



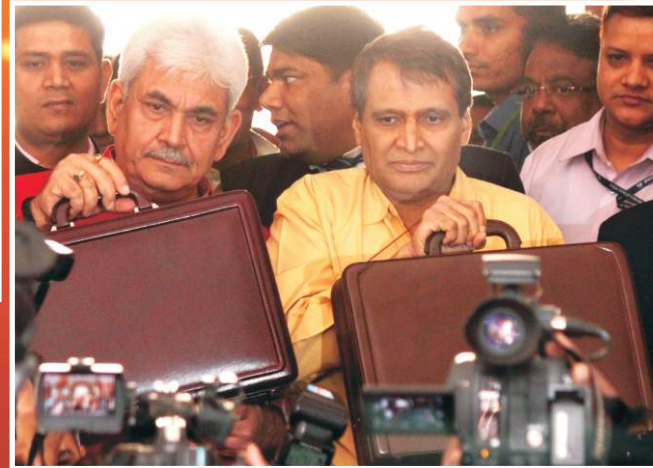
THE NATIONALIST

An Indian perspective

Issue:4, 16th March,2015

सबका BUDGET

युवाओं को रोजगार! किसानों की समृद्धि! गरीबों का उद्धार! देश की प्रगति!
2015 - 16



Special Article

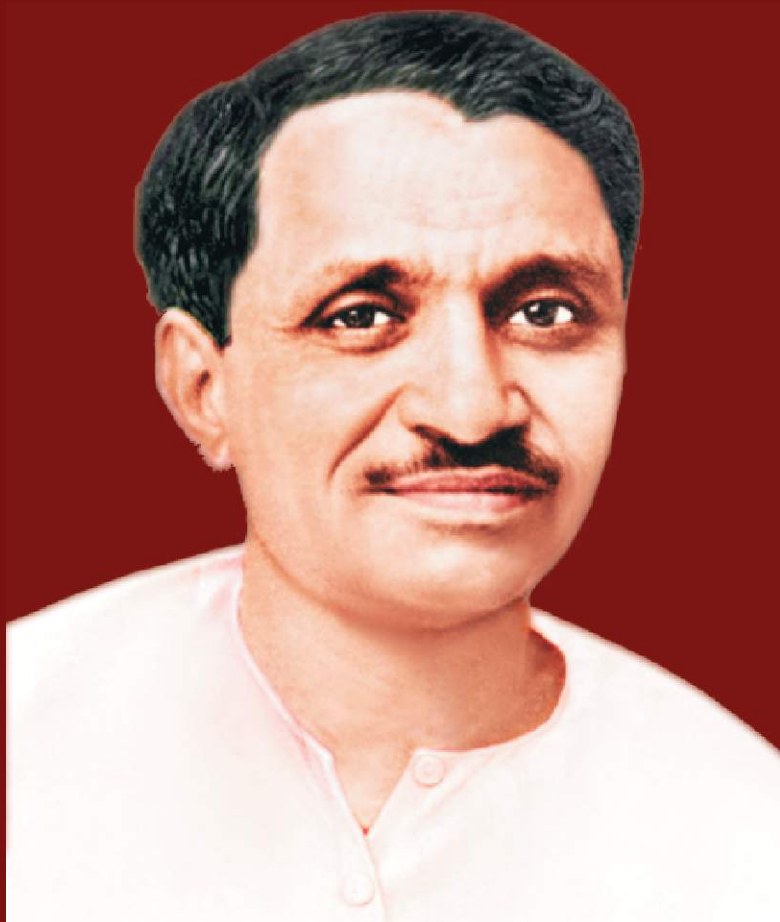
- Modern Rail could be PM Modi's abiding Legacy
- PDP-BJP government: An initiative in right direction

MUDRA Bank:
Theoretical Depth and
Practical Wisdom

विकासोन्मुख बजट
2015 - 16

From a cooperative
federalism towards a
competitive one

मौलिक विचार की आवश्यकता



“आवश्यकता है कि हम अपने जीवन दर्शन का विचार कर भारतीय अर्थव्यवस्था का मौलिक निरूपण करें तथा आज की समस्याओं को यथार्थ की कण्टकाकीर्ण, ऊबड़-खाबड़ किन्तु ठोस भूमि पर खड़े होकर सुलझायें। भारत के ‘स्व’ का साक्षात्कार किये बिना हम अपनी समस्याओं को सुलझा नहीं पाएंगे। यदि किसी क्षेत्र में संयोगवश थोड़ी बहुत सफलता मिल भी गई तो उसका परिणाम हमारे लिए हितकर नहीं होगा। हम परानुकरण की ओर अधिक प्रवृत्त होंगे। अपने स्वत्व और सामर्थ्य के विकास के

स्थान पर परावलम्बन का भाव हमारे मन में घर कर जाएगा। आत्महीनता का यह भाव घुन की तरह राष्ट्र की जड़ें खोखली कर देगा। इस प्रकार जर्जर-मूल राष्ट्र कभी झंझावातों में खड़ा नहीं रह सकता। यदि हमें देश का विकास करना है तो इस प्रश्न का अन्तर्मुख होकर विचार करना ही होगा।”

- दीनदयाल उपाध्याय

- (भारतीय अर्थ-नीति : विकास की एक दिशा; दीनदयाल उपाध्याय; राष्ट्रधर्म प्रकाशन लिमिटेड, 1958, पृ० 7)

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EDITORIAL

Since the last issue of The Nationalist appeared, four major national developments – signifying not only the multi-dimensional approach and march of the Narendra Modi led central Government but also its larger commitment to the progress and welfare of the people of India, have taken place.

This issue carries a special article on the Union Railway Budget – a budget which, after a long interval, eschews false populism and presents a comprehensive blueprint to guide the Indian Railways to a next level of responsive modernity and performance.

The Union Finance Budget was another development which has indeed laid the blueprint for the revival and re-generation of the Indian economy. Through its focus on the MUDRA Bank – the Micro Units Development and Refining Agency, its National Investment and Infrastructure Fund, its Atal Pension Yojana with a focus on all citizens in the unorganized sector and with an increased allocation to agriculture, the Government has only reiterated its seriousness in addressing a wide cross section of Indian society and some of its most

fundamental pillars.

The Formation of the Government in Jammu & Kashmir following a detailed and minute process of dialogue and consultation has only displayed the seriousness with which the BJP wishes to work for the integral development of the State and to essentially dissolve and iron out the various roadblocks that the people of J&K have been facing since independence. Unlike other parties, in the past, which have only believed in using the situation in the State to further their narrow political agendas – the BJP has demonstrated genuineness towards the process of dialogue and development and despite great odds has stepped forward to take ahead the democratic experiment in J&K to newer heights.

The effort towards Government formation in J&K reminds one of a forgotten chapter in India's political history – a chapter which saw Dr. Syama Prasad Mookerjee, then leading the Hindu Mahasabha, join the Progress Democratic Coalition of A.K.Fazlul Haque, as Finance Minister, in order to further the interest of Bengal. As one of the most successful Finance Ministers

of Bengal, Dr. Mookerjee had won the confidence of all sections of society while introducing watershed measures.

The Prime Minister's just concluded and highly successful visit to the Indian Ocean Region has introduced a strong maritime dimension in India's foreign policy and is long-needed recognition of India's maritime and civilisational neighbourhood where her footprints once abounded. Prime Minister Modi's visit to Mauritius, Seychelles – the first Indian Prime Minister to visit this island nation in over three decades—and Sri

Lanka underlines India's quest for evolving a cooperative maritime security framework in the Indian Ocean Region and her willingness to play a critical role in ensuring peace and prosperity in the littoral countries.

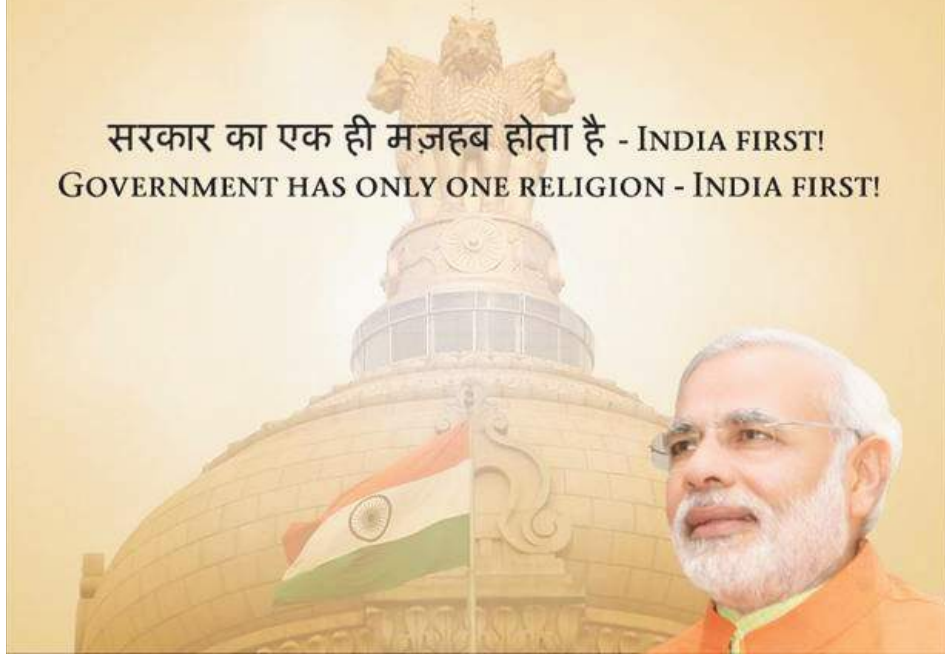
Prime Minister's visit to this region is among the major steps that will – to use one of his own expressions – surely restructure India from being a balancing power to a great power.

- Dr. Anirban Ganguly
Director, SPMRF

मेरी सरकार का एक ही धर्म है - India First

हमारे देश में राजनीतिक कारणों से सांप्रदाय का जहर घुलता जा रहा है और आज से नहीं चला जा रहा है, लंब अर्से से चला जा रहा है। जिसने देश को तबाह करके रखा हुआ है, दिलों को तोड़ने का काम किया है, लेकिन सवाल हमसे पूछे जा रहे हैं कि हमारी भूमिका क्या है ? 27 अक्टूबर 2013, मैं पटना में था, गांधी मैदान में था, बम धमाके हो रहे थे, निर्दोष लोग मौत के घाट उतारे गए। बम-बंदूक के बीच रक्त बह रहा था, लोग मर रहे थे। उस समय मैंने कहा था कि बताइए हिंदूओं को किसके साथ लड़ना है? क्या मुसलमान के साथ लड़ना है ? कि गरीबी के साथ लड़ना है ? मैं मुसलमानों को पूछता था कि क्या आपको हिंदुओं के साथ लड़ना है ? कि गरीबी के खिलाफ लड़ना है? जब हम सबको गरीबी के खिलाफ लड़ना है तो क्यों न हम सब हिंदू-मुसलमान मिलकर, एक हो करके गरीबी के खिलाफ लड़ाई लड़ें। भारत को प्रेम करने वाले हर व्यक्ति के लिए यह बात साफ है यह देश विविधताओं से भरा हुआ है। विविधता में एकता यही हमारे देश की पहचान है, यही हमारी ताकत है। हम एकरूपता के पक्षकार नहीं हैं। हम एकता के पक्षकार हैं। सभी संप्रदायों का फलना-फूलना, यह भारत की धरती पर ही संभव होता है। यह भारत की विशेषता है और मैं यह कहना चाहता हूँ कि हमारा जो संविधान बना है, वो संविधान हजारों साल की हमारे चिंतन की अभिव्यक्ति है। हमारा जो संविधान बना है वो हमारे भारत के सामान्य मानव की आशाओं, आकांक्षाओं को प्रतिबिंबित करने वाला संविधान है और इस संविधान की मर्यादा में रह करके देश चल सकता है। देश संविधान की मर्यादाओं के बाहर नहीं चल सकता है। किसी को भी कानून हाथ में लेने का अधिकार नहीं होता है।

सरकार का एक ही मज़हब होता है - INDIA FIRST!
GOVERNMENT HAS ONLY ONE RELIGION - INDIA FIRST!



किसी को भी साम्प्रदाय के आधार पर किसी के भी साथ भेदभाव करने का अधिकार नहीं होता है। हरेक किसी को अपने साथ चलने का अधिकार है और मेरी जिम्मेदारी है, सरकार में बैठा हूँ, सरकार कैसे चलेगी उसकी जिम्मेदारी है। मेरी सरकार का एक ही धर्म है—India First, मेरी सरकार का एक ही धर्मग्रंथ है—भारत का संविधान, मेरी सरकार की एक ही भक्ति है—भारत भक्ति, मेरी सरकार की एक ही पूजा है—सवा सौ करोड़ देशवासियों का कल्याण, मेरी सरकार की एक ही कार्यशैली है—“सबका साथ, सबका विकास” और इसलिए हम संविधान को लेकर के संविधान की सीमा में रह करके देश को आगे बढ़ाना चाहते हैं।

हमारे यहां 'एकं सद्विप्रा बहुधाव दन्ति' हमारा तत्वज्ञान रहा है। सत्य एक है विद्वान लोग उसको अलग-अलग तरीके से कहते हैं।


NARENDRA MODI

नारी सम्मान और बालिका शिक्षा से जुड़ा है हमारा स्वच्छता अभियान

स्वच्छता हमारी मानसिकता से जुड़ी हुई है और मैं जब स्वच्छता अभियान की बात करता हूँ तब मेरे दिल-दिमाग में वो गरीब है। World Bank का रिपोर्ट कहता है कि गंदगी के कारण जो बीमारी फैलती है उससे औसतन एक गरीब को सालाना लगभग 7 हजार रुपए का खर्च आता है और अगर गरीब का 5 का परिवार है तो 35 हजार रुपए। स्वच्छता का दूसरा संबंध नारी के सम्मान के साथ है। आज भी गांव में मां-बहनों को खुले में शौच जाना पड़े, अंधेरे का इंतजार करना पड़े, तो इससे ज्यादा शर्मनाक कुछ नहीं हो सकता। मुद्दा हमारी

माताओं-बहनों के सम्मान का है, उनको सम्मान से जीने के अधिकार देने का है। बालिकाएं स्कूल छोड़ देती हैं, पढ़ाई छोड़ देती हैं! क्यों? एक प्रमुख कारण ये था कि स्कूल में Girl & Child Toilet नहीं है। सवाल किसी को दोष देना का नहीं है। इस समस्या का समाधान खोजने का है और इसलिए स्वच्छता के अभियान को आगे बढ़ाया है। ये कोई उद्घाटन समारोह नहीं है, ये निरंतर करने का काम है और हम सबको करने का काम है। हममें से कोई नहीं है जिसको गंदगी पसंद है!



भारत देश का मूल वैचारिक तत्व

हम यह बात नहीं मानते हैं कि देश 15 अगस्त 1947 को पैदा हुआ था। यह देश हजारों साल की विरासत है। ऋषियों ने, मुनियों ने, आचार्यों ने, भगवंतों ने, शिक्षकों ने, मजदूरों ने, किसानों ने इस देश को बनाया है, सरकारों ने देश नहीं बनाया है। सरकारें आती हैं, जाती हैं, देश सरकारें नहीं बनाती यह देश जनता-जनार्दन के सामर्थ्य से बनता है। जनता-जनार्दन की शक्ति से बनता है और राष्ट्र, अपनी नीति से चलता है, अपनी Philosophy से चलता है Ideology आती है,

जाती है और बदलती रहती है। मूलतत्व देश को चलाता है और भारत का मूलतत्व है—

एकं सद्विप्राबहुधावदन्ति

भारत का मूलतत्व है,

सर्वेभवंतुसुखिनः सर्वेसन्तुनिरामयाः।

सर्वेभद्राणिपश्यन्तु, माकश्चिद् दुःखभाग्भवेत्।

सबकी भलाई की बात यहां होती है।

०१२०१६ नरेन्द्र मोदी
NARENDRA MODI

Micro Units Development and Refinance Agency (Mudra) Bank "Funding the Unfunded"

• *Siddharth Singh*

According to the NSSO survey of 2013, there are 5.77 crore small business units which run small manufacturing, trading or services activities. Most of these 'own account enterprises' are owned by people belonging to Scheduled Caste, Scheduled Tribe or Other Backward Classes. Only 4% of such units get institutional finance. Providing access to institutional finance to such micro/small business units would turn them into strong instruments of GDP growth and also employment.

The government has proposed to set up a Micro Units Development and Refinance Agency (MUDRA) Bank through a statutory enactment. This Bank would be responsible for regulating and refinancing all Micro-finance Institutions (MFI) which are in the business of lending to micro/small business entities engaged in manufacturing, trading and services activities. The Bank would partner with state level/regional level co-ordinators to provide finance to Last Mile Financer of

small/micro business enterprises.

The MUDRA Bank would primarily be responsible for -

- 1) Laying down policy guidelines for micro/small enterprise financing business
- 2) Registration of MFI entities
- 3) Regulation of MFI entities
- 4) Accreditation /rating of MFI entities
- 5) Laying down responsible financing practices to ward off indebtedness and ensure proper client protection principles and methods of recovery
- 6) Development of standardised set of covenants governing last mile lending to micro/small enterprises
- 7) Promoting right technology solutions for the last mile
- 8) Formulating and running a Credit Guarantee scheme for providing guarantees to the loans which are being extended to micro enterprises
- 9) Creating a good architecture of Last Mile Credit Delivery to micro businesses under the scheme of Pradhan Mantri Mudra Yojana.

Budget 2015: New Initiatives

Mudra Bank

(Micro Units Development and Refinance Agency)

- Mudra Bank would be responsible for regulating and refinancing all Micro-finance Institutions (MFI) which are in the business of lending to micro/small business entities engaged in manufacturing, trading and services activities.
- MUDRA Bank, with a corpus of Rs. 20,000 crore, and credit guarantee corpus of 3,000 crore, will refinance Micro-Finance Institutions through a Pradhan Mantri Mudra Yojana
- While lending money, priority will be given to SC/ST enterprises
- **Motto of the Bank:** Banking the Un-banked, Funding the Un-funded.



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The **Nationalist**

A sum of Rs 20,000 crores would be allocated to the MUDRA Bank for creating a Refinance Fund to provide refinance to the Last Mile Financers. Another Rs 3,000 crore would be provided to the MUDRA Bank from the budget to create a Credit Guarantee corpus for guaranteeing loans being provided to the micro enterprises. While lending the money, priority will be

given to SC/ST enterprises.

The above measures would not only help in increasing access of finance to the unbanked but also bring down the cost of finance from the last Mile Financers to the micro/small enterprises, most of which are in the informal sector.

(Siddharth Singh is Research Associate at SPMRF)

MUDRA Bank: Theoretical Depth and Practical Wisdom

• *S. Gurumurthy*

Jobless Corporate Growth

They have been the most trusted and celebrated economic players in the last two decades. They got foreign investments and local bank credits of over `50 lakh cr in 21 years since 1991 when the government red-carpet welcomed foreign capital and multinational companies. But these celebrities, who absorbed capital that equalled almost half the GDP, added only 2.8 million jobs in 21 years --just a little over 2 lakh jobs a year!

And more. Citing the global meltdown, they also got extra tax cuts of over 15 lakh crore from 2009 as stimulus for growth which, P. Chidambaram now says, did the economy down. Who are these economic players? All public and private sector companies, including the listed and unlisted ones and multinational corporates, added together. The corporates which led this sector -- known as the organised sector in economic jargon-- came to be regarded as the growth icons after India began liberalising and globalising its economy. Their promoters and executives adorned the Prime Minister's Economic Advisory

Council. Celebrated by the elite media and government circles, they dominated economic summits and their concerns monopolise policy making. The powerful print and digital media turned into their advocates.

Yet, the formal sector generated 26.8 million jobs till 1991 and by 2012 it had improved the number by just 2.8 million to 29.6 million. This shocking data was no secret. Year after year, the Economic Survey had printed this data in the Statistical Appendices attached to it and the RBI had reported this every year in Table 14 of its Hand Book of Statistics on the Indian economy. But not many looked at the data to get the message it explicitly conveyed, namely that the organised sector can't employ India.

Small as Big Employer

Who else employs India? The answer to this contained in the data provided by the surveys of the National Sample Survey Organisation [NSSO]. The NSSO has been reporting in its Economic Census every 10 years that it is the non-corporate sector-- derogatorily

as informal sector by economists-- which keeps India employed and sustaining its economic, even public, order.

Its latest Economic Census [2014] says that some 57.8 million small and micro [most of them unregistered and largely self-employment concerns] provide 128 million jobs. This does not include the construction sector or all limbs of the unorganised sector. The entire unorganised sector put together provide over 460 million jobs. Take the 57.8 million small businesses. Their asset base is 11.4 lakh cr. But annual value addition is 6.28 lakh cr – that is over 55 per cent. But the value addition by Indian corporate sector-- the crown jewel of our economy--is about 34 percent of their gross assets. While the organised sector, that provides just a tenth of the non-farm jobs in the country, has almost monopolised the organised capital supply, domestic and foreign, the 57.8 million micro and small businesses that provide 128 million jobs has got only 4 per cent of its capital needs from organised institutions! Who owns and operates the millions of micro units? Almost two thirds of them belong to the Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and Other Backward Castes. More than half of

these units operate from rural areas, where it is difficult to deliver economic growth. More than a third of them are engaged in manufacturing. About a third of them in trade. The rest in different services. Where do they get their finances which is the life-line of businesses. It is from extortionate money lenders, who charge usurious rates ranging from 36 per cent to 365 per cent depending on the type of borrower. This has been the status of this Kamadhenu of employment creation in India.

Birth of MUDRA

When Narendra Modi took over the nearly ruined economy from the UPA, which had celebrated jobless growth, someone must have brought this telling data of the highly funded corporates which have failed to deliver on jobs and the unfunded non-corporates which have provided most of the jobs in India. Modi must have immediately recognised the urgent and the unattended financial needs of these unfunded millions of micro units. In the Budget the new government presented in July last, the idea of creating a financial architecture for funding these micro business units was seeded in para 102 of the Budget speech and a Committee was constituted for the purpose. The

Committee submitted the report days before the 2015-16 Budget. But it rejected a suggestion to create a separate development and regulatory bank like the National Housing Bank to register and regulate and arrange wholesale finance to provide retail finance for the unfunded micro businesses and also appraise, register, regulate and refinance the existing small finance providers after due appraisal and make them Last Mile Financiers. The Committee rejected these suggestions saying that the Reserve Bank of India had opposed it as theoretically a risk-prone idea. Normally this would be sufficient to close the file.

But Narendra Modi would not close the file. Because he was perhaps convinced that the existing financial institutions would not fund these unfunded micro businesses which he must have understood as the backbone of job creation in India. Modi shredded the Committee report and went ahead with what he thought would work in and for India. The result is the birth of MUDRA Bank idea in the Budget 2015-16. Backgrounding the MUDRA bank, the Finance Minister emphasized "inclusive growth" has to come from only the non-formal sector, without saying the corporate sector cannot do it.

Referring how the unfunded non-formal sector, largely operated by the economically weaker communities, provides the maximum employment and pointed out how they are unfunded, he proposed the MUDRA Bank for funding the unfunded businesses. The MUDRA Bank has theoretical depth and practical wisdom. In July 2013, a study titled 'India's better half: the informal economy' by the Credit Suisse Asia Pacific Equity Division on the non-formal sector in India told the world that nine out of 10 jobs in India and half of its GDP originated in the non-formal sector including the 57.7 million micro businesses. The study reduced the status of the corporates in the Indian economy as the "tail cannot wag the dog". The sheer size of the non-formal business in India obviously persuaded even The Economist magazine to see the reality and to say that the best way to organise the non-formal sector in India was to provide formal finance to it.

MUDRA Idea Potential Game Changer

The Press Brief of the Ministry of Finance Department of Financial Services on MUDRA brings out how it is a Made in India idea for funding micro businesses. As a bank to be

established under a new law, MUDRA will register, regulate and refinance all small business finance institutions.

It will partner state level and regional level coordinators to enable them to provide refinance to Last Mile Financiers [LMFs] of micro businesses. The inclusion of the local LMFs is a very innovative idea. And a potential game changer. The MUDRA idea realises that only the LMFs can have local knowledge and of the borrowers' character and worth and seeks to formalise their involvement in credit distribution to micro businesses. A real innovation indeed. MUDRA will register small financiers of micro businesses. Regulate them. Accredite them. Rate them. Fix responsible financial practices, client protection principles and methods of recovery.

Formulate and run credit guarantee schemes for credit extended to micro businesses. Integrating the LMFs to deliver credit to micro businesses is entirely

an indigenous idea. An ingenious too. If LMFs are evaluated, appraised, registered and given refinance at lower rates, the ultimate interest rate for micro businesses would be far lower.

But this would call for huge scaling up of execution and that is where governments normally fail. But Modi Government has shown remarkable capacity to scale up operations-- the Jan Dhan Yojana where it hooked 12.5 million people to banks in less than six months testifies to it. As compared to that scale, the integration of hundreds of thousands of more informed existing and new LMFs into the regulatory and refinance architecture of MUDRA bank does not seem to be a tall order at all. MUDRA, which is a practical idea, is a potential game changer for the country.

(S. Gurumurthy is a renowned C.A. and public intellectual)

Courtesy: The New Indian Express (10th March 2015)

Schemes announced in Budget 2015-16

Self-Employment and Talent Utilisation (SETU) to be established

Government has announced the setting up of a Self- Employment and Talent Utilisation (SETU) mechanism. SETU will be a Techno-Financial, Incubation and Facilitation Programme to support all aspects of startup businesses, and other self-employment activities, particularly in technology-driven areas. An amount of Rs.1000 crore is being set up initially in NITI Aayog for SETU. Experimenting in cutting edge technologies, creating value out of ideas and initiatives and converting them into scalable enterprises and businesses is at the core of Modi Govt's strategy for engaging the youths and for the inclusive and sustainable growth of the country.

National Investment and Infrastructure Fund

Government has decided to set up a National Investment and Infrastructure Fund (NIIF). An annual flow of Rs.20,000 crore will be ensured for the NIIF. This will enable the Trust to raise debt, and in turn, invest as equity, in infrastructure finance companies

such as IRFC and NHB. The infrastructure finance companies can then leverage this extra equity, manifold.

Atal Pension Yojana

The APY will be focussed on all citizens in the unorganised sector, who join the National Pension System (NPS) administered by the Pension Fund Regulatory and Development Authority (PFRDA) and who are not members of any statutory social security scheme. Under the APY, the subscribers would receive the fixed pension of Rs. 1000 per month, Rs. 2000 per month, Rs. 3000 per month, Rs. 4000 per month, Rs. 5000 per month, at the age of 60 years, depending on their contributions, which itself would vary on the age of joining the APY. The minimum age of joining APY is 18 years and maximum age is 40 years. The benefit of fixed pension would be guaranteed by the Government. The Central Government would also co-contribute 50% of the subscriber's contribution or Rs. 1000 per annum, whichever is lower, to each eligible subscriber account, for a period of 5 years, i.e., from 2015-16 to 2019-20, who join the NPS

before 31st December, 2015 and who are not income tax payers. The APY would be launched from 1st June, 2015.

Pradhan Mantri Jeevan Jyoti Bima Yojana

Eligibility: Available to people in the age group of 18 to 50 and having a bank account. People who join the scheme before completing 50 years can, however, continue to have the risk of life cover up to the age of 55 years subject to payment of premium.

Premium: Rs.330 per annum. It will be auto-debited in one instalment.

Risk Coverage: Rs.2 Lakh in case of death for any reason.

Terms of Risk Coverage: A person has to opt for the scheme

every year. He can also prefer to give a long-term option of continuing, in which case his account will be auto-debited every year by the bank.

Pradhan Mantri Suraksha Bima Yojana

Eligibility: Available to people in age group 18 to 70 years with bank account.

Premium: Rs.12 per annum.

Risk Coverage: For accidental death and full disability - Rs.2 Lakh and for partial disability - Rs.1 Lakh.

Terms of Risk Coverage: A person has to opt for the scheme every year. He can also prefer to give a long-term option of continuing in which case his account will be auto-debited every year by the bank.

- SPMRF Desk

Modern Rail could be PM Modi's abiding Legacy

• *Amit Malviya*

India presents its rail budget each year on 26 February, two days before the general budget. The practice of a separate railway budget started in the year 1924 when India was still a British colony. In those days, Railways constituted a significant portion of the budgetary allocation unlike now, when it is just about 8 per cent of the total spend.

Indian Railways is called the lifeline of the nation and directly influences lives of millions of Indians. It carries over 23 million passengers per day (approx. 8 billion annually) and 2.7 million tonnes of freight daily (about 1 billion annually). With 1.3 million employees, the Indian Railways is among the largest employers in the world.

A separate budget for the Railways was conceived with the aim of better policy formulation and implementation in a ministry that controlled what was then the greatest industrial asset. However, over a period of time, given the wide impact the enterprise has, politicians of different hues have used the Railways for political gains. The Railways budget became an

exercise in announcing new trains, many of which never took off, declaring new projects many of which were dead on arrival, and catering to regional aspirations for political realignments.

Railways have been backbone of India's long distance transportation system. Indian rail runs 12,617 passenger and 7,421 freight trains daily across 7,172 stations over a network 114,000 kms long. India's large geography and dense population makes rail transport more efficient than either road or air. Railroads have the least transportation cost per tonne per mile, are less polluting, and more importantly the same system - the tracks, the signaling and switching system - can be used for both passengers as well as goods.

In short, India's vast middle class and economy [more on this later] runs on steel wheels. It is keeping this in mind that Suresh Prabhu presented what is easily a people-centric yet potentially transformational budget. It focuses on enhancing capacity, modernizing infrastructure, improving technology, stepping up the quality of service, ensuring

transparency, increasing operational efficiency, and most importantly making Railways financially sustainable. Prabhu's budget doesn't make grandiose announcements but sticks to addressing basic issues; it refuses to get drawn into parochial interests but focuses on overall economic growth.

The Railway budget plan stands increased by 52% to Rs 1.1 trillion for FY'16. It envisages an investment of Rs 8.5 trillion over the next five years. What is important is that the Rail Mantri outlines the sources from where he expects to raise money for all of the above. The short-term requirement will be met out of budgetary support (Rs 40,000 cr), internal accrual (Rs 17,793 cr), market borrowings (Rs 17,655 cr), institutional investment from state owned companies (Rs 17,136 cr), public private partnerships (Rs 5,781 cr) and Rs 1,645 cr from diesel cess. Funds for long-term requirements will be raised from pension, institutional and multilateral agencies. The Railways is also looking to set up an infrastructure fund and raise long-term debt in the holding company.

Around 1950, India had a rail network of around 55,000 kms,

while China was lagging significantly behind with around 27,000 kms. Even in the early 1990s, India was ahead of China in route kilometer per capita and total route kilometer. In the decade starting 1992, China invested US\$85 billion and started building its rail network. India invested only US\$17.3 billion in the same period. India's route kilometer grew by ONE percent and China's grew by 24 percent¹. China, in a span of five years, constructed the world's largest high-speed rail network.

India's lack of adequate investment in its rail network over the years, coupled with ever-increasing new trains and stations, has led to wide-spread inefficiency. While Indian Railways is capable of delivering speeds as high as 175 kmph, in reality, few passenger trains go faster than 50 kmph and freight chugs along around 30 kmph. This has no doubt inconvenienced passengers, put enormous pressure on existing infrastructure, and led to precipitous decline (from 89% in 1950 to just about 31% now) in freight ferried through rail. As a result, India's modest road network is also clogged now and the consumption of fossil fuel has

¹ World Bank Report "Highways and Railway Development in India and China from 1992 to 2002."

skyrocketed at a high cost to the exchequer as well as to the environment.

Prabhu's budget has stressed on the need to decongest the existing network and improve capacity on high-density network. The minister has announced 77 projects worth Rs 96,182 cr for capacity expansion covering 9,400 km along with electrification. He has also made top priority the completion of four dedicated freight corridors. Overall track capacity has also received the minister's attention and is being enhanced by 10% to 138,000 km.

Furthermore, the Rail Mantri has also announced a review of the wagon-making scheme to encourage private investment; he has also stressed redevelopment and transformation of existing stations through public-private partnerships and developing satellite terminals in major cities. The budget aims to make freight business attractive to public-private participation. It talks of private freight terminals, special freight train operator schemes, and building feeder routes to the dedicated freight corridors in order to win back traffic lost to roads. The ambitious plans for growth of the Railways will not, however, sacrifice fiscal prudence - the minister has simultaneously increased freight

rate by an average of three per cent across commodities, hoping to win back customers with quality rather than subsidies or short-lived discount schemes.

Investment in building the railway infrastructure will have forward and backward linkages, which will boost the economy. It will help industries supplying cement and steel; coach and locomotive manufacturing will also expand. Both directly and indirectly, every category of employment will increase - from unskilled labour to highly specialized technical work. If the extent of employment generation can be sustained over an extended period, it could absorb surplus labour from agriculture, thus increasing agricultural productivity and farm incomes. The multiplier effect on the GDP through backward linkages alone can be to the tune of four times the investment made in Railways.

An improved transportation system as a result of fast trains will benefit manufacturing, exports, agriculture and business-related travel. It will create jobs and capital goods, and build human resources capacity, infrastructure, and technology. It will fuel economic growth while simultaneously reduce the pressure on the environment (railways are less

polluting than trucks, buses, cars, and planes). It will affect every aspect of the economy positively. This omnipresent footprint of the railway budget is why Suresh Prabhu's vision could be potentially transformational.

While the Rail Mantri has been diligent in identifying what ails the Railways and has put forth solutions with clinical precision, he has consciously chosen not to burden the users. Passenger fares have not been increased even though an average user pays as little as 28 paise/km. On the contrary he has put a lot more on the table. The budget has made increased allocation for passenger amenities by 67 percent. He has promised greater transparency and convenience in ticketing (booking 120 days in advance, express ticketing on platform, paperless process), cleaner stations (private agencies to be engaged) and toilets in the train (provision for 17,000 bio-toilets). Adding more general coaches, making provision for clean water and pre-ordered food, focusing on women safety in long distance and suburban trains, national helplines for railway and security related issues, wi-fi at 400 stations, electrical points in general coaches, and user-friendly coaches are some of the other people-centric

initiatives Prabhu has mentioned.

Very importantly, the budget is unflinchingly focused on enhancing safety. It provides for a 5-year quantifiable corporate safety plan to reduce accidents and Rs 6,750 cr towards eliminating 3,438 level crossings, building 970 road under-and-overpasses.

In conclusion, the budget desires to improve travel experience. It is focused on upgrading the existing infrastructure and modernizing user facilities, it has cleverly identified sources of funding to execute its ambitious plans, and it is innovative yet pragmatic. It remains to be seen if Suresh Prabhu will be able to execute his vision just as he revolutionized India's Power sector in NDA-1. I, for one, have no doubts.

(Amit Malviya is a senior banker and early stage investor. He is interested in politics and economics. Amit co-founded Friends of BJP, a national movement and worked closely for the 2014 election campaign.)

PDP-BJP government: An initiative in right direction

• *Dr. Shiv Shakti Bakshi*

A new history has been created in Jammu & Kashmir. BJP and PDP have come together to form new government in the state. As Mufti Mohammad Sayeed was being sworn in as the new Chief Minister of Jammu & Kashmir in the presence of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and BJP President Amit Shah, the people of the state were looking forward for a new future and the nation was watching it with newfound hope and confidence. It was the dawn of a new era in Indian politics as this government was seen as an initiative which may bring in long lasting solutions to some of the longstanding problems on the basis of bonds of goodwill and trust between the Union and the state governments. It was a fitting tribute to the people of Jammu and Kashmir who had voted so enthusiastically in the assembly elections strengthening democracy and speaking in favour of development and progress.

The people of Jammu & Kashmir had to wait for over two long months to get their government in the state. The results of the assembly elections which were declared on 23rd December 2014 saw a hung assembly in the state with PDP getting 28 seats followed by BJP with 25 seats. The NC and Congress could manage 15

and 12 seats respectively in 87-member legislative assembly of the state. The talks between PDP and BJP continued for around two months and finally as a result of an understanding reached on many crucial issues the government was sworn-in on 1st March 2015. While Mufti Mohammad Sayeed of the PDP was sworn as Chief Minister, Nirmal Singh of BJP took the oath as Deputy Chief Minister. As the Governor N.N. Vohra administered the oath, 13 MLAs including Sayeed from the PDP and 12 MLAs from BJP and People's Conference combine were sworn-in as ministers. Sajjad Lone from People's Conference became a minister from the BJP quota. The government has reiterated its commitment towards development and progress of the state.

The PDP-BJP government which appeared impossible for many political analysts became a reality as both sides worked hard for two months to give shape to their common minimum programme. In the 16-page "Agenda of the Alliance" many crucial issues were addressed and future agenda was worked out. While a status quo was to be maintained on Article 370, the PDP-BJP government promised to examine the need for denotifying disturbed areas with regard to

AFSPA. The government is also expected to take measures for sustenance and livelihood of West Pakistani refugees and work out one-time settlements of refugees from Pak-occupied Kashmir in 1947, 1965 and 1971. The governance alliance reached by BJP-PDP seeks to make efforts towards seeking national reconciliation on Jammu and Kashmir.

A section in the media and opposition have criticized BJP for purportedly abandoning its stand on Article 370 which is, in any case, not true. In fact these are the same elements who have been criticizing BJP for its stand on the issue. BJP has never sought to impose its view or forcefully repeal the article but it has always tried to build a political consensus over it. No one should be in confusion that the present arrangement is nothing more than maintenance of status quo on the issue for now and the time is to initiate confidence building measures among the stakeholders so that an amicable solution is found for all longstanding issues in Jammu & Kashmir. The PDP has also shown political maturity over AFPSA and instead of resorting to political rhetoric has shown willingness to act in accordance with the ground realities. The issue of rehabilitation of refugees from West Pakistan is a major achievement also. It will help in applying balm to the long festering wounds. The formation of

government in itself is an initiative in the right direction which may go a long way in finding solutions to longstanding problems of the state.

The BJP has come to power for the first time in Jammu & Kashmir. Never before could BJP win so many seats as it was voted overwhelmingly in Jammu region and could win 25 seats to become the second largest party in the state just three seats behind PDP. In the Kashmir valley also BJP made its presence felt for the first time with many candidates contesting elections with full commitment and sincerity. But in the valley PDP was voted by the people helping it to win 28 seats. So it was natural that a government formed by BJP-PDP had the mandate of both Jammu and Kashmir region of the state. The BJP-PDP government therefore represents the aspirations of both the major regions and may work towards development of the people. It is an opportunity for the BJP to work hard among the people and create a niche for the party in the hearts of the people of the Kashmir valley also. The state may develop and prosper only if both the regions come together and recognize the mutual beneficial alliance for development and prosperity. It is time to build bridges and goodwill for a developed state and a stronger and vibrant India.

(The writer is Executive Editor of the BJP mouthpiece Kamal Sandesh and a PhD from JNU in History)

विकासोन्मुख बजट 2015-16

• सिद्धार्थ सिंह

बजट, 2015-16 एक स्पष्ट दृष्टि वाला बजट है। यह प्रगतिवादी, सकारात्मक, व्यावहारिक व विवेकपूर्ण बजट है। इसमें किसानों के लिए अनेक सुविधाओं की घोषणा की गई है। गरीबों, दलितों व महिलाओं की सुरक्षा व कल्याण हेतु व्यापक प्रबंध किए गए हैं। युवाओं के लिए शिक्षा व रोजगार, वृद्धों के लिए पेंशन व बीमा का प्रावधान कर उनका जीवन सुरक्षित व समृद्ध बनाने का प्रयास किया गया है। साथ ही साथ उद्यमियों और इन्वेस्टर्स के लिए उपयुक्त वातावरण बनाने हेतु विभिन्न कदम उठाए गए हैं।

“सरकार ने किसानों के कल्याण के लिए ऐसा रोडमैप तैयार किया है जिससे आने वाले समय में किसानों को लाभ मिलेगा। सोशल हेल्थ कार्डस्कीम, परंपरागत कृषि विकास योजना और प्रधानमंत्री ग्राम सिंचाई योजना के लिए फंड की व्यवस्था की है। साथ ही साथ नेशनल एग्रीकल्चर मार्केट बनाने का ऐलान किया है जिससे किसानों को अपनी पैदावार बेचने के लिए मजबूत प्लेटफार्म मिलेगा और उन्हें अपनी उपज का अच्छा रेट मिलेगा।”

देश के फेडरल स्ट्रक्चर को ध्यान में रख कर राज्यों की वित्तीय स्थिति को मजबूती प्रदान करने के लिए टैक्स रेवन्यू में राज्यों की हिस्सेदारी 32 प्रतिशत से बढ़ाकर 42 प्रतिशत की गई है। अगले वर्ष देश की आर्थिक विकास दर का लक्ष्य 8.1 प्रतिशत से 8.5 प्रतिशत के बीच रहने का अनुमान है। व्यवसायी जगत आज की अर्थव्यवस्था का अहम हिस्सा है। सरकार ने बजट 2015-16 में कारपोरेट टैक्स 30 फीसदी से 25 फीसदी कर दिया है। इसे चरणबद्ध तरीके से चार वर्षों में लागू किया

जाएगा। साथ ही कारपोरेट जगत को मिलने वाली सभी छूटों को समाप्त कर दिया गया है। कारपोरेट टैक्स जो पहले 30 प्रतिशत था परन्तु विभिन्न कानूनों के तहत दी जाने वाली छूटों के पश्चात यह लगभग 23 प्रतिशत बैठता था। ऐसे में 25 प्रतिशत कारपोरेट टैक्स को ग्राउंड रियलटी पर ले आना एक विवेकपूर्ण कदम है। पूरी संभावना है कि टैक्स में कमी से लाभान्वित कंपनियां ठंडे बस्ते में पड़ी विस्तार योजनाओं पर नए सिरे से काम करेंगी, जिससे नई नौकरियां पैदा होंगी। इंफ्रास्ट्रक्चर के लिए 70 हजार करोड़ रुपए का फंड उत्साहवर्द्धक है। टैक्स फ्री इंफ्रास्ट्रक्चर बांड रेल, सड़क और सिंचाई सेक्टर में ग्रोथ ले आएंगे। 'प्लग एंड प्ले' यानि ठेका देने से पहले सारी मंजूरियां देकर तत्काल शुरू किए जाने वाले पांच नए मेगा पावर प्रोजेक्ट्स इन्हीं बुनियादी प्रोजेक्ट्स को आगे बढ़ाएंगे। सरकारी अड़चनों से दुविधा में रहने वाली निजी कंपनियां अब इन प्रोजेक्ट्स में बढ़-चढ़ कर हिस्सा लेंगी। सरकार ने रोड ट्रांसपोर्ट पर काफी जोर दिया है और इसके लिए 45,751 करोड़ रुपए का प्रावधान किया है।

सरकार बजट में ब्लैकमनी को लेकर काफी गंभीर है। एक लाख से ज्यादा ट्रांजेक्शन पर पैन जरूरी होगा। यदि किसी भारतीय का विदेशी बैंकों में खाता है या विदेशों में उसकी सम्पत्ति है तो उसे रिटर्न भरते समय उसकी जानकारी देनी होगी अन्यथा ब्लैकमनी पाए जाने पर टैक्सचोरी के लिए 300 प्रतिशत जुर्माना लगेगा और साथ ही साथ 10 साल जेल की सजा भी होगी।

सरकार ने किसानों के कल्याण के लिए ऐसा रोडमैप तैयार किया है जिससे आने वाले समय में किसानों को लाभ मिलेगा। सोशल हेल्थ कार्ड स्कीम, परंपरागत कृषि विकास योजना और

प्रधानमंत्री ग्राम सिंचाई योजना के लिए फंड की व्यवस्था की है। साथ ही साथ नेशनल एग्रीकल्चर मार्केट बनाने का ऐलान किया है जिससे किसानों को अपनी पैदावार बेचने के लिए मजबूत प्लेटफार्म मिलेगा और उन्हें अपनी उपज का अच्छा रेट मिलेगा। बजट में छोटी अवधि के लिए कोआपरेटिव रूरल क्रेडिट रिफाइनंस फंड के तहत 45 हजार करोड़ रुपए का प्रावधान किया है। किसानों को लोन देने हेतु साढ़े आठ लाख करोड़ रुपए का प्रावधान किया गया है। ग्रामीण ढांचागत विकास के लिए 25 हजार करोड़ रुपए और सूक्ष्म सिंचाई योजना के लिए 5300 करोड़ रुपए आवंटित किए गए हैं, जिससे कृषि का विकास सुनिश्चित हो। सरकार ने ग्रामीण इलाकों में स्किल्ड इंडिया अवधारणा के तहत शिक्षा और रोजगार को एक दूसरे से जोड़ते हुए दीनदयाल ग्रामीण कौशल योजना के तहत 1500 करोड़ का प्रावधान किया है।

सरकार ने एजुकेशन खास कर हायर एजुकेशन को लेकर देश में फैली असमानता को ध्यान में रखते हुए कई राज्यों में प्रीमियर एजुकेशनल इंस्टीट्यूट देने का फैसला किया है। इसमें जम्मू-कश्मीर से लेकर नागालैंड जैसे दूर-दराज के क्षेत्रों को ध्यान में रखा गया है। एम्स जैसे संस्थान पंजाब, तमिलनाडु, जम्मू-कश्मीर, हिमाचल और असम में दिए गये हैं। जम्मू-कश्मीर, कर्नाटक को आईआईटी तथा आंध्र प्रदेश में आईआईएम खोलने की घोषणा की गई है। सरकार का लक्ष्य 2022 तक हर पांच किलोमीटर के दायरे में एक सीनियर सैकेंडरी स्कूल साथ ही साथ 80 हजार मिडिल स्कूल और 75 हजार प्राथमिक स्कूलों को अपग्रेड करना है। अल्पसंख्यक वर्ग के युवाओं को शिक्षा और रोजगार हेतु नई मंजिल योजना प्रारंभ की जाएगी।

अदालतों में बड़ी संख्या में लंबित मुकदमों को कम करने और तुरन्त न्याय मुहैया कराने के उद्देश्य से मिनिस्ट्री ऑफ लॉ एंड जस्टिस के लिए 4564

करोड़ रुपए के बजट का प्रावधान किया गया है। जो मौजूदा प्रावधान से 50 प्रतिशत अधिक है।

एम.एस.एम.ई. सेक्टर देश के सामाजिक आर्थिक विकास में महत्वपूर्ण भूमिका निभा रहा है। आज एम.एस.एम.ई. क्षेत्र का निर्यात में हिस्सा 40 प्रतिशत तथा विनिर्माण में 45 प्रतिशत है और सकल घरेलू उत्पाद में योगदान आठ प्रतिशत है। एम.एस.एम.ई. क्षेत्र में उद्यमों की कुल संख्या लगभग चार करोड़ है। जिसमें 15.64 लाख पंजीकृत उद्यम हैं। यह एक ऐसा फोकस क्षेत्र है जो उद्यमों का उत्पादक व प्रतिस्पर्धा बनाए रखता है। एम.एस.एम.ई. क्षेत्र में लगभग 5.77 करोड़ से अधिक उद्यम एवं सेवा क्षेत्रों में हैं जिनमें लगभग 62 प्रतिशत अनुसूचित जाति तथा अनुसूचित जन जाति व अन्य पिछड़ा वर्ग के हैं। इस बजट में इन्हें सहज तरीके से ऋण की सुविधा उपलब्ध कराने के उद्देश्य से 20 हजार करोड़ रुपए के बजट से मुद्रा बैंक की स्थापना की गई है।

किसानों, गरीबों, भूमिहीनों व वंचितों का सामाजिक सुरक्षा प्रदान करने हेतु प्रधानमंत्री बीमा सुरक्षा योजना के अंतर्गत 12 रुपए वार्षिक प्रीमियम पर दो लाख रुपए का दुर्घटना बीमा की सुरक्षा प्रदान की गई है। यानि एक रुपए प्रति माह के प्रीमियम पर दो लाख रुपए की दुर्घटना बीमा दी गई है। अटल पेंशन योजना के अंतर्गत जन-धन योजना में 31 दिसम्बर से पूर्व खुले खातों पर सरकार पांच साल तक 50 फीसदी योगदान करेगी।

वास्तव में कुल मिलाकर इस बजट को दूरगामी, सकारात्मक, सभी के हिताय कहा जा सकता है। यह बजट प्रधानमंत्री श्री नरेंद्रमोदी के विजन का रोड मैप है जो सबका साथ सबका विकास सुनिश्चित करेगा और भारत में आर्थिक विकास की रफ्तार को नया आयाम देगा।

NDA Govt's blueprint for India's New Economy

A budget, presented by any Government, is not merely an accounting exercise of expenditure and receipts, or a document for the use of taxes to encourage corporate investment. A budget in a developing economy like India, must propel the socio-economic development of the entire nation. In this sense, the General Budget of the Union Government presented by Arun Jaitley last month is going to be a defining document in India's political economy as he has laid down a clear agenda for India's socio-economic transformation.

Taking off from the view that the world now thinks it is "India's chance to fly", Finance Minister put together a Budget which, if one joins the dots, sets the stage for a new economic order in India. Arun Jaitley's second Budget has a coherent, purposeful and proactive approach which will move the economy forward. The Budget has a comprehensive framework which outlines the NDA's principle vision to spur economic growth. The strategy towards achieving the vision has also been clearly articulated in the budget speech and the bottom line is that the State will play the primary role in economic

and social development and so accordingly as per the Keynesian model, Public investment (a whopping Rs 1.25 lakh crore in 2015-16 alone) would be pumped in the economy and the government would also work towards rural upliftment and social welfare

Finance Minister put together a Budget which, if one joins the dots, sets the stage for a new economic order in India. Arun Jaitley's second Budget has a coherent, purposeful and proactive approach which will move the economy forward.

simultaneously by spending huge sums on irrigation under the Prime Minister Sinchai Yojna, farm credit, MNREGA and a host of social welfare or social security programmes such as the PM Suraksha Bima Yojna, PM Jeewan Jyoti Yojna and Atal Pension Yojna.

FM has shunned "crony capitalism" by resisting the pressures of the private desi and videshi corporates by denying them any concessions for encouraging manufacturing and service sector investment ; instead Arun Jaitley has tried to attract private

investment by improving "the ease of doing business" in India. For instance, he talked about the E-Biz portal that has integrated 14 regulatory permissions at one source; he has constituted an expert committee to draft legislation to design a "pre-existing regulatory mechanism", as a substitute for prior permissions and has indicated the government's will to establish an Institutional Dispute Resolution mechanism under the proposed "Public Contracts Resolution of Disputes Bill" so as to hasten investment projects.

The setting up of the MUDRA Bank to refinance the microfinance institutions for 'funding the unfunded' aims at addressing a major gap which had existed till now for micro and small enterprises who have always struggled for access to funds.

Jaitley decision to introduce the "GOLD Monetisation Scheme", to issue "Gold Sovereign Bonds" so as to utilise household gold for investment, his decision to use post offices as "banks" for garnering deposits in remote areas and his attempt to integrate the Jan Dhan Yojna with new social security programmes such as the PM Suraksha Bima Yojna, Atal Pension Yojna etc., are really "out-of-the box" ideas.

Recognising that agricultural and rural income were under stress - shows that the Modi Government has not only its finger on the pulse but also its heart at the right place. Therefore, upping the MNREGA outlay (to highest ever levels) and increasing budgetary allocation for rural infrastructure - road, electricity and irrigation shows the Government's commitment towards welfare of the poor.

In Budget, Finance Minister has also promised to introduce some tough laws in Parliament to bring back black money stashed abroad. The proposed legislation against black money will blocks those loopholes because of which black money gets generated. To curb domestic black money, FM announced that a new and more comprehensive Benami Transactions (prohibition) Bill will be introduced in the current session of Parliament.

All in all, Arun Jaitley's budget breaks new ground. It is a document crafted with honesty, realism and a powerful vision of India's future. By laying down a clear blueprint of Indian economy, Jaitley has set the tone for *acche din* to set in. It is the first blueprint for India's new economy.

-SPMRF Desk

Priority to Agriculture in Union Budget : 2015-2016

• Siddharth Singh

In the Union Budget 2015-16 the Government has specifically mentioned some steps to address the two major factors criti-

cal to agricultural production: soil and water. An ambitious Soil Health Card Scheme has been launched to improve soil fertility on



Department wise allocation in Ministry of Agriculture:

Central Plan Outlay by Ministries/Departments

(In crores of Rupees)

	2014-2015	2015-2016
	Revised	Budget
Ministry of Agriculture	8735	10670
Department of Agriculture and Cooperation	5326	5846
Department of Agricultural Research and Education	2500	3691
Department of Animal Husbandry, Dairying and Fisheries	909	1133

Major Programmes under Central Plan

(In crore of Rupees)

Sl. No.	2014-2015 Revised	2015-2016 Budget
1 Ministry of Agriculture	8734.6	10669.99
1.1 Krishyonnati Yojana (Central Plan)	...	3257.25
1.2 Crop Insurance	2587.78	2588.6
1.3 Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR)	2206.64	3295
1.4 Dairy Vikas Abhiyaan	...	481.5
1.5 Blue Revolution	50	410.69

a sustainable basis. In order to improve soil health, government has proposed to support the Agriculture Ministry's organic farming scheme - "Paramparagat Krishi Vikas Yojana". The Pradhanmantri Gram Sinchai Yojana is aimed at irrigating the field of every farmer and improving water use efficiency to provide 'Per Drop More Crop'. The Government has allocated Rs 5,300 crore to support micro-irrigation, watershed development and the Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchai Yojana.

To support the agriculture sector with the help of effective and hassle-free agriculture credit, with a special focus on small and marginal farmers, government has proposed to allocate Rs 25,000 crore in 2015-16 to the corpus of Rural Infrastructure Development Fund (RIDF) set up in NABARD; Rs 15,000 crore for Long

Term Rural Credit Fund; Rs 45,000 crore for Short Term Cooperative Rural Credit Refinance Fund; and Rs 15,000 crore for Short Term RRB Refinance Fund. Government has set up an ambitious target of Rs 8.5 lakh crore of Farm credit during the year 2015-16 and is committed to supporting employment through MGNREGA.

To increase the incomes of farmers, the Government has emphasised on the need for a National Agricultural Market. Government intends to work with the States, in NITI, for the creation of a Unified National Agriculture Market. Government has also proposed to set up a Post Graduate Institute of Horticulture Research and Education in Amritsar.

(Siddharth Singh is Research Associate at SPMRF)

The twain shall meet

• *Ram Madhav*

When the Jammu and Kashmir BJP gave the call for “Mission 44+” during the run up to the assembly elections in the state, we had our own assessments and calculations for how we could achieve it. We foresaw various post-poll scenarios and worked on different permutations and combinations. But frankly, not even once did we think of a situation where we would be joining hands with the PDP.

Something that was unthinkable and unimaginable has happened. Today, J&K has a coalition government led jointly by the PDP and the BJP. In politics, the lure of power sometimes makes strange bedfellows. Occasionally, politics also provides you with an opportunity to think of impossible things to achieve larger goals. What prompted the BJP and the PDP to form this alliance?

Had it been only the lure of power, there would have been a government in Jammu some six to eight weeks ago. If power were the only objective, better options were available to the PDP — the Congress and the National Conference were ready to support it unconditionally.

An “unholy” alliance between these parties would have left the BJP the lone opposition in the state. But besides being unholy, it would have also become an unrepresentative government.

The J&K assembly elections have thrown up a difficult and complex verdict. Any government without BJP participation would have meant the exclusion of one full region of the state in the administration. Thus the options were restricted. And we decided to go for the most difficult, yet most durable, option — a PDP-BJP alliance.

“The results of these elections have been judged as fractured and indecisive by everyone. The reality is that it is not the mandate of political parties that is fractured; it is the polity of J&K that is fractured. Instead of being judgemental about these electoral results, the PDP and the BJP have made efforts to understand the verdict in all its complexity” — this is how the common minimum programme of the PDP-BJP coalition describes the electoral outcome.

It took a full two months to stitch this alliance carefully. As Chief Minister Mufti Mohammad Sayeed

described it aptly, the two parties are like the “North and South Poles”. There were difficulties, highs and lows, as well as stalemates during the nerve-wracking negotiations. There were at least a couple of occasions when we almost decided to call off the talks and pack up. It was like the proverbial war of nerves.

Yet we succeeded in the end because of two factors. First, neither side looked at government formation as arithmetic. We had a much larger objective in mind. We had a distinct mandate that needed to be respected. There was an opportunity to bring the people of Jammu and the Valley closer. As Mufti pointed out, the geographical distance can be covered in six hours; but the emotional distance couldn't be covered in 60 years. We are also presented with the opportunity to decimate the emotional barriers between J&K and the rest of the country.

Second, our success depended on the fact that we didn't allow any extraneous factors to influence us. We kept the negotiations strictly under wraps, not with any ulterior intention, but to ensure that we don't get distracted.

We finally have a common minimum programme, “Agenda of the Alliance”, released yesterday by the

new chief minister and his deputy. Have we compromised? A resounding no. Where we have fundamental differences, we have admitted it honestly and given our prescription based on a common understanding — not necessarily consensus — of each other's concerns.

Take, for example, the question of Article 370. “While recognising the different positions and appreciating the perceptions BJP and PDP have on the constitutional status of J&K, considering the political and legislative realities, the present position will be maintained on all the constitutional provisions pertaining to J&K, including the special status in the Constitution of India” — this is what the common minimum programme says. We have agreed to “maintain all constitutional provisions” for the next six years, something we did in 1999, when the Atal Bihari Vajpayee-led NDA government was formed.

Similarly, on the contentious Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act, the common minimum programme has left the onus of taking a “final view” on the Union government, while the state government would, for its part, “examine” the need for “denotifying disturbed areas”. Even here, both the parties admit that they “have historically held a different view on the AFSPA and the need

for it in the state at present”.

The focus of the new coalition government will be threefold: restoring peace, the large-scale rehabilitation of flood victims and ensuring “equitable distribution and balanced development” of all the three regions of the state. Towards that end, the common minimum programme has many social, humanitarian and developmental initiatives for all sections of the state.

The Kashmiri Pandits will return to the Valley with “dignity based on their rights as state subjects”. A “one-time settlement” will be worked out for the refugees from Pakistan-occupied Kashmir of 1947, '65 and '71. Measures will be taken to ensure that the West Pakistan refugees who have been languishing in the state for almost 70 years, without their basic human needs being taken care of, will get “sustenance and livelihood”. A new dawn is breaking for millions of hapless refugees who will now get a ration card for the first time in their lives.

An ambitious agenda of governance and development guides the new coalition in the state. The challenges are serious. A rotten, corrupt system is what the new leaders have inherited. A near bankrupt econ-

omy and the utter misery of the people stare them in the face. Above all, they will have to manage the inherent contradictions between two political parties with distinct ideological predilections.

But the leadership is mature. It may take some time to adjust to the new partnership.

A faux pas causing PR problems every now and then can't be ruled out. However, if the coalition leadership is committed to the vision enunciated in the common minimum programme, it would open a new chapter in the history of J&K.

A political commentator has observed that this common minimum programme is a document that symbolises the second and de facto accession of the state. This may sound hyperbolic. Nevertheless, it underscores the significance of this historic alliance in J&K. Its success will herald a landmark strengthening of India's integrity and sovereignty.

(The writer, national general secretary of the BJP, led the negotiations with the PDP for government formation in J&K)

Courtesy: The Indian Express 2nd March, 2015

Modi Govt ups the ante on black money

The Union Budget presented by Finance Minister Arun Jaitley has been hailed in various quarters for the clutch of initiatives announced to give the economy a big push. Among these one of the most important elements of the Budget is the move to rein in the parallel economy of Black money. Through a series of steps, Arun Jaitley has aimed at addressing the black economy issue which includes the creation of a new law on black money and so accordingly he has proposed some tough measures to bring offenders to book. So those who have cheated our country till now by converting their wealth into black money and hiding it either abroad or within India, will surely feel uncomfortable because in the budget Finance Minister has challenged this corruption with a double-pronged policy: on the one hand awarding severe punishment for cheats in order to bring accountability for the past, and on the other hand bringing transparency in decision-making to curb dishonesty in the future.

For this, the NDA Government will bring in a comprehensive new Bill in Parliament on Black money. The offence of concealment of income or evasion of tax in relation

to a foreign asset will be made a predicate offence under the Prevention of Money Laundering law. Enforcement agencies can then attach and confiscate unaccounted assets and launch prosecution against persons indulging in money laundering. Concealment of income and assets and evasion of tax on foreign assets will be prosecutable with punishment of rigorous imprisonment up to ten years. This offence will be made non-compoundable and penalty for such concealment of income and assets at 300 per cent tax would be levied. The offenders will not be permitted to approach the Settlement Commission. To curb domestic Black money, FM announced that a new and more comprehensive Benami Transactions (prohibition) Bill will be introduced in the current session of Parliament. This law will enable confiscation of benami property and provide for prosecution. The Budget has taken the black money issue head-on and promised legislative measures. It is now the turn of the Opposition to support these initiatives in Parliament and see the legislative measures through.

- SPMRF Desk

From a cooperative federalism towards a competitive one

• *Sushant Jha*

The famous statement of former Andhra CM N T Rama Rao describing center as a mere "conceptual myth" (1) brings out the complexity of the center-state relationship in India. In fact, it was for the creation of Andhra Pradesh that Potti Sreeramulu undertook the fatal fast unto death whose aftermath compelled the government of India to constitute the State Reorganization Commission and give acceptance to linguistic basis of the state creation.

For several foreigners, India's diversity made it an unnatural nation (2) but for India's forefathers it was the reflection of pluralist Indian civilization. For them, it was the main reason why India adopted a federal parliamentary system so as to nurture every aspiration blossoming in the fabric of India. But at the same time they were conscious of the historical experience as well. As per Dr. Ambedkar, India had to face defeat from foreigners due to disunity and indifference between different regions. (3) Therefore, he advocated a strong center in the Republic of India.

But during the time of constitution making itself, representatives

of states opposed an extremely powerful center arguing that the country has got a 'unitary constitution in place of a promised federal one' and the concept of democracy is limited to the boundaries of Delhi. (4) The assertion has continued till date with states demanding non-interference, increase in revenue share or share in collection of taxes and limiting the numbers of centrally sponsored schemes. CM of TN, Jayalalitha once said that states have been reduced to the level of "glorified municipalities" due to the extra-ordinary powers enjoyed by the center. (5) But the nature of such demands has changed. From being the demand of regional identity and regional autonomy, it has become more about economic share for which "soft regionalism" is often invoked.

At present, we are witnessing a full majority government at the center after a long time, which has defied the popular rationalization of coalition era, with ever increasing role of regional parties, as a belated natural reflection of India's regional diversity. However regional parties are not new in India's electoral history. They emerged soon after

the independence and got traction with the transformation of congress from a rainbow national party to a family run enterprise. This marginalized the regional leaders, which led to neglect of regional concerns and aspirations. This forced these leaders to move out of umbrella of congress and form their own region specific parties.

But the expression of regional concerns and identity has not been without its problems. The Naga movement and the Kashmir issue were some of them in the early years of independence. In early 80s and later, a demand for separate Khalistan state were raised; having its roots in the early years of post-independence.(6)

So the problem we are faced with is "what is the solution for these regional aspirations and how could it be utilized in the nation-building process"? Also, how can the federal structure be strengthened while letting the thousand flowers bloom? These are the burning questions, which demand a balanced, liberal and a far-sighted leadership; fortunately India had never dearth of it, unlike its struggling and partially failed Western neighbor. But for answering it, we need to know the characteristics of the regional politics and its impact on the federal character of India.

India witnesses a wide variety of regional politics. The first kind of regional politics derives its inspiration from the identity politics of languages. In fact, the first reorganization of Indian states took place on this very ground and main concern behind it was the fear of some language groups of being over-shadowed by some dominant language group in the region.

The second kind of regional politics is that of religious-ethnic identity, due to concerns of people of losing their religion, or ethnic identity in a huge unitary oriented national mainstream. At times, it went to the extent of separatist demand but largely it remained agitated in the realm of constitution. Its example was Akali Dal (Punjab), Mizo National Front (Mizoram), Asom Gana Parishad (Assam) and National Conference of Jammu and Kashmir etc.

Third form of regionalism is comparatively less 'regional' and driven by aspirations of downtrodden and backwards castes. At times, such movements developed into a localized party. These parties affected our federal system in a significantly different ways and were manifested in Samajawadi Party (UP), RJD (Bihar), BJD (Odisha) and JD-S of Karnataka.

When India witnessed largely a

single party rule from 1952 to 1990, regional parties did not affect the functioning of the center in a way it did in later decades. But the pre-90 era did witness some impact of regional politics on the federal system. In fact, the creation of new provinces on linguistic basis was itself a fine example of regional impact on our federal polity. It was made possible despite center's clear reluctance to open a Pandora box of such demands in the immediate aftermath of the partition. It was the regional politics, which prevented Hindi from being the sole official language of India and ensured continuation of the English. A comprehensive study of language policy of government of India will itself throw much light on regional politics and its influence on our federal system. But it was in 90s & after that regional politics became so dominant and coalition so routine that they even tried to affect the foreign policy of the country. During UPA-2, the Chief Minister of West Bengal refused to visit Bangladesh as part of a delegation led by the Prime Minister. (7) Similarly, during Sri Lankan civil war, political parties in Tamil Nadu pressurized the Government of India to talk tough to Sri Lanka.

Regionalism also came to fore when it came to the distribution of

resources; natural or material. Distribution of river water, ownership of some cities (i.e., then Bombay, Chandigarh or Hyderabad these days), priority in industrial plants or regionalism within a region (i.e. Telangana or Bodoland) was main demands by different regions or regional parties. Till early 90s, newspapers were filled with headlines of Cauvery water dispute or water dispute of Ravi-Vyas River. Often, it was seen that governments fought with each other on these issues even if they belonged to the same party. In Punjab, Haryana, Karnataka and Tamil Nadu, it was Congress or Congress-alliance government in power but they continuously fought for river water. In year 2004, Punjab assembly even passed a resolution scrapping water treaties with neighbouring states in an open violation of federal spirit. (8) At that time, Punjab and Center both had Congress governments.

In some states regional parties opposed those coming from other states on the ground of protecting jobs for locals. It happened in Assam in 60s where Bengalis (especially from East Pakistan) were opposed and in Maharashtra in early 60s (targeted at south Indians) and in the first decade of new millennium where north Indians were opposed.

But regional politics also had its positive side as well. For example, the development of Tamil Nadu or Mizoram may well be cited; which were once epicenter of anti-Hindi, anti-North and anti-Brahmin movement. These states showed the trend of a linguistic, ethnic, caste and anti-center approach. But the feeling of Tamil sub-nationality also did some good for the state. It compelled its leaders to better connect with its people and make state more welfare-centric. They showed inclusive development and were ahead on social standards like education, health and nutrition. Likewise, Himachal Pradesh and Mizoram which were carved out of Punjab and Assam respectively, focused on education especially girl's education and in the later part of 90s Himachal registered a female literacy rate of 98 percent which was just 11 percent in 1961! (9) The regional politics inspired their leaders to become more pro-people and provide better governance, which reflected into literacy rate, per-capita income, better gender ratio, social harmony etc via schemes like mid-day meal, cycle for school going girls, affordable housing and cheaper food-grains for the poor.

In fact, while regionalism was a 'real danger' at the time of independence, it is now controllable and to an extent also welcome. During

British Raj, most of India was backward; it seemed like a colony within a colony where handful of big cities had all facilities. The condition of princely states was different; fortunately some of the princes established modern school or colleges or someone started scheme for the poor. When British left India, only 8 percent of population was literate and almost similar number lived in the cities. The country faced huge disparity; economic, social and regional. In such a scenario, the danger to the unity of country due to regional dissent was 'real'. But by creating infrastructure and spreading education and economic activities, the government has somehow tried to establish a level of parity in the country. Cinema, industrial activities, communication tools, cricket and other factors have done the similar task to lowering regional antagonism. Today regional issues are no more than asking for a better pie in the economy; they do not pose a threat to the national unity anymore but argue for better & equitable integration in the national mainstream. People now can be a confident Tamil, Kannadiga or Bihari at the same time while being a proud Indian as well. (10)

As far as the future of regionalism is concerned, a diverse country like ours is bound to have regional characteristics and it is natural. It can't

be eliminated from this country nor is it desirable; yes the way nation is striving forward in infrastructure, economic integration and witnessing a rapid expansion of communication media, we can say we are moving towards a competitive federalism where states and region are competing with each other and trying to race ahead. In that process, they might quarrel sometimes; but not impact the unity of the nation. Instead, they will add a colour to the idea of India and also integrate the best elements of its culture. Recently, finance minister Arun Jaitley rightly said, "if states are strong, center would be strong. We are moving towards competitive federalism from cooperative federalism". (11)

Also, with the creation of NITI Aayog by the Modi government, it is a good initiative in the direction of letting states and different region develop and design developmental scheme as per their specific requirements. It will cater the need of 'competitive federalism' and a good push towards decentralization of economic activities. It really shows the spirit of a confident nation.

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किसान हितैषी हैं भूमि अधिग्रहण कानून में किये गये बदलाव

• नितिन गडकरी

भूमि अधिग्रहण कानून एक बार फिर बहस के दायरे में हैं। बहस छिड़ी है इसमें हुए कुछ बदलावों को लेकर। इन बदलावों को कुछ राजनीतिक दल और जनसंगठन किसान विरोधी बता रहे हैं। सार्थक बहस किसी भी लोकतंत्र के लिए जरूरी है। जनहित में सरकार हर एक शंका का समाधान चाहती है। यही कारण है कि सरकार ने गांव, गरीब और किसानों के हितों को ध्यान में रखते हुए इसमें भी कई संशोधन किए, इन संशोधनों से लोकसभा सहमत है। कानून में बदलावों का विरोध करने वाले देश में एक गलत धारणा बनाने की कोशिश कर रहे हैं। विरोध करने वाले राजनीतिक दल मुखौटा लगाकर विरोध में खड़े हैं। उनकी असली तस्वीर उनकी राज्य सरकारों ने हमें जो पत्र दिए हैं उसमें दिखती है। मेरे पास इस विषय पर हर एक राज्य सरकारों की राय है, जो पत्रों के जरिये मुझे दी गई थी। ये राजनीतिक दल ऐसी धारणा बना रहे हैं कि भूमि अधिग्रहण कानून में जो बदलाव किए गए, वे गांव, गरीब और किसान विरोधी है। यह पूरी तरह आधारहीन और तथ्यहीन है।

120 साल से चले आ रहे एक गांव, गरीब और किसान विरोधी कानून को बदलने में भारतीय जनता पार्टी ने पिछली संप्रग सरकार का दो कदम आगे बढ़कर साथ दिया। देखने में आया कि कई कमियां इस कानून में रह गई थीं। इन कमियों की वजह से ग्रामीण विकास की रफ्तार तेज गति से आगे नहीं बढ़ सकती। इन कमियों के रहते खेतों को पानी भी हम उपलब्ध नहीं करा पाते। बदलावों से जो शंकाएं पैदा हो रही थीं, उनका भी हमने समाधान किया। हमने साफ कर दिया कि निजी स्कूलों, अस्पतालों के लिए सरकार भूमि अधिग्रहीत नहीं करेगी, सिर्फ सरकारी संस्थाओं, निगमों के

लिए ही सरकार भूमि अधिग्रहण करेगी। कृषि श्रमिकों के लिए हमने एक कदम और आगे बढ़ाया। जमीन अधिग्रहण से प्रभावित परिवारों व कृषि श्रमिकों के एक परिजन को नौकरी मिलना अब अनिवार्य होगा। औद्योगिक कॉरिडोर को लेकर भी कुछ शंकाएं पैदा हो रही थीं। उसका भी हमने समाधान किया, उसकी परिभाषा तय कर दी। सड़क या रेलमार्ग के दोनों ओर एक किलोमीटर तक भूमि ही अधिग्रहीत होगी। अब हम उन सवालों की तरफ लौटना चाहते हैं जिन सवालों को बदलावों का विरोध करने वाले उठा रहे हैं। पहला सवाल किया जा रहा है कि आखिर अध्यादेश लाने की जरूरत क्यों पड़ी? किसानों के हित में अध्यादेश लाना जरूरी था। यदि हम अध्यादेश नहीं लाते तो किसानों को उनकी जमीन का बाजार भाव से चार गुना मुआवजा नहीं दे सकते थे। इस अध्यादेश की बदौलत ही हम किसानों को उनकी जमीन का चार गुना मुआवजा दे पाए। केवल राजमार्ग मंत्रालय और ऊर्जा मंत्रालय ने किसानों को 2000 करोड़ का मुआवजा दिया। यह केवल दो मंत्रालयों का आंकड़ा है।

विरोध करने वाले दल दूसरा सवाल उठा रहे हैं कि बदलाव करने से पहले उनसे बातचीत क्यों नहीं की गई? उनकी यह बात भी तथ्यहीन है। हमने विज्ञान भवन में सभी राज्य सरकारों की एक बैठक बुलाई थी। जिस बैठक में करीब सभी राज्य सरकारों के प्रतिनिधि मंत्री शामिल हुए। इस विषय में उन राज्य सरकारों के मुख्यमंत्रियों के पत्र भी हमारे पास हैं। ये पत्र बदलावों का विरोध करने वाले राजनीतिक दलों की असली तस्वीर है। इन पत्रों से जाहिर होता है कि राजनीतिक दलों का विरोध सिर्फ सियासी कलाबाजी के अलावा कुछ नहीं। अब बात उन बदलावों की, जिन्हें गांव, गरीब

और किसानों का विरोधी बताया जा रहा है। पिछली सरकार जो भूमि अधिग्रहण, पुनर्वास और पुनर्स्थापन अधिनियम 2013 लाई, उस कानून में से 13 विषयों को बाहर रखा गया। इनमें सबसे प्रमुख तो कोयला क्षेत्र अधिग्रहण और विकास कानून 1957 और भूमि अधिग्रहण कानून 1885, और राष्ट्रीय राजमार्ग अधिनियम, 1956 है। इसके अलावा एटमी ऊर्जा कानून 1962, इंडियन ट्रामवेज एक्ट 1886, रेलवे एक्ट 1989, प्राचीन स्मारक और पुरातात्विक स्थल और अवशेष अधिनियम 1958, पेट्रोलियम और खनिज पाइपलाइन एक्ट 1962, दामोदर घाटी निगम अधिनियम 1948, बिजली अधिनियम 2003, अचल संपत्ति अधिग्रहण अधिनियम 1952, विस्थापितों का पुनर्वास अधिनियम 1948 और मेट्रो रेलवे अधिनियम 1978 प्रमुख हैं। इन विषयों को देखते हुए ग्रामीण विकास, सिंचाई परियोजनाओं और देश की सुरक्षा को ध्यान में रखते हुए कुछ बदलाव जरूरी समझ में आए। इसमें रक्षा, ग्रामीण बिजली, सिंचाई परियोजनाएं, गरीबों के लिए घर और औद्योगिक कॉरीडोर जैसी परियोजनाएं शामिल की गईं।

प्रधानमंत्री नरेंद्र मोदी गांव और किसानों के पक्षधर हैं। मैं भी ग्रामीण क्षेत्र में काम करता हूं। किसान का बेटा हूं, इसलिए हमारे और हमारी सरकार के हाथ से कोई भी ऐसा काम नहीं होगा जो किसानों के विरोध में हो। जिन विषयों को हमने इस कानून से बाहर रखने वाले विषयों की सूची में रखा है, उसमें से एक भी किसानों के विरोध में नहीं है। इंडस्ट्रियल कॉरीडोर दिल्ली या फिर किसी महानगर में नहीं बनेगा। यह ग्रामीण इलाको से होकर गुजरेगा। इसके तहत अगर ग्रामीण इलाकों में उद्योग लगते हैं तो इसका सीधा फायदा किसानों को होगा। हमने सिंचाई परियोजनाओं के लिए कानून में बदलाव किए हैं। 2000 एकड़ में अगर हम सिंचाई परियोजना लगाते हैं तो तीन लाख हेक्टेयर भूमि को हम पानी

उपलब्ध करा सकते हैं। यह कहां से किसान विरोधी है? यही नहीं, जमीन मालिक के अलावा भी उस पर निर्भर लोग मुआवजे के हकदार होंगे। पूरा मुआवजा मिलने के बाद ही जमीन से विस्थापन होगा। इसके बाद भी उपजाऊ जमीन अधिग्रहीत करने की या नहीं करने की या फिर उसकी सीमा तय करने की पूरी छूट राज्यों को दी गई है। शंका का समाधान करते हुए हमने लोकसभा में परियोजनाओं के लिए बंजर जमीन के अधिग्रहण की बात कही। क्या यह सब किसान विरोधी है? इन बदलावों में न्यायसंगत मुआवजे के अधिकार और पारदर्शिता पर खास जोर दिया गया है। इसी के आसपास भूमिधारी समुदाय के हक-हकूक के मसलों को कानून में रेखांकित किया गया है। अब मुआवजा एक निर्धारित खाते में ही जमा होगा। मुकम्मल पुनर्वास इस कानून का मूल आधार है। बिना उसके कोई भी जमीन किसी भी किसान से देश के किसी भी हिस्से में किसी भी कीमत पर नहीं ली जा सकेगी। इस पर भी कुछ सवाल उठ रहे थे, सरकार ने उन सवालों को भी सुलझा लिया। अब दोषी अफसरों पर अदालत में कार्यवाई हो सकेगी। इसके साथ ही किसानों को अपने जिले में ही शिकायत या अपील का अधिकार होगा।

देश की सुरक्षा पर ही हमने ध्यान दिया है। आज देश के लोगों की गाढ़ी कमाई विदेशों से हथियार मंगाने पर खर्च होती है। क्या हमें इस क्षेत्र में आत्मनिर्भर नहीं होना चाहिए? क्या ये देशहित में नहीं है? इसके बाद भी हम अच्छे सुझावों को आमंत्रित करते हैं। सदन में भी और सदन के बाहर भी। लेकिन एक बात ही कह सकते हैं कि सोने वाले को जगाया जा सकता है लेकिन जो सोने का ढोंग कर रहे हैं उन्हें नहीं।

(लेखक नितिन गडकरी, केंद्रीय सड़क परिवहन और राजमार्ग मंत्री हैं।)

(साभार: दैनिक जागरण, 12 मार्च, 2015)

A round up of the Budget Session of the Parliament (23rd February to 16th March)

• *Shubhendu Anand*

The first week of the Budget Session that began with the President's Address to the Members of both the Houses concluded with the presentation of the General Budget for 2015-16 by the Finance Minister Shri Arun Jaitley on the 28th February, 2015 and laying of the same on the Table of Rajya Sabha.

The inaugural week of the Budget Session began on a promising note with the Rajya Sabha passing two Bills on the first full working day on February 24, 2015. The highlight of the first week in the Lok Sabha has been the marathon 13 hour debate on the Motion of Thanks to the President's Address and the reply of the Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi before the Motion was adopted by the House. The Prime Minister in his invigorating opening remarks said, "All the honourable members have communicated their ideas in detail during the discussion. I am grateful to all. This is a fact that this house is a Council of States. There are lots of members amongst us who have represented a particular state and during their time of representing that state,

public mood was somewhat different than what it is today in the prevailing situation. Now the political situations have changed. People have changed their decision. And in that sense, from the perspective of Council of States, the representation of the sentiments of the people of those states, representation of the sentiments of the government of those states which the people have elected is a must and this is natural as well. What is more important is the state which we represent rather than the party we are representing and it is our responsibility to represent the state in the position in which it is today. And in that sense, this house will definitely honor the public opinion. The people have given mandate with a great expectation to run the government and although scope for criticism and arguments is always there, it is our collective responsibility to cooperate with each other for the betterment of our country, and I believe that we will not go back in carrying forward this collective responsibility."

Minister of Health & Family Welfare Shri J.P.Nadda made a suo-

moto statement on Swine Flu in both the Houses in the first week. During the first week of the current session, the Government has moved motions for withdrawal of three Bills pending in the Rajya Sabha pertaining to allocation of coal mines through open bidding, introduction of e-rickshaws and hiking FDI in Insurance sector and the same have been put on hold further to some issues raised by the opposition members.

The Government is of the view that new laws by virtue of promulgation of three related Ordinances are in force rendering the pending Bills infructuous and it is within its right to introduce new Bills in the Lok Sabha.

As per the provisions of the Constitution, all the six Ordinances have to be replaced by Acts of Parliament by April 5, 2015.

Parliament passes Bill to amend Citizenship Amendment Act

The Citizenship Act, 1955 provides for citizenship by birth, descent, registration, naturalization and by incorporation of territory. It also provides for renunciation and termination of citizenship under certain circumstances. It contains provisions regarding registration of

overseas citizens of India and their rights. Overseas citizens of India are entitled to benefits such as a multiple-entry and multipurpose life-long Indian visas. The amendment adds grounds on which a person may register for overseas citizenship of India. These include children whose parents are Indian citizens, spouses of an Indian citizens or overseas citizens of India, among others. The amendment also brings holders of PIO or Person of Indian Origin status in line with overseas citizens of India, who are entitled to greater benefits. This is something Mr. Modi promised the Indian American community when he visited New York in September. On March 4th Parliament passed a bill to amend the Citizenship Act to remove disparity between Persons of Indian Origin (PIO) and Overseas Citizens of India (OCI) cardholders.

The Citizenship (Amendment) Bill 2015 was one of the six Bills on which Ordinances had been promulgated by the ruling NDA government. The measure, passed by Lok Sabha on Monday, was adopted in the Rajya Sabha by a voice vote. Replying to the debate, Minister of State for Home Kiren Rijiju said the Ordinance was necessitated to honour Prime Minister Narendra Modi's commitment in the US and Australia to merge PIO and OCI

cards before January 9, the centenary of Mahatma Gandhi's return to India from South Africa. He said the only objection to the Bill was with regard to promulgation of Ordinance which was "an issue of sentiment."

"January 9, 2015 marked the completion 100 years of Mahatma Gandhi's return to India. The Prime Minister had made an announcement in US and Australia to merge OCI and PIO cards before January 9 and, to fulfil this commitment, the ordinance was brought," the minister said. He said now the benefits under the PIO scheme would be extended to OCI cardholders with recognition granted to their great grand children which was earlier limited to grand children. On concerns over discrimination or harassment of the cardholders at the hands of immigration and police authorities at airports, Mr Rijiju said, "Let me assure that the entire procedure of acquisition of card is smooth." The Government would ensure that no such things happen, he added.

He said people who apply for Indian citizenship would now be allowed a 30-day break if they have to leave India for some time and their absence from the country would not affect their application

for citizenship.

Parliament passes the Motor Vehicles (Amendment) Bill, 2015

Parliament on March 11th gave nod to a Bill seeking to pave the way for plying of e-rickshaws on the roads of the National Capital Region, with the government considering a proposal to provide credit to buy these battery-operated vehicles. The Rajya Sabha passed the Motor Vehicles (Amendment) Bill, 2015 to amend the 1988 Act by a voice vote. The measure was adopted by the Lok Sabha on 3 March. Replying to the debate on the Motor Vehicles (Amendment) Bill, road transport and highways minister Nitin Gadkari said not only would the poor benefit from it but it would give a boost to 'Make in India' initiative of Prime Minister Narendra Modi as the battery-operated vehicle was now being manufactured indigenously.

On the issue of providing credit to buy e-rickshaws, Gadkari said he had approached the Finance Minister and Prime Minister and "I hope they will consider this issue." "It is a fact that man pulling man is inhuman. Nearly one crore people are doing this. This should come to a stop," he said, adding that one crore

poor people would be benefitted by the move. Maintaining that the government wanted e-rickshaws to be owned by drivers, he said "women and physically challenged people will also be given license.... Driving licence has been made a compulsory requirement. A permanent license would be given after a year of learning." The Minister said it was being debated that whether an 8th standard passed person would be eligible for a license. "If not, what happens? This condition has to be thought about on a sympathetic ground," he said. E-rickshaws or battery-operated three-wheeler vehicles had gone off roads after Delhi High Court had banned their plying in July last year on safety concerns. On January 7, President Pranab Mukherjee had promulgated an Ordinance as the Bill to regularise e-rickshaws, passed by the Lok Sabha on 18 December, had got stuck in Rajya Sabha. The Government in October last had notified the rules for plying of e-rickshaws, making driver's licence mandatory for operating them and limiting their maximum speed to 25 kmph.

While speaking on the Amendment Bill, Gadkari also said that the Government is reviewing the present driving licence issuing procedures as he admitted that

about 30 per cent of the driving licences issued in the country were 'bogus'.

He also informed the House that the Government would remove all speed breakers on the national highways, as these speed breakers led to many accidents.

Discussing about road accidents, Gadkari also told the Upper House that India topped the list of road accidents as over five lakh accidents take place annually in which 1.5 lakh lose their lives. The government has decided to rope in a well known cine-star to promote its 'Rules of Roads' campaign across the country.

Key provisions of Amendment Bill

- It brings e-carts and e-rickshaws under ambit of the parent Act, so they can ply on roads across the country.
- The Bill defines E-carts and e-rickshaws as special purpose battery powered vehicles with power up to 4000 watts and having 3 wheels. Bill mentions that these vehicles can be used for carrying goods or passengers.
- It also mentions that these vehicles should be manufactured, equipped and maintained in accor-

dance with specifications as prescribed by the Union Government.

- The Bill exempts drivers of e-rickshaw and e-cart from the requirement of learner's licence to drive.

- The Bill gives powers to the Union Government to make Rules on the specifications for e-carts and e-rickshaws, and the conditions and manner for issuing driving licenses.

Insurance Laws (Amendment) Bill passed by the Parliament

The Insurance Bill, a key reform legislation, cleared the Lok Sabha hurdle easily on March 4th 2015 but the problem of numbers in Rajya Sabha prompted the Government to say that it will convene Joint Session if it is defeated in the Upper House.

The Insurance Laws (Amendment) Bill was passed by the Lok Sabha after a short debate. Minister of State for Finance Jayant Sinha, who piloted the Bill which has been pending since 2008, said the measure was crucial for the country as "our insurance penetration is low". The Bill will now have to pass the test of Rajya Sabha.

However a seven-year long wait came to an end when the Rajya Sabha on Thursday passed the

Insurance Laws (Amendment) Bill, 2015 to increase foreign investment limit in local insurers to 49 percent from 26 percent. Narendra Modi led BJP Government introduced the Insurance Bill replacing the Ordinance issued last year.

Coal Mines (Special Provisions) Bill, 2015 and Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Amendment Bill, 2015 sent to select panels

Two key Bills aimed at reforming the coal and mines sectors were delayed as these were referred to separate Committees of Parliament on Wednesday March 11th. The Select Committees, set up by the Rajya Sabha, were asked to submit their reports by March 18, two days before Parliament goes for a month-long recess in the Budget Session. The 8-day tight deadline set for the Select Committees is being seen as a victory for the Modi government as in the past such committees taken as long as a couple of years to arrive at a conclusion.

If the Committees give their recommendations on the designated date, it gives the Government two days to debate the Bills and then send it back to the Lok Sabha if any amendments are made. The

Government can consider delaying the Budget Session break by a day because the two Ordinances are set to lapse in early April and Parliament would convene again only on 20 April.

The two bills were sent to the Select Committees after the Opposition agreed to withdraw motions to defeat the Bills in the Upper House. The 19-member select committee to look into the Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Amendment Bill, 2015 is being chaired by Bhupender Yadav of BJP. The Select Committee to look into the Coal Mines (Special Provisions) Bill, 2015, will be headed by Anil Madhav Dave of BJP.

Earlier in this session, the Lok Sabha on March 4th, 2015 had passed the Coal Allocation Bill providing for vesting mining leases to successful bidders through a transparent bidding process. Replying to the debate on the Bill,

Coal Minister Piyush Goyal said there was no provision for denationalization and workers interests will not be compromised. He said the bill has been brought to ensure continuity in coal mining operations and for promoting optimum utilization of coal resources.

The Coal Mines (Special Provisions) Bill, 2015, provides for allocation of coal mines and vesting the right, title and interest over mine infrastructure together with mining leases to successful bidders through a transparent bidding process. Before the house passed the Bill, amendments sponsored by the Opposition were negated. The Bill replaces an Ordinance brought by the Government in the inter-session period. "The requirement of all public sector units has been taken care of. State governments are also getting their requirement," Goyal said.

(Shubhendu Anand a graduate of the Tata Institute of Social Sciences (TISS),

Ministry of Agriculture

Government approves a Rs. 200 crore Central Sector Scheme for implementing E-platform for Agri-marketing

In order to promote development of a common national market for agricultural commodities through e-platforms, the DAC has approved Rs. 200 crore for a central-sector scheme for promotion of national Agricultural Market through Agri-Tech Infrastructure Fund (ATIF) to be implemented during 2014-15 to 2016-17. Under the scheme, it is proposed to utilize the ATIF for migrating towards a national market through implementation of a common e-platform for agri-marketing across all states. The scheme aims to create an appropriate e-market platform that would be deployable in wholesale regulated

markets across States and Union Territories (UTs). The platform will enable development of an alternative marketing channel, enhance transparency in auction process and number of buyers, resolve information asymmetry, improve market access by integrating warehouse based sales and will facilitate migration towards a barrier free National Market. The scheme, would facilitate setting up of a competitive and transparent system, reduce the role of middlemen and unfair trade practices in the marketing of agricultural produce and thereby enable farmers to get better prices for their produce.

Ministry of Food Processing Industries

Mega Food Parks in every State

Government is taking steps to establish one Mega Food Park in every State in the country. Mega Food Park is the flagship programme of the Ministry of Food Processing with an aim to form a hub for food processing activities to provide a bridge from farm to fork. A total 42 Mega Food Parks (MFPs) have been sanctioned by the Government for being set-up in the country. Out of these, 21 Mega Food Parks have been accorded final approval and are at various stages of implementation, while 4 Mega Food Parks are progressing towards meeting the conditions for final approval. There is

a great potential for value addition for farmers through food processing. Simultaneously this will also help in controlling food wastage and consumers will also get better prices. Thus, food processing is actually equal to saving the food. The Scheme of Mega Food Parks is aimed at providing modern infrastructure facilities along the value chain from the farm gate to the market with strong backward and forward linkages. It is expected to facilitate the efforts to increase the level of processing of agricultural and horticultural produce in the country and thereby to check the wastage.

Gujarat's Sanand: India's new car manufacturing hub

Sanand is well on its way to be among the biggest automotive clusters in the Asia-Pacific region. Some 2.2 million passenger vehicles are expected to be produced in the region in the next six to eight years by Maruti, TataMotors, Ford India and Honda Cars India. The region has become a magnet for the auto industry with the state's enabling policies including tax benefits that leveraged its natural advantages, such as proximity to ports. Availability of infrastructure, ease of doing business and close proximity

of port are among the key triggers behind choosing Sanand as a destination by various investors. For Sanand and its auto factories, 2015 is going to be a turnaround year. Led by the opening of Ford's plant and new car launches from Tata Motors, production in the Sanand area is expected to be 1-1.2 lakh units this year. As much as Rs 15,000-20,000 crore of investment has already been committed to create capacity for about 1.25 million passenger vehicles and three million two-wheelers in coming three to four years.

Chhattisgarh's per capita income up 10% in 2014-15

The per capita income in Chhattisgarh is estimated at Rs 64,442 for the 2014-15 fiscal, while the state's economy is likely to grow by 13.20 per cent during the period, according to government budget report. The report said the per capita income in 2013-14 was estimated to be at Rs 58,547. Against the backdrop of continuing economic slowdown, the growth in Gross State Domestic Product can be termed as 'impressive'. The report also underlined that as per advance estimate of GSDP at current price, agriculture sector (agriculture,

livestock, forestry and fishing) is expected to grow by 14.18 per cent, whereas industry sector (mining, construction, manufacturing and electricity, gas & water supply) and service sector is likely to grow by 10.62 per cent and 15.21 per cent, respectively. These data shows how those State Governments where BJP is in power, has always remained ahead in development and growth story as compared to other State Governments. That good governance and a development agenda remains at the core of all BJP led State governments has been proved time and again.

Tourist Count shoots up by 1,215% on implementation of Visa on Arrival

Modi Govt gives major boost to Tourism by introduction of Electronic Travel Authorization for 43 countries

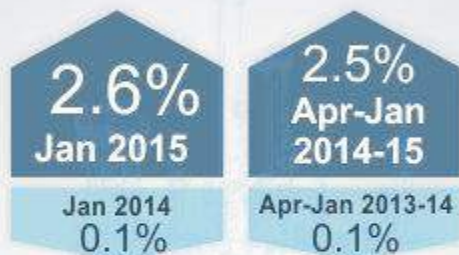


Tourist arrival using the VoA enabled ETA scheme:

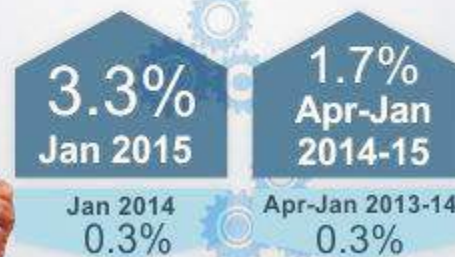


Source: Ministry of Tourism

Modi Govt brings all round cheer with spurt in Manufacturing & Industrial Production



Index of Industrial Production (IIP) growth recovers to 2.6% in Jan 2015 against 0.1% in Jan 2014 and to 2.5% during April-Jan 14-15 compared to 0.1% in April-Jan 13-14



Manufacturing sector expanded 3.3% in Jan 2015 against 0.3% in Jan 2014

Source: <http://mospi.nic.in/>

पुस्तक के विषय में
“मैं दीनदयाल उपाध्याय बोल रहा हूँ : विचार एवं चित्र वीथिका”

पुस्तक “मैं पं. दीनदयाल उपाध्याय बोल रहा हूँ : विचार एवं चित्र वीथिका” में अनेक शीर्षकों के साथ पंडित दीनदयाल उपाध्याय जी के विचारों का संक्षिप्त एवं सार्थक संयोजन किया गया है। कभी-कभी बड़े ग्रंथ सामान्य जन के लिए अपठनीय हो जाते हैं, इस नाते प्रवेशिका के रूप में उनके विचारों का संकलन बहुत ही उपयोगी है। वैचारिक शीर्षकों का दायरा व्यापक है तथा सामग्री संक्षिप्त है। चित्रों के अवलोकन से एक भावनात्मक जुड़ाव उत्पन्न होता है। किसी महापुरुष के गतिविधियों एवं ऐतिहासिकता को जानने में चित्रों की महति भूमिका होती है। इस संकलन में जिन चित्रों का चयन शोधकर्ता ने किया है, उसमें एक सर्वांगपूर्णता है। दीनदयाल जी की हर आयु का चित्र इस संग्रह में हैं, वे चित्र भी हैं, जिनसे हम उनके महत्वपूर्ण सहकर्मियों को जान सकते हैं। अनेक ऐतिहासिक घटनाएं हैं, जिनमें दीनदयाल जी की निर्णायक भूमिकाएं रही हैं। उनके भी चित्र साक्षी के रूप में इस पुस्तक में संकलित हैं। विचार एवं चित्रों का जो मंजुल सामंजस्य बैठाया गया है, इससे इस संग्रह की संग्रहणीयता बढ़ गयी है। नयी पीढ़ी के शोधकर्ताओं में जिज्ञासा उत्पन्न करने की बड़ी सम्भावना इस संग्रह में है। जितनी अधिक मात्रा में यह संग्रह नयी पीढ़ी के हाथ में पहुंचेगा, उतनी ही मात्रा में इस संग्रह की सार्थकता बढ़ जायेगी। जानकार लोगों के लिए भी इसका अवलोकन, स्मृतियों को ताजा कर देने वाला है, रंजन एवं रमणीय भी है।

इस पुस्तक में पंडित दीनदयाल जी के दुर्लभ छायाचित्रों एवं विचारों के साथ ही पंडित दीनदयाल जी के राष्ट्र प्रेम से अभिभूत प्रेरक पत्रों का संकलन भी प्रस्तुत किया गया है। भारत की अखण्डता के लिए अमर बलिदानी तथा भारतीय जनसंघ के संस्थापक डा. श्यामाप्रसाद मुखर्जी और जम्मू-कश्मीर के शेष भारत में विलय के बारे में पंडित दीनदयाल जी के महत्वपूर्ण लेखों को भी इस

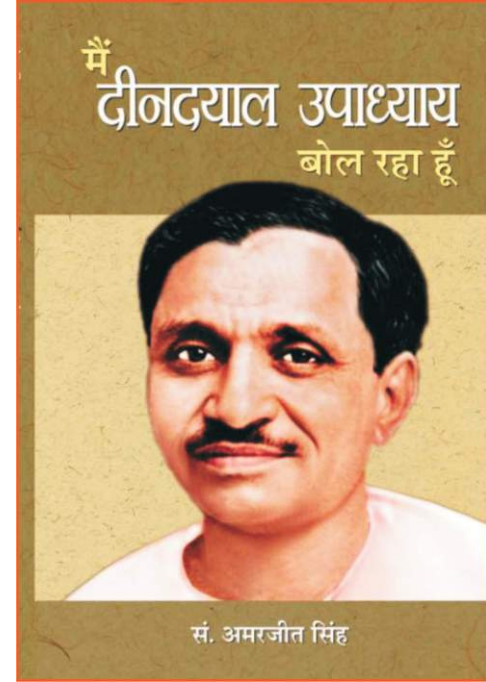
पुस्तक में प्रस्तुत करने की कोशिश की गई है। पुस्तक के अंतिम भाग में पंडित दीनदयाल जी की असामयिक मृत्यु पर महत्वपूर्ण विद्वतज्जनों द्वारा दिए गये श्रद्धा सुमन को ‘लो श्रद्धांजलि हे युग-पुरुष’ शीर्षक के अन्तर्गत रखा है। पंडित दीनदयाल जी की असामयिक मृत्यु से उत्पन्न भारतीय जनसंघ के समक्ष प्रकट हुई चुनौती को श्री अटल बिहारी वाजपेयी द्वारा रचित ‘चुनौती हमें स्वीकार है’ को भी विभिन्न राष्ट्रभक्तों की श्रद्धांजलि की कड़ी में शामिल कर प्रस्तुत किया है।

आज इस बात की नितांत आवश्यकता है कि आधुनिक राजनेताओं के विचारों का निष्पक्ष अध्ययन प्रस्तुत किया जाए। प्रस्तुत संकलन उसकी एक महत्वपूर्ण कड़ी है।

संपादन एवं संकलनकर्ता : अमरजीत सिंह, रिसर्च एसोसीएट, डा. श्यामाप्रसाद मुखर्जी शोध अधिष्ठान, नई दिल्ली

पुस्तक यहां उपलब्ध है: प्रकाश-प्रभात प्रकाशन, 4/9, आसफ अली रोड, नई दिल्ली – 110002, टेलीफोन: 011-23289555, 011-23289666

मूल्य : 250 रुपए



Round-Table discussion on “Clean Rivers, Clean India, Smart Cities”

Dr. Syama Prasad Mookerjee Research Foundation, New Delhi organized a Round Table discussion on 'Clean Rivers, Clean India & Smart Cities' on March 3rd, 2015 at the India International Centre, New Delhi. The Round Table saw the participation of eminent panelists which included industry leaders, domain experts, fellows from leading think tanks, retired senior bureaucrats, etc. There was also a presentation by a team of visiting experts from the Centre for Ecology & Hydrology, United Kingdom, who were members of the team responsible for the cleanup of the river Thames.

The Round Table started with an introduction to the topic given by Dr. Anirban Ganguly, Director, Dr. Syama Prasad Mookerjee Research Foundation, New Delhi which was then discussed further by Shri Raj Liberhan, former Director, India Habitat Centre and a well-known Urban Designer who said, “when it comes to the issues of cleanliness and sanitation, cities demand to 50-55% of our attention and hence it is important that we shift our focus on creating smart cities”. Following

are some salient points that came up during the discussion.

Eminent architect Prof. K.T. Ravindran said that the first step towards creating smart cities is addressing the problems of packaging industry which uses non-biodegradable waste. He said that the major pollutants these days are e-waste, hospital waste and toxic waste (including nuclear waste). He said, “despite dumping waste outside the cities, we have less and less land for dumping. The solution to it lies in proper processing of waste.” Prof. Ravindran emphasized the need to treat both the visible waste (including human waste) and invisible (toxic waste going into water resources)” and pointed out that according to a research the level of arsenic in the soil and water of Varanasi is 20 times more than the tolerance level. Prof. Ravindran emphasized the need to undertake serious time-bound research on the various dimensions of this issue. The data and research thus generated should be disseminated to cover the information gap in the research for smart cities. He also argued that the idea of 'Swachhata' should percolate down to the people

Glimpses of the programme



in general and become a mission.

Ms. Mriganka Saxena, Partner, Habitat Tectonics Architecture & Urbanism, highlighted the problem that India is currently facing and would be facing in future owing to unplanned urbanization. Today the number of urban dwellers is 377 million which is likely to increase to a whopping 900 million by 2050. She said, “the major problems that India is facing and would be facing because of unplanned urbanization are mobility problem, housing crisis, congestion in living space and waste production among other things.” She said that when we talk about environment it includes quality of life and the quality of life depends on choices that are available to you. She further said that we need to make mini city development programmes (CDPs) before going smart.

Ms. Ankhi Das, Director, Public Policy, Facebook India, said that there is an urgent need to address the problems faced by telecom companies and internet service providers (ISPs) in the field of infrastructure development to address the need of uninterrupted connectivity which are an essential feature of smart cities. She emphasized a need for a national regulation for single window clearance system to address the problems of infrastruc-

ture block faced by telecom companies and ISPs.

Shri Pradeep Puri, Chairman FICCI, Urban Infrastructure Committee & CEO ILFS Group stressed on the urgent need to address two main problems faced by urban populace one, the need for safe and uninterrupted drinking water supply. Second, the need proper system for treating the waste.” Shri Puri also pointed out that there was an urgent need to strengthen local elected bodies to solve problems of sanitation, infrastructure, water, etc.”

Dr. Kulwant Singh, Regional Advisor, UN Habitat, highlighted the failure of JNNURM where the governments could not even use half of the allocated money. He said that it was only because of lack of proper planning. Dr. Singh argued that there should be a sense of ownership among the administrative bodies, elected bodies and the local communities towards their cities/towns.

Shri Sanjay Gupta, an independent expert of water resources said, that there should be a focus on prevention rather than curing the problem. We must start using technology for a sustainable living. Since sanitation is directly linked to health we must first make sure

pollutants don't flow into river and drinking water rather than cleaning the polluted water later on.”

Shri Jayadeva Ranade. Former Addl. Secretary, GoI said that there is an urgent need to address the problem of dwindling food production and water crisis, and to address these problems we must fix accountability by monetary mechanisms.

Dr. Uttam K. Sinha, Fellow, IDSA spoke on the need for “smart cities to be safe cities in terms of preventing risks of sanitation, infrastructure, and suggested that communities and religious circles need to be engaged for spreading the message of cleanliness

Shri Shakti Sinha, Retd. IAS, emphasized the need to increase green cover by pushing the density of population upward and downward. He said, “if you don't have provision for cycles and walking, you can't have smart cities.”

A team from the UK based Centre for Ecology & Hydrology (CEH) gave a detailed presentation on cleaning of the river Thames. The team comprised of Dr. Gwyn Rees, Director CEH, Dr. Martin Griffiths, former Head of Water Quality for the UK Environment Agency & Deputy Director of Regulation, Department of Environment, Food

& Rural Affairs and Mr. Ben Piper hydrologist and water resource planner.

Dr. Martin Griffiths led the presentation and said there are three dimensions of the Thames river cleanup project. They are (a) Governance, (b) Research, (c) Infrastructure. He further said that since India has shown political will for cleaning the river Ganga, it needs proper research and infrastructure to give shape to the project. The delegation also laid down the need for a “Competent Authority” for conservation and protection of water environment. They said that the environment agency (ministry) in the UK is the competent authority for protection of water environment. All in all the presentation gave a vivid description of the evolution of the efforts to clean the Thames from the 1860s when it was a near dead river to the present day when it has achieved a high degree of cleanliness.

The Round Table ended with a discussion moderated by Shri Raj Liberhan and a vote of thanks proposed by Dr. Anirban Ganguly to the panelists and experts.

(Report has been prepared by Shubhendu Anand)



Felt extremely proud while unfurling "India's Largest & Tallest Tiranga" at Sector-12 Huda Park, Faridabad, Haryana.

- Amit Shah

I congratulate every karyakarta of BJP. We now have 7crore+ (70 million) members in BJP.

-Amit Shah

Membership Drive crosses

7
Crore
Mark

सशक्त भाजपा, सशक्त भारत
साथ आएं, देश बनाएं

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"If we are to live and grow as a university [Calcutta], one of whose paramount tasks is to produce not only leaders of thought and action but also workers dedicated to the service of the nation, we cannot sit idle with philosophic concern and let things drift as they may. So far as we are concerned, it is for us to set our house in order. It is for us, and specially the younger generation, Hindus, Moslems and Christians alike, to combine and resolutely stand for the permanent well-being of our province ..."

- Dr. Syama Prasad Mookerjee

(Excerpts from the speech delivered at Calcutta University Convocation on 2nd March 1935)



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