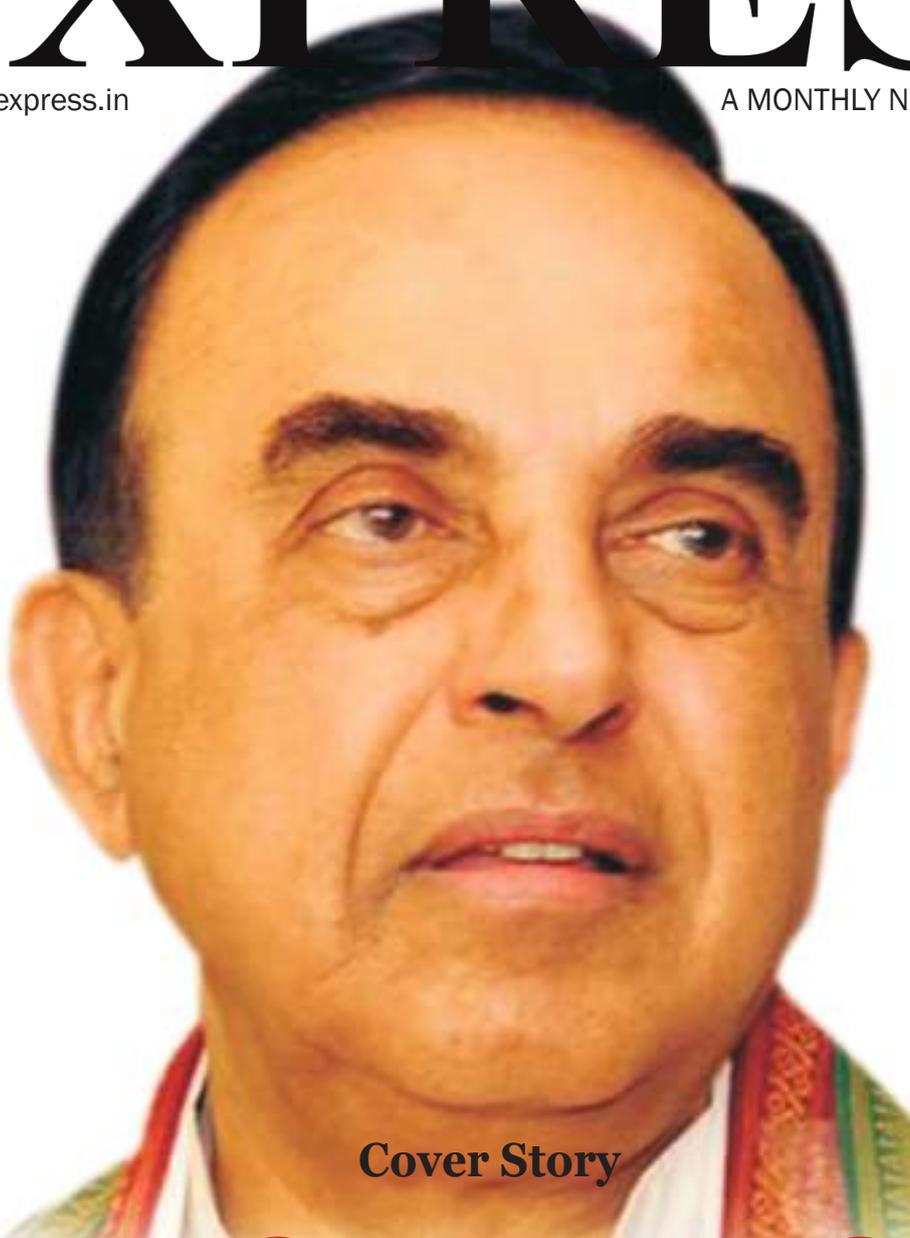


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# OPINION --- EXPRESS

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Cover Story

## THE LONE RANGER

His crusade against corruption across party line makes him stand out. Why isn't BJP bringing him into the mainstream?



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**Delhi / NCR - Hemant Sharma:** D 239  
Defence Colony New Delhi 110024 INDIA  
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Excelsior BUILDING, 6th Floor, A.K. NAYAK  
MARG, Fort, MUMBAI - 400001 (INDIA).  
Phone: 91 - 22 - 22019265 / 22019160  
FAX : 91-22- 22019764 / 22019760

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**Registered Office:** OPINION EXPRESS HOUSE

24-A Clyde Road, Lucknow-226001 (India)  
Phone: 91-522-4060880  
Fax: 91-522-2208242 # 24x7  
mobility +91 9984437000  
email: info@opinionexpress.in

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## Delhi political club, Mumbai commercial syndicates have common agenda –Target Swamy

**D**r Subramaniam Swamy is a target of deeper nexus between Delhi darbar and Mumbai syndicate. Despite his formidable credentials, corrupt lobbies have successfully kept him out of ministerial office during the current regime. It reminded us of the political conspiracies during Subhash Chandra Bose and Syama Prasad Mukherjee era when both the leaders were systematically phased out



of the mainstream politics by a stronger cunning political and business syndicate. Surprisingly, RSS has endorsed his candidature yet it was blocked successfully. Prime Minister Modi has done tremendous hard work single handedly without any talent in the cabinet with exception of few but he is a human being with limitations too. The results of upcoming general elections will show the shortcoming in the approach of governance that people expected while voting for Narendra Modi in 2014. Personally, I don't like his approach of targeting individuals but his commitment to national interest is beyond any doubt. Swamy's lack of fear has its basis in his uncompromising honesty. "I cannot be bought off, and both the netas and industrialists know that. So no one offers me anything," he says with a smile. Seeing some skepticism, he adds: "If I had done anything wrong, I would have been in prison long ago." He has a point, since he's under scrutiny by industry and politicians, both seeking to bring him down. That they haven't succeeded so far proves his contention. Despite Swamy's formidable intellectual abilities and personal integrity, he has failed to capitalize it in political arena. His open arm approach, simple going attitude and blunt speeches have been an obstacle in scaling the political ladder of India's apex power zone. Swamy is largely misunderstood by his own party leaders due to insecurities that they carry within themselves. Today Swamy is perhaps the most popular leader in India after Narendra Modi. The RSS being the ideologue of BJP have realized the value of Dr Swamy and it was RSS in 2014 that forced BJP leadership to welcome Dr Swamy in party to gain pan India footprint. It was RSS that forced the BJP leadership to offer Rajya Sabha seat to Dr Swamy in 2016 in spite of huge resentment within the BJP leadership opposed to the entry of Swamy in the upper house of Parliament. Dr. Subramaniam Swamy is a lone warrior who is fighting alone for many battles in the national interest. As we are approaching the next general elections in 2019, BJP leadership must introspect how badly they have missed the services of Swamy? Yet again, the sad story of Subhash Chandra Bose and Syama Prasad Mookerjee is replicated in modern times. The world class economist, seasoned politician, trained diplomat and anti-corruption crusader is left alone to fight the epic battle on his own for his countrymen. However, Swamy is confident that in this battle of right and wrong, he will have the last laugh. We have included a short interview with Dr Swamy with the cover article that gives an overall perception of his personality and thought process, it is a must read.

Another interesting political story building up in Delhi is the that former President of India and perhaps the most competent political leader of present times Pranab Mukherjee is playing a significant role in bringing non-Congress, non-BJP leaders together to form an alternative front ahead of 2019. He was surprisingly invited as the chief guest at RSS event recently. Pranab Mukherjee has sent out signals that he is not a write-off just yet. While many are stumped in the Congress party, the move is seen as a clear indication that former first Citizen Mukherjee is asserting an identity independent of the Congress, his party of over five decades. Recently various political heavy weights across party lines have confirmed that the 82-year-old is playing a significant role in bringing non-Congress, non-BJP leaders together to form an alternative front ahead of 2019. Some of those leaders went as far as to pitch the former president as a potential prime ministerial candidate in 2019.

—Prashant Tewari, Editor-in-Chief

AUGUST 2018

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## The Missing Link: Subramanian Swamy — The Story of A Lone Crusader

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COVER STORY

# THE MISSING LINK THE STORY OF A LONE CRUSADER

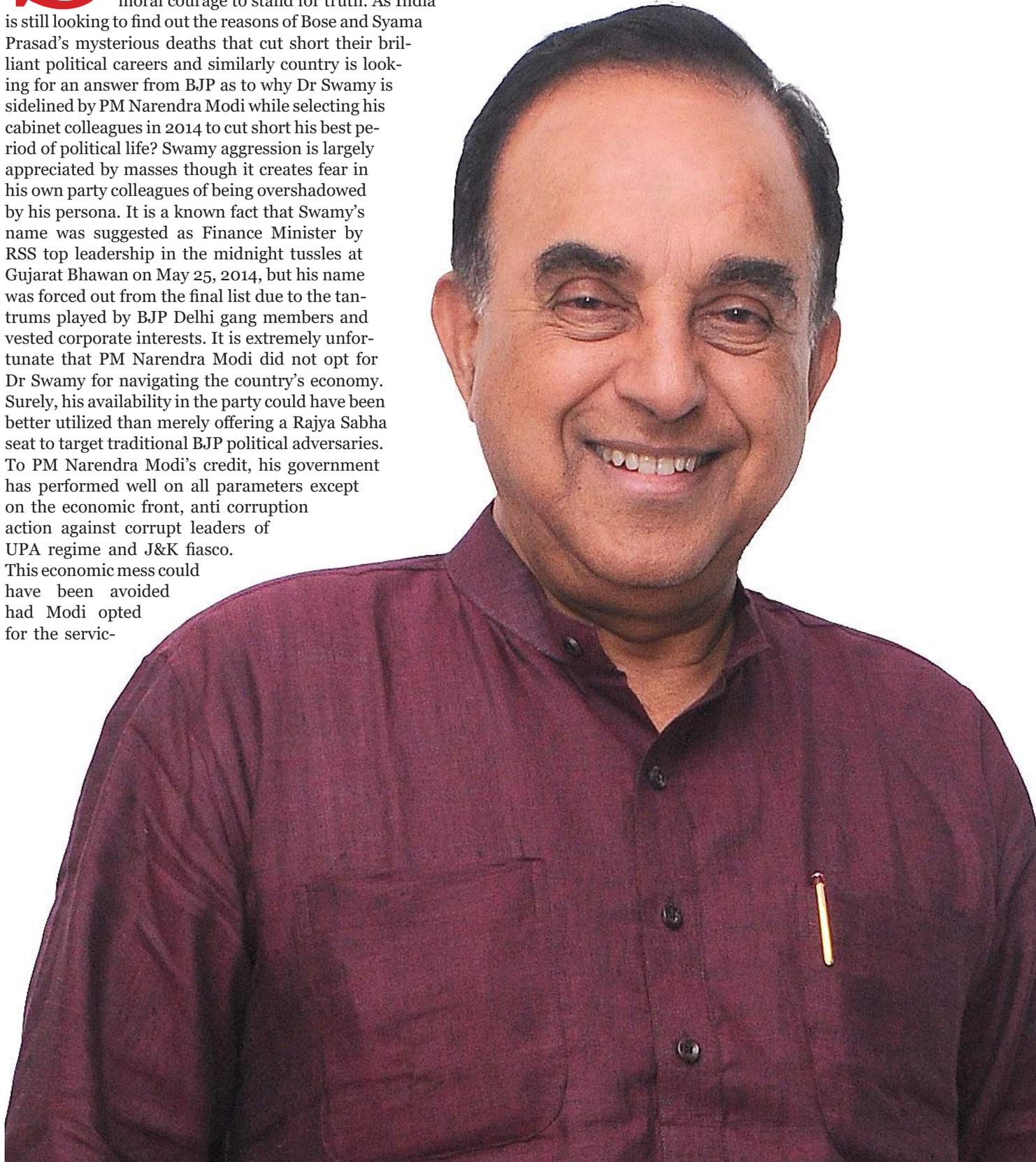
Why has BJP sidelined its best brain? Does it realize its pitfalls?



### Subhash Syama Swamy

**S**ubramanian Swamy is among the leading intellectual, academicians and politician of the present time. He is a rare combination of Subhash Chandra Bose's aggression and Syama Prasad Mookerjee's intellect. All the three leaders have similar leadership traits and moral courage to stand for truth. As India is still looking to find out the reasons of Bose and Syama Prasad's mysterious deaths that cut short their brilliant political careers and similarly country is looking for an answer from BJP as to why Dr Swamy is sidelined by PM Narendra Modi while selecting his cabinet colleagues in 2014 to cut short his best period of political life? Swamy aggression is largely appreciated by masses though it creates fear in his own party colleagues of being overshadowed by his persona. It is a known fact that Swamy's name was suggested as Finance Minister by RSS top leadership in the midnight tussles at Gujarat Bhawan on May 25, 2014, but his name was forced out from the final list due to the tantrums played by BJP Delhi gang members and vested corporate interests. It is extremely unfortunate that PM Narendra Modi did not opt for Dr Swamy for navigating the country's economy. Surely, his availability in the party could have been better utilized than merely offering a Rajya Sabha seat to target traditional BJP political adversaries. To PM Narendra Modi's credit, his government has performed well on all parameters except on the economic front, anti corruption action against corrupt leaders of UPA regime and J&K fiasco. This economic mess could have been avoided had Modi opted for the serv-

es of an expert in 2014. Today, BJP stands to lose its large core vote bank of middle class and trading community largely due to the poor management of economy. Surely, it could have been addressed by a competent finance minister and what better choice could there be but Dr Swamy. He would have simultaneously attacked the corrupt lobbies resulting in creation of public goodwill for the Modi government.



Dr Swamy is perhaps the most literate politician of the present time in India. He has Bachelors Honours degree in Mathematics Hindu College, University of Delhi and master's degree in Statistics from the Indian Statistical Institute, Kolkata. He was later recommended by Hendrik S. Houthakker at Harvard University on a full Rockefeller scholarship where he received a PhD in Economics in 1965. His thesis adviser was Nobel Laureate Simon Kuznets. In July 1965, immediately after obtaining his PhD in economics from Harvard, Swamy joined the faculty of economics at the same institution as an assistant

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professor; in 1969, he was made an associate professor. As associate professor, he was invited by Amartya Sen to occupy the chair on Chinese studies at the Delhi School of Economics. He accepted the offer, and indeed he even travelled to India to take up the position, but his appointment was cancelled at the last minute due to his views on India's economic policy and also its nuclear policy. At that time, India was partially oriented towards Socialism and the "command economy" model instituted by Nehru and Swamy was a believer in free markets. Thereafter, Swamy moved to the Indian Institute of Technology, Delhi and he was a full Professor of Mathematical Economics there from 1969 to the early 1970s. He was removed from the position by its board of governors in the early 1970s. The real turn in his political career came after his sacking from IIT but was le-





gally reinstated in the late 1990s by the Supreme Court of India. He continued in the position until 1991 when he resigned to become a cabinet minister. He served on the Board of Governors of the IIT, Delhi (1977–80) and on the Council of IITs (1980–82). He also taught economics courses in summer session at Harvard until 2011.

Dr Swamy was a staunch opponent of Indira Gandhi so the right wing political party Bharatiya Jana Sangh sent him to Rajya Sabha – the upper house of Indian Parliament in 1974. He was elected Member of Parliament five times between 1974 and 1999. Swamy was a hero during the Emergency due to maverick exit from the country and landing in Parliament and then again escape to abroad. He was the Global Ambassador of RSS against Emergency exposing Indira Gandhi. He has twice represented the city of Mumbai (North East) during 1977 and 1980. Swamy has served as a member of the Planning Commission of India and was a Cabinet Minister in the Chandra Shekhar government. Earlier in November 1978, Swamy was member of the Group of Eminent Persons and was called to Geneva, Switzerland to prepare a report of the United Nations (United Nations Conference on Trade and Development(UNCTAD))

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on Economic Co-operation between Developing countries (ECDC). Swamy also simplified trade procedures and formulated a new export strategy which became the forerunner of trade reform adopted subsequently. In 1994, Swamy was Chairman of the Commission on Labour Standards and International Trade set up by former Prime Minister P. V. Narasimha Rao. However, his most important contribution to Indian economy has been that of the “Economic lib-

eralization” in 1991 which dismantled the infamous “license raj” and paved the way for real economic growth in India. The Architect for reforms was none other than Dr Subramanian Swamy, off course with PV Narsimha Rao political brilliance and administrative skills. Way back in the late 1960s Dr Swamy had done in-depth research in Indian economy & presented his analysis in the form of a comprehensive book titled “Indian Economic Planning: An Alternative Approach” in which he had given a detailed blueprint & proposed dismantling of “license raj” to revive entrepreneurship & boost Indian economy. By connecting the sequence of events, one cannot help but acknowledge that Dr Subramanian Swamy was the brainchild behind the blueprint & the architect of Indian economic reforms, which rescued our economy, dismantled license raj, revived entrepreneurship, boosted industry, reversed brain-drain, and our economy since then has been scaling new heights. However, with this formidable track record of exemplary excellence: BJP leadership had other idea of economics. Swamy’s natural claim to Ministry of Finance to address several structural issues of the Indian economy and fix corrupt syndicate groups operating in India was ignored

by the first BJP majority government in 2014. People in India and the global PIO population are extremely disappointed with the Prime Minister Modi decision to exclude Swamy from the cabinet because Swamy enjoys tremendous goodwill amongst liberal intellectuals in India and even more with the overseas Indians.

Dr Swamy has written on foreign affairs of India dealing largely with People's Republic of China (PRC), Pakistan and Israel. In fact with his huge international experience, if put to effective use, can be extremely beneficial in drafting the contemporary foreign policy of India. He is a rare leader in India having great relations with both USA and China. Swamy learned Chinese language to understand the political developments in China, while closely tracking the developments in China during the 1960s, Dr Swamy noticed that the Chinese were very serious about regular up-gradation of their military systems. In 1964, when China successfully tested its first nuclear weapon, Dr Swamy was one of the first visionaries in India who realized that India also must have

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Swamy's natural claim to Ministry of Finance to address several structural issues of the Indian economy and fix corrupt syndicate groups operating in India was ignored by the first BJP majority government in 2014. People in India and the global PIO population are extremely disappointed with the Prime Minister Modi decision to exclude Swamy from the cabinet because Swamy enjoys tremendous goodwill amongst liberal intellectuals in India and even more with the overseas Indians.

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its own nuclear equipment in order to defend itself from any future external threats. However, Swamy has worked towards normalising relations between China and India. According to Swamy, the re-opening of the Kailash Mansarovar pilgrimage route was announced at a meeting convened by the People's Republic of China paramount leader Deng Xiaoping in April 1981, in which Swamy

was in attendance. Swamy made pioneering efforts towards India's establishment of diplomatic relations with Israel. In 1982, Swamy became the first Indian political leader to make a well-publicised trip to Israel, where he met with several important Israeli leaders such as Yitzhak Rabin and then-Prime Minister Menachem Begin. His efforts at normalising relations with Israel have



borne fruit with both India as well as Israel deciding in 1992 to facilitate the building of embassies in their respective countries. Swamy, on several occasions, has voiced support for the state of Sri Lanka in its role during Sri Lanka's protracted civil war with the LTTE, for which he was criticised as "pro Lanka" by his political opponents domestically. In an interview given to The Sunday Leader newspaper, Swamy stated that the Indian government should attend the CHOGM meeting held in Colombo despite stiff opposition from Indian

politicians in Tamil Nadu concerned for the welfare and human rights of Tamils in Sri Lanka, placing the onus on the LTTE for

Dr Swamy strictly adheres to the politics with principle and knowledge with character. Swamy understood the power of the press to influence public opinion. And he has maintained extremely close relations with media friends in Delhi to articulate his views. This is the single most relevant reason for Swamy's glorious success in public life.

### **The demolition man**

Swamy's transformation from a slightly idiosyncratic, outspoken, sometimes annoying politician to the man India Inc. fears (and, grudgingly respects) started with the 2G spectrum scam in 2010. Swamy's activism in the 2G case resulted in licences worth Rs 9,000 crore being cancelled. "I don't care about what money they lose," says Swamy, who often threatened to send Anil Ambani and Ratan Tata to prison during the 2G scandal (both Tata Tele and Reliance ADAG



had bought licenses). “The truth is more important to me.” Dr Swamy has been a lone crusader against mega corruption in India. In fact, a large section of the Indian population knows him as an anti-corruption crusader rather than an economist or politician. Swamy’s moral integrity is the strong trunk from which all the branches of his life grew. His integrity has many roots in the soil, in education and in Bhagwad Gita. Swamy is a diehard nationalist and believes in one India. Dr Swamy tirade against corruption was largely facilitated by indepen-



dent judicial system of India. In Oct 2014, Swamy filed a petition in Supreme Court praying for declaring Sections 499 and 500 of the Indian Penal Code, that deal with criminal defamation, as unconstitutional. In 1996, Swamy had filed a criminal complaint against Jayalalitha which led to her prosecution, conviction and sentencing to four years imprisonment by the trial court in 2014. Later, on May 11, 2015, a special Bench of the Karnataka High Court set aside the trial court order convicting former Tamil Nadu Chief Minister Jayalalitha, who was acquitted of all charges in the disproportionate assets case. An Appeal against the High court verdict was filed in Supreme Court. However, keeping personal differences aside, he wished her a speedy recovery on her last illness and advised she visit Singapore for treatment. The final verdict of Supreme Court came in February, 2017 that indicted Jayalalitha posthumously and upheld the trial court judgment in toto. In November 2008, Swamy amongst others wrote the first of five letters to Prime Minister Manmohan Singh seeking permission to prosecute A. Raja in regard to 2G spectrum case. After not receiving any response, Swamy decided to file a case on his own in the Supreme

Court of India regarding the matter, which then asked the Central Bureau of Investigation to produce a detailed report on it. On 15 April 2011, he filed a 206-page petition with PM Singh seeking permission to prosecute Sonia Gandhi on charges of corruption. He also raised doubts regarding her acquisition of Indian citizenship. Swamy filed documents in the court to prosecute Minister of Home Affairs P. Chidambaram on 15 January 2008 on various corruption charges; Swamy placed on record the certified copy of the minutes of a meeting between Chidambaram, Raja and the Prime Minister during the tenure of Raja as the MOC&IT. On 31 January 2012,

the Supreme Court of India accepted Swamy’s petition against the Prime Minister’s Office in the 2G case, saying that all public authorities should give a sanction within three months against any public official if a request is made for prosecution. The Supreme Court said that Swamy had the locus standi to seek sanction from the Prime Minister for the prosecution of A Raja in the 2G case. Sanction by a competent authority for the prosecution of a public servant has to be granted within a time frame, the apex court said. Justice AK Ganguly said that the sanction would be deemed to be granted if competent authority failed to take a decision within four months. Swamy’s arguments were that he wrote to the PMO on 29 November 2008, but it was only on 19 March 2010 the PMO re-

plied that the plea made by Swamy was “premature” as investigation was being carried out by the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI). His relentless pursuit of truth may cost corporate India. After the telecom scam, at stake is a \$900 million (Rs 5,643.9 crore) investment of Etihad in debt and equity into Jet, a \$30 million investment in the Air Asia deal, and \$100 million to be put in for the Tata-Singapore Airlines carrier. Apart from this, there’s also his

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accusation that the sale of the Indian telecom provider Aircel to Malaysia’s Maxis was manipulated to ensure that Finance Minister P. Chidambaram and his son Karti Chidambaram benefited financially. He also accused the Chidambarams of money-laundering; this epic battle is likely to come to a decisive conclusion soon.

Swamy always stood for the independence of institutions in India. He assisted Election Commission of India in improving the transparency of voting system when he demanded that an independent committee should be formed to check the security and safety of the Electronic Voting Machines (EVM) to avoid any rigging

or tampering. He argued that countries like US, Japan, UK, Germany and Netherlands have abandoned EVMs and are using paper-ballot system and demanded that a printed receipt should be given to every voter after casting the vote. His PIL to investigate the working of EVM was dismissed by the Delhi High Court on 17 January 2012. The court refused to give any direction to the Election Commission to bring back paper-ballot system or use of printed receipts. The Commission argued that the use of paper is not feasible due to the huge size of Indian electorate. The court further asked the Election Commission to “immediately begin a process of wider consultations” and the Parliament “to go into this question in depth and decide”. On 22 January 2013 the Election Commission informed the Supreme Court that it would include Voter Verifiable Paper Audit Trail (VVPAT) system which is in the testing phase after the court agreed with some points raised by Swamy who was the contender, in the machines so that every voter will come to know who he/she is voting by getting a printed slip after pressing the EVM button. The voter paper audit trail has then been in use from 4 September 2013. On

8 October 2013 the Supreme Court directed the Election Commission to implement audit trail system in 2014 general election in phases.

The National Herald case demolished credibility of apex Congress leadership. On 1 November 2012 Swamy alleged that both Sonia and Rahul Gandhi have committed fraud and land grabbing to a tune of ₹20 billion (US\$300 million) by acquiring a public ltd company called Associated Journals Private Ltd (AJPL) through their owned private company, Young Indian which was formed on 23 November 2010. Through this they had got publication rights of National Herald and QuamiAwaz newspapers, with real estate properties in Delhi and Ut-

tar Pradesh. The acquired place was intended only for newspaper purposes but was used for running a passport office, amounting to rental income of lakhs of rupees, it alleges. Swamy further added that Rahul Gandhi hid the facts in his affidavit while filing nomination for the 2009 Lok Sabha elections. It further alleges that on 26 February 2011 AJPL approved the transfer of unsecured loan of ₹900 million (US\$13 million) from the All India Congress Committee at zero interest.

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## The National Herald case demolished credibility of apex Congress leadership. On 1 November 2012 Swamy alleged that both Sonia and Rahul Gandhi have committed fraud and land grabbing to a tune of ₹20 billion (US\$300 million) by acquiring a public ltd company called Associated Journals Private Ltd (AJPL) through their owned private company

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Swamy argued that it is illegal for any political party to lend the loan as per violation of Section 269T of Income Tax Act 1961. On 2 November, the party responded that the loan was given only for reviving National Herald newspaper with no commercial interest. Swamy decided to approach the Supreme Court for de-recognition of the Congress party, while the Election Commission ordered the probe on 17 November 2012. The hearing of the case had been taken up thereafter on different occasions with the court observing prima facie evidence against all the accused. On 1 August 2014 the Enforcement Directorate initiated probe to find any money laundering in the case while on the same day Swamy was served notice by the High Court. On 18 September 2015 it was reported that the Enforcement Directorate had reopened the investigation. Following it, on 19 December 2015 Patiala House Court granted unconditional bail immediately on the hearing to all the five accused but one.

Dr Swamy has fought an epic battle against black money and corruption in India. According to Dr Swamy, the black economy in India is all pervasive, affecting the day-to-day life of the common man. Be it the purchase of a house or a pin, people has to pay higher price either due to corruption or due to poor quality or due to a black premium. While major-



ity of the population suffers, tiny minority of 3% is its principal beneficiary. The black economy as a percentage of national income (GDP) is supposed to have grown from about 3% in the mid fifties to over 50% in the present times. Given its significant size, it is little wonder that the citizen's life is affected by the black economy at every step. Whether it is the landlord harassing the tenant for a higher rent or the builder, broker and developer who cheat the public in the real estate market, or the trader who sells adulterated stuff (food & medicine) or the restaurant owner who serves sub-standard food, the public have no respite. Then there are mafia operating in slums that makes life hell. All this encourages drugs peddling, prostitution, gambling, contract killings, petty crime and thefts. The corrupt police force provides no help and the citizens are left with no justice. Even the justice system is overpowered by the corruption leading to increase in organized gangs, terrorist groups, mafia formations, naxal activities. As the citizens are increasingly getting cynical of the system, the only way to restore their confidence is to attack the source of corruption with relentless zeal and conviction. We have to clean the political, administrative and judicial system to restore faith in common citizen of the



rule of law. Finally, the black economy in India leads to inefficiency in the system unlike in the developed world. The time wasted due to non-functioning telephones, queues for payment of municipality bills, delays in banks, slow movement of materials for industry or trade etc raises transaction costs all round. This leads to low productivity, poor quality of goods & services and non-competitiveness of exports (In spite of low wages). This inefficiency is part and parcel of the existence of the black economy since people pay extra for any work where additional costs and hassles are involved. Swamy has been the original campaigner against corruption by bringing to light the 2G case and coal scam. He founded Action Committee against Corruption in India (ACACI) on 14 October 2011 and acted as a chairperson. ACACI's goal is to take specific action against corruption at very high places of government and Indian black money stashed abroad, Swamy is the petitioner in Supreme Court for the battle against corruption and it is due to his efforts that SIT was constituted by Supreme Court to track black money in India and abroad.

Swamy has defended the cause of Hindutva in courts with extreme zeal to become de-facto RSS ideologue. He had

filed a petition in the Supreme Court with priests of the dikshitar sect challenging the decision of the Madras High Court on transferring the administration of the Nataraja temple to the then Tamil Nadu government in 2009. Swamy on referring to the provisions of Tamil Nadu Hindu Religious and Charitable Endowments Act, contended that Podu Dikshitaras have right to administer the temple and argued on handing over the administration on mismanagement grounds of temple's wealth is violation under article 26 of the Constitution of India. On 6 January 2014 the Supreme Court ruled that the administration is to be handed over back to the priests of the temple from the state government. Ayodhya temple case: On 22 February 2016, Swamy filed a petition in the Supreme Court allowing construction of Ram temple at the disputed site where Babri Masjid was demolished in 1992, and expediting the adjudication related to order of the Allahabad High Court on 30 September 2010, petition was accepted on 26 February to be later heard by the court. According to Dr Swamy, the Ram temple issue is a matter of faith rather a simple land dispute, and majority Hindu community must get an access to huge ram temple at the earliest.

Swamy has extensively worked on

the integration of the country, especially when at the height of unrest in J&K and LTTE era in Tamil NADU. In September 2008, Swamy stridently retorted against the contentions of some Indian columnists who voiced their opinions in favor of "peacefully" surrendering Kashmir to Pakistan. He said, "I would say that the silent suffering majority of India wants none of this. The 'Kashmir issue,' in fact, can no more be solved by dialogue either with the Pakistanis or the Hurriyat, leave alone the Constitutional impossibility of allowing it to secede. Kashmir, in fact, is now our defining identity. It is a touchstone for our resolve to preserve our national integrity. The population of that State may be majority Muslim but the land and its history is predominantly Hindu. For our commitment to the survival of the ancient civilization of India and the composite culture that secularists talk of, we have not only to win that coming inevitable war but also resolve never to part with Kashmir.

Dr Swamy is the tallest Tamil leader in BJP today. He is loved and hated by the native Tamil population of Tamil Nadu largely due to his non-diplomatic pro-Hindu political approach. Yet again, the RSS / BJP leadership has relied on the likes of Gurumurthy and OPS/EPS com-

bine to expand party's political base with an absolute failure at the ground polity of Tamil Nadu. Swamy is well known for his critical views against the "Aryan versus Dravidian" politics of Periyar E. V. Ramasamy calling it as the theory forwarded by the British administration and evangelists to divide and rule the people of Indian sub continent based on imaginary histories and racial myths – to an extent of inventing an entirely new race called Dravidians. In late 1870's: Bishop Caldwell became one of the pioneering missionaries in South India who shaped what now flourishes as the Dravidian identity. The concept of dissociating Tamils from mainstream Hindu spirituality provided Caldwell an ethica rationale for Christian proselytization. Surely, it is the reason why missionaries have targeted Swamy for his hard-line approach on Hindu identity. And it would have consolidated huge section of Tamil population in favour of BJP party struggling to find its foot prints in the state but again BJP leadership had other ideas. He has been a staunch opponent of the armed rebel group Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam. He also urged the Indian government not to support the US led resolution condemning war crimes in the Sri Lankan Civil War, citing it as one-sided and not in the interest of India. Swamy moved the court and got the order restoring quota for Sri Lankan Tamil refugees in colleges in the state. Swamy obtained Supreme Court Stay against the implementation of Sethusamudram Shipping Canal Project (SSCP). He believes that it would hurt the sentiments of people who believe that this shallow land connecting between Tamil Nadu and Sri Lanka was built by the Hindu god Ram. He strongly opposes the implementation of SSCP citing that implementing this scheme will be a criminal offence under section 295 Indian Penal Code. He wrote letters to Prime Minister of India in June 2009 asking him to stop the project and had informed the Supreme Court on 14 October 2015 that the government may not continue with the Sethusamudram Project.

Swamy's lack of fear has its basis in his uncompromising honesty. "I cannot be bought off, and both the netas and industrialists know that. So no one offers me anything," he says with a smile. Seeing some skepticism, he adds: "If I had done anything wrong, I would have been in prison long ago." He has a point, since he's under scrutiny by industry and politicians, both seeking to bring him down. That they haven't succeeded so far proves his contention. Despite Swamy's formidable intellectual abilities and personal integrity, he has failed to capitalize on it in political arena. His open arm approach, simple going attitude and blunt speeches have been an obstacle in scaling the political ladder of India's apex power zone. Swamy is largely misunderstood by his own party leaders due to insecurities that they carry within themselves. Today Swamy is perhaps the most popular leader in India after Narendra Modi. The RSS being the ideologue of BJP have realized the value of Dr Swamy and it was RSS in 2014 that forced BJP leadership to welcome Dr Swamy in party to gain pan India footprint. It was RSS that forced the BJP leadership to offer Rajya Sabha seat to Dr Swamy in 2016 in spite of huge resentment within the BJP leadership opposed to the entry of Swamy in the upper house of Parliament. Dr. Subramanian Swamy is a lone warrior who is fighting alone for many battles in the national interest. As we are approaching the next general elections in 2019, BJP leadership must introspect how badly they have missed the services of Swamy? Yet again, the sad story of Subhash Chandra Bose and Syama Prasad Mookerjee is replicated in modern times. The world class economist, seasoned politician, trained diplomat and anti-corruption crusader is left alone to fight the epic battle on his own for his countrymen.

## Swamy: Post-emergency, non-meritorious Chamchas were promoted by establishment

**You have seen pre & post emergency era of India, what according to you have changed in INDIA post emergency?**

Post emergency, non-meritorious chamchas were promoted by the establishment officially. The Congress party was gradually taken over by the private secretary, political advisers and has started ignoring mass based leaders, the process was facilitated faster by Sonia Gandhi in the recent times. The institutions were attacked and politics penetrated in constitutional positions. Unfortunately, the process is the order of the day even now.

**In a popular and large democratic country like India where regional divide, caste divide and religious segregation are virtual realities, do you think the exceptional merit and impeccable character of a leader can facilitate his journey to the highest level in politics?**

Yes, I see a struggle but ultimately, there is no alternate for talent.

**Q&A**

**You are a mascot of India's anti corruption movement but do you think it is a relevant issue to a large section of society, when the leadership is build on caste and religious platforms? Glaring examples are Lalu Prasad Yadav in Bihar or DMK leadership in your state of Tamil Nadu?**

In a religious and caste ridden society, the first priority of the voters is to select its own caste leader to establish superiority in the social order but the democracy in India is maturing fast, the glaring example is the Narendra Modi Election of 2014. People are by and large dislike corruption and bad governance but there should be an alternate to attract voters for cleaner politics. In 2014: Narendra Modi was the clear alternate and people from all sections of the society voted for him.

**You are a bitter critic of Jawaharlal Nehru and his socialist policy despite Nehru contributed in setting up industrial base of the country that brought scientific temper, world class institutions?**

I have never opposed any individual in person, I am opposed to ideology or policies of individuals. His adoption of the Soviet economic model, with its neglect of agriculture, quotas and licenses caused India's GDP growth stunted at 3 1/2 % per years rate for 40 years till my reform blueprint developed as Minister in 1990-91 and cou-



rageously implemented by Prime Minister Narasimha Rao through Manmohan Singh during 1991-96 changed it over 8% per year. During this period I also held a Cabinet rank post in Rao's government.

**How do you rate last four years of Modi government?**

Except for gross economic mismanagement, I would give full marks to Narendra Modi government. Although I must confess that PM selection of certain bureaucrats in the important positions has brought down the prestige of the government. And the lack of talent in the present cabinet has made the PM's job more stressful.

**Congress party utilized the services of economist Dr Manmohan Singh extensively in the last three decades, even to an extent of appointing him the Prime Minister of the country. However, BJP had the equally competent economist in you but they ignored the claim for the reasons best known to them. How do you think you would have planned the economy differently if you were to head the finance ministry?**

I would have reformed the tax system to make it simple and incentive oriented such as abolition of income tax, reducing indirect taxes to 22 commodities, zero tax on services,

and raised resources by auctioning natural resources such as Spectrum and coal. I would have lowered interest rates to 9% as prime lending rate and raised fixed deposit rates to 9%. R&D expenditures would be tax exempt while innovation development would get matching grants from government, agriculture become global exporting sector, and got opened colleges in such numbers especially by alumni of universities that Reservation quota would become redundant.

**How do you assess the upcoming 2019 General Elections?**

If Hindutva agenda is implement such as adopting Devanagari script as additional compulsory alphabetical script, encouraging by liberal grants teaching Sanskrit synonyms for English technical terms, abolition of Article 370, finding legal ways for building Ram Temple, ensuring fast tracking in courts of my cases against the Gandhi family and Chidambaram family, then majority in Lok Sabha is certain.

*Article complied with inputs from J Gopikrishnan – The Pioneer, Dr Pradeep B & Dr Swamy interview conducted by Prashant Tewari Editor-in-Chief of Opinion Express Group. The feed-back can be shared at [prashanttevari@opinionexpress.in](mailto:prashanttevari@opinionexpress.in)*

# FATHER OF ECONOMIC REFORMS

PVR's contribution to India's economic reforms is second to none

Opinion Express Political Bureau

**28** June 2018 marked the 97th birth anniversary of P.V. Narasimha Rao, the former Prime Minister of India, whose term from 1991 to 1996 laid the foundation for the rapidly-growing Indian economy of today. One of the statesmen-politicians of India, Mr. Rao's term as Prime Minister was one of the most transformative periods in the history of post-independent India.

The idea of economic reforms was not new but its time came only in 1991. It is said that if a miracle has to happen three ingredients are needed – the man, the moment and the idea. In this case, the last two ingredients – the idea of economic reforms and the opportu-

nity to reform were available to prime ministers before 1991 – in fact, this was a much-discussed idea in the corridors of power since the 1970s. However, 1991 saw the emergence of the third ingredient – the man – P.V. Narasimha Rao. Once Mr Rao assumed power, the miracle called economic transformation happened, resulting in a paradigm shift in the thinking of people not only within India but in the way other countries perceived India.

The catalyst for the reforms was the unprecedented economic crisis, in essence a Balance of Payments crisis, of 1991. Many economists have described this in great detail. Loans taken earlier had to be repaid to IMF in dollars and India simply didn't have those dollars. This crisis was the culmination

of a long-standing BoP problem that plagued Independent India, barring a few years. In the initial decades, budget deficit was met by concessional assistance flowing into the country. By the 80s, deficit had to be met through non-concessional loans, mostly borrowed at market terms from the IMF. The result was a debt-driven economy where borrowed foreign exchange loans were used for imports as well as investments instead of growing the exports. This was a completely unsustainable model that led to the near collapse of the Indian economy. By 1990-91, most of these loans became due for repayment. Adding to the woes, the flight of NRI deposits and drastic reduction of dollar inflows from the Middle East NRIs because of the Gulf War aggravated the





situation. The final assault came from the tripling of oil prices and consequent depletion of foreign exchange reserves. It was a crisis unprecedented in Independent India. It was at this juncture that P.V. Narasimha Rao became the Prime Minister of the country.

Within 45 days of taking over, Mr Rao changed policy and procedure to accommodate liberalisation of the economy by bringing in trade reforms, devaluation of rupee by 20%, tariffs and subsidies, and introduced free exchange regime. He unshackled the private sector industry by abolishing the Licence Permit Raj and by connecting it to the global markets. He also allowed foreign investment in literally every sector, save 18 specific areas. Narasimha Rao's big bang reforms were comprehensively targeted to overcome the BoP crisis

but also saw an opportunity to create a new economic structure. The reforms demolished the three pillars of the old dispensation – state spending on the public sector, shackled private sector and the Indian economy getting cut off from the rest of the world. The new economic policy of Liberalisation, Privatisation and Globalisation replaced the old model.

### **Reforms with a 'Human Face'**

While ushering in such far-reaching reforms in the economy, Mr. Rao believed that creating wealth and its redistribution equitably to the masses were two sides of the same coin and were interdependent. He would go on to say at various fora that economic reforms were the tools used to meet the

same objective as always – serving the poorest of the poor and ensuring their well-being. He stressed upon the different roles of the market and the government, explaining that they should complement each other and not replace each other.

He was always committed to inclusive growth, as clearly visible in his thought and action in the 5 years of his tenure. His tenure has not only seen economic reforms but also some firm steps towards poverty alleviation. His speech in Davos 1993 clearly elucidates the thought behind the economic reforms – “In the newfound enthusiasm for change, the Government should not go overboard and plunge large chunks of people into mass misery. We have to find solutions which involve reforms but with a human face. Each society



has to find its middle way suited to its genius and circumstance. We accept the change because it is necessary, not because we are helpless – definitely not because there is no other solution – voluntary acceptance is the crux of the matter.”

PV was therefore of the opinion that while economic reforms result in accelerated development of the economy, simultaneously benefits should also accrue to the socially deprived section of society – an idea that is an early expression of today’s catchphrase of ‘Inclusive Growth’. He believed that economic reforms should not create disparity or create social tensions. The fruits of reforms should reach the lowest rung in the social pyramid and ensure that they become self-reliant and lead a life of dignity and freedom. Not just inclusive growth, his ideas of reform and development encompassed another buzzword of today – ‘sustainable development’. He strongly believed that the process of economic reforms should depend on three considerations – level of material benefit necessary for a human being to attain his full creativity, the level of exploitation of nature consistent with its need to replenish itself and the need to ensure comparable benefits to the vast mass of people and life.

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**PV was therefore of the opinion that while economic reforms result in accelerated development of the economy, simultaneously benefits should also accrue to the socially deprived section of society – an idea that is an early expression of today’s catchphrase of ‘Inclusive Growth’.**

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### **Commitment to Rural Development**

His birth in a farmer’s family, his upbringing in rural India, and his own experiments in agriculture as a progressive farmer left Mr Rao with strong insights into the rural economy. He realised that if the country has to grow, infrastructure has to grow, manufacturing has to grow for employment generation,

but most importantly, there has to be a huge rural development programme. He never believed in piecemeal rural development. He advocated comprehensive and overall development of all the sectors contributing to the rural economy and rural welfare. He wanted clean water to be made available, women empowerment through DWCRA, improvements in primary health, primary education, empowering of artisans, animal husbandry, poultry, small and tiny scale industry, khadi and village industry, textiles, in fact, improvements in every possible sector. Implementing such schemes for rural development would require huge funds. And so, the allocation of funds was increased to Rs 30000 crores in the Eighth Plan from a mere Rs 7000 crores in the Seventh Plan. Ambitious targets of Rs 60000 crores were set for the Ninth Plan. But where did these funds come from? The answer to this question comes from Mr Rao’s vision for economic reforms. For the first time in the history of Independent India, he proposed that the large infrastructure projects hitherto being funded by the State, instead be thrown open to the private sector and foreign investors. As a result of this, it became possible to utilise the thousands of crores, which would have been tied up in these projects, for rural development

and social welfare. He used to say, "Let the top be taken care of by private funds and we will take care of the grassroots." The idea was to create more wealth for the country which could be effectively and meaningfully distributed between development and welfare.

### **Socialist or Capitalist?**

Naysayers have often accused the first generation economic reforms of 1991, and Mr Rao, of being pro-capitalist. As evinced by the concept of 'reforms with a human face', and with his personal commitment to rural development, it is clear that the reforms were neither capitalist nor socialist. If increasing the wealth of the nation is a capitalist idea, then the appropriate redistribution of such wealth amongst the people is a form of socialism. Both go hand-in-hand. So was P.V. Narasimha Rao a socialist who went astray? Was he a capitalist? Did he stay a staunch socialist? In my analysis, he was a social democrat who believed in hardcore pragmatism. Ultimately, no 'ism' mattered to him as long as his policies yielded results and benefited the poorest of the poor. The vision of the economic reforms was ultimately to improve the lot of India's economically backward population. Mr Rao braved many brickbats in attaining his vision. He was aware of the strong socialist-capitalist criticism he was facing, but did not care as long as the common man benefited. He quipped during the TATA Memorial Lecture 1999 – "I lost one job pursuing a so-called socialist policy, and as though to compensate that, I lost the second one pursuing the capitalist policy!"

### **Remembering a great patriot-statesman**

P.V. Narasimha Rao once said, "I have been a doer throughout my life, less of a talker and very few to talk for me." In the years after his term as Prime Minister, this has largely been true. Mr Rao has been ignored at best, and unfairly vilified at worst. It is only now that India is waking up to the fact that this man's foresight and vision paved the way to a better and greatly improved (and still improving) India. He spelled out the most important decisions post-Independence, so much so that if someone sits down to write the history of post-Independence India, he will have to write it in two parts – pre Narasimha Rao's term as PM and post Narasimha Rao's Prime Ministership. The result of his efforts is that the foreign exchange



which was hovering around Rs 3000 crores in 1991 increased fifteen-fold by 1996. GDP grew from 3.5% to 7-7.5% There was substantial increase in growth figures of industry agriculture and exports and the inflation almost halved from the double digit figures of 1991. The benefits of his policies are still being enjoyed by the average Indian.

The name P.V. Narasimha Rao brings to our mind attributes like intellectual excellence, exceptional political sagacity, and a man of learning. Above all it carries the image of a great Prime Minister who changed the destiny of millions of Indians through his policies. It is time we honour a man who spent his life serving his country and his fellow-citizens by awarding him the Bharat Ratna.

*About the author: P. V. Prabhakar Rao is the President of the Swami Ramananda Tirtha Institute of Socio-Economic Research and National Integration, a member of the Swami Ramananda Tirtha Memorial Committee, and the Managing Director of a not-for-profit company he started in the name of his father, statesman politician Sri P.V. Narasimha Rao. Mr. Prabhakar Rao is very conversant with post 1980s politics in India. In addition to his four-decade long career as an industrialist and entrepreneur, Mr Rao assisted his father by coordinating his activities with other senior political dignitaries and bureaucrats, handling his media interactions, and collating data from the grassroots.*

# Recipe of success for BJP to ensure **victory in 2019**

As BJP gears up to defend its citadel at the Centre, here is a ready reckoner to follow



**Abhishek Bhardwaj**

**T**he Bharatiya Janata Party led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi had comfortably secured the majority to form the government at the centre in 2014. BJP and PM Modi's win in 2014 was historic and the decisive mandate made it clear that the people really wanted to see PM Modi in power. Four of the five year term of the BJP

government has now come to an end. There has been multi-faceted growth in India in these four years. Even though the country is progressing at a never seen before pace and there is a definite increase in how Indians and outsiders look at India today, something seems to be lacking. The urgency of the voters to get rid of Congress in 2014 had played an active part in BJP's landslide win. That scenario has changed today.

People and even the BJP are appearing complacent today. Although, the recently held state elections have mostly went in the favour of BJP the 2019 Lok Sabha elections will be a different game altogether. BJP cannot afford to show laxity today, especially since there are talks of a united opposition doing the rounds in the political circles today and the country has seen desperate opposition parties putting together rag-tag coalition to stop the juggernaut of the BJP in various by-polls.

From Mayawati and Akhilesh Yadav's SP-BSP in Uttar Pradesh to Lalu Yadav's RJD in Bihar, leaders who have faced losses at the hands of BJP in state and Lok Sabha are trying to join hands. Congress too has been trying to get a piece of the united opposition game which has been going on for quite some time now. There definitely are visible



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From Mayawati and Akhilesh Yadav's SP-BSP in Uttar Pradesh to Lalu Yadav's RJD in Bihar, leaders who have faced losses at the hands of BJP in state and Lok Sabha are trying to join hands. Congress too has been trying to get a piece of the united opposition game which has been going on for quite some time now.

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differences between the united opposition leaders but there is also the chance that the collective fear against PM Modi led BJP could drive them towards joining hands for the polls to be held in 2019.

BJP as a party should remain active in the public sphere and keep doing activities which resonate with the public on ground levels. Their focus should be on settling the Ram Janmbhoomi Temple issue before the elections. BJP should keep pushing forward for early judgment from the Supreme Court with no further delays in the hearings



if it wants to fulfill its election promise. The development of Hindu pilgrimages and a nationwide religious tourism circuit starting from Ayodhya would give them an added advantage. The Ram Janmbhoomi issue has been raging on for quite long now and political parties have taken benefit from stretching the matter for as long as possible. Congress, very recently, tried to put a stay on the hearings of the Ayodhya Temple case. Successful completion of the issue will repose the faith of the people in BJP and its promises.

BJP could try to bring about big policies to give further boost to the economy. The government could think of something along the lines of Demonetisation or creation of Special Economic Zones in all states of the country to boost manufacturing and trade. One step that Modi government could push for is bringing the petroleum products within the purview of GST. Granting of special status to states like Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu in the south could also improve chances of BJP's win from these states. TDP is likely to come back again to BJP's side following the grant of special status while Tamil Nadu is a swing state at the moment and BJP could gain massively from these

decisions. Implementation of Uniform Civil Code throughout India could also do the trick for BJP, UCC is necessary in a diverse country like India to provide equal treatment to the citizens.

After the surgical strikes, the government has somewhat softened its stance towards Pakistan. It should switch back to offensive mode and suspend direct talks with Pakistan until it takes substantial action against the terror groups operating from its soil. Ceasefire violations from the Pakistani side of the border have been going on for the longest possible time in Kashmir and other areas, a decisive surgical strike could be carried out once again to put an end to the terrorism in Pakistan. This message will go on to prove that BJP has not softened its stance on terrorism and is not looking forward to appeasement politics on the international level as was done by Congress in UPA II regime.

There are many ongoing cases against prominent Congress leaders like, Congress President Rahul Gandhi and Sonia Gandhi's National Herald case or P. Chidambaram's 2G spectrum case and Aircel-Maxis case. BJP should push for expediting the judicial process in these cases and make sure that the guilty get their comeuppance

in a timely manner, preferably before the 2019 elections. It will clear the clouds over what BJP has been accusing the Congress leaders of doing over the years. The corrupt Congress leaders will be face public humiliation and it will further embolden the BJP workers who have fought for a corruption free India. The party needs to keep pushing forward just like it did in the Lalu Yadav fodder scam case.

The party will benefit immensely if the economic offenders like Vijay Malya and Nirav Modi could be brought back to India before the elections in 2019. Kingfisher and Punjab National Bank incidents had its seeds in the Congress led UPA II regime but BJP could send a strong message by doing a decisive crackdown on them. Bringing them to justice would send a strong message that the BJP is not going to let the economic offenders relax under its rule. Fugitive Economic Offenders Bill has enabled the government to get hold of their properties inside and out of the country but their arrest and deportation will give the symbolic final stamp of crackdown. Public faith on BJP will be reinforced and it will show in the elections of 2019.

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# It's Modi vs The Rest

The coalition against our PM is hinged on following points

**Abhishek Tiwari**

**1.** To counter combined hindu fold, create caste divides.

**2.** Since many muslims have been traditionally voting against B.J.P and Modi ji especially , opposition wants to further create a vote bank by promoting and aligning Muslims with caste- dominated parties.

**3.** Opposition thinks that polarization on hindu muslim basis, will harm them therefore they do not want open polarization as they think that silent polarization of muslim in their favor is a good situation. Opposition further thinks that open polarization of hindu votes will be adversely impacting them.

**4.** The opposition led by congress wants that Hindus should remain divided among caste based parties like SP and B.S.P etc to weaken the composite vote base of B.J.P.

**5.** Opposition further wants that backward castes and Dalits should remain separated from hindu polariza-

tion and remain aligned with Muslim vote seeking parties .

**6.** Opposition is funding and promoting anti establishment agitations like statue of Ambedkar breaking and defacement incidents etc and Kisan riots to depict that Govt is elitist . It expects that state forces to control law and order will further breed anti BJP feelings among people . In case majority BJP states use force against backward caste and Dalit caste affiliated Kisan leaders during riots and agitations , it will create Anti Dalit and anti backward image of B.J.P.

**7.** Mr Jignish of Gujarat and Mr Hardik Patel were nurtured by congress to spread caste divides to weaken the B.J,P vote base in Gujarat.

**8.** Similarly academic institutions like JNU etc are being systematically planted with such student leaders to create student unrest in the country.

**9.** Congress further wants that small issues of student and farmers etc should be bloated out of proportion

and there should be loots and arson on the roads so that people start losing faith in the govt. and governance.

**10.** In the coming months congress will try to create law and order issues, kisan agitations, rail agitations and labour unrests to bring down the economy to discard the claim of good governance and growth .

**11.** Since the congress coalition comprises of tarnished image leaders from all corners, Congress will not like to be challenged and contest elections on issues of good governance and growth centric policies .

Congress will like to derail the election agenda on non issues and to blow them out of proportion to disrepute the Modi led BJP Govt -

## What next for B.J.P.

**1.** To divide the coalition by wooing potential leaders so that coalition remains confused and suspicious about some leaders .

**2.** Too woo other leaders of back-





ward and Dalit castes to support the B.J.P. or form the coalition like apna dal etc in U.P.

**3.** To divide important coalition of leaders like madam Mayawati ji, Naveen Patnaik ji and other South Indian leaders so that the coalition is not able to polarize opposition votes against B.J.P.

### **Main forces of Indian Politics which must be kept in good control.**

**1.** Pro kisan measures. Govt should not only do but appear to be doing that

**2.** Pro business policies fixing aberrations and other such problems in the implementation of G.S.T.

**3.** Creating more jobs on contract models so that huge chunks of people can be benefitted.

**4.** Keeping good control on university campus politics and issues .

**5.** Keeping good control on cow vigilantes to avoid issue less media controversies .

**6.** Expediting the Ram Janam Bhoomi issue so that a huge wave of Hindu self respect may be generated to counter the caste divides

**7.** Expediting infrastructural and rural development projects.

**8.** Creating good infrastructure and eco system to help farmers to double up their income and ensuring health insurance and crop security to all farmers of india.

**9.** Keeping the price under control specially with regard to oil and fertilizers.

**10.** Better media management to keep motor mouths of BJP silent .

**11.** To expose people and media about the ground governance initiatives

**12.** Flogging political representatives to work among people to show case the achievements of govt.

**13.** The coalition of opposition parties has been broadly engineered by congress against Modi led B.J.P. However congress is ready to concede the state space to these parties . But many regional parties are themselves competitors of each other and are afraid of pan india expansion of BJP in all states . Now BJP should also rethink about conceding regional space in lieu of central politics .

**14.** Many regional parties have been fighting against regional parties like SP with BSP , DMK with AIDMK etc. and their alliance will remain intact only till lok sabha elections at the most. After Lok sabha elections their alliance will shatter during assembly elections. This is what congress wants . If BJP does the master stroke of Ram Janam Bhoomi temple , increasing the retirement age of supreme court judges, Govt employees and elections of state and center at one time then the opposition coalition can collapse much earlier .

**15.** Congress is trying to sacrifice regional ambitions to negotiate for lok sabha elections. Congress is not bothered to make its own chief ministers in many states but to make Rahul ji as the Prime Minister . In case both elections happen together the divides among regional

parties will be too much to reconcile and that can very well be exploited by BJP to make reasonable deals with them to stop the vote polarization against BJP. In this process BJP may have to give up certain states to the regional parties and become second fiddle as congress has done in Karnataka .BJP should think that centre is more important and states may have broad coalitions with alliance partners to share the power. Something is better than nothing . These regional parties have no ambition for centre and that's why they were alluded by congress smoothly .

**16.** Another strategy of BJP should be creating better acceptabilities among other backward castes by giving leadership opportunities to their leaders also so that some regional caste based parties with OBC strong holds, may not be able to blame BJP as an upper-caste dominated party.

**17.** With these strategies and better selection of candidates keeping in mind the caste profile of constituencies and making of constituency wise manifestos, BJP with its great brand Modi image, can form govt. at Center in 2019. I am sure that each every nationalist person who thinks that nation is first, fully supports the idea that modi ji should at least be given one more chance to form govt and implement the policies and programs started by his govt.

*A law student in Amity University  
mmtiwari@hotmail.com  
7011988964*

# Pranab Mukherjee, RSS and his role for 2019

Pranab Da created a flutter when he agreed to visit the RSS nerve centre in Nagpur. Will it have a bearing on his role in 2019?

Prashant Tewari

**C**loud of uncertainty over upcoming general elections in 2019 sets in, Politicians across party lines say Pranab Mukherjee is playing a significant role in bringing non-Congress, non-BJP leaders together to form an alternative front ahead of 2019. He is a former president, most prominent Congress leader in contemporary politics but was invited as the chief guest at an RSS event recently. Pranab Mukherjee has sent out signals that he is not a write-off just yet. While many are stumped in the

Congress party, the move is seen as a clear indication that former first Citizen Mukherjee is asserting an identity independent of the Congress, his party of over five decades. Reent various political heavy weights across party lines have confirmed that the 82-year-old is playing a significant role in bringing non-Congress, non-BJP leaders together to form an alternative front ahead of 2019. Some of those leaders went as far as to pitch the former president as a potential prime ministerial candidate in 2019.

It all goes back to a low-key meeting held in Bhubaneswar in January at the home of Odisha Chief Minister Naveen

Patnaik, the chief of the Biju Janata Dal (BJD). Mr Patnaik had invited the leaders for the launch of a biography of his father Biju Patnaik. The attendees were Pranab Mukherjee, Janata Dal Secular's Deve Gowda, Left leader Sitaram Yechury and BJP veteran LK Advani having lunch with Mr Patnaik. It was the first meetings that set the ball rolling on a potential Third Front. Many others say the starting point was a much earlier meeting at Rashtrapati Bhawan last year when Chief Minister Patnaik had lunch with Pranab Mukherjee and then they dialled another "Third Front" player, Bengal Chief Minister and Tri-



namool Congress chief Mamata Banerjee.

Since it involves a former president, there is defining silence in the political circles but key leaders in the Congress, BJP, Trinamool and the BJD have confirmed the developments. "He is very political and he may be the only one with the stature to match Prime Minister Narendra Modi," said a BJD MP. "And he is open to playing a key role as a non-NDA pole position," he added.

Often described as the "prime minister India never had", Mr Mukherjee has documented how he was passed over for the job in 2004 in his book *The Coalition Years*. He shares that he thought then Congress president Sonia Gandhi would choose him and send Manmohan Singh to Rashtrapati Bhawan (as president). "I returned with a vague impression that she might wish to consider Manmohan Singh as the UPA presidential nominee. I thought that if she selected Singh for the presidential office, she may choose me as the prime minister. I had heard a rumour that she had given this formulation se-

rious thought while on a holiday in the Kaushambi Hills." That didn't happen. But this was not the first let-down in his years in the Congress.

The veteran Congressman had to spend some years away from the party after a falling out with Rajiv Gandhi in the aftermath of Indira Gandhi's death in 1984. Many say it was prompted by the fact that when Rajiv Gandhi asked who was most senior in the party to take over after his mother's assassination, Mr Mukherjee's name came up. Mr Mukherjee has declared stories that he aspired to be interim PM "false and spiteful". In 2012, when his name was first proposed for President, it was Mamata Banerjee who swung it for him, backed also by the Shiv Sena in Maharashtra. Significantly, Ms Banerjee along with MPs of other parties including from the Shiv Sena marched to the Rashtrapati Bhawan on 16 November 2016, in a protest against demonetisation.

"It is Pranab Mukherjee who held Bengal politics together for decades and it is because of him that the Trinamool Congress and Mamata Banerjee

evolved," said a senior Bengal leader, explaining the bond between Mamata Banerjee and the former president. A senior BJP minister tracking the developments with interest believes Ms Banerjee's recent overtures to the Telangana Rashtra Samiti (TRS) of K Chandrasekhara Rao are also backed by Mr Mukherjee. "Whatever Mamata is doing is on behalf of Pranab Mukherjee," he said. "They are trying to create a front that will determine India's future in the next five years. The idea is that one of them will be prime minister."

Finally it is a settled case that RSS will be having the key to power corridor in 2019 general elections. There can be two possible outcome of the next general elections namely the present status quo with Narendra Modi remains in the power for the next five years or if BJP strength in the Lok Sabha is reduced to less than 220 seats: then an alternate with the blessings of RSS can emerge. There can be no third option available with the current political arithmetic. RSS has cleverly decided in advance to book both the options. The present status quo suits the RSS because it has facilitated rapid expansion of RSS philosophy in the entire country. RSS Chief Mohan Bhagwat remains the most powerful person in the country with Prime Minister Narendra Modi. The RSS has tremendous influence over governance in the country. BJP has successfully expanded in almost two third of the country with over 16 state governments under its belt. The narrative of the country has changed and the history is getting rewritten by bringing aggressive hindutva in public discourse. With firm grip on the national politics, RSS has designed an alternate plan to remain in centre of power. The closing of gap with an independent most accomplished Congressman is seen as the master stroke to run India peacefully. RSS is a nationalist organization and it is in the national interest that an efficient nationalist person must head the next government. The lack of talent in the present BJP minus Narendra Modi has compelled RSS to close bridge with Pranab Da and evoke the legacy of legendary Syama Prasad Mukherjee. The simple arithmetic of next Lok Sabha elections will determine the Prime Minister candidate – how many seats are with Narendra Modi? Anything over 220 will ensure the status quo and less than 220 is likely to push for the leadership of RSS modern Syama Prasad Mukherjee.

*(Writer is Editor-in-Chief of Opinion Express)*



# INDIA IS A PRIORITY DESTINATION FOR KOREAN BUSINESSES

India and Korea not just share history, but also have immense shared business interests. Samsung plant in NCR is just a beginning

Dr Rajaram Panda

**T**he South Korean President Moon Jae-in paid a four-day visit to India in July (7-10) and held delegation-level talks with Prime Minister Narendra Modi and other senior leaders on a wide range of bilateral, regional, and global issues of mutual interest with a view to further strengthen the special strategic partnership between the two countries. This was Moon's first visit to India after he took over as the President of South Korea in 2017. It was one of the most productive visits to India by a foreign leader as the talks ended with a big-ticket investment announcement that would further deepen bilateral ties between Asia's third and fourth largest economies, particularly in the economic sphere. Prime Minister Modi also took the opportunity to mention how India is concerned about North Korea's nuclear weapon development programmes, and appreciated Moon's initiative to address this issue. For India, Pyongyang's nuclear link with Pakistan has remained a matter of concern for a long time.

## A brief history

India-South Korea relations are not recent but for reasons other than economics, bilateral relations remained in a state of "strategic disconnect". India's policy of "non-alignment and economic autarchy" and the perceived closeness with the then Soviet Union were seen by the US and its allies, such as Japan and South Korea, with suspicion. Under the circumstances, there was little prospect for India-South Korea relations to develop. Even the important role played by India in dispatching the 60th Parachute Field Military Ambulance Platoon — a mobile army surgical hospital that treated more than half of the wounded soldiers and an average of 250 to 300 civilians a day, during the UN operations in late 1951 following



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Even the important role played by India in dispatching the 60th Parachute Field Military Ambulance Platoon — a mobile army surgical hospital that treated more than half of the wounded soldiers and an average of 250 to 300 civilians a day, during the UN operations in late 1951 following the Korean War — though remembered with gratitude

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the Korean War — though remembered with gratitude, did not substantially help remove political barriers to forge a partnership that could have fetched mutual benefits.

There are civilisational linkages between the two countries too. It is popularly believed in South Korea that the legendary Korean King Suro married an Indian princess from Ayodhya centuries ago and mothered the Kim dynasty. Almost 80 per cent of the present generation bearing the name Kim traces their ancestry to the ancient dynasty. So, there is an emotional connection

between the people of the two nations.

Even Nobel laureate Rabindranath Tagore's evocative poem that Korea will be the lamp bearer for the illumination of Asia could not translate to concrete construction of an India-South Korea partnership until the ideological gulf remained. The collapse of the Soviet Union and India's Look East policy, rechristened now as Act East policy, dramatically altered the perceptions in reviewing India-South Korea bilateral ties in a different light in which economic, defence, and strategic dimensions were found enmeshed. The strategic history







of India's ties with this Northeast nation, that remained disjointed for almost four decades since the end of the Korean War, has been successfully recast now.

Put briefly, India-South Korea relations have developed in stages. The years since diplomatic ties were established in 1973 until early 1990 was the first stage or the 'budding period'. Though some efforts were made by both, they could not realise the potentials because of their "inherent ideological incongruity and differences in their policy orientation".

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## India's choice of inward-looking import substitution model of development sharply contrasted with South Korea's outward-looking export-oriented development path prevented the growth of economic ties between them

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While India adopted a socialist, secular, democratic government at home and pursued the policy of non-alignment of the third world in international affairs, South Korea remained tied in a security alliance with the US. So, both saw each other as belonging to different camps and "were blinded by the blinkers of the global block politics of the time".

India's choice of inward-looking import substitution model of development sharply contrasted with South Korea's outward-looking export-oriented development path prevented the growth of economic ties between them. Though the diplomatic and other bilateral interactions continued smoothly, not much headway could be made in expanding the economic ties.

The second stage of the bilateral ties between 1991 and 2009 can be called the phase of 'economic and commercial cooperation'. Both countries discovered a convergence of interests in many areas during this period. In the third stage, the bilateral relationship was elevated into a 'strategic partnership'. This strategic partnership could be achieved because



of the convergence of India's Look East Policy and Korea's New Asia Diplomatic Initiative described as "policy rendezvous". First, the bilateral relationship was catapulted into a higher gear when President Roh Myun-Hwan visited India in 2004 and a "long-term cooperative partnership" was established. This served as the bedrock for bilateral relations. This relationship was elevated to the level of strategic partnership when President Lee Myung-bak paid a historic visit to India in January 2010 as the chief guest of the Republic Day celebrations. The Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA) signed in 2009 was also implemented and entered into force from January 1, 2010, thereby jumpstarting the dormant economic component of the bilateral ties. The CEPA — which came into force on January 1, 2010 — was the first deal of its kind which India signed with an OECD country, and South Korea with a BRIC nation.

Subsequently, several top level visits have taken place between the two countries: Former President Pratibha Patil's visit in July 2011, former Prime Minister Manmohan Singh's visit in March 2012, and others. Defence and

**The Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA) signed in 2009 was also implemented and entered into force from January 1, 2010, thereby jumpstarting the dormant economic component of the bilateral ties. The CEPA — which came into force on January 1, 2010 — was the first deal of its kind which India signed with an OECD country, and South Korea with a BRIC nation.**

Foreign Ministers from both countries have also visited, each time elevating the relationship to a higher level.

#### **Significance of Moon's visit**

Against this background as the relationship evolved, Moon's recent trip to India is another milestone in the bilateral ties. Firstly, the timing of the visit is significant as it coincided with the changes taking place with breathtaking rapidity in the geopolitical landscape of Northeast Asia. The architect of the changes is none other than President Moon whose peace overtures — which

started with North Korea's participation in the PyeongChang Winter Olympics and subsequently led to a summit meeting with Kim Jong-un on April 27, and later paved the way for the first ever summit between Kim and US President Donald Trump in Singapore on June 12. India-South Korea relations were elevated to 'special strategic partnership' after Modi visited South Korea in May 2015, seeking investments in many flagship programmes of the Government, including Skill India and Make in India. The South Korean Government earmarked a whopping \$10 billion as

“financing arrangement for infrastructure development in India”.

Moon’s dynamic leadership aside from his efforts to solve the nuclear dilemma of North Korea became demonstrably clear, or at least his intent, even during the presidential election campaign in 2017 wherein he pledged that he would elevate ties with India to the level of Korea’s relations with four major powers in and around the Korean Peninsula — China, Japan, Russia, and the US. This aside, he intended to craft India prominently in his “new Southern policy” and include the 10-member ASEAN group in its ambit. This is a significant departure from Korea’s traditional foreign policy and possibly could be, as some analysts suggested, a hedging strategy amid the US-China stand-off, coupled with the desire to forge a robust India-South Korea partnership in the interest of building peace and stability in the region. Though for India, South Korea is a valued partner, bilateral trade is below its potential. Bilateral trade in 2017 totaled \$20 billion and investment has shown an upward trend. Both sides have pledged to increase it to \$50 billion by 2030. There are about 300 Korean companies which have invested about \$3 billion, employing about 40,000 workers. The only aberration in the bilateral ties seems to be that the POSCO project in Odisha did not take off despite that it was the single biggest foreign direct investment project to the tune of \$12 billion, owing to land acquisition problems.

This 12-million capacity steel plant was floated in 2005 and POSCO had the patience to wait for close to a decade to see the project become functional. In the process, the company invested a lot of money in the social sector, including the CSR. But despite strong governmental support to the company to make the required land available for the steel project to be set up, the efforts failed and POSCO was forced to pull out of the project in 2017, after waiting for 12 long years as public resistance continued with no sign of ending.

Though POSCO was an unhappy experience for South Korea, this did not deter it to halt investment in India in other projects, such as by firms like Kia and Samsung, in recognition of the Indian market and the buying power of the urban middle class estimated to be to the tune of 350 million plus. Though the main driving force in the bilateral relations remains economic, the strategic dimension — including defence cooper-

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## The reason why the economic dimension in the partnership is significant can be deciphered from the address Moon made to the India-Korea Business Forum organised by the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry

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ation — is becoming equally important. The two sides are looking at defence hardware procurement and manufacture. India is looking for minesweepers for the Navy, and South Korea could be a possible source. India has also sourced artillery guns from South Korea and is looking to manufacture them in India under the Make in India programme. In this light, Moon’s India visit shall pave the way for expanding bilateral ties in

multifarious dimensions, upgrading business ties to the level Korea has with China. Indeed, Moon has been pushing Korean majors to raise their investment in India.

The reason why the economic dimension in the partnership is significant can be deciphered from the address Moon made to the India-Korea Business Forum organised by the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry. It was attended by top management of the major chaebols or large family-owned mega-conglomerates from Korea, such as Samsung, Hyundai, and LG. The three companies command large chunks of the export and domestic consumer and industrial markets in Korea. This was the second such event in less than five months. In February, Modi had addressed a mega delegation of 150-odd Korean companies, wherein he had exhorted the chaebols to further expand the \$2.7 billion worth of investment mainly in the automobile and engineering sectors. Consumer products of Korean companies, such as Samsung and LG, are household names and therefore important players in the Indian consumer market. In the automobile sector, Hyundai competes equally with Japanese products, such as Toyota, Honda, and Mitsubishi.

There are some trade and tariff issues





that need to be sorted out. For example, India seeks zero duty on items such as sesame and motor parts. Korea is reluctant to accede to this request. South Korea imports 630 per cent duty on Indian sesame, while imports 24,000 tonnes a year from China at zero duty, and therefore, India's request is legitimate. Korea feels that opening tariff lines to a country ensures zero custom duty to importers of the country to which it is opened. The duty is applicable for products under those tariff lines. From the strategic perspective, the importance of South Korea in India's Indo-Pacific strategy came out clear in Modi's keynote address at the Shangri-La Dialogue on June 1, 2018, when he mentioned South Korea was an important component of the Act East policy.

During Modi's visit to South Korea in 2015, the two sides sought amendment to the bilateral Air Services Agreement to enhance flight connectivity covering more cities. As Korean business in Indian cities expands, Korea would be interested in increasing direct flights from the existing six in a week. That time, an MoU was inked on cooperation in audio-visual co-production, paving the way for co-production of films, animation and broadcasting programmes. This time during Moon's visit, five MoUs in the field of science and technology were signed. Science and Technology Minister Harsh Vardhan and his Korean counterpart You Young Min signed three MoUs on Programme of Cooperation 2018-21, Establishment of Future Strategy Group and Cooperation

in Bio-technology and Bio-economy. Two other MoUs were signed between the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) and South Korean National Research Council for Science and Technology and IIT Mumbai and Korea Institute of Science and Technology, to further accelerate future-oriented co-operation.

During his visit, Moon inaugurated a Samsung manufacturing unit, the largest in the world, in Noida in which the company has invested \$760 million, demonstrating the trust and business confidence in Indian market despite the unhappy experience of POSCO. This is going to be the world's largest mobile phone manufacturing facility, touting Modi's pet Make in India to propel India to become the world's second-largest manufacturer of mobile phones as the number of factories soared to 120 from just two, four years ago. Apart from creating four lakh direct jobs, 30 per cent of the phones manufactured at the factory — built at a cost of Rs 5,000 crore — will be exported to the Middle East and Africa. India was already the R&D hub for Samsung, now it will be a manufacturing base too.

Would India be the next China for South Korea, as claimed by Korea's Trade Minister Kim Hyun-chong? It may be recalled when South Korea deployed the THAAD US missile defense system in 2017, a decision taken by Moon's predecessor, a diplomatic row broke out between South Korea and China as the latter felt that THAAD breached into China's security. China

adopted a series of economic retaliatory measures against Korean products, thereby severely affecting the Korean economy. South Korea is yet to recover from this. Moon now seeks to enhance economic and trade relations with the ASEAN and India, thus announcing his southern policy.

Moon's strategy is laudable but not without difficulties. Many bilateral economic issues concerning trade and tariff need to be sorted out. Moreover, if Moon targets the ASEAN grouping as a single package, that would be difficult, as a strategy that fits all countries may not be possible as the characteristics of each country could be different. For example, if South Korea wants to expand the market presence of its carmakers in Indonesia — the largest car market in Southeast Asia where Japanese vehicles enjoy 98.6 per cent market share, but the Korean cars take up only about 0.1 per cent — the challenge could be huge.

On the other hand, India holds the greatest potential for South Korea and has the least risk, which is why India is a priority destination for Korean businesses. The absence of any sensitive issue, either historical or geographical, also works in India's favour to be a preferred partner for South Korea. The Moon Government has, therefore, prioritised India to deepen and strengthen multidimensional relations.

With its population expected to reach 1.5 billion in 2030, India has the potential to emerge as the world's single largest market. In view of this, any nation doing business with another country may find it irresistible to overlook India to be a partner in pursuit of economic prosperity. Moon is aware that India is eyeing the tag of the world's third largest economy by 2030, after overtaking France as the sixth largest economy and coming close to the UK, which is at the fifth place. Indian economy is at the take-off stage and is expected to be the world's third largest by 2030 with the GDP worth \$10 trillion. This means India is aiming to overtake the UK, Japan, and Germany by 2030, to be behind only the US and China. As far as doing business is concerned, India presents tempting prospects for any country, and South Korea is well aware of this.

**Writer is former Senior Fellow at the IDSA, was until recently ICCR Chair Professor at Reitaku University, Japan. rajaram.panda@gmail.com II Courtesy: The Pioneer**

# OVERVIEW OF GOODS AND SERVICE TAX

## A year on, where do we stand vis-a-vis Goods & Services Tax?

**I**ntroduction of GST from 1 of July, 2017 is the most momentous step in the field of indirect tax reforms of independent India by creation of one indirect tax(GST), one nation (economic union) and one common national market. GST is the destination based consumption tax with provision of seamless flow/set off of Input Tax Credit across the entire supply chain for either intra-state supply or inter-state supply of goods or services or both. By amalgamating a large number of Central and State/UT taxes /cesses into a single tax and allowing set-off of prior-stage taxes, it has mitigated the ill effects of cascading of taxes and paved the way for a common national market. For the consumers, the greatest gain is in terms of reduction in the overall

tax burden on goods and services. Introduction of GST has also made our products competitive in the domestic and international markets. For assesses, there is online architecture on a common portal ([www.gst.gov.in](http://www.gst.gov.in)) for registration, payment and filing of returns with obviation of grappling with multiple agencies/states. Studies show that this would instantly spur economic growth. Our GDP growth is 7.7% for the quarter ending March, 2018, which is all time high. There is revenue gain to the Centre and the States/ Union Territories due to widening of the tax base, increase in trade volumes and improved tax compliance. GST collection has already soared to Rupees one lakh crore per month. Last, but not the least, this tax (GST), because of its transpar-

ent character, is easier to administer leading to ease of doing business, which would also attract greater FDI. Ranking of India in ease of doing business index has improved to 100 from 130 earlier. Introduction of E-way bill from 1st April, 2018 for inter-sate movement of goods and completion of e-way bill for intra-state movement of goods by 3rd June, 2018 has made movement of goods and thus trading simpler, smoother and swifter. It has led to paradigm shift from departmental policing model to self- declaration model in tandem with self-assessment as in vogue in GST. 6.25 million GST returns were filed in May, 2018 as against 6.05 million Returns filed in April, 2018, which is also a pointer towards growth and compliance.





## II. Salient Features of GST

The salient features of GST are stated hereunder:

(i) The GST is applicable/ leviable on supply of goods or services as against the erstwhile concept of tax on the manufacture (Central Excise) and sale of goods (erstwhile State/UT VAT) or provision of services (erstwhile Service Tax). The incidence of taxation has shifted to supply of goods and/or services or as against manufacture or sale or provision of service. It is a destination based consumption tax, where the taxation effectively is on value addition in the entire supply chain.

(ii) It is a dual GST with the Centre and States simultaneously levying it on a common tax base. The GST levied on intra- State/UT supply of goods and / or services by Centre is called by name Central GST(CGST) and by State/ UT is called by name State GST (SGST)/ Union Territory GST (UTGST). Both CGST and SGST/UTGST is levied on a common tax base.

(iii) The GST applies to all goods other than alcoholic liquor for human consumption and five petroleum prod-

ucts, viz. petroleum crude, motor spirit (petrol), high speed diesel, natural gas and aviation turbine fuel. It applies to all services barring a few specified in tune with erstwhile scenario under Service Tax.

(iv) Tobacco and tobacco products are subject to GST. In addition, the Centre has retained the power to levy Central Excise duty on these products. The States have retained power to levy VAT on 'alcoholic liquor for human consumption', which is outside the purview of GST.

**(v) The GST has replaced the following taxes currently levied and collected by the Centre:**

- a. Central Excise duty
- b. Duties of Excise (Medicinal and Toilet Preparations)
- c. Additional Duties of Excise (Goods of Special Importance)
- d. Additional Duties of Excise (Textiles and Textile Products)
- e. Additional Duties of Customs (commonly known as CVD)
- f. Special Additional Duty of Customs (SAD)
- g. Service Tax

h. Central Surcharges and Cesses in so far as they related to supply of goods and services like SBC & KKC

**(vi) State taxes subsumed under the GST are:**

- a. State VAT
- b. Central Sales Tax
- c. Luxury Tax
- d. Entry Tax (all forms)
- e. Entertainment and Amusement Tax (except when levied by the local bodies)
- f. Taxes on advertisements
- g. Purchase Tax
- h. Taxes on lotteries, betting and gambling: Excepting these other actionable claims are outside the purview of GST (Schedule III of CGST Act)
- i. State Surcharges and Cesses in so far as they relate to supply of goods and services

(vii) The CGST and SGST is being levied at rates jointly decided by the Centre and States. The rates have been notified on the recommendations of the GST Council. The normal rates fixed are from 5 percent to 28 percent ad valorem. About 50 goods or services are in 28 percent slab.



(viii) The list of exempted goods and services are common for the Centre and the States/UTs.

(ix) **Threshold Exemption:** Tax payers with an aggregate turnover in a financial year up to Rs.20 lakhs are exempt from tax. [Aggregate turnover {section 2(6)} include the aggregate value of all taxable supplies, exempt supplies and exports of goods and/or services and Inter-state supplies but excludes taxes viz. GST and cess]. Aggregate turnover shall be computed on all India basis for a person {section 2(84)} having the same Permanent Account Number(PAN). For special category states as specified in sub-clause (g) of clause (4) of Article 279A of the Constitution (like seven NE States, Sikkim, Uttarakhand & Himachal Pradesh), the exemption threshold is Rs. 10 lakhs. All taxpayers eligible for threshold exemption have the option of paying tax with input tax credit (ITC) benefit by getting them registered as a Casual Taxable Person under section 24 of the CGST Act, which would aid them in availing Input Tax Credit. Tax payers making inter-State supplies or paying tax on re-

verse charge basis are not be eligible for threshold exemption.

(x) Small taxpayers with an aggregate turnover in a financial year up to Rs. 100 lakhs are eligible for Composition Levy (Section 10). The threshold is 75 lakhs in case of seven States of North-east, Sikkim & Himachal Pradesh. Under the scheme, a taxpayer shall pay tax as a percentage of his turnover during the year without the benefit of ITC and also without levying/charging any GST in his Bill of Supply. The floor rate of tax for CGST and SGST is 1% in case of manufacturer/ trader and 5% in any in case supply of food, non-alcoholic drink and other articles of human consumption like caterer/ restaurant. A tax payer opting for composition levy shall not collect any tax from his customers nor will he be eligible to avail any Input Tax credit in respect of supplies received by him.

The composition scheme is optional. Tax payers making inter-State supplies or paying tax on reverse charge basis or making supplies through an Electronic Commerce Operator shall not be eligible for composition scheme. The exer-

cise of option for composition scheme has to be exercised at the beginning of Financial Year by electronically filing on common portal an intimation in Form GST CMP-01. This would be available from the beginning of next month. Composition Scheme is not available to Pan Masala, Ice Cream, Tobacco and tobacco products, edible Ice etc.

(xi) Tax payers shall be allowed to take credit of taxes paid on inputs (Input Tax Credit) and utilize the same for payment of output tax. However, no Input Tax Credit on account of CGST shall be utilized towards payment of SGST and vice versa. The credit of IGST would be permitted to be utilized for payment of IGST, CGST and SGST in that order.

(xii) International HSN (Harmonised System of Nomenclature) of World Customs Organisation [used by over 200 countries and covering over 98 percent of international trade merchandise] is to be used for classifying the goods under the GST regime. Tax-payers whose turnover is above Rs. 1.5 crores but below Rs. 5 crores shall use 2-digit code and the taxpayers whose turnover is Rs. 5 crores and above shall use 4-digit code. Taxpayers whose turnover is below Rs. 1.5 crores are not required to mention HSN Code in their invoices, though there is no bar in mentioning HSN codes.

(xiii) Exports and supplies to SEZ/ SEZ Developer shall be treated as zero-rated supplies. The exporter has an option to either pay output tax and claim its refund or export under bond/ LUT without payment of tax(IGST) and claim refund of Input Tax Credit. The Government has made filing of LUT request online, which is also accepted online.

(xiv) Supplies to EOU's and from one EOU to another EOU shall be like any other supply. Supply from Manufacturer Exporter to Merchant Exporter shall also be like any other supply.

(xv) Import of goods and services would be treated as inter-State supplies and would be subject to IGST in addition to the applicable customs duties and Cess. The IGST paid shall be available as ITC for further transactions.

(xvi) The laws, regulations and procedures for levy and collection of CGST and SGST have been harmonized to the extent possible.

**Sanjay Saran:**

Writer was Commissioner of Customs & CGST (Retd )

# Propaganda journalism can destroy us from within

## Yellow journalism takes a more diabolic turn

Syeda Laraib Fatima Warsi

**A**t a time when India's society is clearly strained along communal and caste lines, some of our TV news channels are deplorably wedging these uneasy divides further and deeper. What a shame it is to see respected names of the media industry trading ethics and news values for cheap sensationalism.

The abysmal standard of journalism seen in the coverage of the tragic Kasganj incident is a case in point.

On January 26th – as India geared up to celebrate the ideals of this secular democratic republic – communal violence tore apart this small town in northwest Uttar Pradesh. The riot allegedly began as a minor altercation between two groups over a matter of Republic Day celebrations and flag-waving. By the time the situation was controlled, one man had lost his life, several were injured and scores of businesses, shops and the city's infrastructure had been torched and destroyed.

More than two weeks later, the air in U.P.'s legislative assembly is thick with accusations. Despite a few people being taken into custody, there is not a single official consensus about the investigation into the riot's causes.

Our news channels, apparently, care little about official probes and findings. Indeed, in the aftermath of the incident, a clutch of India's mainstream TV media had shockingly started airing incendiary and provocative headlines. Sample these:

1. Sampradayik hinsa se mukti kab?
2. Desh ke andar aise kitne Pakistan panap rahe hai?
3. UP- kasganj hinsa me ab tak 49 aaropi giraftar!

Let us for a moment set aside all foreknowledge of the Kasganj incident and analyze these headlines.

To a student of journalism like me, it is obvious how these proclamations would widely be read and interpreted by the average Indian audience. And my analysis scares me.

Firstly, the aforementioned head-



lines contain a subtext about Pakistan as India's enemy. Secondly, they force the reader to connect Indian Muslims to Pakistan in his mind. And third - perhaps the most controversial implication - the above two 'hidden messages' lead to the accusation that Indian Muslims are enemies (Pakistanis) in their own country.

In crafting each of the above boldly flashing headlines, the journalists dispensed of objective facts completely and presented a patently fake picture of the incident before the people of the country. The idea, presumably, was to feed on the insecurity and mistrust between two religious communities. In the process, the media risked biasing, even indoctrinating, thousands of ill-informed viewers. Not to mention the aggravating effect these headlines would have on already prejudiced and radicalized minds in both communities.

This is not just shoddy journalism but, more alarmingly, also a dangerous catalyst added to India's already volatile and incensed society.

If this type of sloganeering were being done by an extremist organization and there are plenty of them around – Karni Sena, for instance, whose aggressive posturing is still fresh news - it would still be understandable, if not pardonable.

But this is the voice of a national news channel. These are the words of professional journalists and therefore ring with credibility and authority. Unfortunately, these statements are also unproven, suggestive and extremely leading.

Is it ethically correct for media to make derogatory statements about a community?

Is it responsible journalism to concoct leading headlines without irrefutable evidence?

Who are these "enemies of the tricolor" in Kasganj?

As a young Indian Muslim and an aspiring journalist, I can't help questioning why the "flag-waving" or "flag-hoisting" by Indian Muslims is news at all.

Why should I, or any other Muslim citizen of India, become a recipe for TRPs or a news angle on patriotism on our republic day?

With the penetration of the Internet and social media, a truckload of propaganda and lies disguised as news are seeping into more and more Indians every day. If trusted names of media industry and large, respectable news channels take the same road, our society's bubbling tensions could erupt in several more Kasganj-like tragedies.

*(Writer is a regular contributor to this magazine)*

# SC's interim order on reservation in promotions: A temporary measure?

The SC order has put the Central govt in a bind

A vacation bench of the Supreme Court has passed the interim order on June 05, 2018 clarifying that Union of India is not debarred from making promotions in accordance with law, subject to further orders, pending further consideration of the matter.

The Supreme Court interim order will permit the government to fill a large number of vacancies in government departments. The circulars issued by the department of personnel and training can be followed to make promotions as per existing reservation policy.

The Government was not able to fill up vacancies in the wake of conflicting judgments by different courts. The Supreme Court's decision will protect the government from being in contempt. Now, the government can proceed with promotions in accordance with laws. But which are these laws? That, however, is not clear yet. The court should have clarified on what circular or rules should the government go ahead with the promotions until a final judgment is given by the Supreme Court.

Even the Nagaraj judgment given by the Supreme Court in 2006 has to be revisited. With regards to the power vested with the government for reservation in promotions, there are three conditions that must be met before promotions are decided. These are backwardness, inadequate representation, and efficiency in administration. Since various circulars issued by Government for reservation in promotion had not taken care of these parameters laid down by the Supreme Court, many High Courts struck down the Government circulars thereby stalling the whole process of promotions in Government Departments.

It is to be remembered that provisions under articles 16(4), 16 (4A) and 16 (4B) of the Constitution providing for reservation in promotion are only enabling provisions and not a fundamental right. A few years ago, there was a case relating to reservation in appoint-

ment for faculty posts in the super specialties in AIIMS. The Supreme Court ruled that no reservation in promotions would be given. All parties had protested this decision, but nothing happened after that.

The Supreme Court while passing the interim order on June 05, 2018 has clarified that the Government is not debarred from making promotions in accordance with law, subject to further orders. Effectively it means that inter-

im order is only a temporary relief and till the Constitution Bench delivers the Judgment. The Government will still have to make promotions in accordance with law and that law is enunciated in Nagaraj case too. Filling up the vacancies with principles of reservation in promotion under the interim order will be subject to final decision of the Apex Court.

**By PK Malhotra:** former Law Secretary of India



# Hindu Jewish Unity

**26**/<sup>11</sup>/2008 has gone in history as the day the whole of India, and the wider world, awoke to the constant cross-border terrorism that India has had to face for decades. Some ten terrorists from Lashkar-e-Taiba, an Islamic terrorist organisation based in Pakistan, carried out a series of 12 coordinated shooting and bombing attacks in Mumbai that went on for four days. In the trail of this unwarranted terrorist attack on India, it left 164 people dead with some 308 more who were wounded.

Whilst most of the attacks were of public buildings frequented by a diversity of people, one people in particular had been singled out for their faith. This was at Nariman House. Locally also known as Chabad House which is a Jewish Centre. Rabbi Gavriel Holtzberg and his wife Rivka Holtzberg, who was six months pregnant at the time, were murdered with four other hostages. Security forces who freed the Chabad House from this terrorist attack also lost lives and many were injured.

**In 2010 January** I was honoured to accompany HRH Prince Michael of Kent on our visit to the Chabad to witness, and to hear, first-hand accounts of what actually transpired. It was also a clear sign of our support for the Jewish Community in Mumbai, and to the victims who suffered so greatly during that attack.

I present this as my starting position since it crystallises for me the immoral attack that both Hindus and Jews have had to endure for decades. Hindus and Jews have lived side by side with our Muslim brothers and sisters for a long time. However, this resurgence of the militant Islamic ideology that has spread throughout the world now threatens all of us yet again. Our two communities are the most in danger from these terrorists since they view our communities as a direct threat. The Jewish community have endured more than a millennia of savagery from it's neighbours, and almost always on grounds of faith and race. In similar vein, Hindus have endured more than a thousand years of invaders and their persecution. With this amount of murderous intent and persecution, both the Jews and the Hindus have survived. Once again, these two communities are beginning to rise up and rise above their historical disadvantage and are now leading the way in the world in all spheres of life. The values imbibed within these two communities of

truth, righteousness, peace and love for the whole of humanity is a message that the world needs at this most critical juncture in time.

However, whereas in the past the attacks upon us were primarily physical, in the 21st Century we see these attacks being supplemented with the dark art of social media, political coercion and the wholesale distribution of militant Islam by way of the Petro dollar. In the last few years even the most ardent supporters of these extremist regimes have finally

## Konversations with Kapil



Chabad House the day after the attack

realised that this is now an unsustainable model that must be deconstructed if the world is to enter this new millennium with any hope of peace for the whole of humanity. Duplicity that has been the cornerstone of the work of the United Nations now has to be challenged. It is time that right-minded people, leaders with a moral and ethical spine, and the independent institutions come out and challenge the bigots on the world stage who thrive on terror and extremism. Silence is no longer an option. As Albert Einstein said rightly before, "The world is a dangerous place to live, not because of the people who are evil, but because of the people who don't do anything about it". Couple that with the words of the Mahatma, "When I despair, I remember that all through history the way of truth and love have always won. There have been tyrants and murderers, and for a time, they can seem invincible, but in the end, they always fall. Think of it--always". And

then we have the famous quote from Edmund Burke, "The only thing necessary for the triumph of evil is for good men to do nothing". Quotations are great, and these quotations are so often quoted by the very same people who hide their true duplicitous nature with a smile in the public arena. We the silent majority must now find our voice. Social media is great, but it has been taken over by the extremists from the far left and the far right. Increasingly the threat is in fact from the far left who have moved so far to the left, that they have morphed into the fascists of the 21st Century. Under the cloak of equality and diversity, they hoodwink the masses with their grotesque outrage at anything and everything. They have in fact become a pack of 'mischief' who are intent in causing as much mischief as they can under the camouflage of pre-meditated anarchy. The question arises, who is funding this global phenomenon? After all, does anyone seriously believe that it 'just' happens? Surely one cannot be that deluded!

In this era of orchestrated chaos and white noise, is it any wonder that we now have at the same time on the world stage, leaders like President Trump, PM Modi and PM Netanyahu. You must not confuse right of centre and nationalist leaders with the 'far-right'. Everyone abhors the 'far-right' and rightly so. However, in the world the vast majority of the silent voters are beginning to find their voice by voting in politicians and leaders who are right of centre and those who wish to protect the people and the nation. I have listed three major leaders, but you are welcome to traverse the globe, continent by continent and you will soon see the dynamics at play. However, in countries like France, Greece, Italy, Spain and Poland we have seen a move whereby the frustrations of many people are now leading them to support far-right parties that are beginning to make inroads into mainstream politics. For Europe at least, the warning signs cannot be clearer or louder. Ignore them, as in the past, at your peril. Don't be too surprised to see the opposite in some countries where far-left and socialists come into power, but their own agenda of governance by anarchy.

There are but two options for the world order. Either there is a global realignment which ensures that duplicity over terror and extremism, whether it comes from a religious ideology or from a



political ideology, is tackled head on and put in check. Or there will be a violent reaction from the grass roots that will overwhelm many of the nations. We witness this churning in the European Union at present. Its leaders blinded by their own self gratification and the need to cling on to power by gerrymandering the social fabric of voters. However, the people at the grass roots are increasingly losing their patience. We have seen the eruption of riots in many of these countries. In some countries, no go areas have been created such that even the local Police are too frightened to patrol. The politicians and many of the intuitions with vested interested can ignore the people, but at their peril. And who are the people who will suffer greatly? Yes, it will be us the ethnic minorities. We will all be labelled under the same banner, we will all be attacked, and we will all pay a price for the crimes of the few. The PC Brigade that appears to champion our cause are in fact the very reason for our demise. They are, for all intents and purposes, the new imperial masters who have conquered the art of being your friends and having the capacity to brain wash our communities into believing that they have our interest at heart. Nothing can be further from the truth. Their aim is to usher in the most extremes of a socialist order where any form of challenge or disobedience will be met with wholesale bullying, harassment and abuse. We witness this already on social media and in how our streets are

trampled on, at will, with protest after protest. They want to turn society into a paradise for anarchy, the arena in which they reign supreme.

So folks, be warned. I titled this piece for the Hindus and for the Jews. However, that which attacks these two communities today will also have the capacity to destroy the peace of the world tomorrow. Be warned, we allowed far right monsters to reap havoc with devastating consequences. We also allowed the far-left dictators space and they murdered millions for their ideology. The political elite of yesteryears are now out of touch with the people they claim to represent. Increasingly one is left with the view that the PC brigade's dictum: 'We do not need to be tolerant; you need to be tolerant to our intolerance', is fast becoming the one and only commandment of the political left and of the socialist fraternity.

On the world stage we see how the United Nations has been hijacked by the extremist. They will pass Anti-Israel (Gaza related normally) and Anti-India resolutions (Kashmir related normally) for fun. Am I surprised when the United States recently declared that they were opting out of the United Nations Human Rights Council. I am surprised frankly that many other leading countries, including India and the UK, have not followed suit. If a nation appeases the extremists agenda at the UN in the hope for world peace, then they are sadly mistaken. Appeasement is the required first step for these agents of

doom to systematically dismantle all international structures that have hitherto kept them in check. On the international plane the only two countries who have a sound moral and ethical compass that has passed the test of many millennia are India and Israel. Increasingly I am seeing that maybe the only protection this world has or will have is for these two bastions of humanity to forge a partnership to take on the extremists wherever they might be, and in whatever form they hide. Countries like the United States, and I hope the United Kingdom, will have to lend support overtly. The stakes are too high, and we cannot be complacent this time round.

So I leave you with one thought, that from Martin Luther King Jr, 'He who passively accepts evil is as much involved in it as he who helps to perpetrate it'.

*Note about the writer: Kapil Dudakia is a seasoned businessman and a leading thought provoking writer from the UK. His command of detail and his ability to see issues and events years before they come to fruition is worthy of note. He has advised very senior politicians on a variety of issues. Being independent of thought, he does not compromise, nor does he bow to pressures to become politically correct. He understands the East, and he lives in the West. A unique grasp of perspectives that is often food for thoughts for all of us.*

**Twitter: @kk\_OEG**

# SOPE generates HOPE for the planet earth

It's a great citizen-driven initiative to spread green message

**S**ave our Planet Earth (SOPE) is an NGO that was founded in 2011 by Rajiv Agnihotri, Non Resident Indian living in Mauritius since last two decades. After realizing that the government while building its highways was felling and uprooting thousands of trees, with no intention to replant them, Rajiv founded SOPE to tackle the problem himself, and start replanting trees. Trees are vital plants in any ecosystem, for the cycling of nutrients, retention of water and fertility of soils. Trees, more importantly, absorb carbon dioxide and produce oxygen that we, as many other organisms rely on for survival. He understood the detrimental effect such careless activities could have on the island as a whole if no one were to put their foot down and raise their voice. As a citizen of the

island himself he wants to motivate Mauritians and people of all nations to assume their responsibility and actively work on sustainable development to preserve our planet. As Rajiv Agnihotri states "I am doing it for the next generation". According to him, the total available natural resources in the planet are enough to sustain 2.2 billion people but the incriminate population growth of human beings to over 7 billion has completely changed the dynamics of living. And if the corrective measures are not immediately taken, then the mother earth will be destroyed beyond repair.

Mauritius is a volcanic island located in the Indian Ocean. Its isolation from any land mass enabled it to develop an important and unique biodiversity of flora and fauna. Mauritius is a developing country that has experienced

substantial transformation in the past two decades. It's fast development and attractiveness to big businesses from various industries has led to the development of transport around the island. As the majority of the population travels by public transport, in buses, many new roads and highways were built in order to enable faster travel. This development in infrastructure caused numerous endemic plants to be uprooted. While development and an improved infrastructure are valuable assets for Mauritius, preserving the nature is a priority as well.

The development of countries has to happen responsibly in order to make it sustainable over time. After enquiring about finding a solution, the Road Development authority (RDA) assigned sites on the roadsides of mo-



torways to SOPE in order to replant trees. Therefore, SOPE replants and manages many sites across Mauritius. The NGO has been able to design slogans with shrubs on these sites such as: “Protegeonsl’Environment” (let’s protect the environment), as commissioned by a major company in Mauritius. The main companies that sponsor this sort of activity are: Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC), State Bank of India (SBI), Bank of Baroda (BOB), New India Assurance co Ltd and Indian Oil. The high exposure SOPE gets due to the location of their sites, in high-traffic areas, allows for the NGO to gain a lot

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The high exposure SOPE gets due to the location of their sites, in high-traffic areas, allows for the NGO to gain a lot of attention. This exposure has enabled SOPE to diversify its activity; caring for all things environment related.

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of attention. This exposure has enabled SOPE to diversify its activity; caring for all things environment related. SOPE has taken on other causes alongside its main activity of embellishing the city. By running campaigns in schools and public places, participating in seminars, and surveying tree biodiversity, SOPE prides itself in raising awareness to all Mauritians about the threat of climate change, the drastic effects it could have on the island and more specifically what solutions and behavioral changes the people can adopt to try and slow it down. Instead of watching the Earth turn to flames, SOPE invites everyone to be part of the movement; to take action and make a contribution in conserving the environment through their lifestyle and individual behavior.

In reaction to certain citizens’ concerns and within their responsibility towards the environment, the Mauritian government promised to plant five new trees for every individual uprooted tree.

Currently, some big projects to im-



prove infrastructure (such as transport) are in the work and several sites are beginning or under construction. To ensure that this new policy will be applied, SOPE, has begun surveying the abundance and specifying the exact amount of trees that will have to be replanted.

As plastic pollution, an en vogue topic, increasingly poses a huge threat to our environment, SOPE tries to do its part. The challenge with a relatively small island, surrounded by the sea, is that any disregarded litter and plastic is bound to find its way on to the beaches and into our oceans. SOPE orchestrates beach cleanups to try and interrupt this process by collecting all plastic before it ends up in the ocean.

As a Non-Profit organization, SOPE relies on volunteers to help with the planting and upkeep of various sites as well as running its awareness campaigns. Not only national but also international volunteers are welcome to join SOPE. For the past 3 years, SOPE has collaborated with AIESEC (Association Internationale des Etudiants en Sciences Economiques et Commerciales). AIESEC is an international corporation founded at the end of the Second World

War, with its main aim being: “Peace and the fulfilment of humankind’s potential”. It is the largest youth-non-profit-organization in the world and aspires to enable students to develop their abilities and strengths through leadership.

This collaboration allows SOPE to welcome volunteers from all around the world to come to help them for a few weeks with their mission here in Mauritius. The volunteers, that are most often students, learn about Mauritius, its biodiversity and witness how global warming threatens it. Furthermore, the NGO intends to enhance the student’s awareness and understanding of the problems arising, so they don’t only leave an impact on the island but the island itself and the NGO equally impacts the volunteers. SOPE helps to develop each volunteer’s potential, by trusting them with responsibilities and allows them to widen their perspectives by comparing and contrasting the attitude to the environment with their hometowns.

**By Léa and Joséphine ( SOPE  
Volunteers )  
SOPE MAURITIUS  
+23057880379**

# THE SACRED, OR PERSECUTED?

The holy river crying for policy-makers' attention



**Ankit Kishore**

**T**he Yamuna river is highly venerated in the Hindu religion and is worshipped as goddess Yamuna, further the river marks its relevance as the daughter of the Sun God and the sister of Yama, the god of death. The river is so holy in Hindu religion, it is strongly believed that bathing in its sacred waters frees one from all sins. The parody is as such that the holy waters of the river is being abused in such a manner that the river is suffering and in connection the lives of the people is getting affected too.

For a long period of time the holy river Yamuna has been the lifeline for

Delhi. From a pristine water course that was mesmerised by the Mughals it now meanders wearily loaded with pollutants.

The major cause of pollution of the river Yamuna is basically related to the religious practices that are carried out by the people in day to day lives. Yamuna is a river which passes cities whereby a lot of religious institutions are present like for an instance Vrindavan, people in Hindu religion whereby the holy river is thought to be as a place whereby offerings are to be made and this is a general adopted practice by the Hindus.

A recent judgement by the Uttarakhand High Court, the division bench states that rivers Ganga and Yamuna,

all their tributaries, streams, every natural water flowing with flow continuously or intermittently of these rivers, as juristic/legal persons/living entities having the status of a legal person with all corresponding.

This judgement by the Uttarakhand High Court has not only mentioned that the river Yamuna is a living entity but also has to protect the river Yamuna.

River pollution is a big menace to the environment and of course human health too, the other factors related to the contribution in the pollution are the Industrial wastes, mixtures of chemicals, heavy metals are all discharged in water and these are difficult to clean up.



It has been observed on the banks of the river people enjoy the call of the nature which adversely affects the river health.

The Yamuna has been sentenced to the harshest treatment by the humans, the Yamuna is a garbage dump for more than 57% of the Delhi waste thrown into it and only 55% of Delhi's residents are connected to proper sewage system which negates the other 45% of the population which again remains not properly connected to the proper sewage system. According to Centre for Science and Environmental Pollution, around 80% of the Yamuna's pollution is due to raw sewage.

The river pollution leads to number

of health problems and disorders in humans. Not only it affects the human life but also affects the aquatic life, leading to the growth of fishes that are unsuitable for human consumption which further results in mass killing of the aquatic life too. Many economic activities are carried out by the people on these water bodies for an instance fishing and there are people whose livelihood depends on the aquatic life. Further it is not only limited to humans and the aquatic life but also animals and birds who drink the water of the river. After drinking the toxic water of the river mostly the animals, birds, humans and aquatic life suffers disorders and result in their death.

In the long term, if the continuous river pollution continues it will be a threat to the biodiversity and also the extinction of some species can disrupt the ecosystem completely, as we are aware about the chains of the ecosystem.

The rivers situation at present is very alarming and people in their references term it to be a huge sewage canal, its water is unfit for human consumption and cannot be qualified for any use, it cannot even support bacteria or any aquatic life.

At present the government has spent hundreds of crores Indian rupees in the cleaning of these rivers but still the river still remains to flow dirty.

Yamuna enters into Delhi at Wazirabad barrage, it is reflected in the picture P.1, the water stored in left beaker is the water of Yamuna before entering Delhi and the water stored in the right side of the beaker is the water of Yamuna after entering Delhi.

It seems that human activity is the major cause by which the river Yamuna is killed, the colour of the water has turned completely black which contains heavy metals, toxic metals, pesticides and nuclear wastes and which results in destruction of the properties of water, the oxygen level of the Yamuna water remains to be zero.

The very first solution of this problem has been mentioned in this article itself whereby it is important to know the stakeholders to the particular issue, once the stakeholders have been identified the responsibility of the cleaning of the river Yamuna can be shifted to them.

Dozens of countries have established regulatory bodies for instance in some states of U.S the regulatory bodies are public Utility Commission, in England and Wales a regulatory body was created OFWAT in 1989, and many countries choose for privatization for the concern of water management which India should also implement.

The another is "awareness", once the government is successful in creating the awareness that the river contributes a lot to the people and it is their duty to protect it the pollution level will go tremendously down. The government should formulate policy by making field research and identify the polluters and apply the concept of Polluters Pay Principle.

**(Ankit Kishore is a law student School of Law, KIIT University)**

# YOGA DAY CELEBRATED BY GOPIO CHAPTERS AROUND THE WORLD

**Y**oga is essentially a discipline which also brings harmony in all walks of life, and thus is known for disease prevention, health promotion and management of many lifestyle-related disorders. Yoga is a 5,000-year old physical, mental and spiritual practice speculated to date back to pre-Vedic Indian traditions, but most likely developed around the sixth and fifth centuries BC. Yoga gurus / teachers from India later introduced yoga to the West, following the success of Swami Vivekananda in the late 19th and early 20th century.

Yoga Day was celebrated by several GOPIO chapter around the world. Here are reports from some of the chapters.

## Gopio-reunion organizes yoga day for people with physical and mental disabilities

On Thursday, June 21st, GOPIO-Reunion organized a day of Initiation to Yoga in a hospital for adults and children with physical and mental disabilities in the East of Reunion Island. During the three hours, the teacher presented the audience with some ideas. This is the second year that GOPIO Reunion island offers yoga day in the island.



Photo left: Gopio members and yoga teacher at the Yoga Day. From left to R. Ketty Carpaille, Yoga Teacher Yogesh Bonne, Christian Kichenapanaidou, and GOPIO-Reunion President Jean-Régis Ramsamy; photo right: Yoga teacher having dialogue attendees with disabilities

## Gopio-durban joins hands with indian consulate and sivananda peace mission to celebrate yoga day

International Yoga Day celebrated in Durban in Association with Consulate General of India Durban and Sivananda Peace Foundation. On June 17th morning from 8.30 to 10.30 a.m., at the Durban Amphitheatre (opp. Elangeni Hotel, North Beach). Durban, South Africa.

The objective of celebrating the International Day of Yoga is to create awareness about yoga and how it benefits everyone in better understanding the significance of traditional and authentic yoga techniques.

With the announcement of June 21 as Yoga Day by the UN, it is being celebrated in every country. Yoga is not just about working out, it's about a healthy lifestyle. The practice



South Africa Parliament M.P. Omie Singh, Provincial Parliament M.P. Shaheen Rajabansi, Delhi High Court Acting Chief Justice Gita Mittal, Indian Consul General Dr. Shashank Vikram, GOPIO Executive VP Ishwar Ramlutchman and Indian Consul for Visa and OCI Anil Kumar Pathak.

of yoga allows students to be still in a world consumed with chaos. Peace and tranquility achieved through focused training appeals to everyone. It is estimated that close to 200 million people around the world practice yoga (of some form or the other), a majority of them in India and over 20 million of them in the United States alone. With this resolution for an International Yoga Day, more people are aware of the tenets of yoga and are encouraged to follow a yogic life style, a life that is healthy, humble and devout.

## Gopio-waikato new zealand organizes yoga day

GOPIO Waikato partnered with Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan and Kirikirirao Multicultural Council to lead celebrations International Yoga Day in Hamilton, New Zealand. Over 50 people attended the Yoga Day at the Western Community Center to align with effort of the High Commission of India.

"It was a great celebration of the fourth International Yoga Day in Hamilton," said, GOPIO-Waikato Founder President Suman Kapoor. Yoga teachers included Sanjay Joshi, Gayatri Romila Verma and Katie. Following Yoga session, fresh fruits and yoga-booklets were distributed to all those who attended. National M.P. Timmacindoe and Labor M.P. Jemie Strange also graced the occasion participate in yoga session.

Kapoor welcomed the guests and the session ended with vote of thanks by GOPIO-Waikato President Pradeep Kapoor.



# Surge in Yoga Culture in America

Inder Singh

For the last several years, yoga and meditation are becoming more acceptable in America. Yoga has surged in popularity and its impact is everywhere: in movies, television, advertising, and schools. Americans have witnessed an increase in yoga studios, meditation centers and vegetarian restaurants, all of which have roots in India. Meditation was originally a huge part of yoga. Now, yoga is marketed as a series of asanas (postures) that makes one fit and helps in weight loss. Many Americans have incorporated yoga routines as an essential part of their work out regime. The number of US yoga practitioners has increased exponentially to more than 36 million, up from 20.4 million in 2012, as per a 2016 study conducted by Yoga Journal and Yoga Alliance.

In 2014, the UN General Assembly adopted a resolution proclaiming June 21 as 'International Day of Yoga'. The resolution introduced by India's ambassador to the UN was a follow up of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's call during his address to the UN General Assembly on September 27, 2014, asking world leaders to adopt an international Yoga day, as "Yoga embodies



unity of mind and body; thought and action; restraint and fulfillment; harmony between man and nature; a holistic approach to health and well-being."

The first International Day of Yoga was observed all over the world on June 21, 2015. In New Delhi, Prime Minister Modi, a large number of dignitaries from 84 nations, and a record number of 35,985 people performed 21 yoga asanas (postures) on Rajpath for 35 minutes. At the UN Headquarters, Secretary General Ban Ki-moon and India's External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj spoke at the inaugural function which also featured a yoga demonstration.

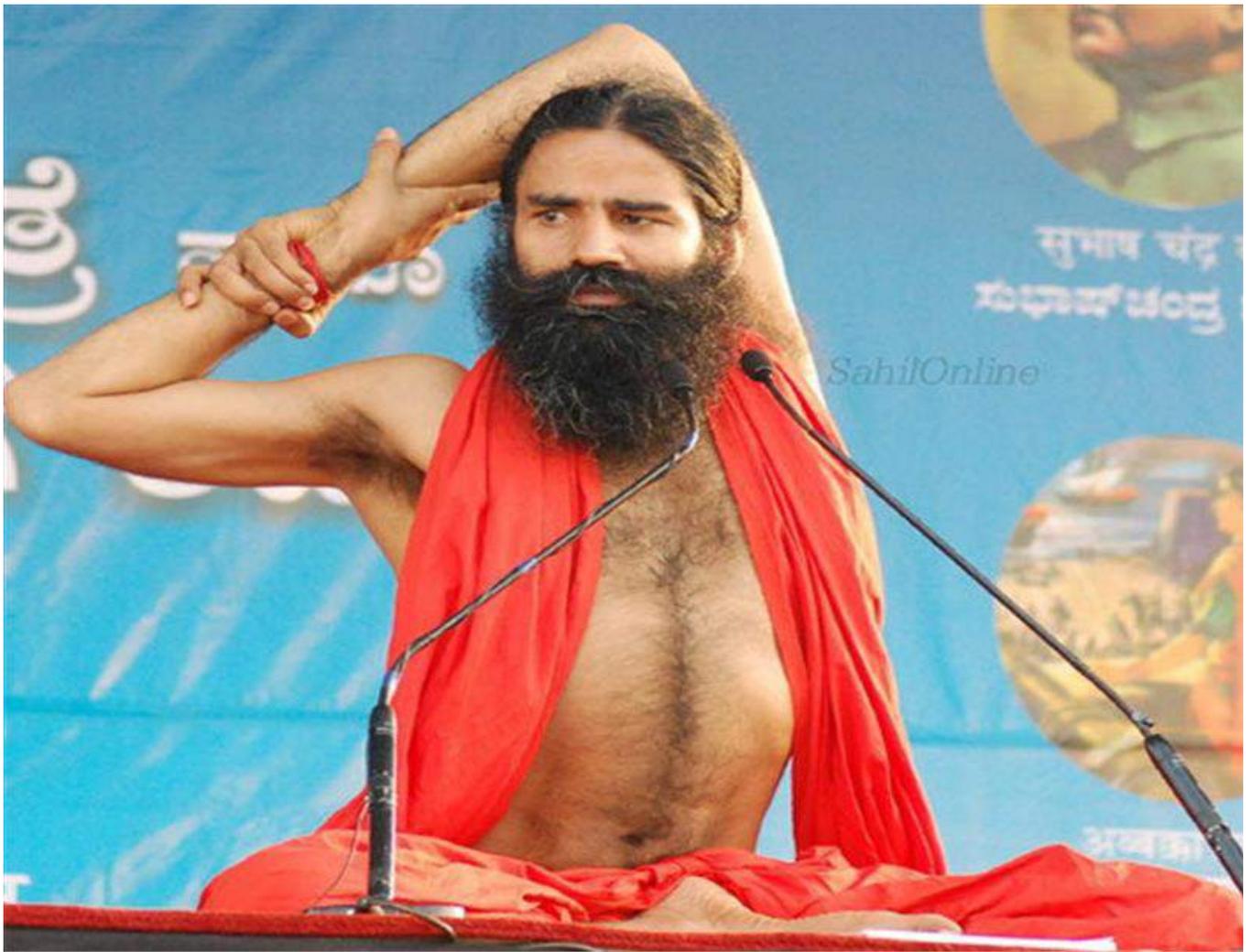
Swami Vivekananda introduced yoga to Americans. He came to the USA in 1893 to address the World Parliament

of Religions in Chicago. He started the Vedantic centre in New York in 1896 and taught Raja Yoga classes. In 1920, Maharishi Mahesh Yogi introduced Transcendental Meditation (TM) to Americans in 1959. The TM technique involves the use of mantra and regular practice offers reduction of stress and fatigue.

Indra Devi was the first to teach and propagate nonreligious yoga for the American mainstream, with an emphasis on its physical benefits. She opened a yoga studio in Hollywood in 1947 with emphasis on the physical benefits of yoga. In an effort to publicize and spread yoga for health and wellness, she cultivated movie stars like Gloria Swanson and other famous people like Yehudi Menuhin to come to her Hollywood yoga studio. She promoted yoga to Americans as a system of physical exercise, consisting of a series of poses, postures and positions.

B.K.S. Iyengar, considered one of the foremost yoga teachers in the world, was the founder of "Iyengar Yoga". He made his first visit to the United States in 1956 and gave several lecture-demonstrations. He published his first book, *Light on Yoga*, which became known as "the bible of yoga". Iyengar started hundreds of yoga centers, teaching Iyengar





yoga which focuses on the correct alignment of the body within each yoga pose, making use of straps, wooden blocks, and other objects as aids in achieving the correct postures.

Yogi Bhajan started teaching “Kundalini Yoga, the Yoga of Awareness” in 1968. He was an inspiring teacher and trained thousands of teachers. Many of his followers opened their yoga studios in various parts of the world, popularizing yoga for health and fitness. Bikram Choudhary earned fame and fortune by teaching yoga to Americans by opening heated yoga studios. In the 1990s, Bikram trained thousands of certified instructors who opened Bikram Yoga studios all over the world. For the last several years, Bikram has been involved in law suits due to his sexual transgressions.

Sri Sri Ravi Shankar established the International Art of Living Foundation in 1981. He has been promoting the Sudarshan Kriya, a rhythmic breathing yoga exercise. In 1986, Sri Sri came to California to conduct the first course to be held in North America. Since then, he has been frequenting America to spread his brand of yoga.

Swami Ramdev is the most cele-

brated yoga teacher and has a following which runs into millions. He has revolutionized people’s thinking about yoga exercises. His Pranayam exercises - a set of breathing exercises - are promoted to bring about balance between the body and mind. Zee TV in USA gives a one hour program daily featuring Ramdev’s yoga asanas. Ramdev has attained commercial success of his physical fitness yoga, with no parallel in India or the western world.

America is now dotted with yoga gyms and studios providing easy access to everyone, including business executives and Hollywood celebrities. There are also many yoga professionals and teachers who have gained prominence in this growing industry and are available for expert guidance. Several studies have shown that yoga reduces blood pressure, back pain, relieves stress and improves overall health. Several doctors recommend yoga to their cancer patients during and after treatment. Many Americans are drawn to yoga for physical fitness, others are attracted as yoga provides relief from stress while many others practice yoga for weight management.

Several entrepreneurs are flourishing in this \$30 billion industry. They publish yoga magazines, yoga books, produce TV shows, make DVDs, video games and apps, manufacture yoga clothes, yoga artifacts, yoga furniture and furnishings, yoga foods, yoga tea, yoga energy bars, and hundreds of products and services. The proliferation of yoga products, DVDs, and internet has made yoga accessible by one and all. Hundreds of yoga websites have all kind of information about yoga, from health and wellness to spiritual and show simple to complex poses. Several New Age gurus, who travel across the globe, have contributed to yoga popularity. In the United States, best-selling author Deepak Chopra has significantly contributed to Indian meditation philosophy and yoga going mainstream.

Yoga has gone through several ups and downs during the last sixty years but now has earned well deserved respect and recognition. At its core, yoga is both a physical and spiritual practice. But for most Americans, yoga is a workout system that consists of a series of stretches, poses, and postures to tone and shape one’s body.

# Chief Justice is the master of roster

Vishnu Sharma

Finally putting an end to the long pending dispute, Supreme Court bench ruled that The Chief Justice is the “master of the roster” and has the power to assign cases.

Earlier Shanti Bhushan’s petition had called for a panel of senior judges to decide on the rostering of judges and assigning of cases.

The government’s top lawyer had opposed it, saying it will result in chaos.

In April, a three-judge bench headed by Chief Justice of India Dipak Misra held that the Chief Justice was “master of the roster” who alone has the power to decide on the allocation of cases, virtually setting at rest the controversy raised by four of its next senior-most judges.

“There is no dispute that the Chief Justice is the master of roster and allocates cases to Judges. The constitution is silent on the Chief Justice. Conven-

tions and judgements over the time and accepted by all stake holders that the Chief Justice is first among judges and senior most,” said the Supreme Court.

In January, four top ranking judges called an unprecedented press conference in which they took on the Chief Justice Dipak Misra.

Shanti Bhushan had said in his petition that “master of the roster” cannot be an “unguided and unbridled” discretionary power, exercised arbitrarily by the Chief Justice by hand-picking the benches of select judges or by assigning cases to particular judges.

In an unprecedented event on January 12, the four top ranking judges after the Chief Justice - Justices J Chelameswar (now retired), Ranjan Gogoi, Madan B Lokur and Kurian Joseph - called an unprecedented press conference in which they took on the Chief Justice and said the situation in the top court was “not in order” and many “less than desirable” things had taken place. The judges had also criticised the way

sensitive cases were being assigned by Justice Misra to junior judges.

During the arguments, Attorney General KK Venugopal stressed on the need for “unity” among the judges of the top court and said that Mr Bhushan’s petition could lead to “conflict” among judges on who would hear a case, besides creating a multiplicity of authorities.

“It is essential that there should be one person doing this and if it has to be one person, then it has to be the CJI,” the Attorney General had said.

Senior counsel Dushyant Dave and advocate Prashant Bhushan, who had appeared for Shanti Bhushan, had questioned the manner in which some “sensitive cases” were allocated to specific judges in violation of rules. They said there was “ambiguity” in the rules as to whether the Chief Justice did have the power to frame the roster.

*(Writer is AOR Supreme Court of India)*



# Trendy Montenegro Trendy Khadi

## 13th July National Day Celebrations of Montenegro in India 2018

This event was held at the Consulate of Montenegro by H.E the Honorary Consul General of Montenegro in India Dr Janice Darbari was witnessed by an exclusive presence of high ranking dignitaries from India and the Diplomatic core gathering of Ambassador's and High Commissioners and members of the diplomatic core of different countries present in India.

Dean of the Diplomatic Core H.E Mr Frank Hans Dannenberg Castellanos Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Dominican Republic, Deputy Dean of the diplomatic core H.E Mr Alem Tsehaye Woldemariam Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the State of Eritrea, Honorary Consul General of Montenegro in India Dr Janice Darbari and Mr V.K.Saxena Chairman of Khadi and Village Industries Commission and members of the KVIC board.

The Chief Guest Mr Subrata Bhatnagar of the Ministry of External Affairs in India, speaking at the Occasion said quote "Hon'ble Minister of state Mr V.K Singh has visited the beautiful country of Montenegro and I am good friends with the Ambassadors of the Balkans you can count on me and my Ministry as friends of Montenegro wish the Khadi promotion a great success". "The Honorary Consul General Dr Janice Darbari thanking Mr Saxena Chairman Khadi weaving a thread and a big

friendship with Khadi Trendy Montenegro Trendy Khadi, Hand woven hand spun each one of us in our country has the beautiful tradition of hand spun and hand woven our artisans and handicraft with the support of the Dean we can take it to the Global level and can knit the cultural network all over the world and make it a celebration for every human being who wants and love freedom, knitting this yarn right through the grassroots level. I think we can bring a lot of economic freedom to everybody, Welcome to a signature fashion show .How this fabric is worn in India in a very friendly way."

The Dean of the diplomats who had just flown in from abroad especially for this event stated, "On behalf of all my colleagues Montenegro is the very envy of all of us. We wish we had a good Honorary Consul General like you. We are very happy you are very active you do a great job, and, I congratulate Montenegro for having appointed you and than you for being one of us. You are always a part of our activities and doing a great job for strengthening ties between India and Montenegro."

Mr V.K Saxena the Chairman of Khadi gram Udyog stated "I want to Congratulate Montenegro Dr Janice Darbari on the Occasion of the National Day joining hands with Khadi by Montenegro is a great conversion, a long way to see Khadi going Global. Khadi means

honesty, purity, hand woven and hand spun is also called the National fabric of India. Joining hands with Montenegro is a historical Day today because Khadi is going global. I am thankful to Ms Janice Darbari for giving this opportunity to take it Global."

The signature Fashion Show was choreographed by the Teachers of D.A.V School Mausasm Vihar ,their alumni and senior students participated as models.

Mrs Paridi Sharma N.G.O working with khadi and Raj Darbari helped in designing the trendy clothes .Mrs Sheila Darbari aged 90 years popoualry known as the daughter of the British era the oldest Alumini of DAV College dating back to 1947 brought back nostalgic memories of 1942 as her father Jagdishwar Nigam I.C.S was the district Magistrate in Ballia who allowed a massmovement a crowd of 25 thousand satyagrahis enter Ballia all wearing Khadi. She walked the ramp amidst a great applause as the song "Apne azadi ko hum hargish mita sakte nahi sar kata sakte lekin sar jhukha sakte nahi" (We cannot forget our freedom we can get our heads cut but we cannot bow our head.) The show stopper Mrs Swheta Dagar former first runner up Mrs India worldwide 2017 ,wore a khadi saree looking absolutely stunning.

—Report filed by **Anshuman Dogra**, Bureau Chief-Delhi





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