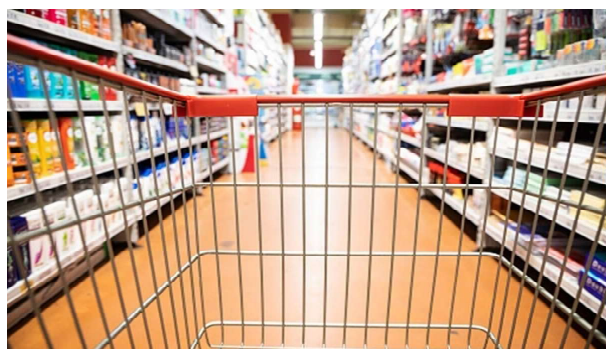
'Star ratings on food items not enough for informed choice': SJM to FSSAI

Swadeshi Jagran Manch (SJM) has raised questions on the FSSAI's move to introduce 'health star ratings' on the front-pack-labels of food items, saying that the food safety regulator should instead put cautionary warnings for an informed choice.

Speaking to PTI, SJM said that health star ratings on packaged food items and beverages would not give consumers an understanding of the health risks.

Whereas, he said, warning labels telling consumers whether the items contain sugar, salt, or saturated fats beyond a threshold limit will help them make informed decisions about their purchases.

"For example, if front of the pack of an item



has warning labels, a diabetes patient or a patient of high blood pressure would be able to decide whether he should buy or not,” SJM said when asked for comment.

The Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) has reportedly started a move to introduce health star ratings (HSR) on the front of the pack labels of packaged food and beverages.

The move was discussed at a stakeholders meeting, presided over by the food safety regulator’s CEO Arun Singhal, which agreed that the system “may be incorporated in the draft regulations”.

“From the minutes of the meeting it is evident that while taking a decision that each food should be rated from one to five stars, the FSSAI has chosen to ignore consumer interest and has given undue importance to the opinion of large food processing industries,” the SJM said.

According to the minutes of the meeting, George Cheriyan from CUTS International and Amit Khurana from the CSE opposed the recommendation for use of HSR Model in India citing the “positive connotation” underlying the star system that may mislead the consumer.

“... health star ratings are taken with a positive connotation and do not meet the intention of FOPL (front-of-pack-label) regarding warning for negative nutrients, which may be overwhelmed by positive nutrients in the algorithm design for HSR,” they said.

Consumer Voice CEO Ashim Sanyal said at the meeting the AIIMS-UNC was also carrying out a study on the FOPL and suggested that the FSSAI should wait for its report, expected to come “shortly”, before taking any decision.

At the meeting, the industry associations “appreciated” the study conducted by the IIM Ahmedabad and “expressed willingness” to go along with its recommendations.

“The stakeholders’ meeting was dominated by

pro-industry members,” said Mahajan, adding that the presence of the large number of food companies, raises question on FSSAI’s objectivity.

“When the food regulatory body is taking a decision in this regard, the health of the people of the country should be its “first priority and not the profit of the companies”, SJM said.

“It is the responsibility of the Ministry of Health to keep a close watch on these subjects,” SJM told PTL.

<https://theprint.in/india/star-ratings-on-food-items-not-enough-for-informed-choice-sjm-to-fssai/872955/>

HC: If Twitter can block Trump, why not Hindu gods’ abuser?

The Delhi high court asked Twitter to furnish its policy on blocking users posting objectionable content, saying the platform is not bothered about the sensitivities of people from “other regions” and ethnicities.

The HC took a dim view of Twitter’s reluctance to act against a user who repeatedly posted objectionable content against Hindu goddesses. When the site claimed it doesn’t block individual accounts unless there is a court order, the HC retorted: “If this is the logic, why have you blocked Mr Trump?”, referring to former US President Donald Trump. A bench comprising acting Chief Justice Vipin Sanghi and Justice Navin Chawla said, “It is ultimately boiling down to this - that people you feel sensitive about... the content, you will block them. You are not bothered about the sensitivities of other people in other regions of the world, of ethnicities. We dare say that if these kinds of things were done in relation to another religion, you would be much more careful, more sensitive.”

It was hearing a plea seeking to block an account for allegedly obnoxious posts on “Maa Kaali” and other Hindu goddesses by user “AtheistRepublic” and asking Twitter to produce its standard operating procedure on blocking of accounts.

Twitter submitted that it has removed the objectionable content in the present case and an FIR has



been registered in relation to the posts. Its counsel said the platform “can’t block any individual” and cannot take action against alleged objectionable content in the absence of a court order.

The HC said prima facie it is of the view that Twitter’s stand in this regard is “not entirely correct” while taking note that Twitter has “blocked the account of certain individuals from time to time”.

The HC underlined that Twitter also needs to follow the framework under the relevant IT Rules for social media intermediaries and asked it to explain if it is obliged to keep a watch on its users for offensive content and whether it blocks an account on receiving repeated complaints.

<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/hc-if-twitter-can-block-trump-why-not-hindu-gods-abuser/articleshow/90508613.cms>

Singapore’s Shopee decides to abruptly shut India business



Singapore’s ecommerce firm Shopee has decided to shut its operations in India just about six months after entering the country.

Shopee announced the development to its local team in a companywide town hall on Monday, saying it will cease to operate in India immediately, three people in the know told ET.

The etailer which competes with the likes of Meesho, Flipkart and Amazon India, especially at the lower-end of the market, will shutter its business effective March 29, they said.

Confirming the development to ET, a Shopee spokesperson said, “In view of global market uncertainties, we have decided to close our early stage Shopee India initiative.”

Earlier this year, Shopee had pulled out from France, after its recent foray in Europe.

Shopee’s exit comes soon after the Indian government banned its parent firm Sea’s gaming app

Free Fire as part of a wider effort to clamp down on Chinese apps. While Sea is based in Singapore, the group has come under the scanner for its Chinese links, including its investment from Tencent.

At least two sources said government’s scrutiny of Sea’s Free Fire app added to the instability of Shopee’s future in India and this was also taken into consideration while taking the decision to pull the plug.

Sea’s stock price on the New York Stock Exchange (NYSE) was down by about 6% at \$116.12 per share on Monday, after having slipped to below \$100 earlier in the month. The company had lost over \$16 billion in market capitalisation after India banned its gaming app.

Shopee communicated its decision to shut shop to merchants who sell on its platform.

The move is surprising considering Shopee had aggressive plans for the India market and has been offering heavy discounting to take on existing biggies.

Trader associations like Confederation of All India Traders (CAIT) had complained to the government, accusing Shopee of having Chinese investments and not adhering to Indian rules. CAIT had also approached anti-trust body Competition Commission of India, alleging predatory pricing on its site. However, the matter was dismissed recently.

Praveen Khandelwal, secretary general of CAIT, “welcomed” Shopee’s exit.

People familiar with the development said Shopee is likely to offer its India staff internal roles within Sea. “If that doesn’t work out, they will be given a three-month severance package,” one of them said.

“Employee access was down since morning today (Monday) and operations would shut down from tonight,” the person told ET.

Meanwhile, Shopee informed its India sellers that services related to payments, refunds, returns, disputes and among others, will continue to be operational until May 30. Existing orders will also be shipped and delivered as per process, the note to sellers said.

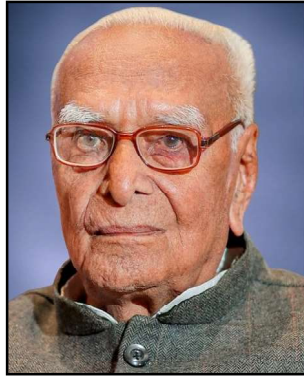
As of December 2021, Shopee had over 300 staff in India along with a seller base of more than 20,000. While the company was adding new staff and sellers, these numbers have not changed drastically since then.

ET saw a copy of the note. “Buyers will not be able to place any new orders from this date— March 29, 12:00 am,” it said.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/tech/startups/in-a-sudden-move-singapore-commerce-major-shopee-decides-to-exit-india/articleshow/90489581.cms?from=mdr>

Ishwar Das Mahajan ji: An inspiring personality

Sh. Ishwar Das Mahajan a Devoted Swayamsewak of the Rashtriya Swayamsewak Sangh, went for his heavenly abode on 28th March 2022 at the age of 99 years. Ishwar ji, the founding All India Treasurer of Swadeshi Jagran Manch, was the President of Swadeshi Jagaran Foundation and Convenor of Delhi Prant for a long time. He was not only a source of inspiration for lakhs of volunteers but also a very efficient administrator. Till the last moment of his life he was the publisher of Swadeshi Patrika.



He was born on 13 September 1923 in Shakargarh district, Gurdaspur (Punjab). His father Sh. Milkhi Ram Ji and mother Smt. Achara Rani had left this world at a very young age. Sh. Ishwar Das Mahajan, his elder brother Shri Ram Saran Das Mahajan and three sisters were brought up by his uncle Shri Mani Ram Mahajan.

He took care of the family so diligently that he decided not to marry. He devoted his whole life in upbringing and educating them and imparting values of life.

Sh. Ishwar Das Mahajan ji's entire life was dedicated to organisation's works. When Ishwar ji was studying in class seven, he became a swayamsewak of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS). Day by day his interest started increasing and he started spending more time in the activities of RSS.

After getting bachelors' degree, he went to Sialkot in 1942 as a RSS pracharak. With his efforts, activities of the Sangh expanded at a rapid pace. During his tenure, the Sangh's Shakhas increased rapidly and many swayamsewaks were sent for OTC (Prathamik Shiksha Varg) of the Sangh.

After the partition of India, he was sent to Shimla as Sangh Pracharak. There also, the Sangh work expanded successfully with his hard work. Due to his ability and skills, he came in contact with highly respected people and connected them with the Sangh. After some years he was given the work of Karnal district. During his tenure, many pracharakas from Karnal came forward for the expansion of Sangh work.

After relinquishing his Pracharakship, in 1952, he obtained degree of BT (equivalent of today's BEd)

degree. After that he served for ten years as General Secretary of RSS's Ambala District, which included a significant area of today's Haryana and Himachal Pradesh. He got Masters degree in History from Ambala. He took teaching assignment there. In the meanwhile, he got married to Nirmal ji and both were both teaching. While Ishwar ji was fully involved in RSS activities, Mrs Nirmal Mahajan ji also got involved into social work and held responsibility in Sewa Bharati.

In 1963, Ishwar ji came to Delhi as per the organization's plan. Taught here for a few years as PGT History in DAV Senior Secondary School and then became Principal there.

In 1967, as per the organisation's plan, he was made a secretary of the Bharatiya Jana Sangh, Delhi State. In 1973, he became a member of the Municipal Corporation of Delhi and was elected the chairman of the Standing Committee. Emergency was declared on 26 June 1975. He was jailed for 19 months during the Emergency.

In 1977, he was elected deputy leader of the Delhi Metropolitan Council. After some years Ishwar ji got involved in the work of RSS once again. He did a lot of work as Vibhag Karyawah, Vibhag Sanghchalak and Prant Karyawah. Due to his organisational skills, the work of the Sangh grew at a rapid pace. Ishwar ji started Vivekananda School in Anand Vihar on 1 May 1978 with some companions.

As per his wish of DEHDAN, his body was donated for the cause of humanity.

A large number of his fans and officials of RSS and various other organizations, including former Union Ministers Dr. Harsh Vardhan, Sh. Vijay Goel, many present and past Members of Parliament, Speaker of Delhi Legislative Assembly Sh. Ram Niwas Goyal, All India Organizer of SJM Sh. Kashmiri Lal, All India Co-convenor Dr. Ashwani Mahajan were present in the Shradhanjali Sabha, held on March 31, 2022. Karyakartas of Swadeshi Jagran Manch from all over the country express tearful tributes on his departure for his final journey and pray for his Sadgati. □□

Swadeshi Activities **Swavlambi Bharat Abhiyan - Meetings**

Pictorial Glimpses



Sepahijala, Tripura (30 March 2022)



Manipur (28 March 2022)



Jodhpur (03 April 2022)

Ahmedabad, Gujarat (26 March 2022)



'Holi Mangal Milan' program, Delhi (17 March 2022)

Swadeshi Activities **Swavlambi Bharat Abhiyan - Meetings**

Pictorial Glimpses



Jabalpur, Mahakaushal (5 March 2022)



Ludhiana, Punjab



Siliguri, North Bengal (25 March 2022)



Assam

