

# Swadeshi

## PATRIKA

March 2025



**Paralyzed WTO:  
Can it Survive?**



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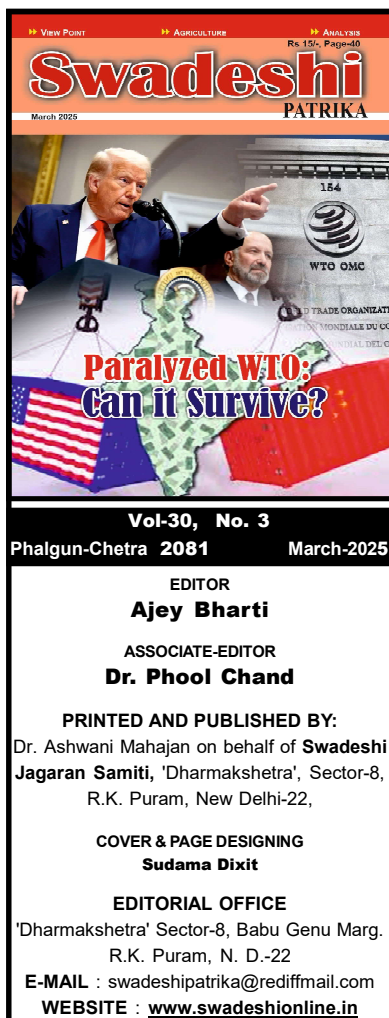


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## Strategic Development for North East India: Towards Viksit Bharat 2047

"North East India's ambitious goal of contributing significantly to a "Viksit Bharat" by 2047 demands a meticulously crafted and executed developmental trajectory. This trajectory must be underpinned by a comprehensive strategy that addresses the region's unique challenges and leverages its inherent strengths.

Firstly, the enhancement of infrastructure networks is paramount. This extends beyond mere road construction to include robust rail and air connectivity, ensuring seamless movement of goods and people. Modernizing these networks will unlock industrial potential, facilitate trade, and bridge the geographical isolation that has historically hindered growth.

Secondly, the integration of advanced technologies, especially 5G, is crucial for leapfrogging developmental hurdles. This entails not only deploying cutting-edge infrastructure but also fostering digital literacy and developing localized tech solutions for sectors like healthcare, agriculture, and education. Edge computing can further empower local data processing and analysis.

Thirdly, cultivating an entrepreneurial ecosystem is vital for generating employment and driving economic diversification. This requires providing access to finance, mentorship, and incubation facilities, particularly for women and youth entrepreneurs. Sector-specific support, such as for bamboo-based industries and sustainable tourism, is essential. Fourthly, modernizing agricultural practices through initiatives like Mission Saffron and NESIDS will enhance productivity and ensure food security. This involves promoting sustainable farming techniques, improving market linkages, and investing in cold storage and food processing facilities.

Fifthly, augmenting human capital through targeted skill development programs will equip the region's youth with the skills required for a rapidly evolving economy. This includes vocational training in sectors like hospitality, IT, and renewable energy, as well as promoting entrepreneurship and digital literacy.

Lastly, strategically promoting the region's tourism sector, highlighting its unique cultural heritage and natural beauty, will generate revenue and employment. This involves developing sustainable tourism infrastructure, promoting eco-tourism, and ensuring the safety and security of visitors. By effectively addressing these critical areas, North East India can achieve accelerated development, transforming its economic landscape and playing a pivotal role in the nation's progress towards a prosperous and developed future.

— Vijeet Kumar, *Delhi*

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## Quote-Unquote



**When India is moving towards becoming the third largest economy of the world, the participation of women in the workforce of the country should increase rapidly.**

Dropadi Murmu,  
President, Bharat



**Our vision for Global South will ... encompass the ideas of trade for development, capacity building for sustainable growth, and mutual security for a shared future.**

Narendra Modi,  
Prime Minister, Bharat



**Just like you need a society in a country, you need an international version of that and it's not just big countries who will benefit if there is no order.**

S. Jaishankar,  
External Affairs Minister, Bharat



## Need for a Robust Manufacturing Policy

There is no doubt that manufacturing production in the country has been adversely affected in the last few decades. It is worth noting that the contribution of manufacturing to GDP was 19.6 percent in the year 2000-01, which declined to 16.5 percent in 2013-14 and further decreased to 14.3 percent in 2023-24. If we look at various industrial sectors in depth, beyond these figures, it is revealed that the country's dependence on imports has increased terribly in almost every sector. The effect of the decline in manufacturing in API, electronics, telecom, chemicals, textiles, and many other sectors has been such that the country's dependence on other countries, especially China, increased so much that the country's trade deficit has been reaching to unbearable levels. By the year 2023-24, this merchandise trade deficit reached 238.3 billion US dollars, out of which 85 billion US dollars was the deficit from China alone. But in first 10 months of 2024-25, this deficit has increased to 243.0 billion US dollars and deficit with China to 83.52 billion US dollars. It has to be understood that no country can move forward by ignoring manufacturing. Efforts to develop manufacturing, doesn't come in way of growth in services, rather growth in manufacturing boosts service sector as well. However, generally ignoring the manufacturing sector has the biggest impact on employment. Increasing production in the service sector definitely leads to some increase in employment opportunities, but if we look at history, growth in the manufacturing sector has seen a much greater contribution to employment creation. Although in the current era, employment in manufacturing is also getting affected due to mechanization, robotization and AI, but these factors are having a greater impact on the service sector. Apart from this, due to disruption in manufacturing, the country's dependence on foreign countries increases, which can have many adverse effects. First, production in the country can stall in industries dependent on the supply of critical components, due to disruption in the supplies from foreign countries. Recently, due to the disruption in the supply of semiconductors, the country's automobiles production was hit badly and several other industries, questioning the very argument of global value chain. Secondly, the country's increasing dependence on other countries can lead to the depletion of valuable foreign exchange reserves. The effect of the recent increase in trade deficit on the country's foreign exchange reserves is a living example of the same. Thirdly, electronics and telecom, have a special importance in the modern era. Importing electronic goods from abroad can make our nation vulnerable due to control of underlying coding with the supplier country. Due to China's hostile stance with India, there may be a danger that China can weaponize this situation. Some time ago, the Ministry of Defense had issued an advisory, asking Indian soldiers to remove Chinese apps from their mobile phones for security reasons. Time and again concerns have been raised over security dangers of different kinds of Chinese electronic and telecom materials. Fourthly, China also engages in unethical activities like dumping to kill industries in the importing nations. APIs dumping by China is a living example, how China successfully killed our API industry, and made our pharmaceutical industry dependent on Chinese suppliers, endangering our health security. Goods are sold so cheaply through dumping that the production of those goods stops in the country, due to which the industrial development of the country is hampered. Later when country gets depend on foreign supplies, then the supplier country start exploiting the situation. API is the living example in this case where dependence of India on Chinese APIs made Indian Pharma industry to pay exploitative prices for APIs.

Under the influence of globalization, manufacturing policy was out of fashion since NEP days. Perhaps that is the reason why Government of India never announced any industrial policy after 1991's New Economic Policy was announced. Rather in the era of NEP, talking about the industrial policy or even manufacturing policy for the country was treated like a crime as the prevalent thought was that there is no need for an industrial or manufacturing policy because unhindered market forces, would automatically lead to international specialization and the country which can produce something more efficiently would be exporting to other countries, and import the other commodities, in which it doesn't have comparative advantage. But, the globe now has tasted the bitter outcome of globalization whereby manufacturing has been badly hit in almost all countries of the world, except China or few of its partners.

The world is now realizing the risk of high concentration of capacities in strategic industries in one single country, namely China. Over 81 percent of solar PV supply chain, 65 percent of EV manufacturing, 66 percent of lithium batteries manufacturing is with China alone. China is dominating in the supply of critical raw materials. This high concentration is endangering the world as the same can be weaponized by Chinese, and this can also be used to kill domestic industries of other countries by dumping. To deal with the situation, developed countries including US, European countries and Japan are trying to give shape to their industrial policy. The US offering hundreds of billions in subsidies and tax breaks for reviving manufacturing under 3 new Acts adopted in 2022. These include \$737 billion Inflation Reduction Act, \$280 billion Chips and Science Act, \$550 billion. Apart from this, Biden administration imposed tariffs in May 2024 on imports of EVs ++ from China. US and other countries have been adopting several measures to foster on shoring of supply chains, including strategic interventions including incentives, subsidies, protectionism, and domestic content requirements. European Union's Green Deal Industrial Plan, European Battery Alliance, Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism (CBAM) and Tariffs on EV imports from China are also worth mentioning in this regard. Japan has been Incentivizing on shoring of supply chains including through a US\$ 2 billion fund.

Today, when the whole world including developed countries are feeling strangled due to the fallouts of policies of globalization, and are moving towards designing their manufacturing policies, freeing them from dogma of free trade, this is the time when we stop and rethink to have a comprehensive manufacturing policy in the country.

# Paralyzed WTO: Can it Survive?



*Today the entire free trade system is going through a major crisis. In such a situation, the countries of the rest of the world will have to conduct international trade keeping in mind the interests of their respective countries, which may not necessarily be based on free trade.*

**Dr. Ashwani Mahajan**

The WTO was born in the 1990s as a symbol of globalization. It was said that the world is like a village, and therefore, unhindered free flow of not only goods and services but also capital should be ensured; so that the cheapest goods and services can be made available to the people across nationalities. It was also said that free flow and adequate availability of capital will improve the possibilities of development in developing countries as well. The specialty of the WTO was that through it, the conduct of international trade was made rule-based. That is, if a country was not behaving in accordance with the WTO agreements, that is, it is imposing higher tariffs or, imposing barriers or obstacles on goods coming from foreign countries, against WTO rules, then legal action can be taken against that country.

However, from the very beginning, developing countries were apprehensive about the stated benefits of WTO, because they felt that they would not be able to protect their industries and agriculture properly through tariffs and other types of barriers, against competition from highly subsidized agricultural products from foreign countries. Not only this, it would no longer be possible to save the economy from the ill-effects caused by the agreements related to TRIPS, TRIMS, services and agriculture, especially health security, security of agriculture and farmers and security of their industries.

Most economists kept applauding the rule-based international trade as a boon in view of the benefits arising from the formation of WTO and the unhindered movement of goods and services due to the same. But the disadvantages caused by the new agreements made under GATT in that era of globalization were either not studied properly or were ignored.

But for the last 8 years, since Donald Trump, first took over as President of USA, the WTO, which was a major tool for conducting global trade, has been losing its sheen. The decisions taken by the US President Donald Trump, in the very beginning of his second inning, have further accelerated the pace of WTO's decline. Concerns are being expressed all over the world, about the future of WTO. Interestingly, those who considered WTO to be a symbol of human welfare, development and smooth world trade are now debating, how soon WTO will see its end.

There is no doubt that the World Trade Organization is now paralyzed. The process of paralysis of the World Trade Organization had started with the Doha Development Round, started at the Doha Ministerial Conference of WTO. In the Doha Conference, developing countries raised the issue that since developed countries are economically strong, development process in developing countries is obstructed due to unequal trade. Therefore, international trade rules need to be amended, with a view to speeding up the development of developing countries. With this, the talks of the Doha Development Round, started in WTO. Developed countries had no interest in this and due to their indifference, the Doha Development Round ended without a conclusion. Developing countries including India, obviously were disillusioned with what has been happening in WTO.



But it was not just that the developed countries were indifferent about the problems of the developing countries, US developed a feeling that, it had got all, what it desired from WTO. Their corporate are now receiving much more royalty and technical fees than before, as intellectual property regime, post WTO establishment, favoured companies, mostly from US, who owned majority of patents and other IPRs. US companies got ample opportunities to invest in developing countries and US agricultural products started getting unprecedented market access in the developing countries. But after China's entry into WTO since 2001, and its economic rise, Chinese goods started capturing US markets and US faced huge trade deficit in foreign trade with China. US also started grumbling that due to WTO's dispute settlement system, its losing many disputes, with other member countries.

In the past, America used to make financial contributions to various international institutions including numerous organizations of the United Nations, World Health Organization, World Bank, International Monetary Fund and many other organizations. But, since Donald Trump became President for the first time, US started developing the impression, that financing these institutions with American taxpayers' money is not in America's interest. As a part of its strategy, America obstructed the process of appointment of judges in the World Trade Organization. Due to this, the dispute settlement system of the World Trade Organization itself became almost paralyzed. It is well known that the dispute settlement process is an integral part



of the rule-based system of the WTO. Due to this, it is no longer easy to ensure compliance with the rules in the WTO by the member countries. It can be said that the WTO has been becoming weaker due to the apathy of US and even its allies.

In successive ministerial conferences of the WTO, it has been becoming evident that US has no interest left in the WTO. But at a time when the developing countries including the rest of the world, except China, have suffered only in terms of their industrial development, due to glutting of their markets with Chinese products, but also lost their freedom or sovereignty to make laws for public health and international trade in the name of free trade and globalization, and WTO was the only tool for them to access the world markets. In such a situation, they have been continuously working in the conferences of the WTO to make it effective.

But after the return of Donald Trump to power in America, the existence of the WTO itself is now in danger. After assuming the office of the President, Donald Trump has started making frontal attack on the global free trade system. The same America, which was at the forefront in the negotiations and formation of the WTO; and was the biggest advocate of free

trade across the world, is now advocating protectionism; and arguing that since other countries of the world impose higher tariffs, US will also impose higher import duties, what he says 'reciprocal tariffs'. With the declaration of this tariff war, the relevance of the WTO is getting eroded. It is important to mention here that at the time of formation of the WTO, India and other developing countries were given the flexibility that even if developed countries reduce tariffs, they can still keep high import tariffs. The average bound tariff (tariff which is allowed to be imposed under WTO rules), for India is 50.8 percent. Despite that, since 2006, India has actually been imposing a weighted average import duty of only 6 percent, which is much less than the bound tariff.

Although there is no justification for the US to impose retaliatory, what they call reciprocal import duties, but the US has the privilege in the WTO that it can impose country specific import duties, a privilege not enjoyed by others. By misusing this right, the US has now started challenging the entire system of free trade of the WTO. In such a situation, the world will have to think whether one-sided free trade can continue. Many experts have now started saying that the rest of the world, except the US, can strengthen the WTO by remaining in it. But perhaps this will not be practical. Today the entire free trade system is going through a major crisis. In such a situation, the countries of the rest of the world will have to conduct international trade keeping in mind the interests of their respective countries, which may not necessarily be based on free trade. □□

# Will Trump's tariff threat work?

President Donald Trump's action on March 4, imposing additional 10% tariffs on China, 25% tariffs on Canada and Mexico, and reiterating his earlier decision to impose reciprocal tariffs on other countries may not have caught many by surprise. However, not many are likely to be aware that these moves are part of the long-standing playbook of the US in international trade negotiations going back several decades: erect barriers, often illegal, to the exports of other countries and extract concessions from them for rewriting trade rules in favour of developed countries.

What are some of the successful examples of the US resorting to this strategy in the past? Why does this strategy work? Will this strategy again bring handsome returns to the US at the negotiating table? Let us examine these questions. The Uruguay Round of multilateral trade negotiations at the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) and the Doha Round at the World Trade Organization (WTO) provide specific illustrations of the US creating a leverage at the negotiating table by blocking, or threatening to restrict, exports from key developing countries.

During the initial years of the Uruguay Round (1986 to February 1989), Brazil and India resisted negotiating standards for the protection of intellectual property rights (IPR) at the GATT — a key demand of the US. As a negotiating strategy, the US imposed 100% tariffs on \$39 million worth of imports from Brazil, and started threatening India with unilateral tariff action on garment exports. In the face of these illegal actions, it is not surprising that by April 1989 these two developing countries changed their negotiating stance and fell in line with the wishes of the US on IPR issues.

Economic coercion helped the US in advancing its objectives at the GATT negotiating table and resulted in the agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intel-



*No country on its own can succeed in defending itself against the US onslaught.*  
**Abhijit Das**





lectual Property Rights. The US repeated this strategy in the negotiations on trade facilitation during the Doha Round at the WTO. During May-July 2014, many African countries had misgivings about putting the finishing touches to the Trade Facilitation Agreement (TFA), which had been finalised a few months ago at the WTO's ministerial conference in Bali. In this uncertain situation, the Obama administration stepped in decisively.

As reportedly mentioned by a prominent African minister, the US issued a veiled threat to stop importing from African countries at zero, or low, tariffs under its African Growth and Opportunity Act if they did not support the TFA. This compelled the African countries to agree to the TFA. Why explain the success of this strategy? Given the high dependence of many countries on the US market for their exports, foregoing such an opportunity could significantly reduce their exports and curtail economic growth. It is, therefore, not surprising that developing countries have, in the past, acquiesced to even unreasonable demands of the US in trade negotiations. In the current times, Mexico, with more than 78% of its exports destined for the US, India (18%), Thailand (17%), and South Korea (16%) are particularly vulnerable to the US tariff threat.

Will President Trump's strategy of seeking to prise open markets through getting countries to lower their tariffs, negotiating new rules on non-discriminatory treatment in government procurement, and strengthening rules on IPR protection mainly for enhancing windfall profits of its pharmaceutical sector succeed? At this juncture, two

***Will President Trump's strategy of seeking to prise open markets through getting countries to lower their tariffs, negotiating new rules on non-discriminatory treatment in government procurement, and strengthening rules on IPR protection mainly for enhancing windfall profits of its pharmaceutical sector succeed?***

scenarios are likely. If changes that may be made by developing countries in respect of tariffs and regulatory regimes — especially on IPRs — for meeting US demands are extended to all members of the WTO, as may be required under the most-favoured nation rule, it would also promote the economic interests of other developed members.

Notwithstanding the differences between the US and the European Union (EU) on some geopolitical issues, the possibility of the latter supporting the former covertly on opening up markets and new rules on some aspects of trade cannot be ruled out. Under this scenario, the US and other developed countries are likely to emerge as outright winners while several developing countries are encumbered with skewed and asymmetric outcomes. Of course, Canada and the EU may be required to accommodate some of the interests of the US.

This scenario is likely to be accompanied with supportive narratives by renowned trade academics, mainly from the developed countries, who might suddenly discover virtues in Trump's actions on trade. While the previous scenario is in line with the historical experience at GATT/WTO, when power play determined most negotiated outcomes, in today's circumstances another possibility cannot be ruled out. The US weaponising tariffs as

a negotiating ploy to secure concessions goes beyond developing countries to now encompass developed countries as well.

With the EU aggrieved by the geopolitical fallout of Trump's possible actions on the North Atlantic Treaty Organization and Ukraine, it could take the lead in coordinating with Canada and some developing countries to collectively challenge Trump's America First trade agenda. Linked to this scenario is the possibility of some larger developing countries not respecting the IPRs of American holders of intellectual property, thereby compelling the US to get back on the rules-based track. This could queer the pitch for Trump's trade ambitions. With Canada and China having announced retaliatory tariffs against the US and Mexico vowing to do so, this scenario may already be unfolding.

In conclusion, no country on its own can succeed in defending itself against the onslaught of Trump tariffs and the US quest for regulatory changes in key markets for promoting its interests. Whether some countries will have the wisdom to resist the temptation of retaining their export opportunities in the US in the short term, and instead join hands for securing long-term benefits of a rules-based trade regime, remains to be seen. □□

The writer is an expert on international trade  
<https://www.financialexpress.com/opinion/will-trumps-tariff-threat-work/3768724/lite/>

# Wild-Trump Card

The game of cards is a simulation of geopolitics. The cards keep changing hands, and certain cards in certain situations are Trump cards. In geopolitics, the Trump card is the scarce resource an individual player owns. It can be food, energy, security, or the future itself. The future can be a scarce natural resource, scarce financial muscle, scarce technological capability, or scarce human capital.

The other player's trump card can counter the trump card of one player. But if the trump card of another player can counter the trump card of one player, then it's not a trump card. Then it is a wild card. The wild card keeps changing hands, and its ability to be a decisive factor is contextual. The context depends on the phase of the game, the timing of the game, the withholding capability of different players, the survival strategy of other players, the strategic decision to lengthen the game till favorable situations arise, and many permutations and combinations for mutual benefit, or waiting for a win-win situation in a likely zero-sum game.

The Trump card is the ability to negotiate in geopolitics. The wild card is more relevant in today's geopolitics. The Trump card is there, but its shelf life is shorter. The resources that are scarce today can be irrelevant tomorrow. The resources of little value today can become the most valuable tomorrow.

The world is discussing, writing, and preparing for the so-called trade war. The existence of multilateral trade instruments like the World Trade Organization (WTO) still bothers many. The WTO is already an expired product, but it is not a hazardous product. Hence, it keeps being showcased in public policy discussions. The WTO is looking for an entity to whom it can be helpful, i.e., it is looking for a utility position for itself.

The Chinese have already squeezed the WTO as much as they can during the first decade of this century. The Americans and Europeans squeezed the WTO to



*They fear Bharat as Bharat believes in "Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam," i.e., "The world is one family." In this era of Trump and the wild card, the world looks to Bharat for leadership.*  
Alok Singh





serve their maximum interests in the last decade of the previous century. The WTO is of no use to Americans, Europeans, or Chinese. So, no one cares about the WTO.

The export-driven economic growth model has prompted the leverage of the WTO to come up with a substitute. The Chinese did it well. They devised several regional, bilateral, and plurilateral trade agreements with and among various geographical areas of the world as an alternative to paralyzed WTO. The new American President recently said the Chinese President is his “dear friend.”

The Americans understand that it's not only the WTO that is not serving America's purpose, but many more international institutions are not in its sole control. The campaign of MAGA, i.e., Make America Great Again, has forced the occupants of the White House to revisit the drawing board. This drawing board projects its objectives as ending the Russia-Ukraine and Israel-Gaza war, controlling America's trade imbalance, and other specific hidden agendas.

The role of the Russia-Ukraine war is the trickiest to understand in the context of MAGA. The Americans want to be great again at the cost of Russians and Ukrainians. The Americans created whatever trouble they could to debar Russians from the international fraternity, whether campaigning that no country trades with Russia or banning Russians from SWIFT, the Society for Worldwide International Financial Telecommunications. The new American President recently said the Russian President is his “old friend.”

The Ukrainians own rare earth materials, which the Americans are eyeing and disclosing publicly, that

we need Ukrainians. In lieu of that, we have to support Ukrainians. The trump card and the wild card of this game are universally acknowledged; hence, it's a game where all the players are playing with their cards open. Access to defense products and technology, obviously outdated or, at maximum, penultimate, is binding Ukrainians to engage with Americans. The Europeans, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), and the Russians sometimes appear as pawns in the game between America and Ukraine. The Russians must disengage from NATO and Europeans for historical reasons and a futuristic defense strategy. The world witnessed the press conference that the presidents of America and Ukraine attended; one is known for dramatics, and the other is a professional comedian. Whether that was planted or spontaneous won't be easy to guess. Anyway, the new American President didn't say anything or didn't catch the attention like an old friend or dear friend to the Ukrainian President.

The new American President didn't refer to the Bhartiya prime minister as an old friend or dear friend but instead said, “We missed you a lot.” The world is talking more about the Trump card of trade war and military war and needs to focus on the undisclosed war.

But silently, the Americans acknowledge that it will be too late to do a deal for satellite communication and electric vehicles with Bharat as our young demography and the human capital have demonstrated to the world the successful execution of one-time pandemic COVID-19 vaccines and the ever-green universal digital transaction system, i.e., Unified Payments Interface (UPI). The shelf life of tech-

***The Americans understand that it's not only the WTO that is not serving America's purpose, but many more international institutions are not in its sole control. The campaign of MAGA, i.e., Make America Great Again, has forced the occupants of the White House to revisit the drawing board.***

nology is getting less and less, and in a small window of opportunity, they want to squeeze the financial resources. In the case of imported electric vehicles and satellite communication, the strategy should be to delay such agreements to minimize the collateral damage.

The Americans are distracting the world with various wars, such as trade and military. Still, they are silently working on projects like United States Cryptocurrency Strategic Services. They wish to gain control of the multipolar world order. They have admitted the departure of the bipolar world and accepted that the unipolar world is history. They are coming up with a new service that will be needed and appreciated by the world population. They fear Bharat as Bharat believes in “Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam,” i.e., “The world is one family.” In this era of Trump and the wild card, the world looks to Bharat for leadership. □□

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

## **Maha Kumbha Mela**

# **Evidence of eternal unity and Integrity of Bharat to guide the universe as Vishwa Guru**



Kumbha Mela is a ideal model of Samajik Samarasata and Hindu Samagam. The Tithi is decided only by movements of Guru and Surya not by any individuals. Brhaspati in Vrush Rashi and Surya in Makara Rashi Kumba will be at Prayag, Guru in Kumbha Rashi and Surya in Mesha Rashi Kumba will be at Haridwar, , Guru in Simha Rashi and Surya in Mesha Rashi Kumba will be s in Ujjain Guru in Simha Rashi and Surya in Simha Rashi Kumba will be in Nasik. So, called westerners with the help of computers, AI

tech finding it difficult to move ments planet. Sanatana Bharatiya thousand centuries ago on their own accurately calculated the dates. So, the People from nook and corner of country will join on their own without any formal invitation. Thus Kumbha is a world's prestigious holy religious congregation of 140+ crores of Hindus, at the sacred site of Sangam of 3 holy rivers i.e., Ganga, Yamuna and Saraswati. Kumbha has been the epitome of Civilizational Unity and integrity of Bharat since time immemorial, and has ensured that Hindus - belonging to 1000s of different casts, following 100s of different modes of worship, living in vastly different geographical regions, speaking 100s of different languages and dialects – are imbued with the spirit of ONENESS of Sanatana Dharma and consequently of integral unity of the holy land of India. Our ancestors, since antiquity, had immense devotion to this land as holy land (Punya Bhoomi) and land of Gods (Deva Bhoomi) and consequently as the land which can give “liberation “from human life (Moksha Bhoomi).



*Kumbha has been the epitome of Civilizational Unity and integrity of Bharat since time immemorial...*  
**Mahadevayya Karadalli**

Events like Kumbha Mela, since vedic times, has been reinforcing the above sense, in Hindus for many generations. Kumbha Mela is to create Bharatiya Collective Chintana i.e. Vyasti – Samasti welfare shall be simultaneously imbibed in the day to day life and practiced as Dharma. Dharma is nothing but following of Yama Niyam, control over of Indriyas (Sense organs), Managing Arishadvarga (i.e. Kama, Krodha, Lobha, Moha, Mada, Matsara) for Universal harmony. Hence, once in twelve years Kumbha Mela, a conference place, where Sadhu, Sharana, Pandits, Dharmacharya together conduct brainstorming sessions to decide common rituals for whole Hindu society to safeguard the unity and integrity of peoples of Bharat. The recently concluded Kumbha Mela, is the idea



of “Hindu Rejuvenation”. which has attracted crores of Bharatiyas irrespective of cast, creed, region, party etc., and proved vivedita me Ekta Bharat ki Visheshata. Resulted in reclaiming its long lost status of “Vishwaguru”.

**Kumbha Mela the perfect example for the concept “Unity in Diversity”**

Kumbha Mela, in these 45 days, was NOT merely the “Sangama” (confluence) of 3 Rivers; it also was the confluence of Devotion (Bhakti), Spirituality (Adhyatma) and Faith (Shraddha). It also was the confluence of people irrespective of cast, creed, region, party, and age group, etc., It also was the confluence of temporal affairs (with a lot of emphasis of technology) with Religious/spiritual affairs. In truest sense Kumbha Mela was the celebration of “Masses”.

According to Govt statistics through the use of around 1700 cameras with Artificial Intelligence software. Around whopping 66 crore people visited Kumbh over its period of 45 days. The visitors obviously included the entire cross section of society, from VVIPs like President and PM to most ordinary person, from highly educated academicians / scientists, to illiterates, from months old babies to centenarians, from sophisticated elite city dwellers to uncouth village /forest dwellers, and all Bharatiyas’ consisting of Hindus, Muslims, Christians living in Bharat.

**A new District arises in Uttar Pradesh.**

It was a humongous task to organize the congregation of such a massive scale, where the cumulative number of attendees of around 66 crores, over just 45 days

would exceed population of each of the 200 countries, except top 2.( India and China ) Yogi Adityanath’s government was up took the task in very systematic way. Kumbh Area covering about 10,000 Acres was declared as a “Special District” and huge amount of administration machinery staffed with top officials with adequate powers was established specially for this task.

About 13 Kilometer stretch of River Bank and Ghats were completely re-laid. 42 Ghat sections were created along the river bank for taking bath. 2213 Pontoons were created to enable traffic to cross the rivers. 2 Highways and 200 new peripheral roads were laid out for the congregation.

Ensuring safety and security of the huge number of pilgrims was a major challenge. To meet the same, about 37000 policemen, 14000 home guards, 56 temporary police stations, 144 Check posts were deployed. Of special importance due to the nature of ritual (i.e., taking bath in river) was the deployment of 700 police boats with 3800 specially trained river police personnel, 3 boat based police stations in river, State of art technology was deployed in the form of 2750 Artificial Intelligence based CC Tus. Drones were deployed on 24\*7 basis for constant surveillance.

To ensure fire safety, 50 Fire stations with 351 fire engines manned by about 2000 fire safety personnel were deployed. To ensure best possible comfortable stay for the pilgrims under this impossibly challenging circumstances, particularly for the Gurus & Sadhus from various Akhadas, 85 Big pendals, 1500 single room and 400

family room tents, 150 Maharaja Deras, 50 temporary Ashrams (Hermitage) were set up, and in all stay arrangements for about 4 Lakh pilgrims were created.

Indian Railways brought about 5 crores people across India, through 17152 trains (7667 special trains and 9485 regular trains).

Special arrangements were made in 9 nearby stations of Prayagraj to handle this huge influx of passengers. Likewise, the Air traffic facility also was geared up to handle the huge increase in Air passengers, coming in both regular flights and chartered flights. For a temporary period, the Prayagaraj airport was upgraded to international airport status. During normal days, about 20 flights used to land in Prayagaraj Airport, but during Kumbh days more than 2000 flights and international flights were landed in just 45 days. Road Transport consisting of all modes such as Bus, Vans, private Cars and Two wheelers was the most popular mode with people travelling long distances from all over India. Huge traffic jams extending to more than 100 kms were the testament of the huge volume of road traffic seen during Kumbha Time. Due to these excellent administrative arrangements, a number estimated based on scientific observations by AI supported cameras Kumbha could handle over the period of 45 days, the huge influx of 66 crores visitors.

In addition to the actual visitors, those who could not visit also got the Ganga Jal/”Prasadams” from those who visited Kumbha. One can confidently say that Kumbh touched almost every Bharatiya, whoever and wherever they are and brought them spiritual solace and blessings of Maa Ganga. □□

# The united states of inequality

To live in peninsular or south India means, for the most part, to live in a more prosperous India than the Great Indian Plain (GIP), a polite geographical name for northern and eastern India.

The peninsular states have per capita incomes (PCIs) at least double that of most GIP states. Tamil Nadu and Kerala have PCIs close to Indonesia's. But Uttar Pradesh and Bihar are poorer than Nepal. Human development—as measured by life expectancy, health, educational attainment, and poverty ratios—in the GIP is comparable to that of the poorest countries. In the peninsula, it compares favourably with upper middle-income countries.

The difference between the GIP and the peninsula is the same as between India and China. The former is only ahead of the latter in population. China and the peninsula are more advanced than India and the GIP on every other count.

This has led to talk in the peninsula about “subsidies” given by the peninsular states to the poor GIP states. To be sure, political power is vested in the GIP, and an obscurantist, Hindi-imposing nationalist government is in power at the Centre and in most of the GIP, fuelling the optics of discrimination.

The lazy ignoring of the peninsula in constituting successive finance commissions—the 15th commission had zero members from the peninsula—the increasing preponderance of senior Central government officials and armed forces chiefs from the GIP, the favouritism shown to GIP states when promoting foreign investment, and the disgraceful behaviour of GIP-born governors of Tamil Nadu and Kerala in subverting the work of duly elected state governments have further fuelled this resentment.

But the vacuity and pettiness of the Centre should not blind the peninsula to two disturbing facts. One, while inequality has stalled progress in the GIP, it poses



*India's south is richer and better developed than its north. But incomes are unevenly spread in either half. Urban decay and misogyny are just as common in both.*

**Rathin Roy**



an equal impediment to further progress in the peninsula. And two, the peninsula shares many retro-grade social and low-fraternity characteristics with the GIP.

If there is a country in the world that can host a museum of inequality, it is India. Income, asset, property and inter-generational inequalities are ubiquitous across the country. The gap has increased with the nation's growth explosion and is as much a part of the India story as the boom in mutual funds.

The peninsula has not escaped this trend. The per capita income of Tamil Nadu is over three times Bihar's, but the average daily wages for men in agriculture are not even double that in UP and Bihar. This signals an extractive economy where the bulk of the rise in prosperity is being skimmed by the already-rich.

This is despite the fact that supposedly high manufacturing wages contribute 21 percent to TN's GDP, as opposed to 11 percent in UP. The situation is better in Kerala but the same or worse in the other peninsular states. Economic transformation has not led to an inclusive increase in prosperity.

As a result, the peninsular states suffer sharp within-state inequalities. Consider the following information from TN's submission to the current finance commission. The average difference in the PCI of a district in TN from the average income of the state is '85,000, compared to just '15,000 in Bihar. The PCI of the poorest district is 25 percent that of the richest. Dharmapuri district in TN has a literacy rate worse than 36 districts of UP, which is three times as poor. Over 60 percent of Telangana and Karnataka's PCI is earned in just 3-4 districts of these states.

Now consider some negative things the peninsula has in common with the GIP despite being richer, healthier, better educated and more prosperous.

Patriarchy and misogyny are as embedded in the peninsula as in the GIP—just watch a Telugu blockbuster, ask Prajwal Revanna or a female tourist in Kerala. Hyderabad is as filthy as Patna, except in the bizarre gated communities. Superstition continues to dominate rational action. Traffic rules, building regulations and anti-pollution laws are flouted with as much impunity in Chennai, Bengaluru and Hyderabad as in Delhi, Jaipur or Kolkata.

Caste discrimination is rampant in every aspect of peninsular society. Clearly, improved PCIs and human development outcomes have not brought the necessary societal transformations that would permit progress to the next stage of prosperity. This social backwardness, in fact, remains a major unifier of the rich peninsula with the poor GIP.

A natural consequence is that peninsular states, just like GIP ones, spend a large proportion of their resources compensating for economic failure and insufficient growth in universal prosperity despite a huge expansion in their PCIs. The same programmes adopted in the poor parts of the country and by the central government—which I have labelled the rise of the 'compensatory state'—are also prominent in the peninsula.

The persistence of low fraternity, the overweening significance of caste politics, weak institutions and disregard for rules means the peninsula punches much below its weight in terms of prosperity and social cohesion, compared to what one

***If there is a country in the world that can host a museum of inequality, it is India. Income, asset, property and inter-generational inequalities are ubiquitous across the country.***

would expect looking just at PCI.

The informal sector persists, boosted by migrant labour from north and east India, letting the rich continue to enjoy feudal lifestyles and allowing low-productivity activities to flourish, instead of the formalised high-productivity, high-investment, high-wage virtuous cycle typical of societies at close to \$3,000 levels of PCI.

The divide between the peninsula and the GIP is as real as the asymmetry between the locus of economic prosperity and political power in India and the malicious acts of a biased and destructive Centre bent on hegemonic control.

But to use the latter as an excuse to overlook the very real and serious problem that the peninsula confronts in executing the next phase of economic transformation—one that requires inclusivity and better social cohesion—would be a blunder of historic proportions.

It is time this became an important focus of the many cross-peninsular intellectual discussions and policy dialogues I am fortunate to be part of.

*Rathin Roy- Distinguished Professor, Kautilya School of Public Policy, Hyderabad.*

<https://www.newindianexpress.com/opinions/2025/Feb/16/the-united-states-of-inequality>



## Can the NTPC Aid The Government's Doubling Farmers' Income Mission?

In the bid to go green, the Narendra Modi government announced that thermal coal-fired power plants will use 5% biomass pellets in 2024-25 and moving forward to 7% biomass pellet blending in thermal coal-based plants by 2025-2026 for energy generation. Now, India has about 53 active coal-fired thermal plants, and more are getting made. And there lies an opportunity of green energy and doubling farmers' incomes with the same step. In today's scenario, biomass pellets made from agricultural residues and agrarian produce is picking up speed across the country, especially as there is a new demand. NTPC alone has invited bids for procuring 219,000 tons of non-torrefied biomass pellets at its coal-fired thermal power plant in Dadri. Imagine this is the requirement for one plant. The NTPC Meja plant closed a bid in December 2024 for one lakh tonnes of biomass pellets for one year. With 53 functional coal-based plants in the country, one can easily image the high demand.

Plus, the demand is only going to increase as the government plans to increase the biomass pellets to a maximum of 15 % if possible in thermal power plants. India is already under pressure from the 'climate change' advocates globally to reduce dependence on coal as an energy source. Biomass-based energy production is the only road out of the coal trouble in as per the western doctrine on climate change. Most developed countries are shutting down thermal power plants or converting them into biomass-based energy plants. We must remember that India is also committed to achieve Net Zero emissions target by 2070 as announced by PM Narendra Modi at COP26.

For India, using biomass doesn't only have 'climate benefits', if this step is



*By investing in the farmers, the NTPC will also have access to cheaper pellets as they will be locally produced.*

**Indra Shekhar Singh**



efficiently achieved we could be looking at a serious reduction in imported coal for our thermal power plants. This will naturally help strengthen our economy as it won't be losing our precious forex. We save the environment and forex reserves at the same time while empowering the local economy especially in the rural sector. Now, some steps to empower the local economy are already playing out. When we look at some of the tenders at NTPC, for example, the NTPC Meja tender doesn't allow for foreign or imported pellets. The NTPC have created a good policy document which even invites future biomass pellet makers to apply for the tender. So the eco-system is very conducive for the growth of the biomass pelleting industry. This is also backed by subsidies and access to soft loans for entrepreneurs, give a chance for local youths in rural areas to work the business side of things.

Small and medium business and pellets-manufactures have been given preference in many of these tenders, and most issues have been considered, but one stakeholder seems to be missing from all these discussions, and that are the farmers and farmers' organisation.

### **Doubling Farmers Incomes**

The policy makers at NTPC have already done a good job, but they can improve on their policy by having a 'farmers'-first approach to the procurement process. But first things first, NTPC has 53 coal-fired plants that would require a considerable amount of biomass pellets. So the NTPC should create thermal plants feeder zones around their power plants. Each zone can have a 50-70 km radius and will take into

account the agro-climate, water, agrarian residues, etc and then recommend to the power plant which kind of biomass pellets will promote the local economy and also ensure that the power generation is not suffering.

For example, if the power plant is in Punjab, naturally the government should insist on higher paddy straw residue based pellets, but if the plant is in the non-paddy growing of Rajasthan, the government ought to change the procurement policy and include local agrarian residues or native crops that can be used for making pellets. The next step, is to collectivise farmers as agro-clusters, co-operatives or farmers producer organisations (FPOs). The Centre already has funds allocated for creating clusters, FPOs and promoting farmers, they should be diverted to help NTPC create clusters which are growing the raw materials like paddy, Napier grass, bamboo, etc for making pellets.

Each thermal plant zone can have an NTPC-managed pellet making infrastructure where farmers can bring their raw materials and get pellets made. To encourage farmers and FPOs, NTPC needs to begin by having a compulsory 10% procurement from these special feeder zones. Eventually, NTPC should aim to procure all at least 50% of all the biomass pellets locally or from feeder zones. Forming partnerships with local farmers and farmers' organisations will go a long way in ensuring that the pellet supply remains constant. By investing in the farmers, the NTPC will also have access to cheaper pellets as they will be locally produced. Farmers working with the NTPC could also receive carbon credits.

***Of course, there will be challenges of storage and processing of agrarian residue for example paddy straw - for this the small rural entrepreneurs can play a big role working with the farmers in the FPO model.***

Of course, there will be challenges of storage and processing of agrarian residue for example paddy straw - for this the small rural entrepreneurs can play a big role working with the farmers in the FPO model. FPOs and farmers' organisations should also be allowed to bid in the tenders for biomass pellets. As suggested before, 10% of the total quantity of pellets required by a coal-based plant should be procured from local farmers and FPOs. This will be a revolutionary step. Now, this process can happen swiftly if all the NTPC's announce a minimum support price for the residues or feeder crops like Napier grass, bamboo, etc. Each year, the price can be revised depending on the annual inflation. NTPC and the government should seriously consider this proposal as this has the potential in a short time period to create a new agrarian eco-system around the coal-based plants, which will enrich the farmers and take India closer to our green energy goals. □□

<https://www.evbarat.com/en/bopinion/can-the-ntpc-aid-the-governments-doubling-farmers-income-mission-en25030505944>

# Making things isn't just about making money

In Oliver Stone's movie *Wall Street*, capturing the reckless 1980s' spirit of making money with money in a booming stock market and through financial innovation and worse, at a time when American manufacturing was being badgered by imports from Europe and Japan, the working-class father Carl Fox has a question for his get-rich-quick son Bud.

"Stop going for the easy buck", the father warns, "and start producing something with your life. Create, instead of living off the buying and selling of others".

Young Bud has little time for such fatherly admonition. "What I see is a jealous old machinist who can't stand the fact that his son has become more successful than he has!" Not to be cowed down by his son's youthful arrogance, father Carl replies: "What you see is a guy who never measured a man's success by the size of his wallet!"

"That's because you never had the guts to go out into the world and stake your own claim!" retorts Bud. After a long pause, the father speaks in a tone of wounded regret: "Boy, if that's the way you feel, I must have done a really lousy job as a father."

Last week two highly regarded business leaders put pen to paper to warn the scions of Indian business families that far too many of them were busy merely managing money rather than making something with that money.

Uday Kotak, the banker, was the first to speak his mind. Warning that, what John Maynard Keynes called, the "animal spirits of enterprise" were not visible in the next generation of business persons. Kotak is concerned that well-educated young people born, so to speak, with a gold spoon in their mouth, seemed content managing their financial inheritance rather than producing something with it.



*Today even Indian business persons are able to run their India business from overseas. And, if it's only about managing money, then who needs anything more than a laptop and a mobile phone.*  
**Sanjaya Baru**





"I would love to see this generation be hungry for success and build operational businesses." Kotak wrote, worrying about a tendency among younger members of business families to "take the easy way" of managing family offices and investments. Few are into building world-class businesses.

Even as Kotak's remarks created a buzz in board rooms, Harsh Goenka of the RPG Group launched yet another missile. Stop criticising N.R. Narayana Murthy of Infosys and S.N. Subrahmanyam of L&T for suggesting that Indians should work longer hours and start doing at least half the work they still do, admonished Goenka.

These young millionaires and billionaires driving fancy cars and holidaying in exotic places "would never survive even a week of (their) gruelling schedule... Instead of rolling up their sleeves and sweating it out in the trenches of business and industry, they are busy trading, speculating and running family offices."

Goenka reminded the brats how an earlier generation of business families expected their children to begin work at the bottom of the manufacturing pyramid, managing people, managing supplies, creating products and selling them. Not just go out for a working lunch with an investment manager to look at spreadsheets and then flying off for the weekend to some hot spot or watering hole.

The Kotak-Goenka put down is should draw attention to a larger malaise that is not just confined to the wealthy young. Even middle-class young people who secure a degree in engineering have, for several generations now, gone on to seek a degree in management

or finance and sat at desks managing money rather than work on the shop floor managing production.

The ingrained caste and class divisions of our society at large also defined success in business. Dirtying hands on the shop floor was not the route to managerial success. When Japan's Suzuki arrived in India and made managers in air-conditioned offices wear the same grey outfits that foremen on the shop floor wore, eyebrows were raised among the hoi polloi.

These social attitudes have had an impact on the larger story of Indian manufacturing. When desk jobs in front of computer screens in the services industry began offering better remuneration than factory-based jobs in manufacturing, the whiz kids from IITs and IIMs and the foreign-returned ones fuelled the services sector boom, once again leaving manufacturing bereft of adequate talent.

To manage manufacturing, the manager has to live close to the factory. That is why industrial centres came up like Bokaro in the public sector and Jamshedpur in the private sector. Governmental incentives for locating manufacturing centres in backward districts meant that many industries came up far away from the major metros. An earlier generation of business persons and managers learnt to live between city and the distant factory.

The urban based services and financial sectors quite understandably attracted the better qualified because these jobs are also city and metro based. Who wants to be in Aurangabad if one can be in Mumbai? Even industrial activity began moving closer to urban centres, adding to the problem of urban

pollution. Taken together, the incentive to dirty one's hands and get into the making of things has been outweighed by the far more seductive incentives of making money sitting at a desk, if not reclining on a sofa.

A mix of cultural attitudes, the gap between the quality of life in metros as opposed to industrial locations and the gaps in remuneration for different types of managerial work — production, marketing and finance — have all combined to make manufacturing a last option for gainful employment. No wonder India lags in manufacturing.

On top of this, the ease of travel between India and financial centres like Singapore and Dubai, not to mention London and Zurich, has also seduced the wealthy away from managing home-based production to offshore management of funds. Indeed, after the Securities and Exchange Board of India (Sebi) permitted online board meetings and with improved connectivity Indian CEOs find they can run their businesses at home living overseas.

The social and cultural gap between manager and worker has been reinforced by the ability of executives to now manage factory and finance sitting comfortably in more hospitable locations. In the past it was executives in multinational corporations that ran their overseas business from their home country. Today even Indian business persons are able to run their India business from overseas. And, if it's only about managing money, then who needs anything more than a laptop and a mobile phone. □□

*The writer is an author, a former newspaper editor and adviser to Prime Minister Manmohan Singh*  
<https://www.pressreader.com/india/deccan-chronicle/20250303/281930253731743/>

# Artificial Intelligence Initiatives

In the previous article on DeepSeek, an overview was presented with the insight on the revolution in artificial intelligence. In this article, the emphasis is laid on the artificial intelligence initiatives by our Government.

The market reaction to DeepSeek's AI breakthroughs has been extreme. DeepSeek's story teaches us critical truths about technology, innovation and greed. DeepSeek's success also demonstrates the power of constraints.

From the early days of Silicon Valley where the scrappy start-ups out-maneuvred the corporate giants to the rise of mobile where hardware limitations spurred software innovation, constraints have always been the catalyst for breakthroughs. The biggest lesson from DeepSeek's rise is the power of open systems. In an age where AI models are being treated as proprietary IPs, DeepSeek is opposite. By being open source, they are rebalancing the AI equation.

Several of our government departments at the state and central level are planning to deploy artificial intelligence (AI) as they look to get more of efficient, become more responsive to public needs, redress grievances and improve access to welfare programmes among other things. Central and state governments departments have floated as many as 13 projects and are seeking tech partners to implement AI in areas such as conversational chatbots, video analytics and data analytics - projects are valued at Rs. 1 crore to Rs. 10 crores. The Union Power Ministry is building the Jyoti Chatbot to inform urban consumers about connections, outages and billing disputes. Digital India Corporation, a non-profit set up by the Ministry of electronics and information technology (MeitY) is seeking an AI chatbot to power the MyScheme platform with the models such as Claude, Llama and GPT-40 that will enable citizens to discover and apply for various social welfare and benefit schemes. The Forest Department of Odisha government is looking to deploy AI based video analytics software and that aims to track animal movement and prevent human wildlife conflict.



*Our AI models under development are more user-friendly and encompass all the needs of the corporate, farmers, start-up ecosystems, education, entrepreneurs and the Government imperatives.*  
**Vinod Johri**



Union Minister Shri Ashwini Vaishnav said government and its agencies will provide Rs.16,300 crore while public sector entities as Khanij Bidesh India Ltd. (KABIL), a joint venture of state for overseas acquisitions - will spend about Rs. 18000 crores as part of their investment plans. The mission will provide a policy Philip to KABIL's quest for stakes in Australia, Chile and Argentina mines. He said the private sector and startups will have a major role especially in exploration and technology development. Niti Ayog paper says Bharat has opportunity to emerge as innovator and leader in equitable AI development

Prime Minister Sh. Narendra Modi co-chaired the AI Action Summit on 11 Feb 2025 along with the President of France, H.E. Mr. Emmanuel Macron in Paris. The week-long summit, which began with the Science Days on February 6-7, followed by the Cultural Weekend on February 8-9, 2025 culminated in a High-Level Segment attended by global leaders, policy-makers, and industry experts.

In his address, Prime Minister Shri Modi noted that the world was at the dawn of the AI age where this technology was fast writing the code for humanity and reshaping our polity, economy, security and society. Emphasizing that AI was very different from other technological milestones in human history in terms of impact, he called for collective global efforts to establish governance and standards that uphold shared values, address risks and build trust. He further added that governance was not just about managing risks but also about promoting innovation and deploying it for the global good. In this

regard, he advocated for ensuring access to AI for all, especially the Global South. He called for democratizing technology and its people-centric applications so that achieving the Sustainable Development Goals becomes a reality. Alluding to the success of India-France sustainability partnership through initiatives such as the International Solar Alliance, PM stated that it was only natural that the two countries were joining hands to forge an innovation partnership for a smart and responsible future.

PM Sh. Modi highlighted Bharat's success in building a Digital Public Infrastructure for its 1.4 billion citizens based on open and accessible technology. Talking about Bharat's AI Mission, PM noted that Bharat, considering its diversity, was building its own Large Language Model for AI. He underlined that Bharat was ready to share its experience to ensure that the benefits of AI reach everyone. Prime Minister announced that Bharat will be hosting the next AI Summit. He stated, "Governance is also about ensuring access for all, especially in the Global South, where capacities are most lacking—be it in computing power, talent, data, or financial resources." The centering of Global South's priorities, particularly questions of access, is very much in line with Bharat's public narrative, as seen during its recent G-20 presidency.

The summit featured discussions on critical themes, including greater access to AI infrastructure to ensure inclusion, the responsible use of AI, AI for public interest, making AI more diverse and sustainable, and ensuring safe and trusted governance of AI.

Bharat actively engaged in the

***Bharat actively engaged in the working groups leading up to the summit, which focused on themes including the future of work, security and safety, AI for public benefit, and innovation and culture.***

working groups leading up to the summit, which focused on themes including the future of work, security and safety, AI for public benefit, and innovation and culture. Now that Bharat has been announced as the host of the next summit, it is worthwhile looking at how it may shape the discussions.

The strategic shift from safety to innovation also suits the regulatory state's approach to governing the use of AI, even in safety-critical sectors such as healthcare and surveillance-centric applications like facial recognition. In the next summit, this shift will allow the Bharatiya government to focus the conversation more on innovation, investments, and access questions while evading scrutiny of its low-rights legal environment ripe for untested technological experiments.

The overwhelming framing of AI conversations in the context of national sovereignty is also a space where our policymakers will find themselves comfortable. Both public posturing and policy documents that describe Bharat's digital policymaking increasingly anchor



the notion of 'sovereignty.' The emotional heft of the word 'sovereignty' allows for the centering of national pride in domestic politics, while in parallel, its contested understanding allows a flexible understanding of national interest for an expedient and transactional foreign policy.

Our government is focusing on developing home-grown voice-based AI models rather than only text-driven ones, which currently dominate the global AI sector. By prioritising voice-enabled models in multiple Bharatiya languages, the government hopes to democratise AI, making it more accessible and

The rationale behind this push is clear. A vast majority of the population is more comfortable speaking their native language than typing it. "The Internet will become more voice-enabled, and there will be many people who will prefer accessing services using voice commands," Abhishek Singh, additional secretary, ministry of electronics and IT (MeitY), told in an interaction.

Abhishek Singh, who is leading the Rs 10,372 crore IndiaAI mission, highlighted the market potential for indigenous voice-based AI models. "If someone develops a voice-based large language mod-

find it easier to interact with AI through speech rather than written text. For instance, a farmer seeking information about crop diseases or weather updates could simply ask an AI assistant in his local dialect instead of navigating text-based interfaces. Similarly, individuals looking for health advice, government schemes, or educational content could benefit immensely from AI-driven voice interactions. The demand for Bharatiya-specific voice AI models is significant, given that global AI firms have not been able to fully cater to the country's linguistic diversity. While some international AI systems support multiple languages, their training datasets for Bharatiya languages remain limited. Singh said that any AI model trained on Bharatiya datasets and designed specifically for the country's linguistic and cultural nuances would outperform existing global models in this domain.

To accelerate the development of indigenous AI models, the government has received 67 proposals from startups, academic institutions, and private enterprises interested in building foundational AI models. A technical committee is currently evaluating these proposals, and selected projects will receive government funding.

The future belongs to the those who innovate faster, smarter, and with greater impact. Our country is making substantial strides in the Artificial Intelligence initiatives and leading the global initiatives too. Our AI models under development are more user-friendly and encompass all the needs of the corporate, farmers, start-up ecosystems, education, entrepreneurs and the Government imperatives. □

(Vinod Johri: Retd. Additional Commissioner of Income Tax, Delhi)

***To accelerate the development of indigenous AI models, the government has received 67 proposals from startups, academic institutions, and private enterprises interested in building foundational AI models. A technical committee is currently evaluating these proposals, and selected projects will receive govt funding.***

beneficial to a wider population. This approach would also bridge the digital divide and position the country as a leader in voice AI innovation. This move is expected to enhance accessibility, enabling the large sections of the population to interact with AI in their native languages through speech rather than text. Unlike conventional AI chatbots like OpenAI's ChatGPT, Google's Gemini, or Elon Musk's Grok, which are largely text-based, the government's approach is on vocal interactions. While global tech firms have introduced voice capabilities in their AI assistants, their models are primarily optimised for English and a handful of other languages.

el (LLM) in Bharat, it will be a game-changer. Voice will become a significant enabler," he said.

The Government has received around 22 proposals for large language models and 45 for smaller domain-specific models in sectors such as healthcare, education, and agriculture. The selection criteria will include the technical credentials of the teams involved, the intended purpose of the models, and the expected impact of their deployment.

Bharat has approximately 900 million active Internet users, but about 500 million people remains offline. Many among them, including rural communities, farmers, and non-tech-savvy individuals, may

## Banks bend for rich corporates, break farmers

The inequality is grotesque. Responding to an RTI plea, the Reserve Bank of India has informed that since April 1, 2014, the banks have written off a staggering Rs 16.61 lakh crore of bad loans of corporate India. On the other hand, speaking in Parliament the other day, Hanuman Beniwal, an MP from Rajasthan, said the outstanding farm loans in the country now exceed Rs 32 lakh crore.

More than 18.74 crore farmers are saddled with outstanding loans.

In fact, the total outstanding farm loans are 20 times higher than the outlay for the annual agricultural budget, Beniwal said, and asked the Finance Minister why no mention was made of any farm loan waiver scheme for farmers.

On the contrary, of the total write-off of Rs 16.61-lakh crore toxic loans of India Inc in the past 11 years (with only 16 per cent recovery), Indian banks appear not to have any second thought before writing-off Rs 10.6 lakh crore of the unpaid loans of India Inc in the past five years. Reports say that 50 per cent of the bad loans being struck belonged to large companies.

But when it comes to farmers, a bank in Shimoga, Karnataka, had showed the utmost urgency by summoning a small farmer who had to walk 15 km in the absence of a regular bus service to clear an outstanding balance of just Rs 3.46.

In the financial year 2023-24 alone, banks have written off Rs 1.7-lakh crore. A year earlier, in 2022-23, banks wrote off Rs 2.08-lakh crore. But when it comes to waiving farm loans, the Centre has done it only twice: in 1990 and 2008. Some state governments have done it separately, but it is not a burden on the banks as the states make the payments to the bank for the amount waived.

While the unpaid bank loans are written off with sagacity, as if the write-off adds to nation-building, it is so painful to see a video clip of a woman self-help



*Why should banking laws be different for different categories of bank customers? Do banks ever treat those who take housing, car, tractor or motorbike loans with the same kind of kid gloves?*  
**Devinder Sharma**



group (SHG) member being dragged to a waiting police van for her inability to pay back Rs 35,000.

It appears as if it's only poor farmers and rural workforce that are responsible for upsetting the national balance sheet with their petty defaults, while the rich defaulters get an easy walkover. The rich defaulters include over 16,000 willful defaulters with an unpaid amount of Rs 3.45-lakh crore in bank loans, and who even the RBI acknowledges had the money but did not want to pay back. Certainly, these are the wealth creators, and the nation must applaud them.

Now take a look at this farmer from Pilibanga in Rajasthan. He took a loan of Rs 2.70 lakh from a finance company and had paid back Rs 2.57-lakh (including Rs 57,000 support received from the state during the pandemic). But unable to pay back the remaining amount, he comes home one day to find his house locked. Later, the lock was broken by outraged villagers.

This unsavoury event must be viewed in the context of a 92 per cent 'haircut' that banks and lenders undertook when Adhunik Metaliks, a leading manufacturer of alloy and steel in the eastern region, settled for Rs 410 crore against their outstanding dues of Rs 5,370 cr after its resolution plan was approved by the Kolkata branch of the National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT), in July 2018.

Obviously, with such a huge 'haircut', the promoters of the company said they are willing to complete all activities and start working towards reviving the flagship company. No wonder, once hailed as a transformative resolution mechanism — the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (IBC) — has come

***If only the amount was, instead, recovered and invested in Operation Greens, there would have been no shortage of financial resources for investing in infrastructure required for stabilising the prices of fruits and vegetables.***

under the flap and the banks are no longer enthused to use it for recoveries. Reports say recoveries for banks and other lenders are coming down.

The bigger question, however, remains. If the house of a Rajasthan farmer can be locked for a non-recovery of a pending amount of Rs 20,000, why couldn't the NCLT lock the premises (and put the owners, like farmers, behind bars) of firms like Adhunik Metaliks instead of giving it cakewalk by simply waiving 92 per cent of the pending dues?

And, if such a massive 'haircut' is required for a big company, why shouldn't farmers get the benefit of a similar approach and, that too, in a relatively smaller way? After all, their individual outstanding loans are hardly a fraction of the corporate bad debts.

Moreover, why should banking laws be different for different categories of bank customers? Do banks ever treat those who take housing, car, tractor or motorbike loans with the same kind of kid

gloves? How long can the banks go on justifying the need for owning the bad debts of the companies and, that too, in the name of economic growth?

When I see agonising videos on social media of farmers — those running tractors to re-plough their standing cauliflower and cabbage crops in Punjab and Haryana; and, more recently, the crash in tomato prices for farmers in Chhattisgarh and Madhya Pradesh — I am reminded of the Operation Greens scheme launched in the 2018-19 Budget with an outlay of Rs 500 crore to stabilise the prices of tomato, onion and potato.

While everyone agrees that adequate investment in agricultural infrastructure, including a network of cold chains, can help minimise the damages, the reality is that Operation Greens has failed miserably to stabilise the vegetable prices. One reason may be that the scheme is short of appropriate funding support.

This is untrue given the fact that in December 2023, the NCLT approved a resolution of bankrupt Reliance Communications Infrastructure Ltd (RCIL) which walked away with a 'haircut' of 99 per cent of the claimed debt. Against Rs 500 crore allocated for Operation Greens in 2018-19, the RCIL walked away by paying just Rs 455.92 crore against the admitted claim of Rs 47,251.34 crore.

If only the amount was, instead, recovered and invested in Operation Greens, there would have been no shortage of financial resources for investing in infrastructure required for stabilising the prices of fruits and vegetables. □□

<https://www.tribuneindia.com/news/comment/banks-bend-for-rich-corporates-break-farmers/>



# History of Metallurgy in Ancient India (Part-5)

## Ancient Indian Chemical Practices

Ancient India was home to a rich tradition of scientific knowledge and exploration, including in the field of chemistry. The ancient Indians were pioneers in various chemical practices, making remarkable advancements in fields such as metallurgy, mining, dyes and pigments, and perfumery. Let's delve into each of these areas to explore the fascinating history of chemistry in ancient and medieval India.

## Experiments In Metallurgy and Mining:

Ancient Indians were skilled metallurgists who conducted extensive experiments to extract metals from ores and develop innovative techniques in metalworking. They discovered the process of extracting zinc by heating zinc ore and collecting the condensate, which was a significant achievement considering the complexity involved. Indians also displayed expertise in mining, with evidence of ancient mining practices in various regions of the subcontinent. They developed sophisticated techniques for mining, such as extracting minerals from deep mines and using hydrological methods to control water flow in the mines.

## Development of Dyes and Pigments:

Ancient India had a vibrant textile industry, and the development of dyes and pigments played a crucial role in enhancing the quality and variety of fabrics produced. Indians used a wide range of natural substances to create dyes and pigments, including plants, minerals, and even insects. Various plant sources like turmeric, indigo, and madder were utilized to create vibrant and long-lasting dyes. Minerals such as ochre and cinnabar were used to produce different shades of red and yellow. Their mastery in dyeing techniques led to the creation of exquisite textiles that were highly prized in international trade.

## Advancements in Perfumery and Cosmetic Preparations:

Perfumes and cosmetics held great importance in ancient Indian culture, not just for aesthetic purposes but also for their therapeutic properties. Indians excelled in the art of perfumery, developing complex methods to extract aromatic substances from flowers, bark, and other plant parts. They created perfumes using distillation techniques and also utilized solid perfumes in various forms. Indian chemists and physicians formulated a wide range of cosmetic preparations, including ointments, powders, and oils for skincare and hair care. Some of these formulations are still used today, highlighting the timeless nature of ancient Indian knowledge in this field. The ancient Indians' contributions to chemistry were remarkable, with their advancements in metallurgy, mining, dyes and pigments, and perfumery leaving a lasting impact on the scientific world. These achievements not only fostered cultural and economic growth but also laid the foundation for future discoveries and inventions in the field of chemistry.



*The trade routes between India and the mediterranean civilizations of Greece and Egypt facilitated the exchange of chemical knowledge. Indian merchants travelled along the silk road and the maritime routes, carrying spices, textiles, and other valuable goods.*

**Prof. Nandini  
Sinha Kapur**

## Contributions of Ancient Indian Scholars

Ancient and medieval India was a hub of intellectual and scientific advancements, particularly in the field of chemistry. The contributions made by the ancient Indian scholars played a crucial role in shaping our understanding of the world. In this section, we will explore the noteworthy discoveries and achievements of three brilliant minds: acharya Kanad, acharya Nagarjuna, and acharya Charaka.

### Discoveries By Acharya Kanad

Acharya Kanad, also known as Kashyap, was a prominent sage and philosopher who made remarkable contributions to the field of chemistry. His work primarily focused on understanding the composition and properties of matter.

Here are some noteworthy discoveries by acharya Kanad –

**Existence of atoms:** Acharya Kanad's groundbreaking concept of “anu” introduced the idea of indivisible particles, which he called atoms. He hypothesized that everything in the universe is made up of these tiny, indestructible particles.

**Law of conservation of mass:** Acharya Kanad proposed that matter cannot be created or destroyed; it can only change form. This principle is now known as the law of conservation of mass and is a fundamental concept in chemistry.

### Acharya Nagarjuna And the Concept of Rasashastra

Acharya Nagarjuna, a renowned scholar and philosopher, made significant contributions to the field of chemistry through his work on rasashastra.

Rasashastra is an ancient branch of ayurveda that focuses on the preparation of medicinal com-

pounds using minerals, metals, and other substances.

Here are acharya Nagarjuna's notable contributions –

**Formulation of ayurvedic medicines:** Acharya Nagarjuna systematized and documented the preparation of various ayurvedic medicines using Rasashastra principles. His extensive knowledge helped in the development of effective remedies for various ailments.

**Processes of purification and transformation:** Acharya Nagarjuna devised innovative techniques for purifying and transforming minerals and metals to enhance their medicinal properties. His methods included calcination, pulverization, trituration, and various forms of heat treatment.

### Acharya Charaka and the Formulation of Ayurvedic Medicine

Acharya Charaka, a distinguished physician and scholar, played a pivotal role in formulating the principles and practices of ayurvedic medicine.

Here are some of acharya Charaka's notable contributions –

**Compilation of Charakasamhita:** Acharya Charaka authored the CharakaSamhita, one of the most comprehensive and influential texts in the field of ayurveda. This text covers a wide range of medical topics, including diagnosis, treatment, and the use of herbs and minerals in therapy.

**Classification of diseases and herbs:** Acharya Charaka classified diseases based on their etiology and symptoms, providing a systematic approach to understanding and treating ailments. He also categorized medicinal plants based on their therapeutic properties, which served as a foundation for

ayurvedic medicine.

The contributions of acharya Kanad, acharya Nagarjuna, and acharya Charaka have significantly enriched the field of chemistry and medicine in ancient & medieval India.

These remarkable scholars not only laid the groundwork for scientific advancements but also played a vital role in promoting the holistic healing system of ayurveda.

### Exchange of Chemical Knowledge with Other Civilizations

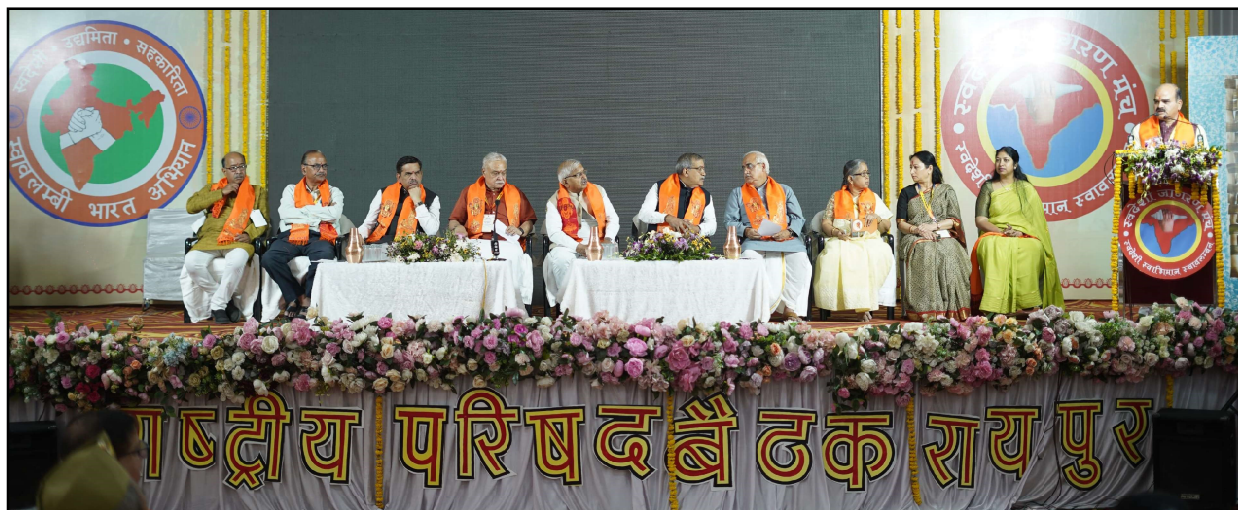
Chemistry has a rich history in ancient and medieval India, with the exchange of knowledge being a crucial aspect of its development.

In this section, we will explore the trade routes and knowledge exchange between India and Greece and Egypt, the influence of Greek and Arab scholars on Indian chemistry, and the impact of Indian chemical knowledge in the Arab world.

### Trade Routes and Knowledge Exchange with Greece and Egypt:

The trade routes between India and the mediterranean civilizations of Greece and Egypt facilitated the exchange of chemical knowledge. Indian merchants travelled along the silk road and the maritime routes, carrying spices, textiles, and other valuable goods. Along with these commodities, they also transported knowledge related to chemistry and other fields. The Indians learned about Greek and Egyptian contributions to chemical knowledge, including theories and laboratory techniques. Similarly, the Greeks and Egyptians gained insights into Indian practices, such as medicinal preparations and the use of natural resources. □□

(Author acknowledges <https://historyrise.com> for the above information.)



## National Council Meeting

### Raipur, Chhattisgarh (9-10 March, 2025)

#### First Session

The inaugural session of the National Council meeting began with the ceremonial lighting of the lamp in front of the images of Bharat Mata, Shradhheyy Thengdi Ji, Deendayal Upadhyay Ji, and Babu Genu Ji. Present on the stage were:

- Sh. R. Sundaram (All India Convenor)
- Sh. Kashmiri Lal (All India Organizer)
- Sh. Satish Kumar (All India Co-Organizer)
- Sh. Ajay Patki (All India Co-Convenor)
- Dr. Ashwini Mahajan (All India Co-Convenor)
- Dr. Dhanpat Ram Agarwal (All India Co-Convenor)
- Dr. Amita Patki
- Smt. Archana Meena

Dr. Rajiv Kumar, Akhil Bhartiya Vichar Vibhag pramukh, introduced the dignitaries on the stage.

Sh. Satish Kumar presented an overview of the topic using a PowerPoint presentation, explaining the necessity of Swadeshi Jagran Manch. He highlighted that conditions similar to 1991 are arising again, and even the U.S., which once supported WTO, is now criticizing it. He emphasized that India must become prosperous and great through Indian ideology, Swadeshi thinking, and global cooperation.

A detailed discussion was held on the Self-Reliant India Campaign, the organizational structure of Swadeshi Jagran Manch, the annual calendar, and various activities. Sh. Satish Kumar emphasized that the

campaign is a new phase of the old Swadeshi movements, and a drive could be launched against Chinese and American products. He assured that Swadeshi's victory is inevitable.

On this occasion, a new Swadeshi song “Bolo Vande Mataram”, composed by Saga Music under the efforts of Sh. Satish Chawla, was released by Sh. R. Sundaram. The song was sung by Dr. Madhur Mahajan.

During the session, National Co-Coordinator Dr. Rajkumar Mittal read and presented the first resolution, titled “Building a Great and Prosperous Nation Based on Indian Economic and Social Thought”, which was passed unanimously after discussion.

Additionally, reports from the Southern, South-Central, and other regional teams were presented by Sh. Satyanarayan and Sh. K. Jagdish (Organizers).

#### Second Session

In this session, Shri V.C. Bhartiya (Trade Association of India) and Shri Dinesh Patel (Gayatri Parivar) shared their contributions to the Self-Reliant India Campaign.

Reports from various regions were presented –

- Western Region – Sh. Manohar Sharan (Organizer)
- Central Region – Sh. Sudhir Datt
- Rajasthan Region – Dr. Satish Kumar Acharya
- Northern Region – Prof. Somnath Sachdeva
- Western Uttar Pradesh – Dr. Amitesh

## Building Bharat Prosperous and Great Nation on Bharatiya Economic and Social Thought Process

Today we are living in a historic era of burgeoning youth population, fastest growing economy of the world, amidst digitalisation revolution, large and rapidly growing urban population. Despite the fact that country has encouraging achievements, advancing fast towards Industrial Revolution 4.0, thanks to progress in space, defence, digital economy, payment systems, quantum computing and abundance of resources, that keeps our economy in a vibrant situation through sustained demand and supply mechanism, there are still many challenges to make Bharat a prosperous and great nation. In view of possible socioeconomic challenges we may face in maintaining this momentum, there is a need to develop a comprehensive framework of holistic social & economic development based on Bhartiya thought process to help us in navigating our journey towards making Bharat a great and prosperous nation by 2047. A possible framework in line with Bharatiya thinking process is hereby proposed.

**1. Decentralisation:** The economy of Bharat used to be the world's leading economy contributing almost one-third of its GDP during the 16th and 17th century. The economic activities were organised on a decentralised basis, where the homes were production centers and villages were self-sufficient. The centralised planning process adopted after our Independence resulted in concentration of economic decision making at few places and regions that hindered the all round development of the country. Now with the development of infrastructure and IT, it is possible to shift to district level planning and support the development of businesses including traders, MSMEs, FMCG, handicrafts & artwares, agriculture and agribased units as per the available resources and needs of the area. There is a need to strengthen the planning process at district levels by leveraging the available expertise & resources and also incentivising the process. Swadeshi Jagran Manch believes in a decentralised development process in which DICs and KVKs can play pivotal roles in strengthening our rural economy, MSMEs sector, entrepreneurship and in solving the problems of unemployment, poverty & inequalities and take the country forward towards making it a prosperous and great nation.

**2. Self-employment and Entrepreneurship focused Development:** Our dominance of the world's economy almost till the end 18th century was based on entrepreneurship. The job seeking culture which Britishers encouraged still dominates the minds of our youth. Today the need is to support and accelerate entrepreneurial mindset and build a strong ecosystem for it. Focus on access to credit, technology, market and better management practices for assisting the youth and women entrepreneurs needs to be done on priority. The Economic Survey 2024-25, further points out that to productively engage the growing working population, 78.50 lacs non-farm jobs need to be created every year until 2030, which is only feasible through the route of self-employment and entrepreneurship. We recommend the creation of one Entrepreneurship Centre in every educational institution. We further feel the need for the Establishment of an Entrepreneurship Commission at the Centre and each State to initiate and accelerate entrepreneurship.

**3. Protection to unorganized sector & Strengthening of Rural Economy:** The unorganized sector (selfregulated) consists of 90 percent of Bharat's workforce (Economic Survey of India 2021-22), where economic activities are largely unregulated. The sector has characteristics like low wages, poor working conditions, lack of job security, and limited social security benefits to workers. To improve the social and economic conditions of these workers, Swadeshi Jagran Manch demands the enforcement of existing minimum wage laws and regulations, and work together in laying down guidelines to effectively implement the policies concerning welfare of the workforce in this sector. Agriculture & allied sector, where most of the activities are unorganised is the backbone of our economy that contributes about 16 percent to our G.D.P. and employs around 46 percent of our population. Still 65 percent of people reside in villages. The challenges this sector faces can be handled by having a more diversified, efficient and sustainable rural economy, focusing on more investment, innovations, incentives and strengthening of institutions. Swadeshi Jagran Manch in particular favours strengthening of the Krishi Vigyan Kendras to motivate farmers in adopting new technologies and agri-practices, cooperative structures to promote Agri-startups & FPOs to boost investment, and raise their farm income.

**4. Leverage Population Dividend:** The demographic dividend refers to the economic growth potential



arising from a shift in a country's age structure, where the working-age population (15-59 years) outnumbers the non-working age groups. Our median age is around 29 years, compared to the ageing population of developed countries. The young population is the key driver of our growth potential, and to reap the benefits of population dividend we need to enhance the quality of, focus on skill & vocational training, entrepreneurship and self-employment; healthcare infrastructure, access to health-care facilities & nutrition for productive and healthy workforce; women's empowerment, training and entrepreneurship opportunities; and a conducive business environment to facilitate innovations, startups, and employment opportunities to the rising workforce.

**5. Stop Cultural Pollution:** Cultural pollution is contamination or onslaught on our rich cultural values, traditions and practices. Internet, related communication technologies and social media has resulted in unmindful spread and adoption of western culture and values by our society, particularly by the youth. SJM resolves that "Swa" based lifestyle - in our languages, food, dresses, festivals etc. should be embraced by all. Thus, the Indian Knowledge System and Swadeshi lifestyle should be promoted in a holistic manner. We need to inspire our youth by the success stories of our scientists, teachers, artists, entrepreneurs, thinkers, project them as their heroes, teach them with our rich cultural heritage and values by including them in the curriculum in the educational institutions. A national policy should be developed to regulate and check the contents delivered by the Internet and media companies. Few countries like Australia bans access to the Internet and social media to children below 16 years of age.

**6. Check on imports from China:** India's trade deficit with China over a period of time is increasing. It was USD 44.86 bn (imports 58.20 USD bn and exports 13.4 USD bn) in 2015 which increased to USD 83.52 bn (imports 107 USD bn and exports 13.48 USD bn) in 2024. This relationship has raised concern regarding our stability, industrial self-reliance and supply chain disruption risks. Excessive Chinese imports have hurt our domestic industries badly. We must diversify our imports from other ASEAN and Western economies. We need to focus on improving the ease of doing business, infrastructure, and reduce redtapism to support local industries. Encouraging innovations, fostering entrepreneurship, incentivising domestic firms to invest in high-tech. manufacturing will be key to ensure long term resilience.

**7. Unlocking the potential of Bharatiya Diaspora - possibility of brain gain:** As per the study of the Ministry of External Affairs there are about 13.6 million NRIs (who are settled down seeking jobs) and 18.6 million PIOs (Overseas Citizens of India) in around 189 countries. The Bhartiya Diaspora produces an annual economic income of about \$400 billion (13 percent of India's G.D.P.). Prominent Indians such as Sunder Pichai (Alphabet Inc.), Satya Nadella (Microsoft), Parag Aggarwal, (Twitter), Leena Nair (Channel), and Shantanu Narayan (Adobe Inc.) are leading the top companies of the world. Indians abroad are contributing to the development of different countries in diverse areas. Swadeshi Jagran Manch appeals to Bhartiya Diaspora to contribute through investment, remittances, mentoring youth towards entrepreneurship, build great Indian companies & brands and head prestigious projects essential for realising the vision of making Bharat prosperous & great. At the same time GOI should provide incentives to Bhartiya Diaspora on the pattern of PLI to incentivise their involvement in India's growth story.

**8. Policy on use of Artificial Intelligence & Robotics:** The unprecedented advancements in artificial intelligence, robotics, machine learning and related technologies presents huge opportunities as well challenges to the world community. Having the potential of replacing human beings and performing functions of a human mind, it causes a lot of disruptions in the labour surplus country like ours. These technologies hold immense benefits if carefully used, but the indiscriminate application of such technologies would add to the problem of unemployment. Coordinated actions from all stakeholders and regulatory frameworks have to ensure that use of AI aligns with societal values, balancing innovations with transparency and accountability, shall make AI driven productivity to help in attaining an inclusive growth.

**Summary:** Presently, we are passing through the period of Amrit-kaal, which provides each one of us the unique opportunity to contribute towards making Bharat a prosperous and great nation by 2047. SJM, believes that by building a strong socio-economic structure based on the above discussion, we can realise this objective. SJM appeals to all to contribute towards this new and constructive Swadeshi Abhiyaan based on Bhartiya Vision of Development and realise the vision of making Bharat a prosperous and great nation in this Amrit kaal. □

## **Protect Interests of Farmers and Small Industries, while Negotiating Indo-US Bilateral Trade Agreement**

After taking over as President of USA, Donald Trump has launched a frontal attack on the global free trade system by announcing his intent to impose higher tariffs (on reciprocal basis) on imports from many countries around the world. Its intention is to bring back manufacturing in USA so that issue of unemployment is addressed.

If we go into history, it was US and its allies only who had pushed the world towards free trade, especially with the advent of World Trade Organisation, introducing rule based global trading system. However, it secured a distinct right to impose country specific tariffs, if it wishes to do so. In spite of extensive protest from Swadeshi Jagran Manch, the then Government in Bharat signed the WTO agreement on the dotted lines.

Since 1990s, a belief has been gaining ground that the policy of liberalization, globalization and privatization is the only way forward for the world, especially developing countries though Swadeshi Jagran Manch was always against liberalisation and globalisation as was being presented.

The US, once the biggest supporter of free trade and a rule-based global trading system, has suddenly realised under Donald Trump that for decades it has bought more goods from the rest of the world, than it sold, due to which US has been facing huge trade deficit. In 2024, USA's had a huge trade deficit of 918.4 billion US dollars. Now Donald Trump wants to reverse this situation. But it is worthwhile to know the background of initial negotiations at WTO. The developed countries, including USA, in bargain with developing countries, allowed imposing higher tariffs on goods than developed countries for accepting new issues in GATT and signing agreements on TRIPS, TRIMS, agriculture and services. So it was a bargain at that time which America is now consciously ignoring. The WTO system greatly benefited the US and other developed countries, as it paved the way for a strong patent and other IPRs (Intellectual Property Rights) regime, which benefited their pharma and other companies, by way of royalties for their IPR, opened the doors of developing countries for investment by multinational companies and opened markets for US agricultural products in developing countries including India.

Donald Trump understood very well that America's free trade policy is somehow responsible for slowdown in economy and increasing unemployment as it allowed cheap imports from China. To deal with this situation, Donald Trump is imposing reciprocal import duties on many countries including China, Canada, Mexico, Britain, South Korea and Bharat. Right from its inception, Swadeshi Jagran Manch, has been fighting against unequal WTO agreements, adversely impacting our public health, farmers, industry and the common man. While making it very clear that SJM is not against promoting international trade, we firmly believe that multilateral trade agreements are not good for the economy, as there is no point giving Most Favoured Nation treatment to all countries. Government of Bharat has also stated that bilateral arrangements are going to be the order of the day as Multilateralism is on its way out.

In the last five years, Bharat has decided to promote the manufacturing of all those goods in the country, in which it was dependent on other countries including China, through the policy of Atmanirbhar Bharat. This policy has also started giving dividend. Bharat will have to prepare its industries for global competition in a protective environment.

In view of a frontal attack of US on our exports, on an illegitimate argument that India imposes higher tariffs, and likely increase in tariffs by them, once again underlines the importance of Swadeshi.

National Council of Swadeshi Jagran Manch strongly suggests that Bharat should enhance its foreign trade with bilateral trade agreements rather than multilateral trade agreements. However, while entering into bilateral trade agreements with US and other countries, national interests should be protected, especially our farmers and small entrepreneurs.

In the past we have observed that in the last 10 years, government has been protecting the interests of

farmers and their livelihood, while negotiating trade agreements, whether it was a regional trade and investment agreement, RCEP, from it withdrew, due to concerns of its adverse impact on dairy and agriculture. This policy needs to continue, so far as agriculture small industry is concerned, especially where livelihood of farmers and workers is involved.

SJM appreciates the Government's effort to enhance foreign trade in Indian Rupee however, efforts should also be to ensure foreign currency and payment system like SWIFT should are not allowed to be used as pressure tactics.

The whole world is passing through a syndrome of geo- economic fragmentation and the key to success in this scenario is the policy of "Nation First" based on the philosophy of SJM.

National Council of SJM also urges upon patriotic citizens of Bharat, that it's time that wherever domestic produce, both agriculture and industrial, are available, we should use Bhartiya products only. They are also entered encouraged to use to use Ayush for their wellness to reduce reliance on reliance on patented medicines.

SJM also believes and advocates that encouraging entrepreneurship at the grass root level and village led development will be the right economic growth path for Bharat. □

- Eastern Uttar Pradesh – Sh. Anupam Srivastava
- Eastern Region – Sh. Ashutosh
- Northeastern Region – Prof. Deepak Sharma

The session was moderated by Dr. Dharmendra Dubey.

### Third Session

Dr. Rajkumar Chaturvedi (All India Contact Head) elaborated on the concerns regarding declining birth rates.

Dr. Rajesh explained the importance of establishing an Entrepreneurship Commission.

Dr. Vikas discussed including organic entrepreneurship in the curriculum at Amarkantak University.

Sh. Satish Kumar emphasized making entrepreneurial education mandatory under the New Education Policy, with at least 30 hours of training for every student.

Sh. Bhaggaya Ji (former Joint General Secretary, RSS) provided guidance, emphasizing the need for Swadeshi awareness and economic self-reliance. He highlighted the importance of promoting local products and turning Swadeshi initiatives into a public movement.

The session was conducted by Sh. Ajay Patki.

### Fourth Session

Sh. Rajesh Gupta (All India Vanvasi Kalyan Parishad) provided insights into various Self-Reliant India initiatives for tribal communities, such as –

- Formation of self-help groups
- Establishment of vocational training centers
- Distribution of fruit-bearing plants to boost farmers' incomes

Prof. Somnath Sachdeva shared details about the Swadeshi Research Institute under construction in New

Delhi, which has been operational since 2018.

Dr. Ashwani Mahajan presented Resolution No. 2, emphasizing that any India-U.S. trade agreement must prioritize farmers and small enterprises. The proposal was discussed, amended with suggestions, and passed unanimously.

Sh. Sonam Gupta (Samarth Bharat, New Delhi) explained various projects under Self-Reliant India, including skill development training through the WORKO app. The session was moderated by Sh. Deepak Sharma (All India Co-Management Head).

### Fifth Session

This session involved regional meetings, with discussions on –

- Full-time workers
- Women's participation
- Youth engagement
- Senior citizens' involvement
- Environmental initiatives
- District-level organizational strategies
- Fundraising campaigns from March 20 to April 11
- Swadeshi fairs

All India officials were present in these meetings.

### Sixth Session

The session began with a tribute to Sh. Dinkar Keshav Bhakre, the first coordinator of Chhattisgarh province.

Dr. Vikas outlined a step-by-step plan for entrepreneurship development under Viksit Bharat@2047.

Dr. Amita Patki emphasized environmental conservation through practical guidelines.

Sh. Saket Rathore presented a report on the

Swarnim Bharat Foundation, a non-profit organization formed in May 2023.

Sh. Yogesh Mehta (BGIF) discussed making India a global manufacturing hub.

Dr. Dhanpat Ram Agarwal explained the importance of branding Swadeshi and analyzing economic trends.

### Seventh Session

Sh. Keshav Dubolia spoke on youth engagement in the organization.

Dr. Rajiv Kumar presented the annual calendar and key events.

Sh. Satish Chawla introduced the fundraising campaign from March 20 to April 11, 2025.

Sh. Anil Sharma detailed Vimarsh Study Groups, focusing on Indian economic models and global market forces.

Dr. Ranjit Singh discussed efforts to spread the legacy of Rishi Dattopant Thengadi Ji through online platforms. Smt. Archana Meena emphasized women's role in cultural and economic self-reliance.

The session was moderated by Dr. Sunita Barthwal.

### Closing Session

Sh. Jagdish Patel introduced the committees responsible for organizing the event.

Attendees expressed gratitude to the Raipur and Chhattisgarh teams through enthusiastic slogans.

Sh. R. Sundaram announced new responsibilities for various members.

Sh. Kashmiri Lal emphasized the need for Swadeshi research and self-reliance.

Dr. Krishna Gopal Ji (Joint General Secretary, RSS) highlighted India's economic history, stressing the importance of self-sufficient development models and decentralization. He cautioned against excessive consumerism and emphasized the need for an Indian-centric development approach.

The session concluded with the national song "Vande Mataram", marking the successful completion of the National Council Meeting.

### New Responsibilities

#### Akhil Bharatiya Dayitva

1. Smt. Archana Meena, Sawai Madhopur - Akhil Bharatiya Mahila Karya Pramukh (Pehle Sah Pramukh), 9460401000
2. Dr. Pratibha Chaturvedi - Akhil Bharatiya Sah

Mahila Karya Pramukh, 7987038542

3. Smt. Rashmi Vijay - Akhil Bharatiya Sah Mahila Karya Pramukh, 9448563586
4. Sh. Deepak Sharma 'Pradeep' - Akhil Bharatiya Paryavaran Aayam Pramukh (Akhil Bharatiya Sah Vyavastha Pramukh bhi Yathavat Rahenge), 9810454566
5. Sh. Vandeshankar - Akhil Bharatiya Sah Paryavaran Aayam Pramukh (Pehle A.B. Sah Sangharsh Vahini Pramukh), 8987517941
6. Smt. Amrita Patki - Paryavaran Aayam Toli Sadasya (Pehle Mahila Karya Pramukh), 9423903915
7. Dr. Raghvendra Chandel - Paryavaran Aayam Toli Sadasya (Pehle Sah-Vichar Vibhag Pramukh), 8989890750
8. Dr. Rajkumar Chaturvedi - Akhil Bharatiya Sampark Pramukh kesaath hi Jansankhiki (Demography) Vishay ko bhi Dekhenge, 992899338
9. Sh. Anil Sharma - Akhil Bharatiya Sah Sampark Pramukh ke saath hi Vimrash ka Karya bhi Dekhenge, 9811320203
10. Sh. Ramesh Dave - Sah Patrika Pramukh (Pehle Paschim Kshetra Sanyojak), 9998879505
11. Sh. Prashant Deshpande - Akhil Bharatiya Karyasamiti Sadasya (Pehle Paschim Kshetra Sah-Sanyojak)

#### Kshetra evam Prantiya Dayitva

##### 1. Dakshin Kshetra

*Dakshin Tamil Nadu*

- Sh. Shanmukh Sundaram - Prant Sanyojak, 9367179220
- Dr. Ashok Kumar - Prant Sah-Sanyojak, 9659406033
- Sh. Pummaman - Prant Sah Sanyojak, 9655223522

*Uttar Tamil Nadu*

- Dr. Sheshadri - Prant Sanyojak, 9840656575

##### Dakshin Madhya Kshetra

*Andhra Pradesh*

- Sh. Rajesh - Prant Sah Sanyojak (Pehle Vibhag Sanyojak)

*Uttar Karnataka*

- Sh. Venkatesh Bidarlai - Prant Sah-Sanyojak (Pehle Vibhag Sanyojak)

##### Paschim Kshetra

*Gujarat Prant*

- Dr. Mayur Bhai Joshi (Gandhinagar) - Gujarat Prant Sangathak (Sangh Drishti Se), 9427380788

*Saurashtra Prant (Gujarat)*

- Shri Yash Bhai Jasani (Rajkot) - Prant Sanyojak, Saurashtra Prant, 9909968428
- Sh. Dinesh Bhai Dangaria (Jamnagar, Laghu Udyog Bharti) - Prant Sah Samanvayak SBA, 9429799856
- Smt. Aarti Ben Vara (Jamnagar) - Prant Sah Sa-



manvayak (Mahila), 7096888606

#### *Vidarbha Prant*

- Sh. Amit Arokar (Amravati) - Prant Sanyojak, 9225700821
- Sh. Shivaji Bhaltillak (Buldhana) - Prant Sah Samanvayak SBA evam Prant Sah Sanyojak, 9689939174
- Smt. Aarti Tai Laddha (Akola) - Prant Mahila Karya Pramukh, 9422861645

#### *Dewgiri Prant*

- Sh. Yuvraj Pardeshi (Jalgaon) - Prant Sah Samanvayak SBA, evam Prant Sah Sanyojak, 9850773006
- Sh. Gajanand Joshi (Jalgaon) - Prant Sah Sanyojak, SJM, 9673962117

#### *Paschim Maharashtra Prant*

- Sh. Mukul Vaidya (Pune) - Prant Sanyojak, 9657003431

#### **Madhya Kshetra**

- Sh. Hariom Verma - Kshetra Prachar Pramukh, 9754556203

#### **Malwa Prant**

- Sh. Vishal Purohit - Prant Sanyojak, 9303225368

#### *Mahakaushal Prant*

- Dr. Sonal Rai - Prant Sah Mahila Karya Pramukh, 9826341230

#### **Rajasthan Kshetra**

##### *Chittorgarh Prant*

- Dr. Sant Kumar - Prant Sanyojak (Pehle Sah-Sanyojak), 9829191060
- Sh. Purushottam Sharma - Prant Samanvayak (Pehle Prant Sanyojak), 9413396511

##### *Jaipur Prant*

- Smt. Chetna Meena - Prant Sah Mahila Pramukh (Pehle Vibhag Mahila Pramukh), 9461239410

##### *Jodhpur Prant*

- Sh. Pramod Kumar Phalodi - Prant Sanyojak, 9983368048
- Sh. Ramesh Vishnoi - Jodhpur Prant Samanvayak, 9818757905

#### **Uttar Kshetra**

##### *Haryana*

- Smt. Deepmala Kamboj (Yamunanagar) - Prant Mahila Pramukh, 9996042444
- Smt. Shruti (Karnal) - Prant Sah Mahila Pramukh (Pehle Zila Mahila Sah Samanvayak), 9466517758
- Dr. Iptisa Bansal (Sonapat) - Sah Prant Samanvayak (Pehle Zila Mahila Sah Samanvayak) - 8397005800

##### *Punjab*

- Smt. Neha Sethi (Amritsar) - Prant Sanyojak (Pehle Prant Mahila Sah Samanvayak), 8146584449
- Sh. Amit Handa (Amritsar) - Sah Prant Sanyojak

(Pehle Vibhag Sanyojak), 9878887600

- Sh. Naresh (Pathankot) - Sah Prant Sanyojak (Pehle Vibhag Sanyojak), 8360674654

#### **Pashchimi Uttar Pradesh Kshetra**

##### *Brij Prant*

- Sh. Sushil Chauhan (Mainpuri) - Prant Sah-Sanyojak (Pehle Zila Sanyojak), 8077588101
- Sh. Rajesh Kumar Singh (Shahjahanpur) - Prant Sah-Samanvayak, 9794547546

##### *Meerut Prant*

- Smt. Silky Gupta (Meerut) - Prant Sah Mahila Pramukh (Pehle Zila Sah Mahila Pramukh), 7417308300

##### *Uttarakhand*

- Sh. Vipin Kandwal (Dehradun) - Prant Sanyojak, 9219211991
- Sh. Nitin Joshi (Rudrapur) - Prant Sah-Sanyojak (Pehle Sambhag Sanyojak), 7956856307
- Sh. Padam Sharma (Rudrapur) - Prant Samanvayak, 9758297123
- Smt. Shweta Tiwari (Rudrapur) - Prant Sah Mahila Karya Pramukh, 9997544999

#### **Poorvi Uttar Pradesh Kshetra**

- Sh. Praveen Mishra (Kanpur) - Kshetra Prachar Pramukh (Pehle Kanpur Prant Sanyojak), 8874779222
- Sh. Satyendra Singh (Kashi) - Kshetra Sah Sampark Pramukh (Pehle Kashi Prant Sanyojak) - 6394545860
- Dr. Chandraprakash Rai (Mau) - Kshetra Sah Vichar Vibhag Pramukh (Pehle Gorakh Prant Sanyojak), 9473766917

##### *Avadh Prant*

- Sh. Amit Kumar Singh (Lucknow) - Prant Sanyojak (Pehle Prant Samanvayak), 9198558070
- Sh. Salil Agarwal (Ayodhya) - Sah Prant Sanyojak (Pehle Vibhag Sanyojak), 9415058429
- Sh. Harshvardhan (Hardoi) - Prant Samanvayak (Pehle Sah Prant Samanvayak), 7651922352

##### *Kanpur Prant*

- Sh. Sudip Khare (Jhansi) - Prant Sanyojak (Pehle Sah Prant Sanyojak), 7905211733

##### *Kashi Prant*

- Dr. Akhilesh Tripathi (Prayagraj) - Prant Sanyojak (Pehle Prant Samanvayak), 9935505356
- Sh. Ajay Anand (Ghazipur) - Prant Samanvayak (Pehle Prant Sah Samanvayak), 9451516677

##### *Goraksh Prant*

- Sh. Dheeraj Rai (Gorakhpur) - Prant Sanyojak (Pehle Prant Sah Samanvayak), 7985885307

## **Swadeshi- the only alternative to fight against the impending Trade War**

The World is passing through certain chronic problems of climate change, geopolitics and economic inequality leading to challenges for global peace and prosperity. The World is moving towards New Economic Order which necessitates de globalisation, de dollarisation and de carbonisation for a democratic and decentralised economic system.

In the above situation, Trump 2.0 is likely to trigger a trade war with imposition of across the Board customs duties of 20% on all the imports and 60% for imports from China. It will be a matter of larger numbers of trade disputes and the retaliation from rest of the world on nation first theory. China has already started tightening its belt as even during Jio Biden era, many import restrictions were imposed by US on China. Globalisation is a common phenomenon and it has been in existence even in the medieval era and it was more deeper when the movement of labour, goods, services, capital and technology including all the economic activities were integrated even until the beginning of colonialism in the 17-18th century and it was broadly unbridled till the end of the First World War or until the Great Depression of 1929 or until the beginning of the second World War. The Smoot-Hawley Tariff Act was passed by US Congress on June 17, 1930, that raised import duties to protect American businesses on the principles and Manroe Doctrine of isolationism and had raised the average tariffs by 20 percent. Therefore what Mr Trump is planning is perhaps rewinding the clock to begin a new era of Mercantilism. This also fructify the fact that the American economy is in great trouble with mounting debt burden of US\$ 35.47 trillion as on 30 September, 2024 and which is projected to be US\$ 46.70 Trillions in 2029 as per the forecast of government Net Debt (Source: ceicdata.com).

US was the main votary of globalisation in early 1990s through its package of economic reforms in the name of Washington Consensus and now it wants to reverse the gears as the Asia is growing and when China is emerging as a great economic power and in fact if we consider purchasing power parity for calculating the GDP, the recent published data by World Bank ( Source: data.worldbank.org) says that China is at the top with its GDP of US\$ 34.64 trillion in 2023, US at top 2 position with its GDP of US\$ 27.36 trillion and India at the top 3 with its GDP GDP in PPP terms US\$ 14.54 trillion. It may be interesting to note that on nominal GDP terms US is at the top and China is at top2 and India at top 5 but on the intrinsic purchasing power of the respective home currencies, there is substantial change in the position and Russian federation is the 4th largest economy on PPP basis with US\$ 6.4 trillion as against Japan which has US\$ 6.2 trillion although Japan is at the 4th position on the nominal value of US Dollar. Germany's GDP on PPP terms is only US\$ 5.8 trillion.

It is worth noting that the nominal value of global GDP is US\$ 105 trillions of which the GDP of USA is 28.5 trillion, China US\$ 19 trillion and India US\$ 3.8 trillion. The major issue of concern is that US population is only 5% of the global population but its GDP is 25% of the Global GDP whereas India's population is 18.5% of the Global population but our GDP is only 3.5% of the global income. China shares 18% of the Global population and also 18% of the Global GDP. Therefore there is need to harness our working population and our youth power which is highest in the World to become the biggest economic power in the world through its entrepreneurial skill and by promoting Swadeshi technology to produce qualitative goods at competitive prices.

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

We should give a fresh look at the present global economic system. The share of OECD countries which is a club of the developed countries with high income group, is declining in the global GDP and the share of the Emerging economies of middle income group economies is increasing. The latest Report of World Economic Outlook published in October 2024 by IMF shows that OECD group or the Advanced countries share in the global gdp on PPP basis is gradually declining. OECD shares 40.7 and Emerging market shares 59.3 per cent of

the global gdp in 2023 and it further says that the declining trend is continuing since 2017 when share of OECD was 44 and declined to 42.3 in 2021. On the other hand the Emerging market economies share in 2017 was 56 and in 2021 increased to 57.7.

President Trump has understood that the present century belongs to Asia. Globalisation is helping the emerging economies and in future with the advancement of technology, the concept of physical boundaries are going to be blurred. It is the Human Resources and the intellectual resources which will take precedence over the capital resources and therefore both China and India are bound to prosper. China has already taken over America in the field of technology. The latest WIPO Report 2024 shows that the share of China in global filing of patents is 47.2% as against USA which is 16.8% and that of Japan, 8.4% out of the total number of applications of 35.52 lakhs. The Artificial Intelligence is another challenge which is going to have different parameters of manufacturing and the services sector. There is no need for physical presence for rendering cross border services. The hegemony of US can be counted in limited number of years as the world is moving towards a new economic order where the digital economy will replace the physical value of US Dollar. In the recently held BRICS meeting in the last week of October, the member countries are contemplating for developing a BRICS currency to replace dollar and the role of US Dollar as an international currency of reserve has started declining as will be evident from the chart presented by IMF team.

It is important to note that the burden of total cumulative foreign capital in the country has been increasing and as per the latest official published sources, the cumulative FDI is US\$ 1 trillion as per PIB dated 12/12/2024, Ministry of Commerce, the cumulative FPI as per NSDL is US\$ 1 trillion as on 31/10/2024 and Foreign Debt US\$ 663.8 Billion as per RBI which aggregated to US\$ 2.664 trillion against Forex Reserve as on 31/01/2025 as per RBI US\$ 630 Billion. This situation coupled with rising trade account deficit of around US\$ 250 billion every year is an area of serious concern.

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

### Uttar Purv Kshetra (Bihar-Jharkhand)

*Uttar Bihar*

- Shri Vinay Bhushan - Prant Sah Sanyojak

*Jharkhand Prant*

- Smt. Anjula Murmu - Prant Sah Mahila Pramukh

### Poorvi Kshetra

*Odisha Poorv*

- Lakhmi Priya Sahu - Prant Mahila Pramukh

*Odisha Paschim*

- Sagarika Patil - Prant Mahila Pramukh

*Madhya Bang*

- Lata Patil Modak - Prant Mahila Pramukh
- Momita Mirdha Sheet - Prant Mahila Sah Samanvayak (SBA)

*Uttar Bang*

- Rajesh Agarwal (LUB, Siliguri) - Prant Samanvayak (SBA), 9434019654
- Pujita Sarkar - Prant Mahila Pramukh, 9382340161



### Poorvottar Kshetra

*Uttar Assam Prant*

- Raju Mishra (Guwahati) - Prant Sah Sanyojak, 6901607576
- Arjun Barman - Prant Sah Sanyojak, 7002631099

*Manipur*

- Phalguni Kogzhemkang - Prant Mahila Sah Pramukh

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## SJM ticks India's winning factors amid tariff war

A “multi-stakeholder roundtable”, chaired by Swadeshi Jagran Manch (SJM), National Co-Convenor Dr. Ashwani Mahajan, and attended by leading economists and trade experts, discussed the challenges that India faced on the proposed trade deal with the United States (US), including tariffs that the Donald Trump administration threatened to impose, and the strategy it should adopt.

In a social media post, SJM called the discussion enriching, “with the approach of ‘Nation First’” and that it would “definitely help in strategizing our dealing with the disruption caused by Trump’s tariffs”.

According to sources, the participants lauded the government’s efforts during its negotiations with the US to safeguard the interests of the country’s farming community and agricultural sector.

It was pointed out during the discussions that while India was negotiating with the US, the China-US trade war could escalate.

The participants spoke of the opportunities that could await India if proposed US-China trade talks were fruitless.

Participants were of the view that the government should remain committed to pursue its “Aatmanirbhar Bharat” policy in the face of the challenges.

All attendees at the meeting, held in hybrid mode, included Montek Singh Ahluwalia, once deputy chairperson of the erstwhile Planning Commission; economist Ila Patnaik; trade experts Abhijit Das and Priyam Banerjee; former Lok Sabha member Jayant Sinha; former ambassador to Switzerland Smita Purushottam; former Indian Revenue Service officer and trade negotiator Sangeeta Godbole; Ajay Srivastava of Global Trade Research Initiative; and author Sanjaya Baru.

“Focussed discussion on US-India trade relations convened by SJM. (I) came away hopeful that ‘Trump’s Tariff Tantrums’ can be managed,” Baru said in a social media post.

Sources said the government should protect India’s agriculture sector just as it had done by keeping the sector out of the Australia-India Economic Cooperation and Trade Agreement and had also walked out of the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership on the issue.

“The idea was to take a 360 degree view of trade and economic experts on the challenges and

opportunities facing the country and what the strategy should be in the context of protecting our national interests,” said a source.

There is a growing sense that the Trump administration needs to understand the growing resistance in India on any concessions that might hurt the interests of its farmers.

On March 10, in Raipur the SJM national council passed a resolution saying India should give priority to bilateral trade agreements over multilateral deals and protect its national interests, especially the interests of farmers and small entrepreneurs, while negotiating with the US amid Trump’s “frontal attack” on the global free trade system.

[https://www.business-standard.com/economy/news/roundtable-on-trump-tariffs-125031901373\\_1.html](https://www.business-standard.com/economy/news/roundtable-on-trump-tariffs-125031901373_1.html)

## Trump's Trade War: SJM's call for Swadeshi And Bilateral Trade

After taking over as President of USA, Donald Trump has launched a frontal attack on the global free trade system by announcing his intent to impose higher tariffs (on reciprocal basis) on imports from many countries around the world. It intention is to bring back manufacturing in USA so that issue of unemployment is addressed.

If we go into history, it was US and its allies only who had pushed the world towards free trade, especially with the advent of World Trade Organisation, introducing rule based global trading system. However, it secured a distinct right to impose country specific tariffs, if it wishes to do so. In spite of extensive protest from SJM, the then Government in Bharat signed the WTO agreement on the dotted lines.

Since 1990s, a belief has been gaining ground that the policy of liberalization, globalization and privatization is the only way forward for the world, especially developing countries though Swadeshi Jagran Manch was always against liberalisation and globalisation as was being presented.

The US, once the biggest supporter of free trade and a rule-based global trading system, has suddenly realised under Donald Trump that for decades it has bought more goods from the rest of the world, than it sold, due to which US has been facing huge trade deficit. In 2024, USA's had a huge trade deficit of 918.4 billion US dollars. Now Donald Trump wants to reverse this situation. But it is worthwhile to know the background of initial negotiations at WTO. The developed countries, including USA, in bargain with de-



veloping countries, allowed imposing higher tariffs on goods than developed countries for accepting new issues in GATT and signing agreements on TRIPS, TRIMS, agriculture and services. So it was a bargain at that time which America is now consciously ignoring. The WTO system greatly benefited the US and other developed countries, as it paved the way for a strong patent and other IPRs (Intellectual Property Rights) regime, which benefited their pharma and other companies, by way of royalties for their IPR, opened the doors of developing countries for investment by multinational companies and opened markets for US agricultural products in developing countries including India.

Donald Trump understood very well that America's free trade policy is somehow responsible for slowdown in economy and increasing unemployment as it allowed cheap imports from China. To deal with this situation, Donald Trump is imposing reciprocal import duties on many countries including China, Canada, Mexico, Britain, South Korea and Bharat. Right from its inception, Swadeshi Jagran Manch, has been fighting against unequal WTO agreements, adversely impacting our public health, farmers, industry and the common man. While making it very clear that SJM is not against promoting international trade, we firmly believe that multilateral trade agreements are not good for the economy, as there is no point giving Most Favoured Nation treatment to all countries. Government of Bharat has also stated that bilateral arrangements are going to be the order of the day as Multilateralism is on its way out.

In the last five years, Bharat has decided to promote the manufacturing of all those goods in the country, in which it was dependent on other countries including China, through the policy of Atmanirbhar Bharat. This policy has also started giving dividend. Bharat will have to prepare its industries for global competition in a protective environment.

In view of a frontal attack of US on our exports, on an illegitimate argument that India imposes higher tariffs, and likely increase in tariffs by them, once again underlines the importance of Swadeshi.

National Council of Swadeshi Jagran Manch strongly suggests that Bharat should enhance its foreign trade with bilateral trade agreements rather than multilateral trade agreements. However, while entering into bilateral trade agreements with US and other countries, national interests should be protected, espe-

cially our farmers and small entrepreneurs.

In the past we have observed that in the last 10 years, government has been protecting the interests of farmers and their livelihood, while negotiating trade agreements, whether it was a regional trade and investment agreement, RCEP, from it withdrew, due to concerns of its adverse impact on dairy and agriculture. This policy needs to continue, so far as agriculture small industry is concerned, especially where livelihood of farmers and workers is involved.

SJM appreciates the Government's effort to enhance foreign trade in Indian Rupee however, efforts should also be to ensure foreign currency and payment system like SWIFT should not be allowed to be used as pressure tactics.

The whole world is passing through a syndrome of geo-economic fragmentation and the key to success in this scenario is the policy of "Nation First" based on the philosophy of SJM.

National Council of SJM also urges upon patriotic citizens of Bharat, that it's time that wherever domestic produce, both agriculture and industrial, are available, we should use Bhartiya products only. They are also encouraged to use Ayush for their wellness to reduce reliance on patented medicines.

SJM also believes and advocates that encouraging entrepreneurship at the grass root level and village led development will be the right economic growth path for Bharat.

<https://www.news18.com/business/trumps-trade-war-swadeshi-jagran-manch-calls-for-swadeshi-and-bilateral-trade-9257786.html>

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## India should protect its national interest while negotiating with US: SJM

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India should enhance its foreign trade under bilateral trade agreements rather than multilateral deals and protect its national interest, especially that of the farmers and small entrepreneurs, while negotiating with the US, the Swadeshi Jagran Manch (SJM) said. The SJM's national council passed a resolution in this regard at its meeting in Chhattisgarh.

The two-day meeting held in Raipur, which deliberated on a host of issues, including strengthening India's economy amid a changing geopolitical scenario and the Donald Trump administration's policy of reciprocal tariffs.

"After taking over as US president, Donald

Trump has launched a frontal attack on the global free trade system by announcing his intent to impose higher tariffs (on reciprocal basis) on imports from many countries around the world,” the resolution said.

The move is intended to bring back manufacturing to the US so that the issue of unemployment is addressed, it said.

“The national council of Swadeshi Jagran Manch strongly suggests that Bharat should enhance its foreign trade with bilateral trade agreements rather than multilateral trade agreements,” the resolution said.

“However, while entering into bilateral trade agreements with the US and other countries, national interests should be protected, especially (the interests of) our farmers and small entrepreneurs,” it added.

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/india/india-should-protect-its-national-interest-while-negotiating-with-us-swadeshi-jagran-manch/articleshow/118839027.cms>

## Seminar on “Digital Hastakshar Abhiyan” Held at IIM Jammu in view of Swavlambi Bharat Abhiyan

Swadeshi Jagran Manch highlights the Role of Entrepreneurship in Nation-Building and successfully organized a seminar on “Digital Hastakshar Abhiyan” at the Indian Institute of Management (IIM), Jammu as part of the Swavlambi Bharat Abhiyan. The event aimed to raise awareness among students about startups, entrepreneurship skills, and the significance of self-reliance in India’s journey towards becoming a developed nation.

The speakers emphasized the importance of “Udyam” (entrepreneurship) as a key solution to unemployment and economic growth. They discussed how digital literacy and financial independence can empower young entrepreneurs to contribute to India’s development.

Prominent personalities who addressed the gathering included: Anita Sharma, Prant Pramukh (Mahila), Dr. Raj, Prant Sadasya, Anjana Sharma, Prant Sadasya, Deepali Handa, Prant Sadasya.

They encouraged students to take initiative in the startup ecosystem and leverage digital tools for business growth. They also highlighted government initiatives supporting entrepreneurship and self-reliance.

The seminar witnessed enthusiastic participation from students, who engaged in discussions on innovation, business development, and the role of startups in driving economic progress. The event concluded

with a call to action for young minds to embrace entrepreneurship as a means to build a self-sufficient and prosperous.

[https://www.instagram.com/jammulinksnews/p/DF-qm0RSNaN/?img\\_index=1](https://www.instagram.com/jammulinksnews/p/DF-qm0RSNaN/?img_index=1)

## Special session on ‘Prosperous and Great India @ 2047’ at Srinath University

Srinath University hosted a special session on ‘Prosperous and Great India @ 2047’, where academicians, entrepreneurs and senior office bearers of Swadeshi Jagran Manch shared their vision for a self-reliant and empowered India by 2047. The chief guest, Satish Ji, All India Co-Organizer of Swadeshi Jagran Manch, emphasized the importance of economic self-sufficiency, urging youth to focus on entrepreneurship instead of seeking jobs. Other speakers, including Amarendra, Ajay Upadhyay, Manoj Kumar Singh (KVIC) and Bande Shankar Singh, highlighted the need for promoting innovation and indigenous products.

Addressing the gathering, Chancellor of Srinath University, Sukhdev Mahato, underscored the importance of linking education with self-reliance and encouraged students to adopt innovation and hard work as core principles. The event inspired students to contribute towards building a strong, independent and prosperous India in the coming decades.

<https://avenuemail.in/special-session-on-prosperous-and-great-india-2047-at-srinath-university/>

## Tripura SJM holds state conference

The state conference of Tripura Swadeshi Jagran Manch’s Swavalambi Bharat Abhiyan was held at Rabindra Shatabarshiki Bhavan.

Addressing the gathering, speakers from Swadeshi Jagran Manch emphasized the role of the Swavalambi Bharat Abhiyan in achieving the national goal of a five-trillion-dollar economy. One of the key speakers highlighted that while India now holds the fifth position in the global economy, the country’s economic condition before the BJP-led government came to power in 2014 was not favorable. In this context, the speaker credited the guidance of Swadeshi Jagran Manch as a crucial factor in achieving this milestone.

The speakers further stated that the organization will continue its efforts to inspire future generations and foster a like-minded approach toward holistic national development. □□

# Swadeshi Activities

## Swadeshi Meetings

### Pictorial Glimpses



**Jamshedpur, Jharkhand**



**Katiyar, Bihar**



**Assam**



**Itanagar, Arunachal Pradesh**





## Swadeshi Activities **National Council Meeting** Raipur, Chhattisgarh (9-10 March, 2025)

Pictorial Glimpses

