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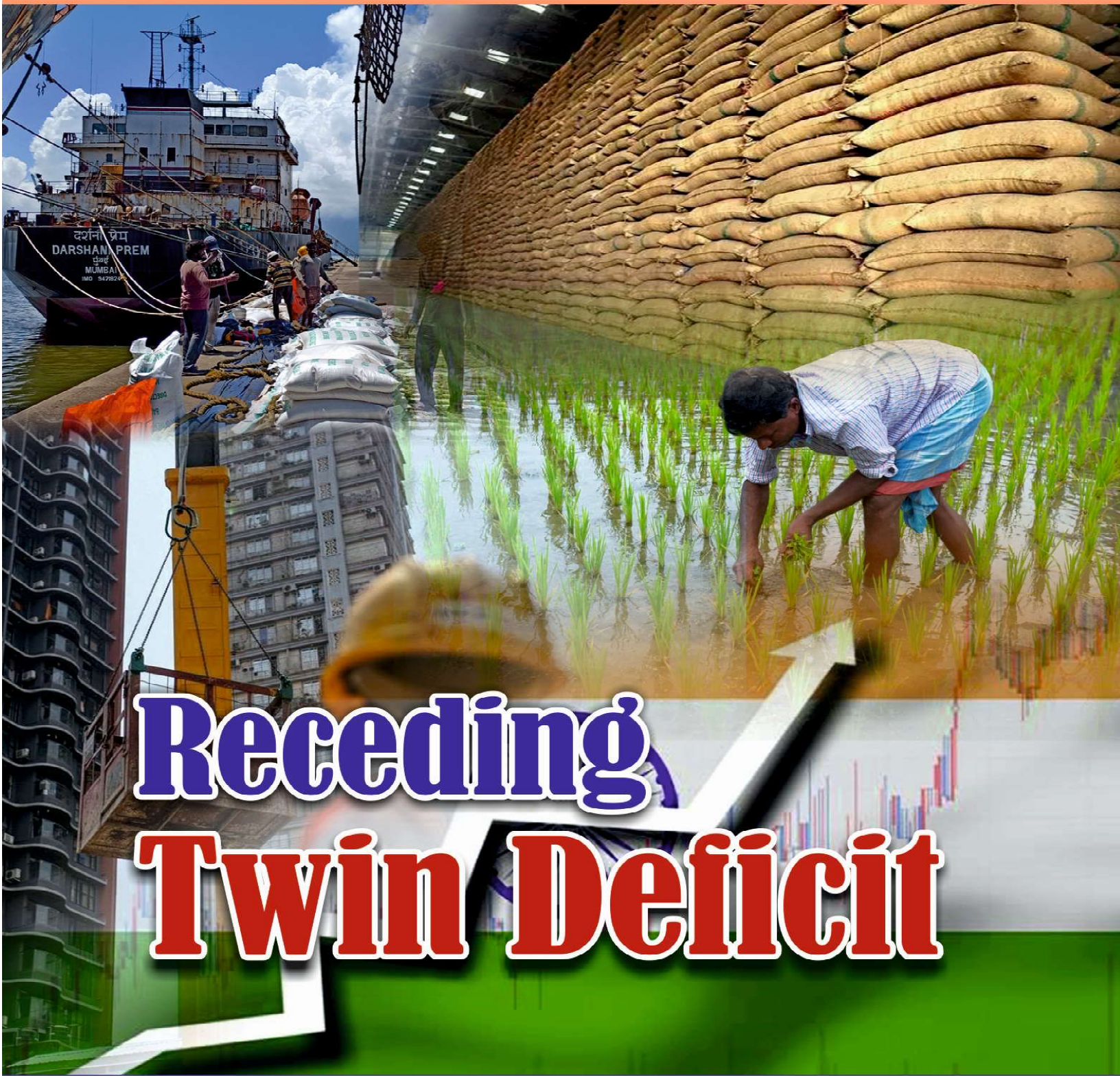
▶▶ ANALYSIS

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# Swadeshi

## PATRIKA

JANUARY 2024



# Receding Twin Deficit



Swadeshi Activities

# Swavlambi Bharat Abhiyan Meetings

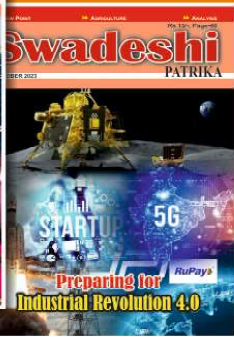
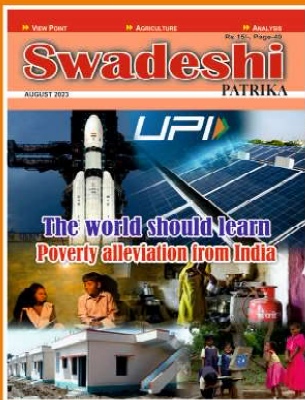
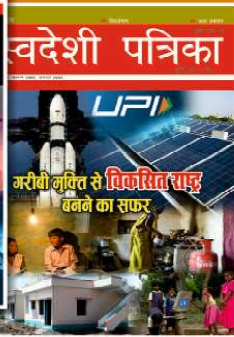
Pictorial Glimpses



Palakkad, Kerala



Telangana



## VOICE OF

SELF RELIANT INDIA

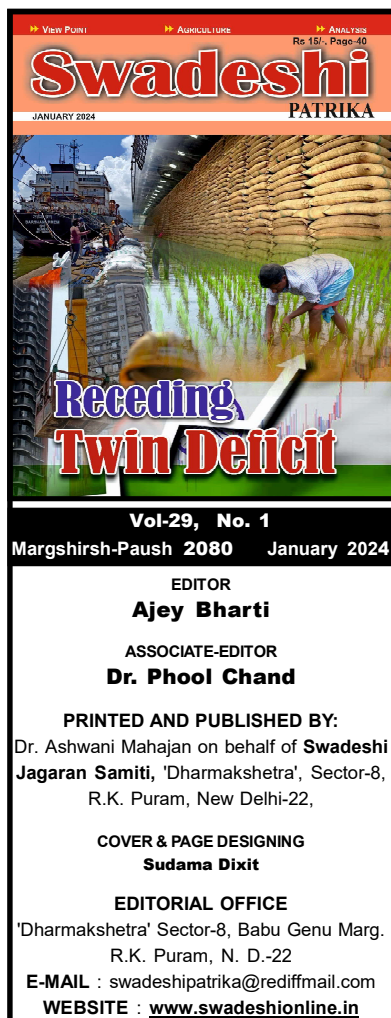
## SWADESHI

Patrika

## स्वदेशी

पत्रिका

# पढ़ें और पढ़ायें



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## Ram Rajya Arriving

*The Ram mandir has emerged as a universal event. It is good to see that the supporters and the opponents are coming together to celebrate this mark on civilization, keeping apart the politicians and religious radicals. This struggle has been of the general public, sadhus, and sanyasis of our motherland for the last five hundred years.*

*Today, the Ram Dhun is being heard everywhere as if it is the latest art. Every artist whether they be singers, choreographers, fashion designers, or even corporations is giving full advertisement with the theme of Ram Mandir.*

*This day 22 January will forever be a mark on the universal calendar. It is very difficult to figure out the most important date that people remember worldwide. A spontaneous answer can be May Day, whatever the reason. The next work or work in progress is the Ram Rajya. Ram Rajya means everyone in the society is well placed as per their capability, interest, necessity, and opportunities. The Swavalambi Bharat Abhiyan is already two years old and many programs have been conducted, and many changes have been felt. In the startup ecosystem, the mindset changes from job seeker to job provider, the enthusiasm to follow the interest rather than the well-paid job without interest, the rising contribution of the agriculture sector in SGDP of Madhya Pradesh, the implementation plan of regional language education through the New Education Policy are all directing towards Ram Rajya.*

*This makes the task tough to visualize our motherland in the next twenty years and only one thing is visible the world has acknowledged that the Vishwa Guru Bharat has arrived to offer the template of Ram Rajya to everyone.*

— Ankit Sharma, Datia, MP

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For subscription please send payment by A/c payee Cheque/Demand Draft/Money

Order in favour of 'Swadeshi Patrika' at New Delhi, or

Deposit the subscription amount in Bank of India A/C No. 602510110002740,

IFSC: BKID 0006025 (Ramakrishnapuram)

Annual Subscription : 150/-

Life Membership : 1500/-

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## Quote-Unquote



**Our commitment is to ensure that language does not pose a barrier to the education and advancement of any child.**

Narendra Modi, Prime Minister, Bharat



**I would urge the entire industry to support domestic procurement and domestic value within your final product to the highest level possible.**

Piyush Goyal, Union Minister, Bharat



**I expect the ODOP (one district one product) to actually translate into a stronger tourism in the years to come and tourism is a powerful driver of employment ... ODOP, can, is and should become a more powerful driver of tourism.**

S. Jaishankar, External Affairs Minister, Bharat



**Aatmanirbhar Bharat successful because India stayed out of RCEP.**

D. Ashwani Mahajan

National Co-convenor, SJM



## WEF: An Elites' Club

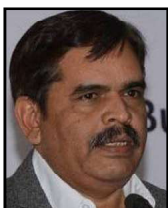
Between January 15 and 19, the conference of the World Economic Forum (WEF), an important forum of the world, was held in Davos (Switzerland). The World Economic Forum, which came into existence in the year 1971, has emerged as an important institution discussing the global economic issues for the last 53 years. Many subjects including trade, geopolitics, security, cooperation, energy, environment and nature have been discussed on this platform. Big celebrities from economic, political, social and technology fields participated in this conference at Davos. Apart from the heads of government of 60 countries, representatives of many big institutions, politicians, heads of multinational companies, and many prominent personalities from the economic, social and political world were seen in the meetings and seminars organized in this conference. If we look at the members of the World Economic Forum and its membership fees, it comes to mind that this forum is not an all-inclusive forum. This is a platform funded by 1000 big multinational companies (MNCs) of the world. Obviously, when MNCs provide funds to run the activities of this forum and huge fees are charged for participating in it, then people, concerned about the welfare of the less fortunate sections of the society cannot participate in it.

WEF can be called the forum of only those giant companies of the world who fund the activities of the forum. Because there is nothing as serving the interests of the common people of the world in this. If we talk about the World Economic Forum 2024, then we see that the issues discussed in this 5-day long conference do not seem to have any special relevance to the common people. All the 60 heads of government who participated in this forum of the World Economic Forum were seen expressing concern over the turmoil in global geopolitics, increasing hostility and war situation between the countries. Although their concerns are legitimate, when discussing the economy, their focus was not at all on the inequalities between countries and poverty, illiteracy and unemployment of the masses in the world. A topic that is of concern to the entire world, i.e. environment and climate change, was discussed, but no political will was seen among global leaders to find a solution. MNCs, whose assets are worth trillions of dollars, may discuss environmental problems at the World Economic Forum or other forums, but they are still unable to spare the technology with them to tackle this problem, without exploitative prices. This situation points towards the dual character of multinational companies. While climate change continues to be the biggest challenge facing humanity at the moment, yet these multinational companies are not ready to sacrifice their profits. All the celebrities who came to attend the Davos conference, discussed the deteriorating environment in the world and the threats of destruction due to changing climate, but most of them came there in their own private planes. They seemed indifferent towards how much carbon was emitted and the environment was degraded. Due to the high fees, activists working for marginalized communities, backward societies and the general public could not be invited to participate in this conference. The presence of heads of government and big ministers in governments and selected intellectuals favourites of big companies provides legitimacy to the agenda of these companies.

Obviously, no matter how much these multinational companies talk about humanity and welfare, their behavior during the worst pandemic of this century was highly shameless. A company called Pfizer deliberately supplied an ineffective covid vaccine across the world. The company was well aware that their vaccine was not effective, yet they were also putting pressure on the Indian government through the American government. Not only this, under US's pressure, India's opposition parties were also pressurizing the government to buy its vaccine. On the sidelines of the last World Economic Forum (2023), when the CEO of Pfizer Company was asked questions in this regard, he shamelessly refused to say anything. It is no secret that 'GATT' agreements were made under the pressure of multinational companies, which included TRIPS, TRIMs, services agreement and agriculture agreement. The TRIPS Agreement not only extended the term of patents on all types of products, including drugs and medical devices, in the interest of multinational companies, it also implemented the transition from process patents to product patents, which hampered health security, all around the world. When the companies protested against South African government purchasing of medicines from India's Cadila company in World Trade Organisation (WTO) and faced public anger due to this, it was accepted in WTO that patents would be ineffective during pandemic and health emergency situations. But the world witnessed that amidst the worst pandemic of the century, multinational companies did not give up their patent rights.

It can be understood that no welfare of the world can be expected from such an international forum which is dominated only by multinational companies and in which the representatives of the masses in the world do not have any effective role. It has to be understood that what can be expected from the World Economic Forum, which is funded and run by MNCs, insensitive towards humanity, whose only religion is profit. On January 19, 2024, U.S. Representative Scott Perry (PA-10), joined by five others, introduced the 'Defund Davos Act'. He said, *"Forcing American Taxpayers to fund annual ski trips for insular, global elitists is absurd - not to mention reprehensible. .... The World Economic Forum doesn't deserve one cent of American funding, and it's past time we defund Davos."* If this act is passed, WEF will stop getting any funding from US exchequer. This shows that WEF is being opposed by congressmen in US as well, accusing it to be elitist and having no relevance for the common man.

# Receding Twin Deficit



*Lower Twin Deficit is bringing good news for the economy by way of control on inflation, lesser domestic and foreign debt and better value for domestic currency. It adds one more reason to celebrate as these numbers mean better prospects for the economy.*

**Dr. Ashwani Mahajan**

Fiscal deficit and deficit in balance of payment on current account are the two deficits which had been haunting Indian economy for long. In economics, we call them Twin Deficit. If we see data, we find a significant decline in both, in the first eight months of the current fiscal year. Though, this is too short a period to make a definitive conclusion, but there doesn't seem to be any major reason, for twin deficit to rise again in any big way, in months to come. As per the latest data, deficit in balance of payment on current account (CAD) has come down to nearly one percent of GDP in first two quarters of the current fiscal year (2023-24), while fiscal deficit has been recorded at nearly 50 percent of the total fiscal deficit estimated for the whole year, in the first eight months from April to November 2023. Actual fiscal deficit for these eight months has been estimated to be only rupees 9.06 lakh crores against total fiscal deficit projected for the whole year, that is, rupees 17.86 lakh crores. This implies that if the same trajectory follows, total fiscal deficit for full year (2023-24), would be rupees 13.5 lakh crores, which would be nearly 75.4 percent of the projected fiscal deficit. If we allow for fiscal deficit to exceed the current projections, by rupees one lakh crores, fiscal deficit could be nearly 81 percent of the budgeted figure.

It is notable that in the budget projections, fiscal deficit for the year 2023-24 was estimated to be 5.9 percent of GDP, but with lower fiscal deficit figures, it is expected to be only 4.8 percent of GDP. Therefore, by any imagination, fiscal deficit cannot breach budget projections, rather it may definitely be lower than the budgeted fiscal deficit.

## Twin Deficit: Duet of Fiscal Deficit and CAD

Fiscal deficit is the difference between the total revenue and total expenditure of the government in a fiscal year. Fiscal deficit arises when the expenditure





(revenue expenditure and capital expenditure) of the government is more than the revenue generated by the government in that year. Though, fiscal deficit and increase in public debt are two different concepts, primary effect of fiscal deficit is felt on public debt. It's notable that in the first eight months of the current fiscal year, total increase in debt has been 8.1 lakh crores.

Current Account Deficit (CAD) in the balance of payments, occurs when the total value of goods and services imported by a country exceeds the total value of goods and services it exports. Its implication is on outflow of foreign exchange from the country on current account. This deficit is filled mainly by borrowing from abroad or inflow of foreign investment, both foreign direct investment and foreign portfolio investment. Direct impact of CAD is on the demand for foreign exchange, which leads to the depreciation of domestic currency and increased dependence on foreign borrowings and foreign investment.

### Booming Revenue

We understand that fiscal deficit, could be kept in check due to booming revenue receipts. Both direct and indirect taxes have shown a significant increase, even higher than the budget projections. For instance average monthly GST receipts in the first eight months of the current fiscal year have been rupees 1.66 lakh crores, which is nearly 11 percent higher than average GST receipts of rupees 1.5 lakh crores, in the corresponding period last year and are also higher than the projected numbers in the budget 2023-24. Similarly receipts

from Corporate Tax in the first eight months, have shown a much bigger receipts, of 5.14 lakh crores, showing an increase of 20 percent from receipts in 2022-23. Similarly receipts of personal income tax of rupees 5.67 lakh crores, too are 29 percent, higher than the receipts a year ago. Despite lower receipts from excise duty due to lowering of windfall tax rate on crude oil, overall tax receipts show a growth of 14.7 percent, which is higher than 10.9 percent growth factored in the budget. Government expenditure in these eight months also is not less than projected, rather it's marginally higher than what was factored in the budget.

### Better Services Exports

On the other hand, we see booming export of services, helping India to limit CAD to nearly one percent of GDP. Significantly, CAD was 3.8 percent of GDP, in the last quarter of the financial year 2022-23. It's notable that India's export of services have been growing at a much faster rate in the last few years. In 2020-21 export of services were hardly US\$ 206 billion, which increased to US\$ 254.5 billion in the year 2021-22, and to US\$ 325.3 billion, in 2022-23. Services exports have been estimated at US\$ 254 billion in first eight months of the current financial year. If they (services export) maintain present pace, it may reach nearly US\$ 380 billion in the year 2023-24. It is notable that merchandise exports are not increasing, rather they show a decline by 6 percent compared to same period last year, and stand at US\$ 279 billion in the first eight months of current financial year. However, total imports of merchandise and services stand

at US\$ 562.2 billion in the first eight months of 2023-24. As merchandise and services exports are estimated to be US\$ 533.4 billion, current account deficit in the balance of payment is only US\$ 28.8 billion for the first eight months of the financial year 2023-24. If we make projections of CAD based on first eight months, total CAD for the whole year would be US\$ 43.2 billion (Rs 3.6 lakh crores) which would be 1.19 percent of the projected GDP of Rs 301.75 lakh crores for first eight months of the current financial year.

### Good news for the economy

Lower than projected fiscal deficit means double benefit for the economy.

First, we shall be able to manage inflation in a better way. We understand that due to purchase of Russian oil, cheaper than global price of crude, thanks to independent foreign policy on the one hand and control on food prices, have helped India to keep inflation rate lower than other large economies. Now, lower than projected fiscal deficit too is destined to help government to keep price line within limits.

Secondly, as we understand, fiscal deficit is majorly filled by government's borrowings, lower fiscal deficit means lower than projected central government's debt. Notably, budget 2023-24 had given central government's debt projections at Rs 169.5 lakh crores, which may be at least lower by 3 lakh crores. It's important to note that if this lower fiscal deficit materialises, central government's debt would be 55 percent of GDP, as compared to 56 percent of GDP in 2022-23.

[Continued on page no. 22]

# Dubious ratings by credit rating agencies

Sovereign ratings attempt to highlight the credit worthiness of governments. They help the lenders to determine whether the borrowing government will honour its debt repayment commitments. Thus a country's ability to borrow money from global investors hinges on good credit rating. If the rating assigned to a sovereign is low, the risk of default is high; consequently that government will have to borrow at higher cost.

Not only that, such ratings matter for all businesses of the country. This is because the government of a country is considered to be the least risky of all borrowers from that nation. Thus other businesses of that country - being considered potential borrowers with even higher risks - will have to pay even higher interest rate.

India - like other developing countries - suffers from a lack of capital; with a poor rating it will find it difficult to borrow from lenders. On one hand it will fail to utilize its other resources (labour, natural wealth, etc. which need to combine with physical and financial capital) for economic development. On the other, productivity will suffer, poverty will continue unabated, and so on.

That's why sovereign credit ratings - and the 3 agencies, Moody's, Standard & Poor, and Fitch - become important in determining not only the borrowing capability of a nation but even the path of economic progress. India, for long, has quibbled with the ratings assigned to it by these agencies. And it has good reasons to be aggrieved. According to the Indian government there are three main issues:-

One, these rating agencies adopt questionable methodologies which inherently appear to work against developing countries. For example, Fitch weighs banks with foreign ownership at a higher pedestal compared with public sector banks (which, according to it, face non economic considerations - political interference - in their working). In India of course these PSBs dominate. Besides, such basis of assessment ignores the welfare and development - functions that these PSBs perform, including spreading financial inclusion (e.g. Jan Dhan accounts - role of the financial institutions).

Two, the experts consulted for the acting assessments are selected in a non transparent manner, thus making the process of assessment even more opaque.

Three, the agencies do not specify the assigned weights for each parameter taken into consideration. Even if some numerical weights are assigned to such parameters (Fitch, for example, considers four factors - structural features, external finances, public finances, and macroeconomic outlook, policies and prospects - with respective 'indicative' weights), these weights may be for illustrative purposes only and need not reflect the actual weights assigned. In any case these indicative weights calculation are also based on false premises. Most of these weights are based not on hard real data, but they rely excessively on subjective appraisals.

Hard economic data may not be used to arrive at these weights. For example, the weights may be based on such criteria as freedom of expression, freedom



*There is an urgent need to voice forcefully against biased, unfair, and unabashedly faulty evaluation by the international credit rating agencies; there should be zero tolerance against such shabby treatment.*

**KK Srivastava**



of media, rule of law, corruption, quality of regulation, etc. The lack of transparency in the assessment methods of the agencies makes it challenging to quantify the impact of qualitative factors on credit ratings. Over half the credit ratings are determined by the qualitative component. Most of these components, indeed, cannot even represent the sovereign's willingness to pay.

If one was to access India's financial strength and stability on financial parameters – the most relevant ones – then India certainly deserves a better rating than what of late has been awarded to India by these three agencies. At the very least, India deserves an upgrade, in the background of India's stellar economic performance both inter temporally and inter regionally. For example, Moody's has shown concern with limited progress on India's fiscal consolidation. While India's fiscal deficit may not have been contained at targeted levels, there seems little danger of it spiraling out of control. The government is targeting a deficit of 4.5% by FY 26, down from 5.9% in the current year, which sounds realistic as tax revenues have been buoyant. Similarly, as per IMF assessment, the country's debt levels could cross 100% of GDP by FY 28 (in the worst case scenario). But note that for the US, UK and China, the debt levels are pegged at 160%, 140% and 200% respectively. India's general government debt – centre and states combined – has actually declined from 88% (2020-21) to 81% (2022-23). The government borrowings are expected to come down even further in face of encouraging trends in foreign investment inflows through bond market. Thus, if at all, the rating



agencies need to revise significantly upward the weightage assigned to financial parameters, including foreign exchange reserves (very high currently) and very comfortable balance of payments.

India has been one of the highest and fastest growing large economies, moving steadily towards becoming world's third largest economy in a few more years. It has never defaulted on loan repayment, including in worse circumstances. This is in background of the fact that in the past on several occasions it has been conclusively established that the rating agencies tend to be way behind the curve; they also exhibit herd behavior, more so in times of stress.

Good governance, democracy, ensuring citizens voice and accountability, rule of law, control of corruption all are desirable goals in themselves. But the ability to discharge debt is ultimately a function of a country's macroeconomic fundamentals, such as GDP growth, inflation, government debt GDP ratio, fiscal and current account balance, external liabilities, forex reserve levels, and so on. Governance indicators (enjoying 68% weightage in India's assigned credit ratings) rely on perceptions and value judgments. This means these

rating agencies are seemingly suggesting that any improvement in macroeconomic parameters would matter little when it comes to sovereign credit rating.

Having said that, however, there is a scope for improvement for India. No doubt the credit rating agencies need to be more objective, quantitative, and transparent in their ratings – and thereby enhance their own credibility. But we need to address some questions too. First issue relates to data quality on which there is a debate currently on; legitimate questions have been raised, especially in the absence of Census data (the latest one became due in 2021, and there are no signs of it at least till the end of 2024, according to the latest reports) or household consumer expenditure survey (government results not after 2011-12). Second, while the general government debt at 82% (2022-23) is a good figure, remember that the same ratio was 77.2% in 2006 and 66.4% in 2010. Thus fiscal consolidation can certainly engage the attention of the government.

Efficient allocation of global capital certainly calls for playing the game on an even ground so that fair play is ensured. Rating agencies owe it to India. □□

# Ayodhya on the path of becoming an important economic center

The idol of Ramlala is going to be consecrated in the newly build grand Shri Ram temple of Ayodhya on 22 January 2024. There is an atmosphere of enthusiasm across the country. Every person wants to go to Ayodhya on the occasion of Pran-Pratishtha; as it is not possible for everyone to come to Ayodhya at the same time, crores of people are planning to visit Ramlala in Ayodhya in the coming few months. Not only an international airport is being built in Ayodhya, hotels and other types of infrastructure are also being constructed rapidly for the convenience of visitors. This will not only boost tourism in and around the city, but will also transform the city into a regional growth hub, thereby promoting trade and economic growth in the wider region. A mega-tourism city of global standard, attracting millions of tourists every day, could also revolutionize the economy of neighboring districts. The people of Ayodhya are upbeat about the development of tourism, defining a new direction for the economic development of Ayodhya. Master Plan to upgrade the holy city to meet the daily temple darshan requirement of around 3 lakh people after the consecration of the idol of Ram Lalla 2031, for the reconstruction of Ayodhya with an investment of over Rs 85,000 crore will be completed in 10 years.

When the movement for the construction of Ram temple in Ayodhya, was going on, some people in the country were suggesting that it would be beneficial for the people if hospitals or educational institutions were built, in place of the temple. Sam Pitroda, a technocrat who was very close to the government during the Congress rule and who had also accompanied Rahul Gandhi on his recent visit to United States of America, had said that temples do not generate employment. No matter what Sam Pitroda says, there is a great need to understand the economics of temples today. It is true that agriculture, industry and services have their own economics, on the basis of which we prepare the outline of the country's development. But people who speak against temples forget that religious services and temples also have their own economics. Wherever there are temples, development work automatically happens around them. In ancient India, pilgrimage places were important economic centres as well, bestowing huge financial benefits to the people. Due to the attractive craftsmanship, grandeur and supernatural idols in every temple, these were spiritual as well as a tourist destinations. This system existed all over India.

Today, when the construction of the temple is nearing completion and the consecration ceremony is about to take place, we need to understand how beneficial temples, religious and spiritual tourism can be for our country and the people. Temples also generate huge employment. Innumerable people earn their living around the temples and through modernization and development of infrastructure in the temples, not only the level of those services can be improved, but their contribution to the GDP can also be increased. Therefore, like other sectors of the economy, it is important to think about the temple economy also. India, which has more than 20 lakh temples, also has 4 crore people directly associated

*Today, it is imperative that by developing these areas of religious and pilgrimage tourism, their contribution in the development of the country be further increased.*  
**Swadeshi Samvad**



with the tourism and travel industry. Religious and temple tourism is a big part of overall tourism in the country. Prime Minister Narendra Modi's government is also working to further strengthen this temple economy in a planned manner. Shri Ram Temple in Ayodhya, Mahakal Lok for Mahakaleshwar Jyotirling, Kashi Corridor for Kashi Vishweshwar, temple renovation and Shankaracharya site in Kedarnath, Ekam Dharm in Omkareshwar, renovation of Sharda Peeth in Kashmir, development of Kailash Darshan in Uttarakhand are some steps in the same direction.

We see that even today a large population in many cities and towns in India depends only on temples and pilgrimage places for their livelihood. Varanasi, Mathura-Vrindavan, Ayodhya, Kushinagar in Uttar Pradesh, Haridwar, Rishikesh, Kedarnath, Badrinath, Gangotri, Yamunotri temples in Uttarakhand are only some examples. If we see, almost all the states have one or more big religious centers. Tamil Nadu has Meenakshi Temple (Madurai), Rameshwaram Temple and many other temples. Jagannath Puri Temple in Orissa; Somnath and Dwarka in Gujarat, Golden Temple in Punjab are the major centers of faith. Baidyanath Temple in Deogarh, Jharkhand and Jagannath Temple in Ranchi are world famous; There is Mahakal Temple of Ujjain in Madhya Pradesh and number of temples in many cities and towns of India, which are centers of faith.

### Tourism

In the cities where such temples are located, a large number of devotees and tourists visit, supporting the economies of those cities.

There are many places where lakhs of devotees gather in a single day. During the year 2022, 36.4 lakh devotees visited Vaishno Devi temple located in Katra, Jammu, 3 crore devotees visited Tirupati Balaji temple located in Andhra Pradesh during the year 2022. Similarly, crores of people visit different temples every year. This natural religious tourism forms a major part of our total tourism business, creating huge demand. It is estimated that the share of religious tourism in India is 60 percent of the total domestic tourism, while 11 percent of foreign tourists come for religious purposes. It is noteworthy that the share of tourism in India's GDP is about 7 percent and its share in the total employment of the country is huge 8 percent. That means this sector provides employment to nearly 4 crore people. In such a situation, looking at the contribution of religious tourism, both domestic and international, there can be no doubt about the contribution of temples to the Indian economy.

According to the Ministry of Tourism, Government of India, while 14.33 crore Indian people visited temples and pilgrimages in the year 2022, 64.4 lakh foreign tourists also visited these places. In the year 2022, an income of Rs 1.35 lakh crore was generated from these pilgrimage places. That is, it can be understood that those who say that temples do not create employment or temples have no contribution in the Indian economy, should know these facts.

### Contribution to the Society

We have several examples showing that many temples, places of pilgrimage and religious and spiritual leaders are doing exem-

plary work in the establishment of educational institutions and health centres. The Hindu Mission Hospital in Vellore, Tamil Nadu was founded by the Hindu Mission Society in 1894. It is one of the oldest and most well-known hospitals in the country. The Ramakrishna Mission runs a number of educational institutions and health centers across India. The Arya Samaj also runs a number of educational institutions and health centers across India. These include schools, colleges, and hospitals.

The Jain temples in India have traditionally been centers of learning. Many Jain temples have libraries, schools, and even universities. The Sikh Gurudwaras in India also provide free education, food and healthcare to the country. These are just a few examples of the many educational institutions and health centers that have been developed by temples and religious leaders in India. These institutions play an important role in providing education and healthcare to the people of India.

Today, it is imperative that by developing these areas of religious and pilgrimage tourism, their contribution in the development of the country be further increased. For this, apart from renovation of old temples, construction of all types of economy and luxury hotels, expansion of infrastructure and civic amenities and establishment of tourist information centers in these religious and pilgrimage places; and their connectivity with different parts of the country to reach these places, are some of the initiatives through which their (pilgrimage places and temples) contribution to the national economy can be strengthened. □□

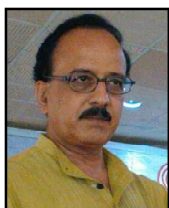
## Hand-holding marginal farmers

Kradhika is a marginal farmer from Veerapanenigudem village in Krishna district of Andhra Pradesh (AP). She has just 1.1 acres of land and all of it is under natural farming. I couldn't believe when she said her son had done MBA and her daughter was studying in the US. When asked why she hadn't given up farming as her children were doing so well, she said: "My children do want me to give it up and live with them but I tell them you do what you are doing and let me do what I enjoy doing." She follows a staggered cropping system, which is called ATM (any time money) as it provides her with a regular income.

ATM is one form of the classification of activities enshrined under the Andhra Pradesh Community-Managed Natural Farming (APCNF) programme, which is all about farming in harmony with nature. Starting from Punukala village in Khammam district some two decades ago, this agro-ecological farming system is now spread to 3,730 villages across the 26 districts of AP. Eight lakh farmers have either shifted completely from chemical to non-chemical farming or are in the process of transitioning. By 2031, the state aims to move its entire 60-lakh farming population from chemical to natural farming.

Mysamma hails from Battinapadu village in NTR district. She cultivates cotton on two acres and had transitioned to natural farming in 2018. When she told me that her daughter was an aeronautical engineer, for a moment, it felt as if I was interacting with a middle-class housewife. But these were small and marginal farmers, mostly women, who had come from various parts of AP to share their experiences about the virtues, strengths and immense potential of climate-resilient and environmentally healthy natural farming system.

Some of them, with an average landholding of less than 1 acre — a few even owning land in fractions of 0.10 to 0.50 cents — had assembled at the Guntur headquarters of the APCNF, which is implemented by the state-owned company,



*Andhra Pradesh shows how organic farming compares favourably with intensive agriculture.*  
**Devinder Sharma**





Rythu Sadhikara Samstha (RySS).

It soon became obvious why mainstream thinking has been trying to run down viable alternatives. Small landholdings are often decried as unviable, and in the name of land and labour reforms, economists and corporate leaders advocate for their exclusion from agriculture, urging their integration into the urban workforce. The global economic design devaluates small and marginal farmers as an economic burden. But a little handholding and a set of appropriate marketing initiatives can catapult these farms into viable enterprises which would neither heat the planet nor poison the air, water and soil.

Connecting the dots, it becomes evident why the agri-business industry holds a different perspective, as reflected in its decision to double the number of lobbyists at the recently concluded COP28 in Dubai compared to last year's climate talks. For instance, multi-national agribusiness giant Bayer, with which, surprisingly, the Indian Council of Agricultural Research has recently entered into a research collaboration, had sent more representatives than Eritrea.

It reminds me of an analysis published in Nature. The article drew from studies conducted in 51 countries over a period of 50 years to conclude that contrary to the commonly held perception, small farms were found to be more productive and ecologically sustainable. But such studies do not become a part of the mainstream science policy. This is because globally, agricultural scientists, economists, media and policymakers have spent decades endorsing the commercial interests of agribusiness giants that debunk everything but in-

***Right from the Philippines to Vietnam, Cambodia to Mexico, and India to the USA, a strong and vibrant movement towards agro-ecology is slowly but steadily bringing a change in policies, such as the small steps being taken to rebuild paramparik kheti and introduce schemes to reduce fertiliser use, with the underlying objective of restoring and replenishing Mother Earth.***

tensive farming, thereby resisting efforts to move towards an environmentally healthy and equally productive, sustainable food system.

Still, a quiet turnaround is happening and it is shaping a transition to new agriculture. I call it new agriculture because the conventional monocultures that relied more on producing surpluses have only desiccated farmlands, turned soils sick, mined groundwater and contaminated the food chain and also forced farm populations to abandon farming and migrate. Furthermore, it has contributed to the dual challenges of an overwhelming burden of human diseases and climate emergency. However, given the escalating temperatures, this kind of agriculture is left with a limited role in the future. Shifting the food system towards agro-ecological system not only ensures food security and nutrition but also revitalises healthy ecosystems, promotes economically viable livelihoods, thereby contributing to employment generation.

Rethinking agriculture is the need of the times. Right from the Philippines to Vietnam, Cambodia to Mexico, and India to the USA, a strong and vibrant movement towards agro-ecology is slowly but steadily bringing a change in policies, such as the small steps being taken to rebuild paramparik kheti and introduce schemes to reduce

fertiliser use, with the underlying objective of restoring and replenishing Mother Earth. But a lot more still needs to be done, beginning by discarding outdated economic policies that suit only corporate interests. A transformation towards ecological sustainability is also becoming paramount for farm research and education.

Take the devastation caused by the failure of genetically-modified Bt cotton. What was hailed as a silver bullet has bitten the dust. On the other hand, I see hope in farmers like Laxmi Narayana from NTR district who are engaged in organically-grown cotton. His farm has a large number of plants with more than 100 balls. A plant with over 50 healthy balls is a good crop. He said the yield ranged between 12 and 15 quintals per acre, which is very encouraging. Similarly, Gopala Rao from the same district grows organic paddy in 3.5 acres. He transitioned to organic farming two years ago and says his harvest is around 30 quintals per acre. Non-chemical farming, therefore, compares favourably with intensive agriculture. It only needs more research and public sector investments.

We must not sit back. Let's hand-hold small farmers and guide them in the right direction. They provide hope. □□

Devinder Sharma: Food and Agriculture Specialist  
<https://www.tribuneindia.com/news/comment/hand-holding-marginal-farmers-576205>

# Can an Overlooked Millet Make Large Parts of India Sugar-Producing Regions?



India may be celebrating 2023 as the 'International Year of Millets', serving dishes made with these grains to diplomats and parliamentarians, but unfortunately, it has overlooked an important millet – sweet sorghum (jowar) – for its farmers. This crop holds the potential to convert vast swathes of rural India into sugar-producing regions. Not only will this improve farmers' incomes but being a millet, these crops use much less water than crops like sugarcane.

The sweet sorghum varieties were first introduced in India from the US in the 1970s. The millet was commonly known as the "sugar of the north" in the US because sugarcane couldn't be grown in the Union states during the American Civil War and hence another sugar-producing crop was required to meet growing demands.

Sweet sorghum proved to be a likely candidate and even in modern times from 1930-1970s family-owned small syrup-producing units sprung up in Alabama, Arkansas, Georgia, Iowa, Kentucky, Mississippi, North Carolina and Tennessee. Wanting to understand more about the crop, I travelled through Kentucky, Hyderabad, Jashpur, Chhattisgarh and finally ended my journey in Benaras.

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## On the sweet sorghum trail

A peachy sun was setting on the Kentucky horizon. Its rays colouring the skies with hues of orange, pink and magenta. I was standing with Homer Paul Lovelace, farm manager and seed ambassador for Seedleaf, overlooking his family's grey worn-down tobacco barn. In the field ahead stood hundreds of thin, long, red-headed sweet sorghum plants waving at us.

"They are ready for harvest," Paul picked up his machete and started chopping at them. In a couple of hours, Paul had a cartload of sweet sorghum to take for the next juice pressing. I watched him press the juice and then put it out in the evaporation trays for it to convert into molasses. While looking at the evaporation trays, I started thinking about sugarcane.

Paul caught my thought and said, "I first tasted freshly pressed sugar cane juice on a street in Mysore India in 2004. That delicious and inspiring experience made me wonder why, in all my years of growing, processing, and tasting sorghum, I had never enjoyed sorghum cane juice in this way. We do now. I'm so excited that Della sweet sorghum is now thriving in India."

Paul is part of the heritage sweet sorghum revival in Kentucky and hopes to spread this healthy millet into the communities again. "I've actively grown Della sweet sorghum since 1999. My parents grew up in this Appalachian Community, where collaboratively growing, milling, and producing sweet sorghum syrup (molasses) provided supplementary income and semi-self-sufficiency to so many, my family included," he said.



*Sweet sorghum may be able to replace the sugarcane crop in water-scarce situations and help meet demand for sugar and ethanol production.*  
**Alok Singh**



“Some of my earliest memories conjure mule-turned sorghum mills, standing among the massive canes, smelling the sweet boiling green juice from miles away, and the joys of sampling the final product with sections of sorghum cane dipped into the fresh, and still too hot to eat, molasses. Though I left Kentucky for college, I knew that I needed sorghum and sorghum culture in my life. This crop has the power to transform rural America and India together ecologically and economically. India already has the sugarcane infrastructure, sweet sorghum will fit right in without any extra costs,” he added.

### Expanding sweet sorghum production in India

It was a foggy November morning on the banks of the river Ganga in Benaras. The sun was still hiding behind the grey mist and tall sticky green plants were waving to the birds. Manas Singh (32), a farmer, seeing the seed head of this plant turn dark red was out with his sickle – it was harvest time.

“This is the first time we are growing sweet sorghum. We had grown jowar before but never knew it could produce sugar. We had got these seeds of an American sweet sorghum variety which can be used for sugar production, fodder, and also for grain. It is a fascinating crop,” Manas said.

After his first successful harvest in Benaras, Manas plans to expand this sweet sorghum cultivation to central India into Jashpur, Chattisgarh for the kharif season. His parent organisation Baba Bhagwan Ram Trust is working with local administration to bring this miracle crop to the region and potentially convert the region into

a sugar-producing area.

“We use very little water and even then there is no requirement for chemical fertilisers or pesticides. We got very few pest attacks also. The stock is thinner than sugarcane, but the juice is much more nutritious and tasty. Our organisation spent very little to grow the crop. And this is a successful crop from the US, why shouldn't it grow here too?” Manas said.

We took a tour of Jashpur to understand the agricultural climate and the need for ecologically sound crops in the region. “Sweet sorghum crop can be a big cash crop, and hence will transform the region in few years,” Manas added.

### The verdict

But to get the final word I went to the Indian Institute Millet Research Institute (IIMR), Hyderabad to meet with the principal Scientist and PI (Sweet and High Biomass Sorghum) A.V. Umakant.

“India has achieved more than 10% blending of petrol with ethanol recently and the next target is 20% blending by 2025. The fact remains that ethanol production from sugarcane molasses alone does not ensure optimum supply levels needed to meet the demand at any given time owing to reasons such as the cyclical nature of sugarcane cultivation, difficulty in increasing sugarcane area due to high water intensiveness of the crop, erratic monsoon and power supply,” he explained.

“Increasing the area under sugarcane at the cost of diverting land from other staple food crops is undesirable. There is every need for exploiting alternate feedstocks for biofuel production. Sweet sorghum, a widely adapted sugar crop

with high potential for bioenergy and ethanol production and which produces higher biomass yield with fewer inputs is listed as a candidate crop for biofuel production in our National Policy on Biofuels 2018. Sweet sorghum is an attractive crop for biofuel production and in the era of climate change, it is good renewable feedstock suitable for cultivation under arid and semi-arid regions where water is going to become a scarce resource,” he said.

But was biofuel it? What were its other uses? “Sweet sorghum is a good source of fodder and there are reports of an increase in milk and meat yields when animals are fed with this kind of fodder. Besides this, sweet sorghum can also be utilised for biogas production as well as in the paper and pulp industry,” he answered.

The cost of cultivation would be Rs 12-15,000 per acre, Umakant said. He further explained that the grains, stalk (for sugar production) and bagasse (dry fibrous material) are three sources of income for the farmers and the returns would be quite high when all three products are used for ethanol production.

“And yes, sweet sorghum can replace sugarcane in water-scarce situations,” said Umakant, referring to the vast potential of this crop in water-scarce areas. However, the academic hinted that “the dominance of the sugar industry for sugar and ethanol production in the country” was a potential roadblock for this millet variety.

Having seen and understood the ground realities, it is clear that India is missing an important opportunity by not adopting sweet sorghum for sugar and ethanol production. □□

*Indra Shekhar Singh is an independent agri-policy analyst & writer.  
<https://thewire.in/agriculture/sweet-sorghum-millet-sugar-india-production>*

# Complex, not complicated

“Simple” is the opposite of both “complex” and “complicated”. But, as political economist Yuen Yuen Ang has eloquently shown, the two words mean very different things.

She illustrates this with an example. A toaster is complicated. It has many different parts, all of which must work for it to deliver toast. A tree is complex. It has many different parts and processes, which enable it to exist and reproduce. When these are impaired, then all or some of its parts respond to try and keep the tree functional and reproductive. This involves adaptation and evolution. If the response is malignant, the tree ceases to exist.

The “scientific approach” used by economists, engineers, and the like views problems as more or less complicated. It seeks to simplify them or to empirically understand the contours of complicatedness (called being “data driven”) to derive policy solutions. In contrast, scientists and philosophers attempt to understand the workings of complexity to arrive at solutions that are progressive and avoid malignancy. Data is used to draw inferences to understand complexity, not to prove or disprove complicated propositions.

This distinction is especially vital at the present juncture. Economists have, finally, abandoned simplistic approaches such as rational expectations and the efficient markets hypothesis to address economic challenges. There is growing interest in studying how sociology, political institutions, and human behaviour impact economic decision-making.

But the lens continues to be that of complicatedness, not complexity. Economics continues to treat the problem as one in which the complications introduced by such things as human behaviour need to be addressed, leading to the rise of behavioural economics as a discipline. This posited three ways to solve the



*Navigating the current economic and political challenges demands a shift in our analytical lens to one that refrains from simplifying problems.*  
**Rathin Roy**



problem of complicatedness. First, asserting that people behaved not as individuals but as herds. This amazing vulgarisation of societal dynamics was then added to by positing that people could be “nudged” into the right kinds of behaviours to make better choices. Both these approaches captivated policymakers, leading to facile advertising agency-type recommendations becoming the stuff of policy initiatives. This included predicting herd behaviour to estimate the trajectory of economic growth, and setting up “nudge” units in government, aided by a cohort of intellectually questionable consulting firms quick to jump onto this bandwagon. On the empirical “data-driven” side, randomised control trials (RCTs) entered economics from medicine to generalise from the particular about things as diverse as education policy and social protection.

These approaches utterly and completely failed for they sought to address phenomena that were perceived as complicating a simple theoretical approach—the rational self-interested maximisation of economic utility by all economic participants. There was no attempt to understand that the policy canvas was, in fact, a complex one and it was the failure to create a framework to understand and address this complexity that led to the problem in the first place. They were trying to fix a tree as if it were a toaster.

Today, despite Nobel prizes to the economists who propounded these approaches, behavioural economics stands discredited, RCTs are no longer used anywhere except in development economics, (typically the dustbin where failed experiments are consigned) and nudge

***Today, despite Nobel prizes to the economists who propounded these approaches, behavioural economics stands discredited, RCTs are no longer used anywhere except in development economics, (typically the dustbin where failed experiments are consigned) and nudge units have quietly been wound up.***

units have quietly been wound up.

But the problem has not gone away. There continues to be little understanding of perhaps the two most important phenomena of our times: The sharp rise in inequality that has accompanied an unprecedented rise in human prosperity, and the increasing and genuine popularity of bigoted political platforms that clearly and obviously detract from prosperity.

Both are global phenomena. Bigotry and populism are central features of the Indian, Brazilian, American, Italian and Swedish landscapes, even as all these countries face an unprecedented challenge in addressing inequality. So, positing simplistic binary relationships between democracy/autocracy/ bigotry and economic prosperity will not help. Nor will explanations that seek to establish populism as somehow a consequence of chicanery and misinformation or an “insider-outsider” problem — the pro-Brexit British Prime Minister, a rich prig married

to a billionaire heiress but ethnically of Indian-origin, is, like Donald Trump, radically different from the support base that voted his party in. India’s second-poorest state is steadfast in its endorsement of authoritarian populism. Jair Bolsonaro’s support in Brazil came, like Mr Trump’s, from the losers in the inequality stakes. The prosperous winners, whether in South India, or coastal Brazil, or the United States continue to opt for less regressive alternatives. Women, despite significant gender oppression, continue to be enthusiastic voters and leaders of bigoted parties and movements, as do people from ethnic minorities and many disadvantaged castes and tribes.

To give just one example, those who propagate a universal basic income (UBI) to address inequality do not see that if economic development and prosperity were more inclusive, a UBI would not be necessary in the first place. But all of progressive economics has argued for a welfare state to compensate those excluded from economic prosperity. They have ignored things like industrial and income policies to enable their participation in creating economic prosperity. The people impacted see this, and vote and support what they can get out of the zero-sum game of bigotry and the compensatory game of subsidies and “freebies”.

An analytical approach that unpacks and makes sense of this complexity is urgently needed, to build a progressive alternative to the inequality-accepting, bigotry-promoting, political majority that is now in the ascendant. □□

The writer is a macro-fiscal and political economist, and former member of the Economic Advisory Council to the Prime Minister.  
[https://www.business-standard.com/opinion/columnists/complex-not-complicated-123121401249\\_1.html](https://www.business-standard.com/opinion/columnists/complex-not-complicated-123121401249_1.html)



# Security Paradigm for New Bharat

The prevailing challenge in the world is security. No country is secured today. Every nation is redefining the meaning of security. It includes internal and external security. The border security includes land, air, and water. There are tradeoffs among various securities, whether it be energy, food, defense, technology, and so on.

The defense security is of utmost relevance. The capability of the defense security maneuvers the energy security and food security. If we are self-reliant in energy security and food security but lack defense security then our energy and food security is vulnerable. If we are self-reliant in food security and defense security but lag in energy security then our defense security and food security are vulnerable. If we add technology security to this spectrum of securities then the tradeoff among varieties of securities becomes more and more complex. The nations within and across have security tradeoffs.

One nation is strong in one security paradigm then the other nation is strong in another paradigm. For illustration, China has the advantage over 21 kilometers of narrow stretch of Siliguri corridor which is also called Chicken's Neck as this narrow stretch is the connectivity of the Bharat with the northeastern part of the Bharat. Bharat has a huge advantage in the Indian Ocean. Our naval forces in general and nuclear-powered submarines in particular are a nightmare to the Chinese. If Chinese hand has our neck, then we have our foot on Chinese chest.

The new wars are not fought by men but it includes women, technology, communication devices, and the supply chain of the defense forces. We lost to the Chinese in 1962 despite having a stronger army than the Chinese, the culprit was the poor logistics management. The huge collateral damage to Americans in the Iraq war of 2003 to 2011 was due to the strategy of Iraq to make logistics tough for Americans. It's not always the weapons and men but the mindset and the logistics which has emerged as an important factor of winning or losing the



*The youngsters should be encouraged to get military training during their college days irrespective of their chosen profession for livelihood*  
Alok Singh



war. The 7 October 2023 attack on Israel by Hamas is a live example of failure of high-end Israeli defense technology by hand made ordnance supplies of Hamas.

The learning is that there are circumstances where traditional weapons can beat technology. We need our people to prepare and preserve our traditional defense knowledges and keep marching ahead to be self-reliant in technological warfare. The mindset be that it is the responsibility of each one of us to defend our motherland and do the actions and preparations accordingly. This is the demand of the defense system.

Technology and economic security are also important domains that are driven by defense security. There have been occasions like the Pokhran nuclear test of 1998 when we did not restrain in executing our planned efforts beneath the fear of varieties of international sanctions. We had strengths and at last, the world had to lift sanctions. But the world tried its best to trade off our march towards defense self-reliance with other securities like oil, technology, and finance. Finally, we were acknowledged as a nuclear state.

Self-reliance in food security and energy security seems achievable. All the stakeholders contribute and participate in the food and energy security. As a citizen, it's our responsibility to minimize food wastage and optimize energy consumption. Same way as a citizen, we have responsibility for defense security. The common people of Ukraine and Israel are a live example to demonstrate the responsibility towards defending the motherland.

The general perception is that



***Self-reliance in food security and energy security seems achievable. All the stakeholders contribute and participate in the food and energy security.***

the defense forces like the army, navy, and air force are solely responsible for defending the border of the motherland. The government is supposed to allocate budgets and intervene in generating resources for the defense forces like technology requirements, and provide other necessary resources. Apart from the government and defense forces, international relations and financial economics are also influencers at the policy level for defense establishments. The role of society and citizens in defending the nation is blind. Citizens and society need clarity. The Sangh Prathana which is repeatedly sung every day by Swayamsevak at Sanghsthan mentions invincible strengths, the sen-

tence is अजय्यांचविश्वस्यदेहीशक्तिम्.

Moreover, the concept of "AkhandMandlakaram" of Pandit Deen Dayal Upadhaya ji is well acknowledged for economic and social issues. The concept of "AkhandMadalakaram" is equally applicable in defense as well. The Rashtriya Swayam Sewak Sangh (RSS) is preparing the generations to realize their responsibility towards national security and defense establishments. RSS has contributed during various wars by organizing blood donation camps for the defense personnel, and supporting other logistics whenever the need arises. The contribution of RSS during national emergencies, pandemics, floods, earthquakes, railway accidents, and airway accidents is full of many acknowledgments. The defense is a spiral structure like the spring of a ballpoint pen in which citizen, family, society, governments, defense forces, and other stakeholders has to participate and contribute to serve the motherland proactively.

There is another concept of a citizen army. A citizen army is defined as citizens who are trained to serve the nation during wartime and align with the professional army. During normal days the citizens live civilian life but when the emergen-

<b>The List of Swadeshi-Videshi Commodities</b>	
<b>Product Name</b>	<b>Swadeshi Product - Use</b>
<b>Bath Soaps</b>	Santoor, Nirma, Swastik, Mysoor Sandal, Wipro-Sikakai, Medimix, Ganga, Cinthol, Godrej No.1, Margo, Neem, Patanjalee & Home Products etc.
<b>Detergent Soaps</b>	Nirma, Acto, Vimal, Hepolin, Dait, Fena, Ujala, Shudh, EG, Ghadi, Gentle, Manjula, Patanjali, Pitambari, Maxo, Vimal, SASA and Home Products etc.
<b>Beauty Products</b>	Tips & Toes, Shringar, Cinthol, Santoor, Emami, Boroplus, Tulsi, Vicco, Termaric, Arnika, Hair and Caire, Hemani, Parashoot, Faim, Cadila, Cipla, Dabar, Franki, Khandelwal, Torant Pharma, Zandu Pharma, Himalya, Maharishi Ayurved, Balsara, J.K. Sandoo, Vaidhnath, Bhaskar, Borolin, Bajaj Sevashram, Kokoraj, Move, Creck Cream, Park Avenue, Unichem, IPCA, Patanjali and Home Products etc.
<b>Toothpaste</b>	Babool, Promise, Dabar, Meswak, Ajay, Harbodont, Ajenta, Garware, Brush, Clasical, Egle, Bandarchhap, Vaidhnath, Emami, Vicco, Anchor, Amar, IPCA, Dentobec, Patanjali and Home Products etc.
<b>Shaving Cream /Razer Blade</b>	Godrej, Emami, Super, Super-Maix, Ashok, Vi-John, Topaz, Premium, Park Avenue, Lazer, Vidyut, J.K., Cosmoplus and other Home Products etc.
<b>Biscuit, Chocolate Milk's Products</b>	Nutrin, Shangrila, Champion, Ampro, Parle, Sathe, Bekman, Priya-Gold, Monaco, Krackjack, Gits, Shalimar, Parry, Rawalgaon, Clasic, Amul, Nutramul, Vijaya, Indana, Safal, Asian, Verka, Madhu, Mahan, Gopi, Himghi, Vita, Patanjali & other Home Products etc.
<b>Tea, Coffee</b>	Girnar, Tata-Tea, Asam-Tea, Society, Duncan, Brahmputra, Tej, Tata Cafey, Tata-Tetli, Amar, GS, Parivar, Sapat and other Home Products etc.
<b>Cold Drink</b>	Guruji, Oanjus, Jumpin, Nero, Pingo, Fruity, Sosyo, Aswad, Dabur, Mala, Besleri, Rasna, Humdard, Mapro, Rainbo, Calvart, Ruhafja, Jai Gajanan, Haldiram, Gokul, Bikaner, Wekfield, Noga, Priya, Ashok, Uma, H.P.M.C Product, Him, Switemblica & other Home Products etc.
<b>Ice-Cream</b>	Amul, Himalaya, Nirula, Vadilal, Mother Dairy, Vindi, Verka, Havemore, Gocool, Natural and other Home Products etc.
<b>Food Oil, Food Products</b>	Maruti, Postmen, Dhara, Rokat, Ginni, Swikar, Cornela, Rath, Mohan, Umang, Vijaya, Span, Parashut, Ashok, Saphola, Kohinoor, Madhur, Engine, Gagan, Amrit, Vanaspati, Ramdev, MDH, Evrest, Bedakar, Sahkar, Lijat, Ganesh, Shaktibhog Aata, Tata Salt, Gemini, Society Masale, Tata Masale, Ashirwad Atta, Patanjali Atta & Oil and other Home Products etc.
<b>Electrical Product, Home Use Product/ Watch</b>	Videocon, BPL, Onida, Slora, ET&T, T-Series, Nelco, Westen, Uptron, Keltron, Cosmic, TVS, IFB, Godrej, Crown, Bajaj, Usha, Polar, Surya, Orient, Cinny, Tullu, Crompton, Loyde, Blue Star, Voltas, Cool Home, Khaitan, RR, Eveready, Geep, Novino, Nirlep, Elight, Jaico, Titan, Ajanta, HMT, Maxima, Alwin Ghadi, Bengal, Mysore, Hawkins, Prestige, Pressure Cooker, Wipro, Trupti and other Home Products etc.
<b>Writing Product</b>	Geeflow, Wilson, Camlin, Revlon, Rotomac, Cello, Stic, Chandra, Montex, Camel, Bittu, Plato, Triveni, Flora, Apsra, Natraj, Hindustan, Lotus, and other Home Products etc.
<b>Shoes, Chappal, Bootpolc</b>	Lakhani, Liberty Standard, Action, Paragon, Flash, Carona, Welcome, Rexona, Lotus, Red-Tep, Phonix, Whyking, Billi, Carnoba, Kiwi Shoe Polish, Woodlands, Mochi, JJ Flex and other Home Products etc.
<b>Readyment Cloths</b>	Peter England, Van Husain, Lous Philip, Colourplus, Alen Soli, Mafatlal, Trends, Cambrige, Duple bull, Zodiac, Arvind Denim, Don, Prolin, TT, Lux, Amul, VIP, , Rupa, Raymond, Park, Avenue, Altimo, Newport, Killer, Flying Machine, Monte Carlo, Duke; Tiger, Kolkatta, Pantaloon, Patanjali products, Ludhiana and Tirupur Products.
<b>Mobile Phone</b>	Macromax, Karbon, Di and Locally assembled



<b>The List of Swadeshi-Videshi Commodities</b>	
<b>Product Name</b>	<b>Videshi Product - Not to be Used</b>
<b>Bath Soaps</b>	Lux, Liril, Lifebuoy, Piers, Rexona, Humam, Jai, Moti, Cammy, Dove, Ponds, Pamolive, Johnson, Clearcil, Detol, Lesansi, Lakme, Amway, Savlon, Amazon, Wallmart
<b>Detergent Soaps</b>	Sunlight, Wheel, Ariel, Trilo, 501, OK, Key, Revail, Amway, Surf, Excel, Rin, Vimbar, Robin Blue and other products of Hindustan Liver Ltd.
<b>Beauty Products</b>	Johnson, Ponds, Clearcel, Brilcream, Fair & Lovely, Velvet, Medicare, Lavender, Nycil, Showar to Showar, Liril, Dainim, Organix, Painteen, Roots, Head & Sholder, Amway, Clinic, Nihar, Glaxo, Treseme, Lorial, Cuticura, Lakme, Nivia.
<b>Toothpaste</b>	Colgate, Cibaca, Closeup, Pepsodent, Signal, Maclins, Amway, Auqa Fresh, Oral-B, Forhuns. Sensodyne.
<b>Shaving Cream/ Razor Blade</b>	Palmolive, Nivia, Ponds, Platinum, Gillate, Seven-O-Clock, Vilmen, Viltage, Erasmic, Lakme, Danim.
<b>Biscuit, Chocolete Milk's Products</b>	Nesle, Cadbury, Bornvita, Horlies, Boost, Milkmade, Kissan, Maggi, Farex, Anikspray, Complian, Kitkat, Charge, Eclair, Modern Bred, Maltova, Mylo.
<b>Tea, Coffee</b>	Brook Bond, Tajmahal, Red-Lable, Dymond, Lipton, Green Lable, Nescafe, Neslay, Delka, bru, Sunrise, three flowers, Tazza.
<b>Cold Drink</b>	Leher, Pepsi, 7-up, Mirinda, Team, Coca-Cola, McDonald, Magola, Goldspott, Limca, Citra, Thums-up, Sprite, Fanta, Crush, Appy, Cadbury.
<b>Ice-Cream</b>	Cadbury, Dolop, Nice, Product's Brook Brond, Kwaliti Wals, Baskin-Robins, Yanki-dudals, Carnetto.
<b>Food Oil, Food Products</b>	Dalda, Crystal, Lipton, Annapurna Salt, Aata and Chapati, Maggi, Kisan, Tarla, Knorr, Dalal, Brook-Brond, Pilsbari Aata, Capton Cook Salt and Aata, Modern Chapati, Kargil Aata.
<b>Electrical Product, Home Use Product/ Watch</b>	GEC, Philips, Sony, TDK, Nippo, National-Panosonic, Sharp, GE, Whirlpool, Samsung, Toshiba, LG, Hitachi, Thomson, Electrolux, Akai, Sansui, Kenwood, Aiwa, Carrier, Konica, tupperware, Japan Life, Omega, Timex, Rado.
<b>Writting Product</b>	Parker, Pilot, windser-nutton, faber-castle, Big, Mont blank, Koras, As, Rotring.
<b>Shoes, Chappal, Bootpolish</b>	Bata, Puma, Power, Cherry-blosom, Addidas, Rebok, Nike, Lee-cooper.
<b>Readyment Cloths</b>	All product of Lee, Berlington, Arrow, Lacoste, Levis, Paibe Jins, Wrangler, Benaton, Reed & Tayler, Byford, Crocodile.
<b>Mobile Phone</b>	All Chinese Products Like Mi, Appo, Vivo, LG, Samsung, Xiomi, I-phone, Apple

*This List is published on demand from the Readers.*

cy arises, they support the army including in combat operations. Terrorist organizations have their well-prepared supporters in society and such people live a normal life in a normal society. Such supporters become active when they are asked to contribute. Such supporters are labelled as sleeper cells. The ongoing anti-Israel protest reflects the penetration of such supporters who are a variant of the sleeper cell of terrorist organizations.

There are many countries where every civilian must serve in the army. There are many countries where women are an integral part of the defense forces. Russia, North Korea, South Korea, Israel, Brazil, Iran, and Sweden has prepared its citizens to serve whenever the occasion demands. In Russia, all able-bodied men in the age group of 17 to 27 years must serve in the military for 12 months. North Korea promotes a military-first policy for school graduates aged between 17 to 18 years to join the military for 10 years. In South Korea, men must serve either for 21 months in the army, 22 months in the navy, or 24 months in the Air Force with certain exemptions for sportspersons. Israel has compulsory military service for all Israelis, men and women both, who are 18 years of age except ultra-orthodox and Arab-Israelis. Brazil has made compulsory military service of 10 to 12 months for all its male citizens. Iran has made it compulsory for all its men aged 18 years and above to serve in the military for 18 to 24 months. Sweden has made it compulsory for both men and women to serve in the military between 9 to 12 months. Israel and Sweden do not discriminate between men and women on pro-

viding military training.

Bharat has an alternative recruitment process for defense forces, like the Territorial army and a recent addition is "Agniveer". These are opportunities are voluntary and not compulsory to serve in defense forces. Bharat has the youngest population in the world today. We rely heavily on our demographic dividend to be a developed country by the year 2047. Our army is much younger than China today. Soon, we will be the highest and the youngest defense force in the world.

The commitment of self-reliance is reflected in defense sector as well. The Bharat Forge, L&T, Mahindra, and TATA, HAL and many more has proved their mettle in world class defense production. Many PSUs and startups have joined the indigenous defense manufacturing fraternity. The trust on our own resources in defense pro-

duction has started seeing the day of lights. The motivation and the speed of outcomes of indigenous defense product manufacturers are well acknowledged today.

We aspire to be ordnance exporters and equip ourselves with the youngest defense personnel, latest technology including in communication systems, and at the same time we should preserve our traditional skills of warfare engaging traditional tools and sacred defense knowledge. The modernization should not blind us to forget our traditional defense skills. Every citizen of the country should be trained well to defend the motherland when the situation arises. We as a citizen should think and prepare ourselves to serve the nation, even in combat roles. The youngsters should be encouraged to get military training during their college days irrespective of their chosen profession for livelihood. □□

[Continued from page no. 7]

## Receding Twin Deficit

Lower CAD is no less boon for the economy. In the past, our country had been experiencing much high level of CAD, sometimes going upto nearly 5 percent of GDP. Though, in the last few years this has remained around 2 percent of GDP, CAD of around 1 percent of GDP is therefore no less an achievement. Higher CAD increases our dependence on foreign borrowings and foreign investment, which puts pressure on rupee, and leads to its depreciation. But lower CAD will make

rupee stronger, which means control on imported inflation and lower foreign outgo on interest on foreign loans, apart from many other benefits.

In conclusion we can say that lower Twin Deficit is bringing good news for the economy by way of control on inflation, lesser domestic and foreign debt and better value for domestic currency. It adds one more reason to celebrate as these numbers mean better prospects for the economy. □□

# Yemen blockade of Red Sea overturns regional chessboard

Yemen, an unexpected outlier in the current conflict in Gaza, has intervened in the war between a pygmy Hamas and mighty Israel, by shutting down the Suez Canal, throwing international shipping out of gear. Since December 15, 2023, Hapag-Lloyd, CMA CGM, Maersk and MSC, the four largest shipping companies that account for 53 per cent of global container trade, have halted all transit through the Red Sea. Taiwan's Evergreen shipping has also halted transit through the Red Sea and will no longer accept any Israeli cargo.

On December 20, Malaysia announced it was closing the Strait of Malacca for the Israeli ZIM shipping company and refused ZIM ships permission to dock or transit in its territorial waters. The decision will be effective in four weeks. The ban covers ships sailing under the Israeli flag or moving towards Israel. Globes, an Israeli financial newspaper, has reported that Israeli shipping companies have so far lost around 23% of their market value, a loss of billions of dollars. Since then, the oil majors, Evergreen, Euronav and BP, have joined the growing list of shipping companies that have temporarily suspended shipments through the Red Sea.

The region's geo-economic chessboard has thus been turned upside down. Rerouting of cargo ships will impact the economy of Egypt, which derives a substantial portion of its revenues from traffic through the Suez Canal. The Suez Canal is the fastest route to transit from Asia to Europe; its rupture will affect global supply chains as a drought in Panama has affected shipping via the Panama Canal. Nearly 5 per cent of all global trade moves through the Panama Canal, and 12 per cent via the Suez. Disruption in supply chains will impact every link in the chain, from producer to end user.

Admiral Ossama Rabiee, chairman and managing director of the Suez Canal Authority stated that 55 ships have been rerouted since November 19, causing a loss



*Yemen, an unexpected outlier in the current conflict in Gaza, has intervened in the war between a pygmy Hamas and mighty Israel, by shutting down the Suez Canal, throwing international shipping out of gear.*

**Sandhya Jain**





of US\$ 27.5 million for Egypt. Diversion via the Cape of Good Hope (South Africa) will add 9-14 days to every trip. Experts say shipping costs have risen by nearly 50% in just one week and could rise further with tensions in the Red Sea.

The Houthis have announced that they want a ceasefire in Gaza. Washington is reluctant to expand the Israel-Hamas conflict by hitting Houthi missile sites and provoking Iranian retaliation, despite intense pressure from Israel. Instead, it mooted Operation Prosperity Guardian, a “multinational security initiative” to protect shipping and shoot down incoming missiles and drones. The coalition was to include the US, Britain, France, Italy, Canada, the Netherlands, Norway, Spain, Bahrain, and the Seychelles. Former British MP George Galloway observes that Saudi Arabia and UAE, new members of the BRICS grouping, have refused to join the coalition against Yemen, as they do not wish regional chaos to enable covert plans for regime changes. Bahrain, which hosts the US and UK navies, has joined the Western alliance.

However, Operation Prosperity Guardian collapsed almost immediately, as France, Spain, and Italy withdrew and announced that they would join maritime operations under the Command of NATO and/or the European Union, and not the United States. The Netherlands and Norway then stated that they would not send any vessels but only liaison officers. In the circumstances, Britain may refrain from joining the coalition to protect Israeli shipping in the Red Sea. Moreover, Algeria indirectly extended support to Palestinians by closing its airspace to American

military planes and forcing an aircraft en route to Israel to turn back.

Houthi spokesperson Mohammed al-Bukhaiti was firm that his forces would confront any US-led coalition in the Red Sea. The Houthis have Zoheir and Khaliq-e-Fars anti-ship ballistic missiles with a range of 300 to 500 km. The Hezbollah has also entered the arena, targeting two Iron Dome batteries north of Kabri with Basir artillery shells. He added, “Even if America succeeds in mobilizing the entire world, our operations in the Red Sea will not stop unless the massacre in Gaza stops.”

Ansar Allah spokesman Muhammad Abdel Salam said Yemen’s position towards Palestine is based on religious, national and moral principles, as the Palestinian issue is not negotiable, and the events in Gaza are unacceptable. Besides lifting the siege on Gaza, Yemen wants food and medicine to be allowed in the area. Salam claimed that the Red Sea is safe for navigation by all ships, barring ships linked to Israel.

The Yemeni Armed Forces spokesperson, Yahya Sarae, who announced the attack on the container ships MSC Alanya and MSC PALATIUM III, said the objective was to defend the Palestinian people in the Gaza Strip, who urgently need food and medicine. The United States forces are also targeted, with US bases in Syria and Iraq under attack with missile and drones.

According to the Israeli newspaper, Haaretz, Hamas has forced Israel to call up nearly 360,000 reservists and evacuate thousands of people from their homes in the south, and most economic activity there has ground to a halt. Mean-

while, Hezbollah is doing similar economic damage in the north. Overall, the Israeli economy is expected to shrink by an annual rate of 15 per cent in the fourth quarter. Workers have been put on unpaid leave, and unemployment rose to 9.6 per cent in October, from 3.6 per cent in September. Tourism has sunk to the levels experienced during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Haaretz observes that Yemen “presents an entirely new threat to the economy because it is targeting Israel’s international trade”. Already, cargo traffic at Israel’s Eilat Port has fallen by 85 per cent and the cost of marine insurance for Israeli-owned (and presumably Israel-bound) vessels is soaring. Ships transiting via Africa take two weeks longer, which adds to the costs of imports, which will eventually be passed on to the end consumer.

Domestic and international pressure, particularly from Washington, compelled Israeli Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu to modify his position and allow the Mossad chief to go to Qatar to negotiate with Hamas after the Israel Defense Force mistakenly killed three Israeli captives (Yotam Haim, Alon Shamriz and Samer El-Talalqa) in Gaza on Dec 15, provoking outrage and protests in Tel Aviv. The trio were carrying a white flag and cried for help in Hebrew when the incident occurred. In a televised press conference (Dec 16), Netanyahu hinted at fresh negotiations to recover the hostages.

Israel has suffered a public relations setback since the hostilities began on October 7, as hundreds of Orthodox Jews in the United States rallied for a ceasefire in Gaza. □□

<https://www.sandhyajainarchive.org/2023/12/26/yemen-blockade-of-red-sea-opens-regional-chessboard/>

# 16<sup>th</sup> Finance Commission



*Finance Commission may also study and examine major overhauls in the revenue structure of Revenue laws of the Centre and the states and recommend major changes as the Centre and States have been silent on amendments in tax structure except peripheral tax rate changes, which is not enough. Fiscal indiscipline needs to be tamed.*

**Vinod Johri**

The Government of India, with the approval of the President of India, has constituted the Sixteenth Finance Commission, in pursuance to Article 280(1) of the Constitution. Dr Arvind Panagariya, former Vice-Chairman, NITI Aayog, and Professor, Columbia University will be the Chairman. Members of the Sixteenth Finance Commission would be notified separately. Shri Ritvik Ranjanam Pandey has been appointed as Secretary to the Commission. Detailed terms of reference for Sixteenth Finance Commission have also been spelt out in the notification issued today.

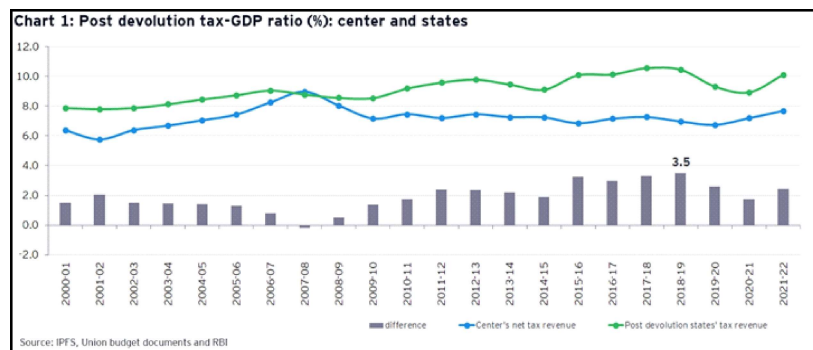
The Sixteenth Finance Commission shall make recommendations as to the following matters, namely: —

1. The distribution between the Union and the States of the net proceeds of taxes which are to be, or may be, divided between them under Chapter I, Part XII of the Constitution and the allocation between the States of the respective shares of such proceeds;
2. The principles which should govern the grants-in-aid of the revenues of the States out of the Consolidated Fund of India and the sums to be paid to the States by way of grants-in-aid of their revenues under article 275 of the Constitution for the purposes other than those specified in the provisos to clause (1) of that article; and
3. The measures needed to augment the Consolidated Fund of a State to supplement the resources of the Panchayats and Municipalities in the State on the basis of the recommendations made by the Finance Commission of the State.

The Sixteenth Finance Commission may review the present arrangements on financing Disaster Management initiatives, with reference to the funds constituted under the Disaster Management Act, 2005 (53 of 2005), and make appropriate recommendations thereon.

The Sixteenth Finance Commission has been requested to make its report available by 31<sup>st</sup> day of October, 2025 covering a period of five years commencing

ToR of 16th Finance Commission	Relevant constitutional provision
The distribution between the Union and the States of the net proceeds of taxes which are to be, or may be, divided between them under Chapter I, Part XII of the Constitution and the allocation between the States of the respective shares of such proceeds	Article 280(3), subclause (a)
The principles which should govern the grants-in-aid of the revenues of the States out of the Consolidated Fund of India and the sums to be paid to the States by way of grants-in-aid of their revenues under article 275 of the Constitution for the purposes other than those specified in the provisos to clause (1) of that article	Article 280(3), subclause (b) along with Article 275(1)
The measures needed to augment the Consolidated Fund of a State to supplement the resources of the Panchayats and Municipalities in the State on the basis of the recommendations made by the Finance Commission of the State.	Article 280(3), subclauses (bb) and (c)
The Commission may review the present arrangements on financing Disaster Management initiatives, with reference to the funds constituted under the Disaster Management Act, 2005 (53 of 2005), and make appropriate recommendations thereon.	Entry 97 of Union List of Schedule VII



ing on the 1<sup>st</sup> day of April, 2026.

The terms of reference (ToR) of the 16<sup>th</sup> Finance Commission can be considered as a fresh and welcome departure from the earlier practice of giving a detailed set of considerations. This implies that the Commission is free to determine scope of its work, approach and methodology. The Commission would be free to choose the Census year for state-wise population without any direction from Government of India (GoI) through the ToR. It may be noted, however, that the 2021 Census has not been carried out and the latest available Census data pertains to 2011.

The subject of determination of grants and tax devolution in India requires consideration of three types of imbalances namely, vertical, horizontal, and fiscal. Fiscal imbalance deals with the borrowing undertaken by Central and State governments to fill up part of the resource gap, which is not met by the availability of resources after transfers from the GoI.

In the context of vertical imbalance, Chart shows a convergence between the Centre's net tax revenue and states' tax revenues post tax devolution during FY 2001 to FY 2008. These years were covered largely by the recommendations of 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> Finance Commissions. After FY 2010, the gap between the two started to

increase with states' post devolution tax-GDP ratio exceeding that of the Centre by a wide margin, resulting in a squeezing of fiscal space for the Centre.

Apart from the key recommendation on distribution of net proceeds of taxes between the Centre and States and allocation among States of the respective share of such proceeds, the panel will also prescribe measures needed to augment the Consolidated Fund of a State to supplement resources of the panchayats and local bodies on the basis of recommendations made by the respective State Finance Commissions.

Under the ToR, the panel will recommend principles that should govern the grants-in-aid of the revenues of the States out of the Consolidated Fund of India and the sums to be paid to the States by way of grants-in-aid of their revenues. Also, it may review the existing arrangements on financing Disaster Management initiatives and make appropriate recommendations.

Some criticism was also made about lack of clarity on whether the proposed commission would give recommendations based on criteria and weights assigned for horizontal devolution. The previous 15<sup>th</sup> Finance Commission had retained the criteria and weights according to which 15 per cent

weight each is for population and area, 10 per cent for forest and ecology, 45 per cent of income distance, 2.5 per cent for tax and fiscal efforts and 12.5 per cent for demographic performance.

This is a point of discomfort for the southern States which have higher human development indices and low population. In the fiscal redistribution process based on weightage to population, their shares get reduced.

Over the years, Finance Commissions have influenced public finance, governance, and development in India significantly. Following their recommendations, tax devolution became a major component of vertical transfers, increasing states' shares progressively from 10% to 42%. The commissions have also encouraged performance-based incentives for states in areas like fiscal discipline, population control, forest conservation, and power sector reforms. To strengthen public trust and ensure effective implementation of its recommendations, the Finance Commission should prioritise transparency and accountability in its operations. This could involve publishing detailed reports on its deliberations, making data and analysis readily accessible to the public, and establishing clear mechanisms for stakeholder engagement. By fostering openness and accountability, the commission can enhance the credibility and legitimacy of its work.

The 16<sup>th</sup> finance Commission headed by Shri Arvind Pangarhia has in a departure from recent history, not been issued any specific tasks leaving it free to determine the scope of its recommendations. This gives the Commission more



elbow room to go about strengthening fiscal federalism. Its job is to ensure balance in resource transfers between the Centre and states and among states. But the task is nuanced. States grudgingly relinquish their resource raising capacity and resent any loss of agency over expenditure. The Centre on its part would like to see the larger devolution to the states put to responsible use and tries to nudge states towards fiscal responsibility. States also need to be convinced that the formula for dividing resources does not disincentive outperformance and delivers on curbing unwanted migration.

The 16<sup>th</sup> finance Commission has the freedom to choose its population data. But it will not have the 2021 census data to go by. Population is a key determinant of how much a state received as its share of the divisible pool of government

resources. States that have stabilised their population growth, and, thereby bumped up their per capita income, would have gone further down that path between 2011 and 2021. Without the 2021 data, however there would have to be an approximation of the performance of lagging states. The extent of migration over a decade would also involve an element of uncertainty. This makes assessment of social sector spending outcomes more difficult than it should be. The Centre now draws less from the combined resource pool than the states, but is directing spending through Capex and welfare payments.

The past experience over a decade shows that the states lack resource mobilisation initiatives and depend more on taxes and revenues charged on citizens. Finance Commission should incentivise the lagging states with resource gen-

eration with industrialisation and business creation in backward areas for job creation and zero poverty in such areas. Without job creation and upliftment of the poor, the high GDP or third slot in the global economy are meaningless and will end up widening the gap in rich and the poor. Development is itself major job creator. Populism and freebies culture have reached retrograde. Major infrastructure projects are executed by the Centre while poor states even lack initiatives on development. Finance Commission may also study and examine major overhauls in the revenue structure of Revenue laws of the Centre and the states and recommend major changes as the Centre and States have been silent on amendments in tax structure except peripheral tax rate changes, which is not enough. Fiscal indiscipline needs to be tamed. □

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## Mewar as Focus of Guhila State (Part-XVIII)



*Once the Guhilas conquered Chittorgarh and made it their capital, they politically incorporated economically the strongest community, the Jains of Mewar into state apparatus. The Jains were integrated into administration as well as Military apparatus; they dominated the commercial economy as well.*

**Prof. Nandini  
Kapur Sinha**

These donations indicate the control of merchants over mandapikās. It is interesting to note that Nagdā, the famous Pāūpata centre of Mewar, was a centre of Jain pilgrimage too. Temple of the Digambara sect, Aloka Pārūvanātha, icons installed at the temple of Aloka Pārūvanātha by the Úvetāambaras of Khara-taragaccha in the fifteenth century and Tapagacchapattāvali's references to Pārūvanātha temple, all indicate patronage of Nāgda by the Jains. Significantly, the Ekalingaji Temple Inscription of AD 971 mentions a joint session of the Pāūpata and Jain ācāryas at Nāgahrda in which Pāūpatas are claimed to have defeated the Jains in discourse.

The temples of Adbhutnātha and Pārūvanātha (built in AD 1373) continued to be an important Jain tirtha throughout the fifteenth century. Ahada and Udaipur (built in the mid-sixteenth century by Rānā Udaisimha II) also figured in the network of Jain tirthas, testified by nearly one hundred and five inscriptions recording installations of icons of Jinas mostly by the merchant families of Prāgvaa, úrimāla, Upakeúa and Ukeúa (Osvāl) lineages at the temples of Úitalanātha, Vāsupūjya and Gauri Pārūvanātha.

The Jain Pustaka Praúastis records composition of some of the famous manuscripts such as Srāvakapratikramanasūtracūrni, patronized by Mahāmātya Samuddhara (chief minister at the court of Guhila King Tejasirinha), Daúavaikāladisūtrapatrikā, by Jagatsirinha (chief minister at the court of Guhila King Jatirasirmha) at Āhadamahādurga. The composition of these manuscripts was made possible by a grant in cash. Other contemporary tirthas of the Jains, Dhuleva, Zawar, Bhatevar, Râòakpur and Kumbhalgarh were located within the Mewar hills indicating the circulation of wealthy merchants in the very core- area



of the Guhila state. A text, composed in the fourteenth century, the Vagod Pravāsa, refers to Dhuleva as a Jain tirtha. Other references also point to widespread Jain patronage. For instance, we have references to the patronage of the temple of Dāntinātha by Nānā of Prāgvaa lineage, the construction of a new devakulika, and patronage of acāryas, etc., at Zawar (the famous mining centre), to the enlargement and building of the shrines at Rānakpur temple complex by the wealthy merchant Dhārana Sāh, to the succession ceremonies of the acaryas at Kumbhalgarh, to the beginning of Bhartpurīyagaccha at Bhatevar, to the composition of the manuscripts of Saptamāṅgacūṛṇi at village Baragrama and that of Kalpasūtra Kālikācāryakathā at village Bauna. Such scale of patronage points to the socio-economic importance of the Jains in Mewar between the thirteenth and the fifteenth centuries.

The earliest direct evidence of Guhila patronage of Jain establishments in Mewar appears in the late thirteenth century. Guhila Queen Jayatalladevi, wife of Tejasimha and mother of Mahārāval Samarasimha was a staunch Jain. The Guhila queen, at the instance of Ācārya Āri Dradvumna Siri of Bhartpurīyagaccha, got a temple of Ūyām Pārūvanāth constructed in Chittaur in AD 1278. The Guhila queen is likely to have patronized local gaccha – Bhartpurīyagaccha probably being one of the most influential Jain institutes in thirteenth-century Mewar. The inscription also refers to the grants of land and dramma coins from the mondapikās of Citrakūatalahati, Ahada, Khohar and Sajjanapura, and those of oil, ghee, etc., by

the reigning king, Mahārājakula Samarasimha. This inscription, interestingly, was not composed by any Jain acārya but by the brāhmaṇas, usually employed by the royal court. Such patronage attests to the importance of the Jains for the Guhila state once it acquired the most prominent centre of the Jains in Mewar Chittaur.

Because of their vast knowledge, the Jain acāryas were employed by the non-Jain members of society to compose their records. The Chiravā Inscription (AD 1273) was composed by Ācārya Ratnaprabha Sūri of the Caitragaccha. The Tāmarāda family from Chiravā significantly mentions that Ratnaprabhasūri was revered by King Visaladeva (Bāghelās of Gujarat) and Tejasimha, the Guhila king. This evidence indicates royal patronage enjoyed by the acāryas of Mewar beyond the territorial boundary of the Guhila state.

The peak of Guhila patronage of the Jains was reached in Rānā Kumbha's reign. The Abu Inscription of Rānā Kumbha of AD 1449 records the Guhila order for the abolition of the pilgrimage tax, customs, valvāhi (armed escort), caukidāri (security) and cattle taxes levied in Abu. The Guhila order is politically very significant as most travellers to Abu were Jains, and because Abu was contested between Gujarat and, the Devadās of Sirohi.

The Guhila patronage of Jain tirthas was parallel to the process of Incorporation of the Jains into the political structure. The Jains begin to figure as important officials in Mewar by the thirteenth century. The first Jain family formally inducted into the administrative structure was from Ahada. Thus, Jagatsirm-

ha of Āhada, who had patronized Daḍa-vaikālikādisūtrapatrikā appears as the mahāmātya (chief minister) of King Jaitrasimha. Two more Jains figure as official favourites in the court of Jaitrasimha. The Pāksikasūtravṛtti mentions that the writing of its manuscript was patronized by mahan (mahantak: accountant) Āri Talhana, Āri Karana and others who had received the favours of King Jayasimha (another name for Jaitrasimha). Influential Jains continued to occupy the post of chief minister in the Guhila court in succeeding years. The ministers of Tejasimha (Jaitrasimha's successor), Jalha Samuddhara and Kāngā, were all devout Jains. In particular, minister Samuddhara seems to have been a man of great wealth and status as he figures in a number of contemporary records. He figures in a copper plate inscription, the Ghagsa Inscription dated AD 1260, and in the manuscript of the Sr̥ṣvaka Pratikramanasūtracirni dated AD 1261 Kāngā figures as pradhāna rājā in the administration of King Tejasimha. It is important that he received the title of rājaputra. This indicates absorption of the influential Jains into the political structure with a status higher than that of chiefs in the sāmanta hierarchy. Dresthi Dhāndhal and Sreṭhi Ratnā seem to have been the two most important Jain merchants in the reign of Guhila King Samarasimha. The families of Samuddhara, Kāngā, Sresthis Dhāndhal, Ratnā, Ralha, etc., must have been quite influential in the Chittaurgarh belt. In the early fourteenth century, Sreṭhi Jijā and Punyasimha of Bāgherwal lineage figure as important Jain families of Chittaur.

(continued....)

## Akhil Bhartiya Brihad Baithak (Kanyakumari, 23-25 December, 2023)



The All India mega meeting of Swadeshi Jagran Manch and Swavalambi Bharat Abhiyan, focused on the broader idea of youth, entrepreneurship and Swadeshi, was held on 23, 24 & 25 December at Vivekananda Center, Kanyakumari. 274 karyakarta of prant level and above from 42 prants of the country participated in the meeting, in which the number of female participants was 48. This three-day meeting was conducted in 13 sessions.

After the meeting, 40 full-time karyakarta from 25 prants were present in this two-day full-time training meeting and they pledged to take active participation in nation building at the Swami Vivekananda Rock Memorial.

### 1. Inaugural Session (23/12/2023)

In the inaugural session, special guidance was received from former Sah-Sarkaryavaha and present national executive member, Man. Shri Bhagaiya ji. Special presence of Vivekananda Kendra pramukh Shri Balkrishna ji and General Secretary Shri Bhanudas ji and Chairperson of Zoho Corporation and patron of SBA Sh. Shridhar Vembu was also received in this session. On stage All India convenor of Swadeshi Jagran Manch Sh. R. Sundaram, National Organizer Sh.

Kashmiri Lal, National Co-convenor of SJM and co-ordinator of SBA Prof. Bhagwati Prakash Sharma, National Co-covenor of SJM Dr. Dhanpat Ram Aggarwal, Dr. Ashwini Mahajan, Sh. Ajay Patki and Mahila Pramukh Smt. Amita Patki were present.

Prof. Bhagwati Prakash Sharma gave detailed information about the SBA. It's first national workshop was held in Delhi on January 2022 in which karyakarta from various organizations participated. At present, 400 Rojgar Srijan Kendras in which 152 full-time karyakarta of Swavalambi Bharat Abhiyan are working across the country. Presently there is a central group of 94 karyakartas which include representatives of different organizations.

While guiding the Karyakartas, National Organizer Sh. Kashmiri Lal said that Swadeshi Week and Babu Gainu Martyrdom Day were observed on a large scale in the entire country, which should be followed in the coming years also. Distribution of leaflets containing information about local/desi, foreign and local goods is a mandatory task. Swadeshi fairs should be organized at various places. The work on the building of the Swadeshi Research Institute is in the final stages and additional work will also be completed and inaugurated by April 9, Pratipada. Kary-



akartas should know about the economy of their prant, only then we will be able to work properly at the prant and district levels.

Sh. Shridhar Vambu expressed his views on district based economy. He said that the economic model established by China is gaining its place in the world. This model, by giving employment to the youth for just 5-7 years of 18-20 thousand rupees, changes their entire outlook towards life into detachment from the society, making them lonely, which is never helpful in the upliftment of any nation. He gave the example of 35,000 women hired as employees by a foreign company in a district of Tamilnadu. As a result of working in this foreign company, life values, social values, cultural values, family values are changing and birth rate is decreasing. In South Korea it has come down to 0.7. We have to change such economic development model.

Man. Bhagaiya ji in his inspirational address described Swadeshi as the vision and way of life. The first task of Swadeshi Jagran Manch is to spread the concept of Swadeshi to the people. There is a need to present the path towards Swadeshi and self-reliance among the youth. He gave an example of earning Rs. 20,000 per month by rearing a cow. He talked about mental and social upliftment of the Karyakartas of Swadeshi Jagran Manch and the need to connect new Karyakartas and their training.

The subject of Swadeshi is very important in Panch Pravah, which needs to be implemented in life. The welfare of the world lies in the spirit of Swadeshi.

Sh. R. Sundaram said that this place of Kanyakumari is very energetic. He explained the importance of Vivekananda Center and also expressed confidence that the Karyakartas will get a new energy through the meeting organized at this place.

The book Bharat@2047 written by National Co-organizer Sh. Satish Kumar was also released by the dignitaries present on the stage. The session was conducted by national Co-Convenor Sh. Ajay Patki.

### **Session-2**

In this session, a summary of the works (Vrit) completed in the last year according to 6 regions (South Region, South Central Region, West Region, Central Region, Rajasthan Region, North Region) was presented by the Regional Coordinators.

Dr. Rajeev Sijariya, representative of Akhil Bharatiya Vidyarthi Parishad, gave information about

the entrepreneurship promotion conferences organized by Vidyarthi Parishad across the country. The session was conducted by Akhil Bharatiya Sangharsh Vahini Chief Sh. Ananda Shankar Panigrahi.

### **Session-3**

In this session, the minutes (Vrit) of the remaining 5 regions including Western Uttar Pradesh, Eastern Uttar Pradesh, Bihar-Jharkhand, Eastern (Orissa, Bengal) and North Eastern were presented by the regional coordinators.

National Organizer of Sahakar Bharti, Sh. Sanjay Pachpor, while throwing light on the subject of self-employment through cooperation, said that projects have been set up with the help of Sahakar Bharti taking strawberry farming as an example. In Andhra Pradesh, consumer stores are being run by women at tehsil level. Examples of forming IT co-operative society at All India level and manufacturing of toothpaste and Lijjat papad by women through SHG in Uttar Pradesh were also given.

Dr. Ashwani Mahajan said that the objective of establishing SJM was to save the country from foreign conspiracies through WTO agreements. A narrative was created by Swadeshi Jagran Manch that we will not accept WTO agreements and will not allow wrongs to be done to the public. A movement was made for the agreement, the result of which was that the Indian government refused to accept the patent despite foreign pressure.

He said that efforts were made by foreign powers to tarnish the image of India as if India is an underdeveloped country with poverty and hunger. But currently this misleading propaganda is being changed. He said that increasing GDP cannot mean development of any country.

Sh. Ashish Pandit, representative of De Aasra Foundation, which is supporting the SBA, said that this foundation has so far supported 2,75,000 entrepreneurs. He clarified about the future action plan in collaboration with the abhiyan. The session was moderated by Prof. Raj Kumar Mittal.

### **Session-4**

This session was conducted region wise and in groups. All the 11 regions were divided into five groups and three subjects were taken for discussion. 1. India @ 2047, 2. Swadeshi Fairs, 3. Youth Entrepreneurship Rallies on 12th January. All 11 regions discussed the topics and made their own action plans.

### Session-5

This session was conducted region wise in which all prants, in the presence of national level officers, held meetings and discussed the following points: 1. Full-time Karyakarta, 2. Organizational expansion, 3. Pravas yojna.

### Session-6 (24/12/2023)

The topic of this session was SBA and its working. In the session, Sh. Satish Kumar said that the first formula for taking the country on the path of development and making it Swavlambi was given by the visionary Dattopant ji Thengadi at the time of the establishment of Swadeshi Jagran Manch.

Today the slogan of “Nation First Swadeshi Must” is a direct extension of the basic spirit of Swadeshi through the SBA.

The country can be made employment-rich, poverty-free and prosperous through the fourfold path of Swadeshi, cooperation, entrepreneurship and decentralization. For this, we need to work with sensitivity, determination for awakening of emotions and change in mentality of society and youth.

Naturally, we have “sanskar – purity of purpose – practicality of purpose – determination” which will help in achieving our goals.

This session was also conducted on questions and answers mode. The session was conducted by Akhil Bhartiya Sah-Vyavastha Pramukh Sh. Deepak Sharma 'Pradeep'.

### Session-7

In this session, All India Co-Convenor Dr. Dhanpat Ram Aggarwal, in his presentation, said that at present India is the fifth largest economy in the world in terms of GDP. We should move forward keeping in mind two things, first is the environment and second is the material wealth. At present, India's working population is the highest in the world, but to become a prosperous nation, we will have to move forward in technology and do new research and inventions.

Giving information about MySBA, the digital form of Swavalambi Bharat Abhiyan, Sh. Hardik Somani said that through MySBA platform, both job seekers and job providers can easily register themselves, and get information about employment generation opportunities. The campaign to make SBA volunteers is to be started from January 12, a target has been set to make minimum 1000 volunteers in each district.

Sh. Jwala Prasad (National Executive Member of Vidya Bharti) told that Vidya Bharti is the only non-government organization in India through which 28,000 schools are run across the country. He also mentioned how the campaign is being given impetus by Gandhi Smriti and Darshan Samiti and Vidya Bharti. Employment and entrepreneurship programs are also conducted for the youth in these Vidya Mandirs.

Dr. Dharmendra Dubey (Akhil Bhartiya Prachar Pramukh) discussed about the publicity system that there should be minimum five Karyakartas in the publicity team at the state level and minimum three Karyakartas at the district level platforms and campaigns to spread organizational publicity through social media accounts. He asked to follow the accounts and increase its followers. There is an account in the name of MySBA and Join Swadeshi on Instagram, Facebook, YouTube and Swadeshi Yoddha on X (Twitter).

Subscription campaign for Swadeshi Patrika and digital subscription campaign will also be organized with a subscription fee of Rs.50 for its digital format.

Dr. Ashwini Mahajan said that Anti-national forces are raising their heads within the country, which can be weakened through propaganda and our view point can be put forward strongly. We should include like-minded intellectuals in the organization. The session was conducted by Akhil Bhartiya Sampark Pramukh Dr. Rajkumar Chaturvedi.

### Session-8

Giving information on finance related issues, Sh. Satish Chawla (Akhil Bhartiya Vitta Pramukh) said that the money collection campaign was started on June 1, 2023. Its specialty is that it is completely cashless and paperless enterprise. There will be a need for funds for direct and successful operation of the campaign up to the district level, which can be simplified only by collecting funds through Karyakartas.

We can take contribution in all three ways: CSR, institutional and personal. From the money collected, 85% will be shared by the district, 10% by the Prant and 5% by the Centre. This year the fund collection campaign will be done in the month of April.

Prof. Pradeep Chauhan (JNU) discussed about the work progress of the Swadeshi Shodh Sansthan, under construction, New Delhi.

Sh. Ravi Kavi through a documentary discussed regarding the Entrepreneur Championship award which is going to be organized in the first week of

March at Bharat Mandapam, Pragati Maidan, Delhi. After this, the idea was put before everyone that the Entrepreneurship Award scheme should be implemented in all the prants and districts.

Akhil Bhartiya Sah-Vyavastha Pramukh Sh. Deepak Sharma 'Pradeep' gave information about the assets while Central Office Pramukh Shri Laxman Bhavsiganka gave information about the Central office in Delhi. The session was conducted by Dr. S. Ligamurthy.

### **Session-9**

In this session, Shri Shashank Mani Tripathi ji, who runs Jagrati Udyam Center and Yuva Jagrati Yatra in Deoria, Uttar Pradesh, stressed on providing adequate information to the youth regarding entrepreneurship. The prevalence of National Entrepreneurship Service will have to be increased so that the young generation can get adequate information and guidance and the qualities of becoming entrepreneurs can be developed in their minds.

Sh. Surendran, Sangathan Mantri, Bharatiya Mazdoor Sangh told that Bharatiya Mazdoor Sangh is the largest trade union with 2 crore members and after the Corona epidemic, the importance of livelihood has been understood by the people. He said that he is continuously making efforts to protect the interests of the Karyakartas of government, non-government, organized and unorganized sectors. The session was conducted by Dr. Sunita Bharatwal.

### **Session-10**

In this session, based on the theme of making Bharat Samridh and Rojgaryukt, representatives of various organizations were connected through the online mode and discussions were held on employment generation activities in their organizations which included Vishwa Hindu Parishad, Seva Bharti, Grahak Panchayat, Sahakar Bharti, Kisan Sangh, Vanvasi. Kalyan Ashram, Vidya Bharti, Hindu Jagran Manch, Saksham, Environmental Activities, Bharatiya Shikshan Mandal, Gayatri Parivar, Vakrangi Group, IID etc.

Sh. R. Sundaram, Sh. Surendran, Prof. Bhagwati Prakash and Sh. Shyam Manohar were present on the stage. Dr. Bhagwati Prakash Sharma threw light on the topic. The session was conducted by the co-coordinator of the Abhiyan, Sh. Jitendra Gupta.

### **Session-11 (25/12/2023)**

In this session, the upcoming calendar of women's work and campaign was discussed. Smt. Archana

na Meena (Akhil Bhartiya Mahila Co-Coordinator) under the SBA, informed on the topic of maximum participation of women in the campaign from center to district level, system coordination, full use of digital platforms.

Smt. Amita Patki said that the mentality and economic condition of every family is different, hence we have to decide with our creativity how to extend Swadeshi to the families. He guided the Karyakartas on this subject through effective examples.

Dr. Rajeev Kumar (Akhil Bhartiya Co-Coordinator) presented the annual calendar of programs for the coming year 2024 (January to December) in detail before everyone. The session was conducted by Dr. Pratibha Chaturvedi.

### **Session-12**

Prof. Rajkumar Mittal effectively presented the topic "Brain Drain – Brain Gain" before everyone on how Indians who are abroad should use their contacts/experiences/means to be useful to India when they come back to India.

Dr. S. Lingamurthy (Kshetriya Samanvayak) discussed about the temple based economy "the root of happiness is religion and the basic meaning of religion". Till 1500, 21,000 festivals were celebrated in India and every person got employment through festivals only. Example – Ganesh Utsav of Mumbai and Hyderabad, Durga Utsav of Bengal etc. Identify such places in the country and make proper plans for employment generation there.

Sh. Kashmiri Lal discussed in detail about the organizational issues and building of Karyakartas. A Karyakarta is not born, he has to be developed and nurtured. He presented his views with examples on four issues - Karyakarta, programme, funds, Karyalaya. He asked to make the Rojgar Srijan Kendras as the offices of Swadeshi and also disussed the five tasks to be done by the Karyakartas. The session was conducted by Dr. Dharmendra Dubey.

### **Closing session**

Sh. Bhanudas (General Secretary, Vivekananda Kendra) presented the detailed history of Vivekananda Rock Memorial and Vivekananda Kendra.

Sh. Satish Kumar while throwing light on the topic of lifestyle-entrepreneurship of Indian youth said that the coming time belongs to Bharat. In the coming days, entrepreneurship is going to become the lifestyle of the youth of Bharat. No one can stop that

idea, whose time has come.

Sh. Kashmiri Lal on behalf of National Convener Sh. R. Sundaram announced new responsibilities.

### New Responsibility

#### All India Responsibility

- Sh. Arun Ojha, guardian of Bihar-Jharkhand region and member of the National Executive.
- Prof. Rajkumar Mittal, National Co-Convenor (Formerly - Akhil Bharatiya (A.B.) Vichar Vibhag Pramukh)
- Dr. Rajeev Kumar, A.B. Vichar Vibhag Pramukh (formerly - A.B. Sah Vichar Vibhag Pramukh) and A.B. Sah Samanvyak, Swavlambi Bharat Abhiyan.
- Dr. Dharmendra Dubey, A.B. Prachar Pramukh (Formerly- A.B. Sah Prachar Pramukh )
- Prof. Raghavendra Chandel, A.B. Sah Vichar Vibhag Pramukh (formerly- Convenor of Central Region)
- Sh. Balraj Singh, Samprak Pramukh, Eastern Uttar Pradesh Region, Kendra- Kashi (Varanasi).
- Smt. Sheela Sharma, Co-Convenor, Chhattisgarh (Formerly- A.B. Sah Mahila Pramukh)
- Smt. Alka Saini, Member- A.B. Prachar Toli (formerly- A.B. Sah Mahila Pramukh)
- Mrs. Archana Meena, Mahila Sah Samanvyak, Abhiyan and A.B. Sah Mahila Pramukh, SJM
- Smt. Vijaya Rashmi (Mandya, Karnataka), A.B. Sah Mahila Pramukh, SJM
- Sh. Ajay Patki (All India Co-Convenor) will also look after the work of the indigenous pilgrimage area, Arvi Wardha.

#### Swadeshi Shodh Sansthan

- Sh. Sridhar Vembu, Chairman, Board of Advisors
- Prof. Bhagwati Prakash Sharma, Vice Chairman
- Dr. Rajeev Kumar, (Former Vice Chairman, NITI Aayog) – Vice Chairman
- Prof. (Dr.) Pradeep Chauhan (JNU Delhi), Secretary
- C.A. Anil Sharma, Palak, Board of Management
- Dr. Sarvjit Kaur (D.U. Delhi), Co-Secretary
- C.A. Vijay Goyal, Head of Treasury

#### Media group

- C.A. Gagan
- Sh. Alok Singh
- Sh. Ankit, Purnkalik

#### Entrepreneurship Champion Award

- Sh. Mukesh Shukla
- Sh. Ravi Pokharna
- Sh. Saket Singh Thakur

### Other Responsibilities

- Sh. Satish Chawla, will head the Swarnim Bharat-varsh Foundation and look after the full-time work.
- Mrs. Suman Mutha will be the full time work assistant.
- Sh. Vasu Yogi, Head the Swavlambi Bharat Abhiyan (SBA) Office, New Delhi.

#### South Zone – Kerala State

- Sh. Anil Pillai, Kerala State Convener (formerly State Convener and State Coordinator of SBA)
- Sh. Bhagyanath, State Coordinator of SBA

#### North Tamil Nadu

- Sh. Chandra Shekhar, already State Coordinator
- Kumari Maithali, advisory committee member of Shodh Sansthan as well as the state women's head. South Central Region – Telangana
- Smt. Bala Swapna (Hyderabad), Prant Sah Mahila Pramukh.

#### West Zone - Konkan Prant

- Sh. Kishore Aswani (Mulund, Mumbai), State Convener (Earlier Mr. Madhavan Nair was the State Convener) Gujarat Prant
- Sh. Dhawal Thakkar (Laghu Udyog Bharti), State Co-ordinator of SBA.

#### Central Area

- Sh. Sudhir Date, Kshetra Sanyojak (formerly Sah Kshetra Sanyojak)

#### Malwa Prant

- Dr. Vishal Purohit, State Co-Convenor (formerly Indore Mahanagar Convenor)
- Sh. Rajesh Deshmukh, Laghu Udyog Bharti (Agar District), Co-Coordinator of SBA Malwa.

#### Mahakaushal Prant

- Prof. Vikash Singh (Amarkantak University), Mahakaushal State Co-Coordinator (formerly Shahdol Vibhag Convenor in SJM and Contact Head of Mahakaushal Prant)
- Mrs. Deepti Payasi, Head of MySBA Digital Work of M.P. (formerly, Mahakoshal State Co-Convenor and State Women Co-Coordinator).

#### Rajasthan Region - Chittor Prant

- Dr. Jyoti Verma, State Women's Affairs Head and also State Co-Convenor.
- Sh. Rajesh Gautam, State Co-Convenor (formerly Baran Vibhag Convenor)

#### Jodhpur Prant

- Sh. Anil Verma, Kshetra Vichar Vibhag Pramukh (SJM) and Kshetra coordinator of SBA.
- Sh. Pramod Paliwal, State Convenor and coordi-





nator (both) (formerly, State Co-convenor of SJM and state coordinator of SBA)

- Mr. Sameer Raizada, State Co-Convenor (formerly Prant Prachar Pramukh)

#### **Jaipur Prant**

- Sh. Lokendra Singh Naruka, State Co-convenor and state coordinator of SBA.

#### **North Zone - Punjab Prant**

- Sh. Pankaj Jindal, Only State Co-Convenor (formerly, State co-convenor and state Coordinator.)
- Sh. Siddharth Sharma, State Coordinator of SBA (formerly, Vibhag Convenor, Jalandhar)

#### **Delhi**

- Sh. Satyavan, State Co-convenor (formerly, State co-convenor and state Coordinator.)
- Dr. Sunita Dahiya, State Co-convenor (formerly State Women Head)
- Smt. Anuradha Barthwal, Delhi Coordinator of SBA (formerly, Delhi Sah Mahila Pramukh)
- Dr. Manjeet Singh, State Co-Convenor (formerly Vibhag Sanyojak)

#### **Western Uttar Pradesh Region**

- Dr. Amitesh Amit, Kshetra Sanyojak (formerly Kshetra Coordinator)
- Sh. Kapil Narang, Meerut Prant Convenor and Area Coordinator of SBA.

#### **Meerut Prant**

- Sh. Prashant Maharishi, State Co-convenor

#### **Uttarakhand Prant**

- Sh. Ashish Rawat, State Co-convenor.

#### **Eastern Uttar Pradesh Region**

- Dr. Sarvesh Pandey, Vichar Vibhag Pramukh of Eastern and Western Uttar Pradesh Regions.

- Sh. Anupam Srivastava, Kshetra Sanyojak and Kshetra Coordinator.

- Dr. Vijay Kumar Singh, Member of Akhil Bharatiya Prachar Toli (formerly, Kshetra Vichar Vibhag Pramukh)

#### **Awadh Prant**

- Sh. Vanshidhar Mishra (Balrampur), State Convener (formerly, State Co-convenor)
- Sh. Ramu Swadeshi (Lakhimpur-Kheri), State Co-convenor.

#### **Eastern Region – North Bengal Prant**

- Sh. Somresh Naskar, Prant Purankalik
- Dr. Palomi Nandi, State Women's Affairs Head.

#### **Middle Bang**

- Sh. Vidhanchandra Akuli, State Sangthak

#### **Odisha West**

- Chandrika Lakra, State Women's Affairs Head.
- Shamishtha Dev, State Women's Affairs Co-Head.

#### **North Eastern Region**

- Prof. Deepak Sharma (Tripura), Area Coordinator (formerly Area Contact Head)

#### **Manipur**

- Sabit Ji, State Women Chief

#### **Tripura**

- Mr. Subrata Nandi, State Co-Coordinator.

In the end, Sh. R. Sundaram thanked all the guests, officers and Karyakartas by encouraging them and calling upon them to expand their work at their places with new energy and determination from Kanyakumari. The session was conducted by Dr. Rajeev Kumar. At last the meeting ended with Kalyan Mantra. □□

## National Meeting at Vivekananda Kendra in Kanyakumari



In a dynamic and thought-provoking national meeting held at the Vivekananda Kendra campus in Kanyakumari, key leaders and influencers gathered to discuss the ongoing initiatives and future goals of the Self-reliant India Campaign. The event was marked by the presence of BhagwatiPrakash Sharma, the All India Coordinator of the campaign, along with esteemed guests including Bhagaiyaji, All India Executive Member of Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh, and Shridhar Bambooji, National Patron of the campaign and Chairman of Zoho Corporation. The highlight of the meeting was the insightful address by Padma Shri Sridhar Vembu, owner of Zoho Corporation, who shed light on the economic model inspired by China. Mr. Vembu emphasized the need for a shift in the prevailing economic development model, citing the transformative impact it has on the youth. He illustrated this point with a case study of a foreign company employing 35,000 women in Tamil Nadu, leading to significant changes in life, social, cultural, and family values, and a decline in birth rates. To address these challenges, Mr. Vembu presented a detailed roadmap for an alternative economic development model. The discussions aimed to encourage a reconsideration of current approaches and fostered dialogue on creating a more sustainable and self-reliant India.

Swadeshi Pracharak Shri Sunil Kumar from Jammu and Kashmir province also contributed to the dialogue during the mega meeting, sharing perspectives with his group of workers at the Vivekananda Centre in Kanyakumari, Tamil Nadu.

The diverse gathering included participants from various states, such as the All India Co-Organizer of Swadeshi Jagran Manch, Sh. Satish Kumar, and workers from the All India Executive of the Self-reliant India Abhiyan. The collaborative effort sought to explore effective solutions and initiatives to propel India towards self-reliance.

As the nation grapples with economic challenges, this national meeting provided a platform for influential voices to converge, share insights, and collectively work towards shaping a more resilient and self-reliant future for India.

<https://www.earthtimes.in/newsdet.aspx?q=361078>

## Switching to Trade in Local Currencies is in Economic Interest of Every Nation: Economist

Agreeing with the Putin's views, Swadeshi Jagran Manch (SJM), underscored that it was in the "economic interest" of every nation to switch to trading in national currencies. "But such a transition hasn't been possible till recently because of the lack of viable alternatives. The US dollar and the Euro to an extent have been viewed as the only feasible currencies in the global trading system," stated SJM. "It is an appropriate time to take advantage of this and switch to national currencies in bilateral trading settlements," asserted the economic expert.

SJM noted that around 20 foreign banks have opened Special Rupee Vostro Accounts (SRVAs) in Indian banks since last year to facilitate settlements in INR. India's new Foreign Trade Policy (FTP) unveiled in March this year also calls for encouraging trade in INR to "disaster-proof" against economic contingencies such as dollar shortages or international currency shortages, officials have said.

SJM recalled that India's "dependence" on USD for trade settlements has worked against the country.

"We have faced challenges such as rising debt burden, increased imports' bill due to fluctuation in US dollar. Even though the INR has gained strength vis-à-vis non-US dollar currencies, it has been depreciating with respect to the US dollar. It has led to depreciation in our currency," the Indian professor explained. SJM suggested that trade in national currencies could help countries like India in "maintaining balance of payments".

N Sathya Moorthy, a Chennai-based policy analyst and commentator, also agreed that New Delhi and Moscow share a common interest in switch to trading in national currencies.

"In principle, trading in national currencies will help in putting checks to huge money leakages incurred in transactional costs (for USD at present)," Moorthy said.

SJM also pointed out that other nations have to

“earn” USD through means of conducting trade with the US. “On the other hand, the US only has to print it, so to say. It is an unfair arrangement.”

As a “better and a fairer” alternative to trading in national currencies, Moorthy suggested that there could possibly be a mechanism to carry out international trade through Special Drawing Rights (SDRs).

“Bilateral transactions in multiple currencies across the world could create a huge, irreconcilable mess,” opined Moorthy.

<https://spatniknews.in/20231214/russia-india-agree-on-need-to-ditch-usd-for-trade-in-local-currencies-experts-5834781.html>

## Dots of Bharat @ 2047: SSS Launches Book on India's Growth Story



The Swadeshi Shodh Sansthan (SSS) launched ‘Dots of Bharat @ 2047’, a book authored by Sh. Satish Kumar and Dr. Shiv Kumar at Samay-Yan Library at sector-8, R.K. Puram, New Delhi on the premises of Swadeshi Jagran Manch (SJM).

Present at the event were Sanghtak of SJM Sh. Kashmiri Lal, Sah-Sanghtak of SJM Sh. Satish Kumar, Sah-Sanyojak of SJM Dr. Ashwani Mahajan, former NITI Ayog vice-chairperson Dr. Rajiv Kumar, and Editor of Organizer magazine Sh. Praful Ketkar. Dr. Pradeep Chouhan of JNU was the moderator.

Sh. Satish Kumar discussed the purpose and the five chapters of the book and the way it culminated into reality. Ketkar discussed the relevance of “swa” integrating the concept of swadharm, swabhasha, swadeshi, swarajya, and swadhinta to swatantrata. He said that the new education policy and Swadehi concept will lead the nation to its due position.

Dr. Rajiv Kumar said that India has to set an example of development by increasing growth at the rate of decreasing carbon footprint and the world will follow us. “All of us have to think for the nation first and discard selfish interests from all aspects of life,” he said.

Describing India's failure in Industrial Revolution

1 to 3, Dr. Mahajan said the world has acknowledged that Industrial Revolution 4 will be led by us. He illustrated the success story of our payment system and the competitiveness of the country which is reflected in our space mission and purchasing power parity. Sh. Kashmiri Lal gave a vote of thanks and asked the audience of the book to read between the lines to understand the message of the book.

<https://www.news18.com/india/dots-of-bharat-2047-swadeshi-shodh-sansthan-launches-book-on-indias-growth-story-8711275.html>

## 52% drop in toy imports in 8 years, 239% jump in exports: Commerce Ministry

The Indian toy industry witnessed remarkable growth in FY2022-23 in comparison to FY2014-15, with a decline in imports by 52 percent, and a rise in exports by 239 percent, said the Ministry of Commerce and Industry.

These observations were noted in a case study on “Success Story of Made in India Toys”, which was conducted by the Indian Institute of Management (IIM) Lucknow at the behest of Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT).

According to the report, the efforts of the government have enabled the creation of a more conducive manufacturing ecosystem for the Indian toy industry. The report further highlighted that in a span of six years, from 2014 to 2020, these dedicated efforts have led to the doubling of the number of manufacturing units, a reduction in dependence on imported inputs from 33 per cent to 12 per cent, increase in gross sales value by a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 10 per cent, and overall rise in labour productivity.

The report analysed that India is also emerging as a top exporting nation due to the country's integration into the global toy value chain, along with zero-duty market access for domestically manufactured toys in countries, including UAE and Australia.

The report further stated that in order to position India as a viable alternative to current toy hubs of the world, i.e., China and Vietnam, consistent, collaborative efforts of the toy industry and the government are essential for advancements in technology, embracing e-commerce, encouraging partnerships and exports, investing in brand-building, engaging with educators and parents to communicate with children, valuing cultural diversity and collaborating with regional artisans, etc.



The report emphasised that to address these issues and foster growth in the Indian toy industry, a strategic plan of action was needed. The government has implemented several interventions and initiatives, including:

a) Formulation of a comprehensive National Action Plan for Toys (NAPT) having 21 specific action points, and implemented by 14 central ministries/departments, with DPIIT as the coordinating body.

b) Basic Customs Duty (BCD) on toys (HS code 9503) was increased from 20 percent to 60 percent in Feb. 2020, and subsequently to 70 percent in March 2023.

c) Directorate General of Foreign Trade (DGFT) has mandated sample testing of each import consignment to curb the import of sub-standard toys.

d) A Quality Control Order (QCO) for toys was issued in 2020, with effect from January 1, 2021.

e) Special provisions were notified by the Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) on December 17, 2020, to grant licences to micro-sale units manufacturing toys without a testing facility for one year and without establishing an in-house testing facility, which was further extended by three years.

f) BIS has granted more than 1200 licences to domestic manufacturers and more than 30 licences to foreign manufacturers for the manufacture of toys with BIS standard Marks.

g) Cluster-based approach adopted to support the domestic toy industry. The Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME) is supporting 19 toy clusters under the Scheme of Funds for the Regeneration of Traditional Industries (SFURTI), and the Ministry of Textiles is providing designing and tooling support to 13 toy clusters.

h) Several promotional initiatives have also been undertaken to promote indigenous toys and encourage innovation, including The Indian Toy Fair 2021, Toycathon, etc.

[https://www.business-standard.com/industry/news/52-drop-in-toy-imports-in-8-years-239-jump-in-exports-commerce-ministry-124010400932\\_1.html](https://www.business-standard.com/industry/news/52-drop-in-toy-imports-in-8-years-239-jump-in-exports-commerce-ministry-124010400932_1.html)

## India's forex reserves hit over 21-month high; jump \$4.47 billion to \$620.4 billion: RBI

India's foreign exchange (forex) reserves continued to rise for the third consecutive week, adding \$4.471 billion more, to hit an over 21-month high of \$620.441 billion, according to the weekly data released by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI).



In the previous reporting week, the forex kitty had swollen by \$9.112 billion to \$615.971 billion, making the quantum of increase one of the highest in a week. In the week before, the overall reserves had risen by \$2.816 billion to \$606.859 billion.

In October 2021, the forex kitty had reached an all-time high of \$645 billion. At over \$620 billion, the reserves are just \$25 billion off the peak. The reserves took a hit as the central bank deployed the kitty to defend the rupee amid pressures caused majorly by global developments since last year. This takes the year-to-date addition of forex reserves to \$57.634 billion, according to central bank data.

For the week ended December 22, the foreign currency assets, which are the single largest component of the reserves, increased by \$4.898 billion to \$549.747 billion, according to RBI.

In the year so far, the monetary authority has added \$51.257 billion to the foreign currency assets. Expressed in dollar terms, the foreign currency assets include the effect of appreciation or depreciation of non-US units like the euro, pound, and yen held in the foreign exchange reserves.

However, gold reserves declined by \$107 million to \$47.474 billion during the reporting week while the special drawing rights (SDRs) were almost flat, adding just \$4 million to \$18.327 billion, said the central bank. The country's reserve position with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) also declined by \$129 million to \$4.894 billion in the reporting week, the data showed.

Separate government data on Friday showed that the government's fiscal deficit at the end of November stood at 9.06 lakh crore or 50.7 per cent of the full-year budget estimate. According to data released by the Controller General of Accounts (CGA), the fiscal deficit — the difference between expenditure and revenue — was at 9,06,584 crore during the April-October period of 2023-24. □□

<https://www.livemint.com/economy/indias-forex-reserves-hit-over-21-month-high-jump-4-47-billion-to-620-4-billion-rbi-11703858471281.html>



# Swadeshi Activities

## Swavlambi Bharat Abhiyan Meetings

### Pictorial Glimpses



Delhi



Bokaro, Jharkhand



Moradabad, UP



Odisha





## Swadeshi Activities

# Akhil Bhartiya Brihad Baithak Kanyakumari (23-25 December 2023)

### Pictorial Glances

