

DESTINATION INDIA

CONVERSATIONS

SEEKING 'KRISHNA' IN MAYAPUR

**CHANDRAYAAN 3:
INDIAN SCIENTISTS
CREATE HISTORY**

**G20 SUMMIT:
INDIA'S PRESIDENCY SCORES
NOTABLE SUCCESS**

ONE THOUSAND WORDS

A PICTURE FROM OUR TIMES



PHOTOS: JAISON THOMAS

Classical Kathak Dance performance of Navina Jafa, a cultural doyen in New Delhi, invoked travel experiences of grand ancient temples and palaces. Locations such as Khajuraho, Halebid, and Konarak temples, where exotic sculptures depicting beautiful women as metaphors of fertile energy in the walls of heritage sites, took on a contemporary dance theme to raise hope in every Woman – A call for Violence against Women. The poetic dance performance gave every lady in the audience the energy to accept that each Woman has the mental power that every Man must honour, even if the Woman has a naturally physically weaker body. The performance titled "Freedom in Amalgamation" – Samavesh mein Swadheenta saw the audience move, many with tears. A silence as Jafa concluded her grand Kathak dance and then a standing ovation. It was a display of royal feminine energy presented before an enlightened audience who saw heritage performed. Navina Jafa blended 16th-century Hindi poetry to present the Swadheenpatika Nayika – The Fully Empowered, Enlightened heroine in Indian arts and thoughts. Krishna, the archetype of the hero Navina depicted, was the consciousness, but he needs Radha to complete himself. With an oil lamp burning in the front of the stage, with the beautiful smell of Jasmine Flowers, Navina Jafa sat wearing a resplendent costume. To the lilting sound of the Sarangi, the dancer created the awakening of the potent seed of hope. The vocalist sang the musical scale of Raga Durbari, and the percussionist introduced the rhythmic frames as if echoing from the pillars in a royal courtyard of the past. Dancer Navina Jafa, renowned for curating immersive tour experiences, glided to capture time history in the fluid movement and delicate footwork, amalgamating the majestic Indian and Persian world of Incredible India.

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On the Cover

Devotees at Krishna temple in Mayapur
Photo: Tanmoy Das

The G20 Summit, the much-awaited event through the year, is finally here. And the capital city is all geared up to receive our VIP guests from across the globe, for this mini-UN event. Never before, and by the look of things a seldom held event with so many prized dignitaries, each one of them a show-stopper. We bring a brief assessment of the event, within the nuances of a multi-polar policy that is gaining ground globally.

The big event of recent history must inevitably be the Chandrayan 3 landing on the moon, as a 1.40 billion Indians literally were over the moon, thanks to the brilliance of our scientist community; in possibly the most economical exercise conducted by any country to achieve so much, in so little a cost.

India globally, needs to attract world attention on critical issues such as energy and growth and cost, against what it means environmentally sustainable. In this time of the year when global leadership gets together, the rich need to give a patient hearing to the concerns of the global South!

India's nuclear doctrine has been that of a responsible state, keeping consistency in both words and actions. Unlike a few who have always used the threat of possessing nuclear weapons, to win a brownie point or two.

Back at home, we remain concerned with the ongoing challenge in Manipur, where in spite of best intentions, we have not managed to pull in the rogue elements. These need to be cut to size, and peace must prevail earliest, as peaceful and law-abiding citizens cannot be held hostages longer.

Our big debate this month is on tourism! India is probably among the richest globally in terms of experiences, each of them unique and unprecedented. The world is no longer just 'doing it', but looking for experiential travel opportunities, those that can be savoured for a life time. India's tourism effort has been lagging on account of our inability to join the dots that make up a seamless and enriching travel experience. It is time now for action!

Navin Berry
Editor

Destination India, published since 1975, is published and edited by Navin Berry, on behalf of Cross Section Media Private Limited, 401, Surya Kiran, 19 Kasturba Gandhi Marg, New Delhi-110017. Printed at Ravescan Printers, Manesar, Gurugram.

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VOICES



RAJEEV GANDHI: HIS FAULTS WERE HIS VIRTUES

I don't think I would be so vocal about the virtues of Rajiv Gandhi if it weren't that there were so many and it's still happening, who are so vocal about what they see as his faults. His faults were his virtues. He did what was right. He always put national interest above party interest. That is how he brought peace to Assam. That is how he brought peace to Punjab. That is how he brought peace to Darjeeling. That is how above all, he brought peace to Mizoram. Don't forget that when Rajiv became the prime minister of India, the most insurgent state in India was Mizoram. And today the most peaceful state in India is Mizoram. And how did that happen? By Rajiv Gandhi asking the leading insurgent Laldenga to without an election become the chief minister of Mizoram and ordering the Congress Chief Minister, whom Laldenga had been trying to assassinate for 20 years to become his deputy. And that was because he felt that it's the only way of bringing the insurgents into the mainstream. He did that in Punjab by handing over the government to the Akali Dal. He did it in Assam by handing over the government to the AGP. He did it in Darjeeling by bringing in the GNLF. What a great statesman. He put every principle above party interest.

– *Politician Mani Shankar Aiyar, in conversation with Vir Sanghvi, on the occasion of his book launch*



INDIA STANDS FOR PEACE AND PROGRESS

“The world is looking at G20 to deliver results on many issues such as growth, development, climate change, pandemics and disaster resilience, which may affect every part of the world. We have and will always stand in support of peace, stability and progress.”

– *PM Modi in an interview to PTI*



LIKE EACH OTHER AND NEED EACH OTHER

It is because we really like each other and need each other. The world needs us to like each other and work together. It's an interesting moment in global relations. The world feels a little unmoored, a lot of change, some good, some bad. India is experiencing this and I think India is at a place where it is wondering who are we as a nation. There are stronger challenges both domestically and globally. We're both struggling with democracy and diversity. But we both want both of those things. It's better than the alternative. Who wants to live in an autocracy? In India, everybody has a connection to America. One in four Americans have been treated by an Indian doctor. While people of Indian descent are just one per cent of America's population, it's four million people, which is a lot for us, and it's six percent of our tax base. We need each other for health, climate, security, and growth of the economy among other things. Be it the common threats we face or the common opportunities we have, we need each other.

– *Ambassador Eric Garetti in an interview in The Financial Express*



COLOSSAL BREACH OF PRIVACY

In a lengthy caption on Instagram, the veteran actor opened up about the "vicious" labels put on her by tabloids and how she coped with the "blatant lies" and "colossal breach of privacy".

"If the headlines were to be believed, in 1979 I had cursed myself, in 1982 I was being picked on, in 1984 I was out of sync, in 1985 I was marching towards self-destruction, and in 1998 I was shattered! There was a time that I subscribed to glossies and tabloids, but that passed very quickly."

"The headlines would be adulatory one day and vicious the very next. There was little by way of fact-checking, and no remorse for errors made. When they got the story right, it was usually a colossal breach of privacy. When they got it wrong- those blatant lies would be taken as the gospel."

These "scandals" took a toll on her- sometimes in the form of "public humiliation", other times as "anxiety, outrage and grief".

With time, Aman recalls, her "skin thickened":

"The realisation dawned that it was impossible for me to challenge the persona that they wanted to create. The one time I confronted an erstwhile editor about a malicious story, she was full of excuses but not a single apology. I made up my mind then not to take it personally. Undignified as it was, their only interest was selling their magazines."

"All this is just to say - people will always find reason to talk, and so it's probably best not to allow their opinion or perception to define your life," she wrote.

– Zeenat Aman on Instagram



IT'S TIME TO SAY GOOD-BYE

"A long time ago, I saw names like JP Morgan and Goldman Sachs dominate the financial world and dreamed of creating such an institution in India. It is with this dream that I started Kotak Mahindra 38 years ago, with 3 employees in a 300sq ft office in Fort, Mumbai. I have deeply cherished every bit of this memorable journey, living my dream," he wrote on X.

– Uday Kotak, Founder, Kotak Mahindra Bank



CREATING PERMANENT ASSETS FOR DELHI

When I took oath, I said that I would try to make Delhi a beautiful city of flowers. The fountains, sculptures, and greenery are all permanent assets of Delhi. I also request that people should treat them as assets of their city and help maintain it, rather than vandalise it. The efforts will be made to protect it and we also will have to change mind set. Should we not create assets because someone will steal it? We have placed about 7 lakh potted plants on the streets. Can people take away all of those? The miscreants will eventually fall in line. It's part of the game, and we can't be scared of them.

– V K Saksena, Lt Governor, Delhi

THE SUMMIT IS HERE!

INDIA DOES WELL FOR G20

It has been a year-long festival with serious intent to bring the world together on issues that confront the global community, in a spirit that represents the concerns of the global South. Efforts that have been recognised by the world at large, to forge unity and empower the weaker sections.



by NAVIN BERRY

It has been a year of hectic activity on the ground for G20 year of India's presidency, culminating in this month's Summit that will bring some 40 plus global leaders, like never before in our history. It is a mini-United Nations at work, a summit that can produce so much and yet also risks the danger of being just another occasion when leaders mouth platitudes, with little real intent to change how the world lives.

It's been a most challenging times for the global community, especially when India has worked hard to make the difference. Not an easy crown to wear if you wanted to ensure a new order, where the global South should matter more than they have got so far; when North-

South and East-West have seen new divisions taking sharper trajectories.

India has been a rising power, based both upon its economic progress and yet to achieve its known potential. Here is where the world will invest in the next few decades, this is where global business has the opportunity to put their money and resources, where else can they get a better market. Ironically, our slow progress in recent decades has given us a new edge – we are the country of 1.4 billion where the growth has not happened in the past, now with an opportunity to grow, the maximum potential that any single country can offer. Our domestic market is huge, craving for every little category of creature comfort.

India is buying weapons, upgrading its technology, building infrastructure, aiming at healthy and climate friendly solutions giving rise to unseen possibilities.

An earlier policy of non-alignment, championed by us in the 60s and 70s, has moved towards a recognition of a multi-polar world order. This may go against the grain of a two-power challenge, but this is indeed the reality of the modern world. There is Europe, Russia, Japan, China, the US; there is also a rising India, and blocks like ASEAN, the

Latin Americans and the Africa block, not to mention the entire Gulf region. Each of them counts and together they will guide the future world order. There would be pulls and pushes, tugs and glitches, but this is the new dispensation where India has a role to play, representing the concerns of the Global South, irrespective of which continent they are in!

Nearer home in South Asia, stability is being challenged like never before. China continues its aggressive drives – on the eve of the summit, to release a new map that defies logic. Continuing dialogues on the border have failed to change the ground reality, little disengagement is in sight. That chance encounter at the BRICS summit between the two sides was a non-event, videos show Xi in a rigid mode! This alone is enough to keep our region on the boil. Except that the recent deeper understanding with the US, the new alignments through multilateral alignments such as QUAD will alter and bolster the overall power engagements. But it all forebodes an ongoing hostile environment for the region, with India in the middle.

How does the rest of South Asia see the emerging situation? These are countries in debt, a large part of which is on account of false promises from China and expensive projects being floated with no returns in sight. Driven by covid impact that has lasted longer than one thought, internal unrest and unsettled economic compulsions. And, a more reliable India as neighbour, who has put trust first in our relationships with them – look at Maldives, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh and Nepal – we have explored and worked upon mutual interests and deepened our social, cultural and economic engagement with all of them.

Through the year, India has navigated this multi-polar doctrine, understood the economic challenges of growth with responsibility to environment and climate change, sought a new level of cooperation and support from the richer nations, which have ironically been the biggest polluters and most irresponsible, having developed at a time

when these issues were not adequately recognised or addressed.

Narendra Modi has emerged as a serious leader, a tough leader, and one who is willing to put his neck out based upon convictions and belief in how the new order must evolve. Modi's stance has

There would be pulls and pushes, tugs and glitches, but this is the new dispensation where India has a role to play, representing the concerns of the Global South, irrespective of which continent they are in!



G20 delegates in Srinagar.



Modi's stance with President Putin to say that 'war is not the solution' holds good for other regions as well; in Taiwan, on the Indo-China border, and elsewhere. It underscores the need for restraint and solutions in the ongoing Ukraine conflict. It also says something on our own borders, taking a 360 degree perspective.

been globally accepted, and indeed it would appear also well respected. He has built upon his 'hugs' diplomacy to deepen his personal relationships across countries and continents. Undoubtedly, he has impressed world leaders with his sincerity to build a new India and a new global order in cooperation with everyone. There has been only one notable exception, that of China and Xi, but the Indian PM continues to hope this too will change, though this may be inconsistent to China's growing belligerence across the globe, it is not winning friends.

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In all these efforts, from an India perspective, an able votary has been EAM Jaishankar, clearly toing and strengthening the Indian and Modi principle. He is admirably suited to his new assignment, as a career diplomat, and a budding politician with composure and knowledgeable. He has articulated India's position, simplifying what is couched in diplomatic language and made intelligible to the masses. He has also mentioned how the Modi



No effort has been spared by the Indian authorities at all levels, to make it a grand welcome. Access from the IGIA onwards to the hotels, has been upgraded with a holistic expression on safety, easy mobility, plenty of greens, and expositions of Indian art. A pleasing sight for the visitor. During the summit, expositions have been planned on both Indian culture and also global expressions, signifying one earth, one people in a unity embrace.

government has taken G20 issues and concerns across to smaller cities, made global issues a concern for the common man.

What of the G20 summit itself? No effort has been spared by the Indian authorities at all levels, to make it a grand welcome. Access from the IGIA onwards to the hotels, has been upgraded with a holistic expression on safety, easy mobility, plenty of greens, and expositions of Indian art. A pleasing sight for the visitor. During the summit, expositions have been planned on both Indian culture and also global expressions, signifying one earth, one people in a unity embrace. The stately Pragati Maidan, renamed Bharat Mandapam, will offer world class amenities to the attendees.

As far as the content of the summit goes, will it depend upon who wins? India will naturally and rightfully aim for a resolution that is acceptable to all. Equally, there would be dissenting voices who would have a singular mission to spoil the party. If a situation can be developed where everybody wins, and there are no losers, we will have a most successful way forward. On climate change, on energy, on a host of issues like tourism and exchange between nations; on Ukraine where war still rages with no solution yet in sight.

G20 must focus upon development, Amitabh Kant, Sherpa for India, has said. Leave political issues to the United Nations, as here at G20, India has “worked upon the reform and development of multilateral financial institutions, how these instruments can play a key role in providing long term fincnaces to the Global South”. Kant, in an interview with a daily newspaper, has also promised that there will be a communique at the end of the summit, as the PM has promised a forward looking a progressive, action oriented one.

What of the messaging of the G20 year of presidency through 2023 within the country? As the world meets in New Delhi, what impact

will this have upon domestic politics? Will this swing the voter towards the ruling party at the hustings next year? Difficult to say, only time will tell. There is a PM riding the high stage, deliberating upon the global scene with over 40 leaders who matter! It cannot not have an impact. But will this convert to votes, is only what the results can say.

All considered, we have done well on numerous fronts in a tricky and edgy situation globally. It has been a year long festival, with serious intent and role play, with India certainly moving into a slot of leadership of the Global South. It’s a role that requires humility, benevolence and tolerance. And, also a big heart and possibly a deep pocket as well!



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Navin Berry, Editor, Destination India, over five decades has edited publications like CityScan, India

Debates and Travel Trends Today. He is the founder of SATTE, India’s first inbound tourism mart, biggest in Asia.

ONE THOUSAND WORDS

A PICTURE FROM OUR TIMES



Host New Delhi is all spruced up to welcome its distinguished guests from across the world. Vignettes presented here to represent the makeover, much of it meant to become permanent landmarks in the city.



ENERGY VERSUS CLIMATE VERSUS GROWTH

This is perhaps one of the most central questions that we have to answer as a country, but also think about it in terms of us as global citizens and where India fits in, in terms of the broader trajectory that the world takes over the course of this century. This is also one big issue before G20 as they deliberate upon global issues at the 2023 summit in New Delhi.



This talk was presented at a webinar hosted by St Stephen's College Alumni group.

by ARUNABHA GHOSH

The sign of a good debate is not that there is silence after one has spoken, but that there are many more who want to jump into the fray. So, I hope that I can stimulate you all with a little bit of provocation and a lot more questions, which I hope we can collectively try to answer. I've titled my talk today over the next 15 minutes, "Energy versus Climate versus Growth?". But I've also put a question mark after that because this is perhaps one of the most central questions that we have to answer as a country, but also think about it in terms of us as global citizens and where India fits in in terms of the broader trajectory that the world takes over the course of this century.

Why energy versus climate versus growth and seemingly it's that last one, growth, that takes

And the question for us now is not whether growth should be deprioritized, but can it be reprioritized and realigned and recalibrated in a manner that is also consistent with energy security for us as a country, but also sustainability and integrity of the global climate.

priority. And the question for us now is not whether growth should be deprioritized, but can it be reprioritized and realigned and recalibrated in a manner that is also consistent with energy security for us as a country, but also sustainability and integrity of the global climate for planetary sustainability and of course for human wellbeing. So, to frame this debate, I wanted to talk about four tradeoffs, and I wanted to present to you, arguments on either side to then ask ourselves, is there a way to go beyond the tradeoffs?

Dealing with developmental priorities when space is getting restricted

The first trade-off I call is between responding to climate emergencies versus dealing with other developmental priorities when the space is getting restricted.

Let us start with India and then tell you a little bit about what that means for the rest of the world. At CEEW, we've been developing a higher resolution climate risk atlas at a district level, and for some states we are going into a sub-district level analysis, and it could be perhaps the first of its kind at that granular level anywhere in the developing world. What we see already is that three quarters of our districts are hotspots for extreme climate events like floods, cyclones and related disasters. But what's particularly worrying is that about 40% of our districts are showing swapping trends means what was traditionally prone is becoming drought prone or at least getting affected by droughts and vice versa. Which means at the administrative level, the institutional

memory that we have of local administrators to deal with one type of challenge might not suffice to deal with the challenges that are coming our way.

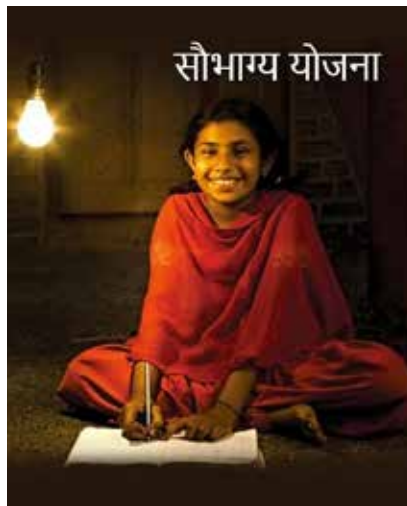
But why does this matter beyond just the management of a disaster or the saving of lives on which we have actually done remarkably well over the last two decades with early warning systems, et cetera. Why this matters, is that now the climate crisis is not just a disaster management challenge, it's a macroeconomic challenge. Across the world we see that while for developed countries, the high-income economies or the upper middle-income economies, the impact of natural disasters over the last two decades, say from the late nineties to the late 2010's was less than half a percentage of GDP. But for low middle income economies like India or for low-income economies like the least developed countries (LDCs), often that exceeds well over a percentage point in terms of just the direct impact of climate related disaster on their economies when with shocks responsive in the acuteness crisis.

But you also have to figure out for the chronic nature of the crisis and what it does in terms of limiting space that you have to deal with other priorities, education, healthcare, infrastructure and so forth. And this is why India domestically, but also internationally is promoting disaster resilience, this coalition for disaster resilient infrastructure, a new disaster resilience working group that India has promoted to the G20. But of course, as you can imagine, the solutions are not going to be easy.

At the French President's Finance Summit that was held in Paris in June this year, I was a member of the high-level group of economists advising for that summit. We heard some encouraging sounds such as the IMF putting together a Resilience and Sustainability Trust of 60 billion for that trade off risk. But the one message I want to leave you with regarding that trade-off is that we can't just limit it to when the crisis occurs, we respond.

Energy access on one hand and investment in clean energy on the other

There is this chronic nature that we now have to factor in our macroeconomic planning. So, in the second, and that is between energy access on one hand and investment in clean energy on the other. Now, over the last two decades since 2000, India has given electricity to about 700 million people, many who got electrified during the SAUBHAGYA scheme



So if you think of the SAUBHAGYA scheme, which ran for about 18 months, 28 million households getting at least a wire, that basically means approximately 11,000 people got access to electricity every hour. This is a crude arithmetic.

in recent years. But of course, the work had begun previously as well. Now, while we have to also understand the level of resources, and not just financial, but human and material that was needed to get a wire down to every household. So if you think of the SAUBHAGYA scheme, which ran for about 18 months, 28 million households getting at least a wire, that basically means approximately 11,000 people got access to electricity every hour. This is a crude arithmetic. Compare this to, 700 million people across the world that still need access to electricity by the end of this decade. If the world has to meet the challenge, that would mean that for the remainder of this decade, 11500 human beings have to get access to electricity every single hour.

When the solar mission in India kicked off when we had less than 20 megawatts of solar, we are now over 185,000 MW of non-fossil installed capacity. This itself has been a remarkable transformation.

So, this is going to be a breathless marathon of one kind that has not been witnessed anywhere before. And this is what developing countries say, look, we've got to get power to our people. We've got to get clean cooking fuels to our people. That's the priority. And yet with a shrinking carbon constraint, we also have to make sure that we are investing heavily in cleaner energy infrastructure. So again, if you think about the ambitions that India has put forward, the 500 gigawatt target, of non-fossil electricity capacity. That's first that in terms of what we've achieved over the past since 2010, when the solar mission in India kicked off when we had less than 20 megawatts of solar, we ramped up to nearly 70,000 megawatts solar, over 42,000 megawatts of wind, and with hydro capacity, the nuclear capacity, small hydro, all of that put together, we are now over 185,000 MW of non-fossil installed capacity. This itself has been a remarkable transformation, particularly in the developing world where we demonstrated that a poor economy like India can give electricity access and cooking energy access, but also build renewables at scale. But now, we have to build 11-12 megawatts of clean energy capacity every hour. That's another marathon. Now, if you look across the world, 88% of all new electric demand, will come emerging economies like India over the next two decades.

So whether it's countries like China or India moving from coal, whether it's countries like Egypt or Argentina moving on from gas and so forth, it's the emerging economies where this action will play out. But as we keep raising the ambition, as we keep deploying capacity, we still have a big challenge, that the finance, the money is still not



flowing where the sun shines the most. Despite becoming the fourth largest clean energy market in the world by deployment already, India gets less than 3% of global clean energy investment. All of Africa gets less than that. So, this is a major structural problem we have to solve, and this is another priority of our G20 presidency as well. How do we de-risk in order to be able to get a large volume of capital flowing to emerging markets?

Despite becoming the fourth largest clean energy market in the world by deployment already, India gets less than 3% of global clean energy investment. All of Africa gets less than that.

Energy sustainability versus energy security


Let's also discuss the remaining two trade-offs. The third trade-off is between energy sustainability on one hand that I have been describing and energy security. In 1913, more than a hundred years ago that Churchill told that energy security comes from nothing but diversification and diversification alone and countries across the world have sort of followed that mantra. If you look at even a country like ours, which is highly dependent on fossil fuel imports, our fossil fuel imports come from countries as wide ranging as the US, Russia, Iraq, Saudi Arabia, UAE, Nigeria, Kuwait, and so forth. Now, it does raise a question about vulnerability of overdependence on imports, but then let's look at clean energy imports and our renewable energy and batteries imports. 92% of that comes just from China and Hong Kong. So, on one hand, as we are moving towards energy sustainability, the concentration of that vulnerability in terms of input dependencies has actually increased. And again, this is not just an India story. We've seen this across the world. The number of countries with concentrated sources of clean energy imports for solar has gone up from 38 in 2012 to over 70 countries in 2021. And for batteries from 19 in 2012 to 49 in 2021. We have to solve for the past - coal, oil, gas, but even more importantly, for the fuels of the future - renewables, solar, wind, batteries, critical minerals, hydrogen. How do we create that energy security architecture that is consistent with energy sustainability, but also stops giving us headaches and keeps us awake at night.

Job losses versus Jobs Growth

And therefore, finally, the last thing that might keep us up at night is the

trade-off between job losses on one hand and jobs growth on the other. And can we create more jobs in the move towards a more sustainable economy? And how do we deal with that? Again, no easy answers. 266 of our districts have at least one asset that is linked to coal. There are at least 13 million people in India formally employed in coal-based industries with informal employment included perhaps 20 million plus. Now, at the same time, we know that solar or renewables creates more jobs per unit of power produce than coal. Distributed renewables like rooftop solar creates eight times more jobs than even utility scale solar. We estimate at CEEW that by the end of this decade, we'll have a workforce in solar and wind alone of 1 million people, which is equal to full-time equivalent jobs of three and a half million people. In the electric mobility sector, we see a loss of jobs about 1.6 lakhs in the petrol internal combustion engine sector. But we see a growth of jobs about 1.2 lakhs in the electric vehicle sector, but even more that could come with factory recycling, installation of EP charging infrastructure, building of giga factories and so forth. The green hydrogen supply chain could create another 1.9 million jobs and so forth. But again, the big political economy question is, will the jobs come in the same places as where the job losses are? And if not, do we have the political maturity to manage these distributional consequences as the economy at a macroeconomic level moves forward?

So, what I've outlined for you, significant amount of progress that India has made over the past two decades in terms of electricity and access over the past decade, it becomes a clean energy deployment or even job creation. But critical trade-offs remain whether in dealing with the fiscal constraints of dealing with climate risks and the chronic nature of that risk of dealing with the core finance for driving this infrastructure build out of dealing with the vulnerability that continue energy security and dealing with political economy of jobs.

My job wasn't to deliver all the answers, but to stimulate a debate. 



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Rahul Gandhi, back in Parliament after the courts stayed further proceedings, journeyed to Ladkakh, in a convoy on motorbikes, visited the sights and sounds, including Pangong Lake, which he said his father called the most beautiful on earth. Rahul played the young adventurer with much flair, visibly enjoying his love for the outdoors.



INDIA OVER THE MOON

CHANDRAYAN 3 HAD 1.4 BILLION INDIANS LITERALLY OVER THE MOON. A TRIBUTE TO ISRO AND INDIA'S SCIENTIST, AN EMERGING FORCE TO RECKON WITH

by SHASHANK SHEKHAR

A Historic Milestone: India Lands on the Moon!

India's space odyssey reached a new milestone with the touchdown of Vikram lander on the lunar South Pole. The success of the Chandrayaan-3 lunar mission has propelled India in an elite list of spacefaring nations to have soft-landed on the moon, and the first to have landed on its dark side. It is a significant moment in the history of space exploration, and a crucial step in humanity's attempts to unravel the secrets of the Cosmos.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi looked on from Johannesburg via teleconferencing as the 2148-kilogram Vikram lander module made its final course correction after a 41-day journey. The thrusters of Vikram lander fired in clockwork precision to align the lander with the Moon's surface. The anticipation was palpable; Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO)'s live telecast of the proceedings created a new YouTube streaming record with over 8 million viewers tuning in to watch history





in the making. A few minutes later, scientists at the ISRO Telemetry, Tracking and Command Network (ISTRAC) centre erupted in thunderous applause as the lander glided onto the moon's surface. S Somnath, Secretary, Department of Space, Government of India and Chairman, ISRO, confirmed the visuals. India was on the moon.

PM Narendra Modi dedicated the success of the moon mission to the unwavering efforts of the scientists, suggesting that it was a victory for humanity. Foreign media prominently covered the proceedings, and congratulatory messages poured in from across the global scientific community. The PM flew in directly to the ISRO headquarters after attending the BRICS 2023 Summit in South Africa to congratulate the scientists, underlining how big a deal it is for the country and the government.

Why Landing on the Moon Matters?

Humanity's fascination with the moon is not a new subject. The space race between the erstwhile Soviet Union and the United States was centred on the moon, culminating of sorts with the historic Apollo 11 mission. After successfully landing humans on the moon, it receded from the imaginations of the NASA scientists as they began exploring deeper space with countless successful missions like the Voyager-1 and Voyager-2, and the Hubble Telescope.

Truth be told, space technology is deeply intertwined with military capabilities, making it a non-negotiable for the much-coveted super-power status. Success in space missions is also a great way to stoke national pride, and mainstream science among the masses. However, a renewed interest in moon has much to do with the desire to understand its surface's chemical composition and detect the presence of frozen ice.

The discovery of Hydrogen and Oxygen can help access drinking water and rocket fuel, and, ultimately, ensure permanent human habitation. These limited precious resources are key to further space exploration as the moon's low gravity makes it an ideal launching pad for rockets. Countries with the first-mover advantage will have a head-start in establishing permanent human establishments, and gain a competitive advantage in future explorations.

“India's successful moon mission is not India's alone... Our approach of one earth, one family one future is resonating across the globe... Moon mission is based on the same human-centric approach. So, this success belongs to all of humanity.”

Narendra Modi,

Prime Minister, India

“Please, accept my heartfelt congratulations on the occasion of the successful landing of the Indian space station Chandrayaan-3 on the Moon near its South Pole.”

Vladimir Putin,

President of Russia

“Congratulations to India for the historic landing of Chandrayaan-3 on the southern polar region of the moon. It's an incredible feat for all the scientists and engineers involved. We are proud to partner with you on this mission and space exploration more broadly.”

Kamala Harris,

Vice President of the United States



A Long-awaited Dream Accomplished

More than six decades ago, Vikram Sarabhai, the founding father of the Indian space research organization, was asked whether a poor country like India really needed a space program. Rife with social and economic challenges, India had several conflicting priorities and spending money on space research was viewed as a wasteful expense. Vikram Sarabhai responded by saying that India had no intention of competing with technically advanced nations in space exploration. He, however, was convinced that if India was to play a meaningful role nationally, and in the community of nations, “we must be second to none in the application of advanced technologies to the real problems of man and society.” The success of the Chandrayaan-3 mission has vindicated Vikram Sarabhai’s dream of seeing India at the forefront of space exploration for the greater good of humanity.



A History of Chandrayaan Missions

Chandrayaan-1 was launched in 2008, which confirmed the presence of water molecules on the lunar surface, forever altering our perception of the moon. This mission further underlined India’s desire to remain at the forefront of space exploration, paving the way for Chandrayaan-2, another audacious mission launched in 2019.

A software error disrupted communication between the lander and Bengaluru-based mission control after the Vikram lander reached an altitude of 2.1 kilometres above the Moon’s surface. Pragyaa rover crash-landed on the moon and was destroyed along with Vikram. However, the orbiter continues to send crucial information about the moon, enriching our lunar understanding.

“Congratulations @isro on your successful Chandrayaan-3 lunar South Pole landing! And congratulations to #India on being the 4th country to successfully soft-land a spacecraft on the Moon. We’re glad to be your partner on this mission!”

Bill Neslon,
Administrator, NASA

“Congratulations to India for landing Chandrayaan-3 on the Moon — joining Russia, USA, & China as the only countries to have achieved this feat. More importantly, it’s the first mission of any country to arrive near the Lunar South Pole - a possible location for future Moon bases.”

Dr. Neil deGrasse Tyson,
Renowned Astrophysicist and Author

India Is Eyeing a Piece of the Space Economy

A McKinsey & Co. research reveals that the global space economy has grown to US\$ 450 billion in 2023, and is likely to touch the \$1 trillion mark by 2030. Meanwhile, it also suggests that the “number of active satellites involved in tracking data on climate change to processing credit card transactions—could triple within the next decade.” The USA already has robust private sector participation, especially since the rise of Elon Musk’s SpaceX.

On the contrary, Indian policymakers have traditionally viewed space as a strategic sector and have tightly controlled private sector access to it. However, the Modi government’s concerted efforts to open up the space sector for private participation signals a major shift in how policymakers now view the space sector as a major business opportunity.



Decoding the Artemis Accords

The Artemis Accords are agreements established by NASA, the United States' space agency, to govern international cooperation in lunar exploration and the sustainable utilization of lunar resources. These accords aim to promote peaceful and responsible space exploration by outlining principles for transparency, interoperability, and sustainability.

They encourage collaboration between spacefaring nations and private companies while respecting the Outer Space Treaty of 1967 and other relevant international space laws. The Artemis Accords are a crucial step toward establishing a framework for the peaceful and coordinated exploration of the Moon, and serve as a model for future cooperation in space endeavors. India is a signatory to the Artemis Accords.

Since 2020, when the space sector was thrown open to private participation, the Indian startup ecosystem has grown exponentially, driven by factors like the falling cost of access to space, thanks to ISRO's cost-effective payload carrying and delivery capabilities. Plus, the increasing demand for space-based services, and the growing interest of private investors have contributed to the proliferation of Indian space-related startups. These startups are helping to drive innovation and affordability in the space industry, opening up new possibilities for space exploration and utilization.

Data suggests that over 150 Indian startups are currently working on several cutting-edge technologies, including small satellite development and launch, space-based communication and imaging, space robotics and automation, in-orbit servicing and repair, and lunar and asteroid exploration.

Some key Indian startups and their areas of involvement are listed below:

- *Pixxel*: Pixxel is developing a constellation of small satellites to provide high-resolution Earth imagery.
- *Agnikul Cosmos*: Agnikul Cosmos is developing a small rocket to launch small satellites into orbit.
- *Skyroot Aerospace*: Skyroot Aerospace is developing a small rocket to make access to space more affordable.
- *Astrome*: Astrome is developing a space telescope to study exoplanets.
- *Bellatrix Aerospace*: Bellatrix Aerospace is developing a lunar rover to explore the Moon.

What's Next?

Moon will remain the centre of space race 2.0 as the USA gears up to

land the first woman and first person of colour on the Moon. With Artemis missions slated to be launched in 2025, NASA will probe the lunar surface further, and collaborate with other spacefaring nations and private entities to establish the first long-term presence on the Moon. The learnings from the Artemis mission will provide the groundwork for human-led exploration of Mars.

Several more moon missions are lined up in 2023 and 2024. The United States plans to launch Nova-C IM-1 in the Q3 of 2023, from a private Houston-based company, Intuitive Machines. Japan's JAXA space agency, too, was planning to launch SLIM (Smart Lander for Investigating Moon) during the last month, which has now been postponed. Meanwhile, an Israeli firm - SpaceIL - will re-attempt landing in 2025 after a failed mission.

Russia and China have planned crewed flights and landings in 2029 and 2030, respectively. NASA and the European Space Agency (ESA) will soon commence work on a space station in lunar orbit in 2025. As the space race heats up, the moon will continue to court visitors, humans and probes, and will hopefully soon become our first home away from Earth, as humanity explores the possibilities of interplanetary travel. 

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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THE FOURFOLD PATH: ELECTORAL REFORMS FOR A GREATER DEMOCRACY



by S Y QUERISHI

The Election Commission of India has for long been the shining symbol of democracy all over the world. To further solidify this reputation, we must ensure that all the safeguards are in place that increase and institutionalize the credibility and autonomy of EC. With the 2024 general elections coming up in the near horizon, and elections in five states this year, it is all the more urgent and must be one of our great priorities.

In the light of serious concerns concerning the electoral process in recent times, last week, many prominent personalities signed a public petition addressed to the CEC urging the ECI to implement its constitutional mandate to conduct free and fair elections. They highlighted many issues ranging from EVM/VVPAT system and electoral rolls to money power in elections.

What, then, must be done to sustain and strengthen the constitutional ideals in the current moment? I propose that we carry out reforms classified under four broad “categories”: (I) reforms to strengthen and revitalize the Election Commission; (II) reforms to fundamentally alter the electoral system itself (III) reforms to increase and institutionalize transparency; (IV) and finally reforms for cleansing politics at large.

Reforms to EC: Appointments and Registrations

The first important measure to ensure non-partisanship and impartiality of the EC would be through the appointment of the members of the Election Commission through a collegium, as is also recommended in the 255th report of Law Commission of India.

On the day before the conclusion of the Monsoon Session, the government presented the Chief Election Commissioner and other Election Commissioners (Appointments, Conditions of Service, Term of Office) Bill in the Rajya Sabha. This follows the significant March verdict of the Supreme Court regarding the appointment procedure for polling officials. The Selection Committee now would consist of the PM as the chair person, the union cabinet minister nominated by the PM and the Leader of the opposition.

However, this does not reduce the hold of the executive over appointments as instead of the government unilaterally making appointments, a govt dominated collegium is now proposed. I suggest that the collegium system will be credible only if unanimity is added as a precondition.

Additionally, the EC’s reputation also suffers when it is unable to tame recalcitrant political parties, including the ruling party, at the state level or at the centre. This is because despite being the registering authority under Section 29A of the Representation of the People Act, 1951, it has no power to de-register them even for the gravest of violations. This is a debilitating concern given that it erodes the EC’s authority in upholding electoral sanctity, and must therefore be a priority reform.

The most important element in EC’s credibility, however, is the way how the incumbents conduct themselves. Total even handedness, non-negotiable neutrality and absolute level playing field for all parties and candidates are imperative. It’s a pity that it came into question

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recently. The entire edifice of credible elections is built on the image of the commission. We cannot afford any dilution of this image.

Reforms to the Electoral System: FPTP vs PR and Single Phase

Currently, we follow the Westminster model, employing the first-past-the-post (FPTP) system. Voters elect representatives to the Lok Sabha, with candidates securing the highest number of votes in their constituencies declared winners. Despite its efficiency, FPTP has shown flaws, as illustrated in the 2014 general elections, where the Bahujan Samaj Party secured 20% of the national vote share in UP but no seats.

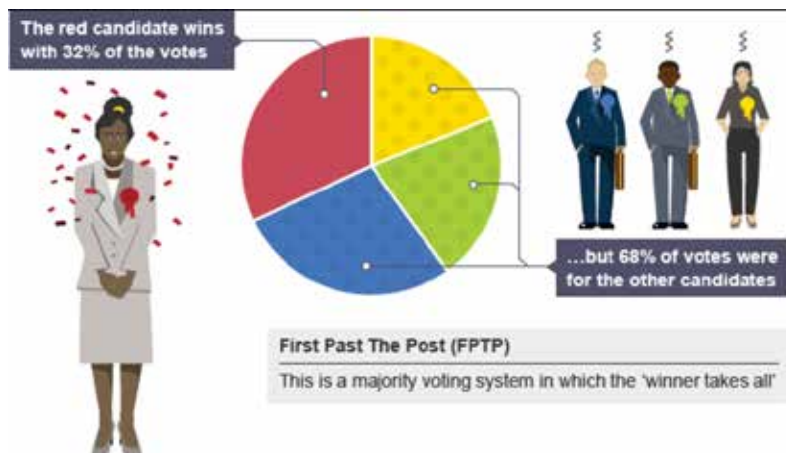
Proportional representation (PR) could be an alternative, allocating seats to parties in proportion to their vote share. However, PR has issues too, like making government formation challenging due to fragmented votes, often requiring coalitions. The list system within PR can prioritize party-favored candidates over voter-preferred ones, potentially leading to undue influence on elected representatives.

A hybrid solution, akin to Germany, Sri Lanka and Nepal’s models, could combine FPTP and PR benefits. In India, this would necessitate enlarging the Lok Sabha or reducing constituencies. Given India’s

constituency-voter ratio, increasing Lok Sabha seats seems more feasible, now possible in the newly constructed building. A concern is model code violations in multi-phase elections, when leaders campaign during silent periods despite restrictions. The Election Commission’s efforts, like vulnerability mapping and central armed police personnel deployment, have addressed this, suggesting that peaceful single-phase elections are possible.

Transitioning to single-phase elections could streamline the process, shortening the election cycle to 30-35 days from the current 2-3 months. This curtails communal tensions, caste dynamics, and misuse of money power during extended campaigns. Furthermore, this change could reduce violations of opinion and exit poll restrictions.

The final point worth mentioning here concerns the EVM/VVPAT debate that keeps rising up ever so often. The Election Com-



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mission challenged conspiracy theorists multiple times to prove EVM hacking, yet no party accepted. In 2010, after an all-party meeting, the adoption of VVPATs was unanimously recommended and accepted. Two EVM factories developed VVPATs under the monitoring of a committee from five IITs. Rigorous trials and simulations were conducted in 2011-12 across diverse Indian cities before deploying VVPATs in 20,000 booths, gradually expanding to all. The Supreme Court praised these efforts in 2013, directing funds for VVPATs in all booths by 2019. Since 2017, all elections included VVPAT-attached EVMs. Despite counting 1,500 machines, no mismatches occurred.

Reforms for Transparency: Electoral Financing and Inner-Party Democracy

Regarding the question of expenditure on campaigns, and more broadly of controlling money power in elections, the EC must be given an open and active role in regulating what politicians and political parties spend while conducting campaigns. The Electoral Bonds Scheme announced in 2018 only exacerbates the opacity, unaccountability and dependency on illicit and anonymous sources of electoral financing, including foreign sources.

Instead, as EC has repeatedly recommended, it would serve transparency better if the accounts of the party finances are to be audited by a list of chartered accountants recommended by the EC or CAG. The results of this audit are to be made available to the public on the EC's website, along with the website of the political party concerned. If implemented, this would go a long way in strengthening EC's ability to curb corruption and black money in electoral politics.

An important alternative is to do away with private fund collection altogether and replace it with public funding of political parties. A National Election Fund could be set up to which all donations could be directed. The Fund could then be allocated to political parties on the basis of their electoral performance.

“An important element of electoral democracy pertains to the management and conduct of political parties. Thus, the functioning and regulation of parties, from their provenance to their electoral campaigning must be closely scrutinized for the betterment of the democratic process.”

The final point worth mentioning here concerns the EVM/VVPAT debate that keeps rising up ever so often. The Election Commission challenged conspiracy theorists multiple times to prove EVM hacking, yet no party accepted. In 2010, after an all-party meeting, the adoption of VVPATs was unanimously recommended and accepted.

Likewise, an important element of electoral democracy pertains to the management and conduct of political parties. Thus, the functioning and regulation of parties, from their provenance to their electoral campaigning must be closely scrutinized for the betterment of the democratic process.

In 1996, the Commission had issued a review of intra-party elections across the country, and the results were disappointing. Thus, provisions must be made to introduce inner-party democracy within the political parties. This should include mandatory secret ballot voting for all elections for all inner-party posts and selection of candidates by the registered members, as suggested by Law Commission Reforms and practised in Germany. Furthermore, this whole process of party elections must be overseen by an observer appointed by the Election Commission of India.

Reforms for Cleansing Politics: Decriminalization, Financing, and Media

The criminalization of politics has been a constant threat to the proper functioning of democracy in India. According to the association of Democratic Re-



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forms, nearly half of the 17th Lok Sabha members have criminal charges against them. Of the 543 elected Lok Sabha members 233 have criminal charges, of which 29 per cent of elected members have criminal cases of rape, murder, attempt to murder and crime against women.

What then is the way out? There are three possible options. One, the election law (Section 8 of the Representation of the People Act, 1951) which disqualifies a person convicted with a sentence of two years or more from contesting elections, should be amended to debar charge sheeted or under-trial persons from contesting elections. Two, political parties should refuse tickets to the tainted. Three, fast-track courts should decide the cases of tainted legislators quickly.

While electoral financing and criminalization affect the institutional performance and vitality most significantly, there are also matters that have a broad-based impact on the cultural and social facets of democracy, in other words, the nation's civil society, including its media.

In the recent years, hate speech in all its varieties, has acquired a systemic presence in the media and the internet, from electoral campaigns to everyday life. Abusive speech directed against minority communities, particularly Muslims, and disinformation campaigns on media networks have made trolling and fake news significant aspects of public discourse. The ethical and moral bonds of our democracy are taking a hit.

In fact, the Indian Penal Code, as per the Sections 153, 295A and 298, criminalizes the promotion of enmity between different groups of people on grounds of religion and language, alongside acts that are prejudicial to maintaining communal harmony. Whereas Section 125 of Representation of People Act deems that any person in connection with the election promoting feelings of enmity and hatred on grounds of religion and caste etc is punishable with imprisonment extendable up to three years and fine or both. Section 505 criminalizes multiple kinds of speech such as those that cause public disorder.

However, it is important to highlight that while there maybe constitutional and electoral provisions, sufficient or otherwise, to treat the phenomenon of hate speech legally and institutionally, what we need to

solve the problem at its roots is political will, morality and reverence for the secularism and multicultural tolerance.

Another urgent recommendation concerning the role of media, which had first been sent to the PM in 2004 and then reiterated in 2013 by the EC, was to prohibit the dubious opinion polls during elections. There was also a proposal tabled by the EC in 2004 and again in 2015 suggesting that government-sponsored advertisements be prohibited starting from 6 months before the elections. With elections becoming increasingly mediatized infected with reigning fake news and paid news, it is indispensable to the functioning of democracy that media be independently regulated so as to ensure proper electoral integrity.

Conclusion

Electoral reforms must be undertaken not to serve narrow political dividends but to enhance and strengthen our institutions and the structures of democracy.

In order therefore to achieve a greater democracy, with an independent EC, we must commit ourselves to prioritising the necessary reforms that make it possible. **DI**

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INDIA'S NUCLEAR STRATEGY

RESPONSIBLE. RESOLUTE. ROBUST. RUGGED



by MAJ GEN JAGATBIR SINGH, VSM (Retd) and MAJ GEN VK SINGH, VSM (Retd)

Introduction

The Stockholm International Peace Research Institute's (SIPRI) annual Yearbook 2023 assessment of the state of armaments, disarmament, and international security highlighted that the number of operational nuclear weapons had started to rise. Nuclear arms control and disarmament diplomacy has suffered major setbacks due to the Russia-Ukraine conflict, with USA and Russia suspending bilateral strategic stability dialogues. As per Dan Smith, SIPRI Director, it is a period of high geopolitical tension and mistrust, where risks of miscalculation, misunderstanding or accident are unacceptably high, he said 'there is an urgent need to restore nuclear diplomacy and strengthen international controls on nuclear arms.'

Even in such an environment India's nuclear programme is viewed with complete trust and respect. 25 years have passed since the Pokhran-II tests. India has clearly emerged as a responsible nation with a stable nuclear doctrine. With noteworthy advancements such as the Agni-V/VI missiles and the S-4, India's third indigenous nuclear ballistic missile submarine, India has established its triad capabilities.

On the other hand, our Western neighbour repeatedly makes bold statements with reference to its nuclear strategy and response. It retains the option of 'First Use' and does not hesitate to raise the bogey. Its nuclear policy is vague and ambiguous. It also has no hesitation in turning around on a previously taken stance and even in peaceful scenarios where there is no perceived threat, it brings up the nuclear issue, in national/international forums, to keep the nuclear card alive.

Recently, while talking at the Institute of Strategic Studies, Islam-

25 years have passed since the Pokhran-II tests. India has clearly emerged as a responsible nation with a stable nuclear doctrine. With noteworthy advancements such as the Agni-V/VI missiles and the S-4, India's third indigenous nuclear ballistic missile submarine, India has established its triad capabilities.

abad, on 24 May 2023, to celebrate the 25th Anniversary of Pakistan's nuclear test Lieutenant General Khalid Kidwai (Retd), currently an Advisor to Pakistan's National Command Authority, reiterated some of the long-standing positions of Pakistan's nuclear policy, such as the strength of its nuclear triad reliant on Land, Air, and Sea-based capabilities. He also discussed full-spectrum deterrence. In his words, full-spectrum deterrence "comprises horizontally of a robust Tri-Services inventory of a variety of nuclear weapons held on land, sea and in the air." Vertical deterrence covers strategic, operational, and tactical ranges. However, what stood out in his statement was that "vertically the spectrum encapsulates adequate range coverage from 0 meters to 2,750 Km as well as nuclear weapons destructive yields at three tiers-strategic, operational, and tactical."

Nuclear Warfighting Has No Precedence. Hiroshima and Nagasaki cannot be counted as a precedence. That was a case of the Atom Bomb versus the Samurai, a highly unmatched proposition and in hindsight, highly unwarranted. However, it did expose the power and devastation of the bomb. There has been no incidence of two nuclear nations going to war using nuclear weapons against each other.

In view of the above it is necessary to analyse the Indian Nuclear Strategy in the regional context.



Deciphering India's Nuclear Doctrine

Undoubtedly the use of nuclear weapons constitutes the gravest threat to humanity and to peace and stability in the international system. However, India had no choice but to opt for this option keeping in view the hostile nature and unreliability of its neighbours.

Autonomy of decision making in the developmental process and in strategic matters is an inalienable democratic right of the Indian people. India had to strenuously guard this right in a world where nuclear weapons for a select few were sought to be legitimised for an indefinite future, and where there was growing complexity and frequency in the use of force for political purposes.

Apropos, on 17 August 1999, Indian National Security Advisor, Brajesh Mishra released a Draft Nuclear Doctrine which was then further refined by the Cabinet Committee on Security in January 2003.

Protecting the Indian State, from the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons by any State or entity, was the *raison d'être* of India's nuclear deterrent. The fundamental purpose of India's nuclear weapons was that they were meant only for self-defence. To deter the use and threat of use of nuclear weapons by any State or entity against India and its forces. India will not be the first to initiate a nuclear strike, but will respond with punitive retaliation should deterrence fail. The main features of India's nuclear doctrine were as follows:

- (a) Building and maintaining a Credible Minimum Deterrent;
- (b) A "No First Use" posture; nuclear weapons to be used only "in retaliation against a nuclear attack on Indian territory or on Indian Forces anywhere;"
- (c) Nuclear retaliation to a First Strike will be "massive" and

designed to inflict "Unacceptable Damage."

(d) Nuclear retaliatory attacks to be authorized only by civilian political leadership through the Nuclear Command Authority.

(e) Non- use of nuclear weapons against non-nuclear weapon states.

(f) India to retain option of retaliating with nuclear weapons in the event of a major attack against it with Biological or Chemical Weapons;

(g) Continuance of strict controls on export of nuclear and missile related materials and technologies, participation in FMCT negotiations, continued moratorium on testing;

(h) Continued commitment to goal of Nuclear Weapon Free World, through global, verifiable, and non-discriminatory disarmament.

Credible Minimum Deterrence

While every sub clause is important, the start point is the factor "CREDIBLE." If an adversary uses nuclear weapons against India, then he must know that **India can and will retaliate** with sufficient nuclear weapons to inflict destruction and punishment that the aggressor will find unacceptable. Several factors come into play to ensure credibility. These can be listed as three specific components, technological credibility, force credibility, and leadership credibility.

Simply defined, technological credibility means that, when the time comes, the **bomb must work**, and that too effectively. Force credibility means that there must be **adequate numbers** to create the requisite deterrence and these must survive the first onslaught, to be effectively launched. Leadership credibility is the political **resolve** to use the weapon,



World nuclear forces, January 2023

| Country | Deployed warheads ^a | | Stored warheads ^b | | Total stockpile ^c | | Total inventory ^d | |
|----------------|--------------------------------|--------------|------------------------------|-----------------|------------------------------|------------------|------------------------------|------|
| | 2023 | 2023 | 2022 | 2023 | 2022 | 2023 | 2022 | 2023 |
| United States | 1 770 | 1 938 | 3 708 | 3 708 | 5 428 | 5 244 | | |
| Russia | 1 674 | 2 815 | 4 477 | 4 489 | 5 977 | 5 889 | | |
| United Kingdom | 120 | 105 | 225 ^e | 225 | 225 | 225 ^f | | |
| France | 280 | 10 | 290 | 290 | 290 | 290 | | |
| China | – | 410 | 350 | 410 | 350 | 410 | | |
| India | – | 164 | 160 | 164 | 160 | 164 | | |
| Pakistan | – | 170 | 165 | 170 | 165 | 170 | | |
| North Korea | – | 30 | 25 | 30 ^g | 25 | 30 ^g | | |
| Israel | – | 90 | 90 | 90 | 90 | 90 | | |
| Total | 3 844 | 5 732 | 9 490 | 9 576 | 12 710 | 12 512 | | |



when called upon to take the decision. These three factors define the simplistic survivability effectiveness formula.

For example, force credibility includes its technological and operational aspects, while technological credibility underwrites the entire edifice of credibility. With technological capability in doubt, neither survivability nor effectiveness would be credible. No level of 'survivability and effectiveness' can compensate for weak and irresolute leadership; hence leadership credibility has been stressed in the expectation of their resolve.

Safety and survivability have been achieved by separating the warheads from the delivery systems, but this would retard effectiveness unless it is ensured that their mating can be guaranteed at will and in the specified time. The concept of force credibility ensures that the confusion associated with dispersal, survivability, and effectiveness, which may work at cross purposes, are integrated together into a synergistic whole. The above factors define the very concept of nuclear warfighting. If all these factors are in place and credible, then deterrence is in place and if deterrence is in place, then Lieutenant General Khalid Kidwai can keep talking about his 0-2750 theory, **but he is only bluffing himself** as rhetoric without adequate capabilities/mechanisms.

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Command and Control

India's Nuclear Forces and their command and control have been organised for very high survivability against surprise attacks and for rapid punitive response. They have been designed and deployed to ensure survival against a first strike and to endure repetitive attrition attempts with adequate retaliatory capabilities for a punishing strike which

would be unacceptable to the aggressor. Procedures for the continuity of nuclear command and control shall ensure a continuing capability to effectively employ nuclear weapons.

Massive Retaliation

To understand the retaliation aspect, one needs to visualise as to how will this nuclear warfighting will really happen. Our mindset will take us to Hiroshima, which was one bomb at a time. This may not be so. In consonance with our stated policy to inflict unacceptable damage to the aggressor, there may be a requirement to launch numerous strikes, possibly employing the multiple independently targetable re-entry vehicles (MIRV). Accordingly, a sizeable nuclear weapons arsenal is essential, as we need to factor in the possibility that the same would undergo a substantial degradation, despite all precautions, in a first strike, that some of our own attacks could be negated by defensive measures and above all what we must inflict is "massive" and "unacceptable damage."

The survivability of our nuclear forces would have to be ensured by a combination of multiple redundant systems, mobility, dispersion, and deception. This also requires that India's Nuclear Forces are based on a triad of aircraft, mobile land-based missiles, and sea-based assets. Thus, the Indian deterrent shall remain credible against all categories of weapons of mass destruction.

Having articulated an abridged version of the Indian Nuclear Doctrine with interpretation of some relevant portions, one realises the depth of the Indian Doctrine. This is the precise reason

that any amount of sabre rattling, 0-2750 or threat of use of tactical nuclear weapons, has no effect on a robust policy. In fact, how does a tactical nuclear weapon make a difference?

In the movie 'Where Eagles Dare,' one of the British paratroopers is reported shot dead with a hole in the head. Richard Burton asks the carrier of the news, what hole was it, a British hole, or a German hole? The messenger responds, a hole, is a hole, is a hole. Similarly, a nuclear strike, is a nuclear strike, is a nuclear strike and will be responded to as per the stated policy of massive retaliation, the yield notwithstanding. For that matter the unfortunate soldier who vaporised due to the strike will never know what killed him, whether it was a tactical nuclear weapon or a 50 KT fusion bomb. And it really does not matter, because he died anyway, and both options would be responded to with massive retaliation.

Pakistan's claims that their nuclear programme is purely India centric and the 2750 Km range is to cater for India's farthest island territories. The shallowness of such a claim is rubbish because a missile does not fly only in one direction. It flies wherever it is programmed to fly, and if you change the direction of the missile, from 2750 Km South-East of Pakistan, to 2750 Km West, the missile will arrive in Israel, and

similarly it can land in so many other countries in the region as 2750 Km is the radius. Therefore, an unreliable nuclear programme such as Pakistan's is a matter of grave concern to regional security.

The Zero the General refers to in his 0-2750 statement, is obviously to do with range, and Zero range is possible only within Pakistan. He, therefore is alluding to attack on foreign troops on Pakistani soil. However, it makes no change to India's response because the Indian Doctrine clearly states, that any nuclear attack on India in its territory or on its forces anywhere, will result in massive counter strikes to inflict unacceptable damage to the aggressor.

Another aspect or doubt keeps cropping up time and again, as to how safe are the nuclear warheads in Pakistan. Can they fall into the hands of the Jihadis or other non-state actors? The response to such a doubt is twofold. Firstly, a nuclear weapon system is a technological marvel that needs special platforms for launch. It also possibly requires series of codes to be meshed in the motherboard for the chain reaction to start. A fusion/fission bomb is not a Diwali Sutli bomb or a Bhim Pataka that you light and throw across the fence. It is nearly impossible to trigger such a weapon without the technological support system. Secondly, if any undesirable element is threatening the use of such a weapon, then it is obviously with inside infrastructural support. Further, the weapon comes from the Pakistani stockpile, for which Pakistan is responsible. There will be no change to the Indian narrative, if there is any such attempt, it will be directly attributable to the State of Pakistan, and the response will be, as stated, **massive**.

By constantly developing nuclear weapons which they know they cannot use and a conventional Army that has failed to win any War, Pakistan has chosen the path of relying on the use of terrorism under the nuclear umbrella as its stated policy for achieving its strategic goals. The sword and shield strategy is what they feel will give them security, the sword being terrorism and the strategic shield being nuclear weapons. An unwise and unsustainable strategy.

Our Other Neighbour


SIPRI's estimate of the size of China's nuclear arsenal increased from 350 warheads in January 2022 to 410 in January 2023, and it is expected to keep growing. Depending on how it decides to structure its forces, China could potentially have at least as many intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBMs) as either the USA or Russia by the turn of the decade. China's primary concern when it developed its nuclear weapons was to prevent its enemies from imposing war on China. Earlier, China believed that it faced nuclear threats from both superpowers and that was the underlying theme for their nuclear programme. However, once it developed and tested nuclear weapons, China has maintained that these weapons must be banned and destroyed. China has also committed itself to never being the first to use nuclear weapons at any time and under any circumstance.

Chinese Nuclear Force is one of the most important pillars of China's Armed Forces, which are well trained and effective. China's policy of nuclear weapons deployment is to maintain retaliatory-strike capability. They excel in their infrastructure, which is so well developed that troops can live in the underground bunkers. The weapon systems are deployed deep in the ocean and ground to be able to sustain any kind of strike and still be capable of retaliation.

Overall, the Chinese stance sounds appropriate and responsible. The catch remains, trust and reliability, which in both cases is woefully suspect, as shown by the Chinese, time and again along the Line of Actual Control. However, in the Indian context our doctrine is firm and resolute. With the development of Agni V and VI with MIRV capability, required ranges have been achieved for requisite deterrence against China.

Conclusion

There is always the counter argument. Ethically, the punishing of a whole nation for the decisions of its leadership is unsustainable. Moreover, executing massive retaliation would expose any nation to international isolation. The pursuit of diplomacy during a period of high tension will also erode the credibility of a massive response posture, since it signals a willingness to negotiate.

Therefore, when you possess such weapons, you must also possess the resolve. The firmer your resolve, the stronger your deterrence, and the stronger your deterrence, the safer is your country. Overall, the Indian Nuclear Doctrine is very comprehensive giving adequate room for flexibility to the Prime Minister. It also sends a clear message of resolve, strength, and capability to the enemy. **Nuclear weapons are weapons of war. They are offensive weapons that can cause tremendous damage. When one makes such weapons, one should understand the devastation they can create. One should also be willing to accept such devastation on one's self too.** 

ABOUT THE AUTHORS



Maj Gen VK Singh, VSM was commissioned into The Scinde Horse in Dec 1983. The officer has commanded an Independent Recce Sqn in the desert sector, and has the distinction of being the first Armoured

Corps Officer to command an Assam Rifles Battalion in Counter Insurgency Operations in Manipur and Nagaland, as well as the first General Cadre Officer to command a Strategic Forces Brigade. He then commanded 12 Infantry Division (RAPID) in Western Sector. The General is a fourth generation army officer.



Major General Jagatbir Singh was commissioned into 18 Cavalry in December 1981. During his 38 years of service in the Army he has held various command, staff and instructional appointments and served in varied

terrains in the country. He has served in a United Nations Peace Keeping Mission as a Military Observer in Iraq and Kuwait. He has been an instructor to Indian Military Academy and the Defence Services Staff College, Wellington. He is a prolific writer in defence & national security and adept at public speaking.

DEEP SPACE ACTIVITIES: ARTEMIS ACCORDS: WHY INDIA SHOULD JOIN?



In the present day Geo-political environment India cannot join the China group nor will China easily accept India. Our choice, therefore, in joining the Artemis Accord Group is most appropriate from all points of view- national advantage, independence to carry out our own deep space exploration and gain from technology being used under Artemis programme.

by SANAT KAUL

Introduction

The Deep Space activities are now divided into two spheres of influence: the US and China with Russia no more a strong force. The next prize is again the Moon which will determine an international acceptance of who is in the lead. While the first landing on the Moon took place in 1959 with the US flag and the Soviet Russia got left behind, the race is now between the US and China. This is a war of image and status and perhaps, future economic gains. The Space is now the newest frontier- the fourth frontier. It is reminiscent of the days when sea explorations to the New World were taking place from

The US has floated the concept of Artemis Accords which is open for Agreements with like-minded countries to go to the moon and thereafter go to the Mars.

Europe in 1492 onwards with Spain & Portugal being the main contenders. The last vestige of international cooperation was when the International Space Station was set up in 1998 as a multilateral agreement between USA, RUSSIA, European countries, Canada and Japan. It is 25 years old and has completed its life. Led by US with Russia and other US European allies, it is now past its prime.

Artemis Accords

However, after over 64 years, United States of America has again come up with the idea of going to the Moon with a group of like-minded countries, set up a camp and then move on to Mars. This is a new concept includes not only landing but also inhabiting and further mining of the Moon. The US has floated the concept of Artemis (a Greek moon goddess often portrayed as a virgin huntress) Accords which is open for Agreements with like-minded countries to go to the moon and thereafter go to the Mars. It wants to sign up a multilateral Agree-

ment with other countries for common peaceful purposes. The concept includes landing a woman and a person of colour on Moon by 2024 but also to prepare for a future manned visit to Mars by 2030s. National Aeronautical and Space Administration (NASA) of US is leading the Artemis program and feels that international partnerships will play a key role in achieving a sustainable and robust presence on the Moon while preparing to conduct a historic human mission to Mars.

Eight founding countries namely, the United States in the lead with Australia, Canada, Italy, Japan, Luxembourg, United Arab Emirates and United Kingdom signed on 13th October 2020 a non-binding multilateral Agreement which is open to all countries to sign. India became the 28th country to sign the Accord in June 2023 during the visit of the Prime Minister to Washington. The US believes that international partnerships will play a key role in achieving a sustainable and robust presence on the Moon while preparing to conduct a historic human mission to Mars.

What are the implications of signing the Artemis Accords for India.?

What are Artemis Accords: the Preface of the Accord states:

"AFFIRMING the importance of compliance with the Treaty on Principles Governing the Activities of States in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space, Including the Moon and Other Celestial Bodies, opened for signature on January 27, 1967 ("Outer Space Treaty") as well as the Agreement on the Rescue of Astronauts, the Return of Astronauts and the Return of Objects Launched into Outer Space, opened for signature on April 22, 1968 ("Rescue and Return Agreement"), the Convention on International Liability for Damage Caused by Space Objects, opened for signature on March 29, 1972 ("Liability Convention"), and the Convention on Registration of Objects Launched into Outer Space, opened for signature on January 14, 1975 ("Registration Convention"); as well



as the benefits of coordination via multi-lateral forums, such as the United Nations Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (“COPUOS”), to further efforts toward a global consensus on critical issues regarding space exploration and use; and...” Thus Artemis Accords want to remain with the existing legal Space framework.

Background

The Outer Space Treaty (OST-1967) is the main international treaty with reference to Space and is ratified by more than 100 countries. The key provisions of the Outer Space Treaty includes prohibiting nuclear weapons in space; limiting the use of the Moon and all other celestial bodies to peaceful purposes; establishing that space shall be freely explored and used by all nations; and finally, precluding any country from claiming sovereignty over outer space or any celestial body.

The OST also declares that space is an area for free use and ‘exploration’ by all and “shall be the province of all mankind”. What does this mean? While accepting that claims sovereignty or appropriation by a government is not allowed, does it allow exploitation or private appropriation? The US is clear that it does by stating that “The Signatories affirm that the extraction of space resources does not inherently constitute national appropriation under Article II of the Outer Space Treaty.”

However, the Accord does state, “Signatories emphasise that the extraction and utilisation of space resources, including any recovery from the surface or subsurface of the Moon, Mars, comets, or asteroids, should be executed in a manner that complies with the Outer Space Treaty and in support of safe and sustainable space activities. The Signatories affirm that the extraction of space resources does not inherently constitute national appropriation under Article II of the Outer Space Treaty, and that contracts and other legal instruments relating to space resources should be consistent with that Treaty.”

The Moon Agreement which was adopted by the UN General Assembly in 1979 could only be ratified by 5 countries in 1984 to enable it to enter into force although there were 18 signatories. Why Moon Agreement was not signed or ratified by major space faring nations?

The Moon Agreement was not rat-

ified by any major spacefaring country including India. Saudi Arabia, which had ratified the Agreement has withdrawn from it. The reason which we can surmise is that it disallows exploitation of the wealth of moon. We also presume that this was the reason why India did not ratify the Moon Agreements after having signed it earlier. If this is the case then why this lament by Indian space experts that India should not join the Artemis Accords. India is, therefore, as much interested in exploitation of Moon and celestial bodies as the US. The only difference is that US are bold to talk about it, while India tries to maintain a softer view.

The US has been bold and outspoken about the exploitation issue by passing of a US law as follows: In 2015, US Congress passed a law explicitly allowing American companies and citizens to use moon and asteroid resources. Further, US President has recently signed an executive order called “Encouraging International Support for the Recovery and Use of Space Resources,”. The policy stresses that the current regulatory regime — notably, the 1967 Outer Space Treaty — allows the use of such resources, “The pact also aims to provide a framework under international law for companies to own the resources they mine”, A similar type of legislation has been passed by Liechtenstein which offers a legal framework for licensing of resources mined in space.

Geopolitical situation in Space

China and the Moon race: While US announced the project of Artemis Accords and kept it open to all countries China has not shown any interest in it. Meanwhile, China has announced its own lunar exploration programme called The Chinese Lunar Exploration Program (CLEP). CLEP is divided into four main operational phases, with each mission serving as a technology demonstrator in preparation for future missions. International cooperation in the form of various payloads and a robotic station. Change1 launched on 24 October 2007 aboard a Long March 3A rocket, scanned the entire Moon in unprecedented detail, generating

a high-definition 3D map that would provide a reference for future soft landings. The second is landing and roving on the Moon, as Chang’e 3 did in 2013 and Chang’e 4 did in 2019. The third is collecting lunar samples from the near-side and sending them to Earth, a task for the future Chang’e 5 and Chang’e 6 missions. The fourth phase consists of development of a robotic research station near the Moon’s south pole. The program aims to facilitate a crewed lunar landing in the 2030s and to possibly build an outpost near the south pole. Russia has also joined the Chinese programme CLEP. It has also announced for setting up an International Lunar Research Station (ILRS) jointly with Russia with a MOU signed in 2021. It has projected crew landing by 2030s.

Choices before India

If India chooses not to join either group and hopes to reach the Moon and Mars, it is indulging in space fantasy. The need for joint collaboration with either Artemis programme or with the Chinese- Russian programme is now an essential requirement for a country like India which is well qualified to set up its own camp on moon but with too many handicaps, both technical and financial. The advantage of joining either group is immense. However, remaining aloof can only lead to being left behind although India is independently doing its own Moon exploration currently with Chandrayaan

In the present day Geo- political environment India cannot join the China group nor will China easily accept India. Our choice, therefore, in joining the Artemis Accord Group is most appropriate from all points of view- national advantage, independence to carry out our own deep space exploration and gain from technology being used under Artemis programme. **DI**



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GDP DATA—FIRST CUT CAUTIOUS OPTIMISM



by VIPIN MALIK and DR. MANORAJAN SHARMA

GLOBAL PERSPECTIVE

The IMF's WEO, July 2023 shows global growth is likely to fall from 3.5 per cent in 2022 to 3 per cent in both 2023 and 2024. The US economy expanded at 2.1 per cent in April-June, UK's GDP increased by 0.4 per cent, Japan's GDP expanded by 6 per cent and Germany's adjusted GDP contracted by 0.2 per cent. China's April-June GDP rose by 6.3 per cent because of the triple whammy of a worsening property slump, weak consumer spending and falling credit growth.

INDIA-AN OUTPERFORMER IN THE COMITY OF NATIONS

Against this disconcerting setting, India's GDP rose by 7.8 per cent in Q1 of FY as compared to a growth of 6.1 per cent in the previous January-March quarter of fiscal 2022-23. This growth was spearheaded by consistent demand, higher activities in the services sector, and increased capital expenditure by the central and state governments.

While the services sector clearly outperformed, the sluggish growth in manufacturing was adversely affected by falling exports, and a deceleration in the construction sector. Domestic demand growth and private consumption and investment spending will be a key determinant

Global growth is likely to fall from 3.5 per cent in 2022 to 3 per cent in both 2023 and 2024. Against this disconcerting setting, India's GDP rose by 7.8 per cent in Q1 of FY as compared to a growth of 6.1 per cent in the previous January-March quarter of fiscal 2022-23.

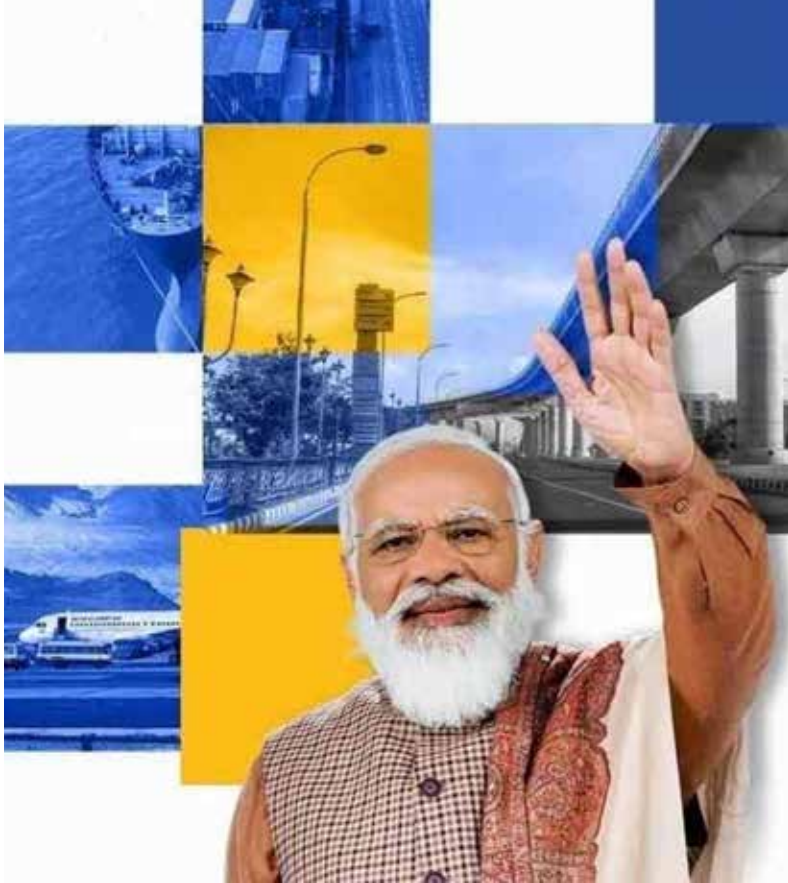
of growth sustainability. Festive October-December demand will raise spending significantly. Capital formation, a proxy for investments, and private consumption expenditure, an indicator of consumption demand, rose by 8 per cent and 6 per cent in Q1 FY24, respectively. These had recorded higher growth rates of 20.4 per cent and 19.8 per cent, respectively, in the corresponding period a year ago. There is some evidence to suggest that the government's capital expenditure push is "paying off" and is crowding in private investment. Similarly, the state governments also seem to be doing well.

Expansion of public digital platforms and path-breaking measures such as PM GatiShakti, the National Logistics Policy, and the Production-Linked Incentive schemes would boost manufacturing output. To be sure, a deceleration in the global economy and trade may hamper export growth. But it may be good for India in certain respects. The rural demand for FMCGs has increased especially for high-value goods. The same trend is evident for small towns, contributing to growth.

As a share of GDP, private consumption expenditure dropped to 57.3 per cent of GDP in April-June from 58.3 per cent in the year-ago period.

There was, however, a contraction of 0.7 per cent in government expenditure in the first quarter this year — its share in GDP also decreased to 10.1 per cent

Festive October-December demand will raise spending significantly. Capital formation, a proxy for investments, and private consumption expenditure, an indicator of consumption demand, rose by 8 per cent and 6 per cent in Q1 FY24, respectively.



Expansion of public digital platforms and path-breaking measures such as PM GatiShakti, the National Logistics Policy, and the Production-Linked Incentive schemes would boost manufacturing output.

of GDP from 11 per cent; exports also recorded a contraction of 7.7 per cent, while imports increased by 10 per cent.

The manufacturing sector's growth is skewed more towards organised sector's growth. This requires an accent on making the ongoing recovery more broad-based. Consumption demand could also be hit by surging inflation and weak external demand.

Five of the eight key sectors registered over 5 per cent growth in April-June, with two sectors recording a higher growth rate than the year-ago period — 'financial, real estate and professional services' at 12.2 per cent as against 8.5 per cent in the year-ago period, and 'agriculture, forestry and fishing' at 3.5 per cent as against 2.4 per cent.

Manufacturing grew at 4.7 per cent in April-June 2023 as against 6.1 per cent in April-June 2022, while mining and quarrying grew at 5.8 per cent, lower than 9.5 per cent a year ago. Construction sector grew at 7.9 per cent in April-June this year as against 16 per cent growth in the corresponding period last year.

EMERGING CONTOURS

The West is confronted by twin challenges of high inflation and slow growth and China by a consumer demand slowdown. But India is well poised for sustained growth because of the twin advantages of improving profitability of companies and higher capacity utilization together with a robust and well capitalized banking sector. Steady growth would foster stability in overseas flows and also promote higher domestic institutional investment providing some support to the Indian equity markets.

As the Chief Economic Advisor V Anantha Nageswaran stressed, investment and consumer momentum will underpin solid growth prospects over the upcoming year. The private sector capital formation, supported by the Government's capex push, is underway. These and other measures would significantly boost economic growth, employment and income gains for households.

Going ahead, there are concerns of erratic monsoon with India getting 36 per cent less rain than it usually gets in August making it the driest August in 122 years, July CPI inflation rising to 7.44 per cent, the lagged impact of interest rate hikes, weak trade activity,

heightened political uncertainty, volatile global financial markets, likely slowing of Government capex and exports, geopolitical tensions and economic fragmentation. Hence GDP growth would moderate in the remaining three quarters of this financial year because of the base effect, deficient rainfall, high inflation and geo-political dynamics. But we are well and truly on a course to steady growth. **□**



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GIVING EMPLOYMENT A BOOST: IT CAN'T BE TREATED MERELY AS AN OUTCOME OF GROWTH ALONE. A CONCERTED POLICY PUSH IS NEEDED.

It is necessary to pursue employment as an independent objective and not have it as an outcome of growth. More than ten million people entering the employment market every year cannot otherwise find jobs.

by R GOPALAN AND MC SINGHI

From 1972-73 to 1993-94, for every 1% of GDP growth, employment grew by 0.48%. During 1993-94 to 1999-2000, GDP grew 6.8% and employment grew by 1% annually. The period between 2004-05 to 2009-10 showed jobless growth with annual GDP growing at 8.7% and employment growing at 0.1% annually. During 2011-12 to 2021-22 (the latest period for which the employment data is available), average GDP growth was at 5.4%, with an average employment growth of 1.4%. We had demonetisation in 2016, introduction of the GST in 2017, and the pandemic in 2019-20. The changes up to the pandemic moderated both growth in income and jobs. Post the pandemic, with expansionary fiscal and monetary measures, there is a return to normalcy with growth averaging 7.5% in the last 10 quarters and employment showing signs of revival.

The Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS) was introduced in 2017-18. Prior to that, employment data gathering was a five yearly exercise. The last such data is from 2011-12. The Labour Bureau came out with an annual survey during 2011-12 to 2016-17, but there were issues of consistency and comparability, including the NSSO quality guarantee. The PLFS 2017-18 indicated that overall employment has declined from 472 million in 2011-12 to 457 million in 2017-18. There was a decline of 25 million in the female workforce during this period. Job creation post 2017-18 improved, and in the four years since then, 86 million incremental jobs were created, while an additional 80 million were seeking jobs.

The accompanying graphic provides over-



The PLFS 2017-18 indicated that overall employment has declined from 472 million in 2011-12 to 457 million in 2017-18. There was a decline of 25 million in the female workforce during this period. Job creation post 2017-18 improved, and in the four years since then, 86 million incremental jobs were created.

all employment, compound average annual employment growth, growth of gross value added in the sectors and employment elasticity for two periods (period I being 1999-2000 to 2011-12, and period II being 2011-12 to 2021-22).

The elasticity of employment was negative in agriculture in period I and positive in period II. Agriculture can't retain a large labour force. Adoption of sustainable technologies, freeing internal and external trade in agri-commodities, with government intervention only at critical times, and transfer of manpower to secondary and tertiary sectors through labour intensive manufacturing and higher growth in services are critical for a sustained growth of persons engaged in agriculture. Post pandemic, reverse migration has contributed to the positive employment elasticity in agriculture.

The performance of manufacturing in period II was dismal. Notwithstanding available manufacturing centric policies, employment elasticity was just 0.1. This sector employs only 62 million people. Perhaps, manufacturing strategy needs a paradigm shift, and we are yet to understand the core issues that will enable manufacturing to reach 25% of GVA. Manufacturing has been helped by a booming construction sector, including real estate and public infrastructure.

Spread of labour-intensive manufacturing in areas where labour is available by implementing policies favorable to positioning such industries will require sustained effort by both the Centre and the

EMPLOYMENT AND GVA GROWTH IN PER CENT AND EMPLOYMENT ELASTICITY

| | 1999-20 | | 2011-12 | | 2021-22 | | 1999-2000 to 2011-12 | | | 2011-12 to 2021-22 | | |
|---|------------------------------------|-------|---------|-------|---------|-------|----------------------|----------------|-----------------------|--------------------|----------------|-----------------------|
| | Number of persons employed (Lakhs) | | | | | | Employment growth | GVA/GDP growth | Employment elasticity | Employment growth | GVA/GDP growth | Employment elasticity |
| Agriculture & Allied Sectors | 2,383 | 2,311 | 2,471 | -0.26 | 2.90 | -0.09 | 0.68 | 3.46 | 0.20 | | | |
| Mining & Quarrying | 22 | 21 | 18 | 1.24 | 2.89 | 0.43 | -3.46 | 2.31 | -1.50 | | | |
| Manufacturing | 442 | 591 | 629 | 2.51 | 7.49 | 0.34 | 0.55 | 5.77 | 0.10 | | | |
| Electricity & Utilities | 11 | 21 | 30 | 6.92 | 5.86 | 1.18 | 1.98 | 5.26 | 0.38 | | | |
| Construction | 176 | 501 | 676 | 9.10 | 9.44 | 0.96 | 3.04 | 3.28 | 0.93 | | | |
| Trade, Transport & Communication | 561 | 744 | 964 | 2.40 | 8.05 | 0.30 | 2.59 | 5.38 | 0.48 | | | |
| Financial & Professional Services | 49 | 111 | 160 | 6.94 | 6.32 | 1.10 | 3.88 | 7.27 | 0.53 | | | |
| Other Services | 335 | 411 | 488 | 1.77 | 7.37 | 0.24 | 1.68 | 6.01 | 0.28 | | | |
| Total Non Agriculture | 1,596 | 2,411 | 2,964 | 5.51 | 7.42 | 0.47 | 2.07 | 5.70 | 0.56 | | | |
| Total Employment | 3,979 | 4,721 | 5,435 | | | | | | | | | |
| Overall Growth & Employment Elasticity with GVA | | | | 1.44 | 6.37 | 0.23 | 1.41 | 5.31 | 0.27 | | | |
| Overall Growth & Employment Elasticity with GDP | | | | 1.44 | 6.36 | 0.23 | 1.41 | 5.37 | 0.26 | | | |

Source: MOSPI: National Accounts, PLFS and employment Unemployment Surveys



Construction has indeed been a sunrise sector. This relatively low-technology and labour-intensive sector had an employment growth of 9% in period I and 3% in period II, with a near unity in employment elasticity.

development, use of appropriate technology, and regulation and quality upgradation in health and education will make them more accessible and affordable.

Policies to increase female labour force participation ratio from the current 24% will help. This was 33% in 1993-94. To increase female participation, we need cultural acceptance, emphasis on female education, creation of auxiliary facilities for working women, and their skill upgradation. But an increase in labour force participation to even 45% would increase the number of new job seekers by 110 million by 2029-30, or an average 13 million persons per year. With agriculture looking for a net reduction in work force, the new job seekers need to get accommodated in industry and services raising the required rate of growth of employment even higher. As gig workers will contribute to substantial employment in this period, legally enforceable social security measures, as appropriate, must be put in place. **□**

states. A collateral benefit in doing so will be increased consumption and exports of labour-intensive products in the country.

Construction has indeed been a sunrise sector. This relatively low-technology and labour-intensive sector had an employment growth of 9% in period I and 3% in period II, with a near unity in employment elasticity. This underscores the importance of MGNREGA and infrastructure development and perhaps an easy shift of labour from agriculture.

Trade, hotels, transport, and communication services has been the second-largest sector in absorbing labour. These entities are mostly in the household sector. They face challenges from organised retail, digital, and home deliveries. Increased digitisation and incorporation into the e-commerce ecosystem will help them. Enhanced technology usage in transport and communication along with reducing costs in regulation will further help them. Focus on skill development is bound to enhance employment. Financial and professional services will continue to perform well because of increased need for intermediation and consultancy. But these are upscale market jobs and not the point of first jump from unorganised to skilled.

Other services are a heterogeneous mix of public administration and defence, education, health, art and recreation, and other services. Public administration and defence account for nearly 20% of these services. With faceless delivery of public services, growth of employment in public administration is unlikely. Skill

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Writers are respectively, former finance secretary and former senior economic adviser, ministry of finance, GoI. This article was first published in The Financial Express. Reproduced with permission of the authors.

THE CHALLENGE IN MANIPUR

**IT IS CRITICAL
THAT
RESOLUTION
IS ARRIVED AT,
EARLIEST**

It is not always necessary to ask the question: who is right, who is wrong. Important that we find solutions, that put speculation and suspicion to rest; governance demands peace must be restored, by bringing all affected parties to a discussion table – the author here details possible causes of the present unrest, traces the diversity of the region, and its complexities.

by DEEPAK DADLANI

Manipur has been on the boil with violence, killings and rape for the last nearly 4 months that has degenerated into an ongoing conflict zone of sectarian violence with religious undertones. Communal violence in India has erupted on and off over many decades across various dispensations at the state/centre and across regions, triggered seemingly by a small incident or speech that gets inflamed by fanatics and vigilantes to violence to unleash their rage and hatred for the other. The ground would have been laid by recent or earlier history of pernicious politics/politicians, lax administration and trigger-happy police. In some malicious cases the communal violence is pre-planned and stage managed with an agenda and the administration is either complicit or grossly negligent.

India is a rich tapestry of its diversity

India is a highly diverse country – probably the most heterogeneous in the world – of multiple castes, customs, communities, religions, ethnicities, linguistics and more. As the largest populated country of 140 crore, it is a complex federation of regional and local identities that are so varied, assorted and multifarious as to make it a conglomeration of cul-





India is a highly diverse country – probably the most heterogeneous in the world. This multi-dimensional and layered structure is held together by delicate bonds of social, ethnic, linguistic and political accommodation and when these tenuous links are over-stressed or fray over time the result is the eruption of pent-up fury.

tures. This multi-dimensional and layered structure is held together by delicate bonds of social, ethnic, linguistic and political accommodation and when these tenuous links are over-stressed or fray over time the result is the eruption of pent-up fury. Many regions and communities in outlying areas of our variegated and ancient land are very distinct from the Hindi heartland that mostly does not understand the essence and nuances of the disparate people.

Has Manipur become a victim of cultural and political imposition from outside that has snapped the local equilibrium between the communities built up over long years? The ethnic minorities living in the hills have felt a perceived partiality displayed by the state government to promote the majority ethnic majority living in the valley. The 4 sub-nationalisms at play in the state are Meitei, Kuki, Naga and Bamar with each having its own identity, history, position and armed militias. The primary political identity is in terms of which group you belong to and the present clash is between the majority Meiteis living in the valley and the minority Kukis in the hills. The former is in the majority in the state legislature as well as in the civil administration and police that gives it overarching and dominant power and authority. The contours of the asymmetry and skewed equation has an added dimension in the form of religion as the Meiteis are mainly Hindu and the Kukis are mostly Christian which gives the conflict another twist and a different edge.

The Division here is ethnic and linguistic, not religious or communal

The normative axis of division and conflict in the Northeast has been ethnic and linguistic rather than religious or communal. Immigrants moved from Bengal into Assam in the early 20th century when the British partitioned undivided Bengal in 1905 to curb nationalism in the large state and to exploit the religious sentiments. The division of Bengal was so unpopular that the British within six years accepted it as un-

successful and restored the status quo of one Bengal in 1911. The devastating Bengal famine of 1943-44 occasioned another wave of immigrants in to Assam (and elsewhere) of both Hindus and Muslims to earn a livelihood and created social and economic pressures that persisted in to the ensuing years. The Assam students agitation of the 1980s was against the ongoing illegal immigration that was threatening the demographic structure of the state and the limited land available on both sides of the Brahmaputra. It acquired a religious undertone when some vested interests wanted to exploit this aspect of those crossing over from Bangladesh to suit their political and communal interests. The Northeast is a complex patchwork of identities, cultures, loyalties, land, history and religion of its people and tribes that necessitates exercising equity, maturity, sagacity and even-handedness in governance and administration to maintain the social calm and balance.

The Genesis: How the Events Rolled?

In early March this year, the Manipur Government unilaterally withdrew from a tri-lateral pact negotiated in 2008 with the Kukis and Zomis called SoO (Suspension of Operations), claiming that the hill tribes were not observing it properly. Then on 27 March, the High Court asked the government on a reservations plea to



on 27 March, the High Court asked the government on a reservations plea to consider giving the majority Meiteis the status of a Scheduled Tribe (ST) with all its benefits. This was made public only weeks later, on 19 April, which led to widespread protests by Kuki, Zomi and Naga tribes.

consider giving the majority Meiteis the status of a Scheduled Tribe (ST) with all its benefits. This was made public only weeks later, on 19 April, which led to widespread protests by Kuki, Zomi and Naga tribes. It further aroused their fears of losing their control and influence in the hills against the backdrop of their demand for autonomy and separate administrations for their areas which has become the core issue. When ethnic clashes broke out on 3rd May, the state police did not intervene urgently and sufficiently enough to curb the violence on both sides and remains heavily compromised in the eyes of non-Meiteis as corrupt and partial to the majority community. The Meiteis constitute 53%, Nagas 24% and Kukis/Chins 16% of the total population making the majority group very dominant. In this scenario granting ST status and consequent benefits to the Meiteis was seen as incongruent and provocative by the Kukis and others. Thus, the withdrawal of the SoO and according ST status to Meiteis set the stage for the meltdown that was to follow.

In the first phase of violence (3-6 May) 59 people are said to have died with the State Police unable to intervene effectively and in

the second phase (25 – 31 May) another 28 died. The Police armouries were looted by mobs and the state police could not or would not stop the mobs by stopping/shooting them and 90% of the hundreds of tons of the spoils is with the Meiteis. The Assam Rifles (AR) as the premier para-military force was asked to restore order but the Meiteis and State Police dislike the AR which is under the operational control of the Army and led by 80% of its officers. In fact the Meiteis are demanding withdrawal of this force which comes under the administrative control of the Home Ministry and the police and AR have had had public spats such as the most recent one on 5 August when Assam Rifles stopped the state police from crossing over to a Kuki area. The state police were very aggressive and bellicose against the AR for stopping them as the videos posted on social media showed; a police SI even had the temerity to file an FIR against the AR for this roadside squabble when such an action would require a clearance from the civilian leadership. Despite the top army commanders meeting the CM about this FIR filed against the 9th battalion of AR it has not been withdrawn and is truly an extraordinary development, maybe never seen before.

The Meiteis constitute 53%, Nagas 24% and Kukis/Chins 16% of the total population making the majority group very dominant. In this scenario granting ST status and consequent benefits to the Meiteis was seen as incongruent and provocative by the Kukis and others.

The Implications and the Stand-off !

The Manipur police is neither neutral nor effective in controlling the law and order in the surcharged and sensitive conditions prevailing. When 200 men on motorcycles suddenly arrived in Imphal from outside the state, armed and rearing to fight and were goading the Meiteis on - some engaged in attacks and violence - the state police made no effort to stop this outside group. The operation seemed to be well planned, funded and executed and it is not clear who organized it which is anybody's guess! The ethnic conflict has divided the police and other state forces with many defecting to their communities along with their arms. The infamous video of 2 women being paraded naked on 4 May and then



sexually assaulted surfaced after two and a half months on 19 July and sparked outrage across the country and made news internationally. The women have filed petitions in the Supreme Court against the state and centre and the case has been taken over by the CBI. Why it took so long for this appalling incident to manifest publicly and how many more such horrors have taken place is unclear but is symptomatic of the gravity of the situation. Sushant Singh, a senior fellow at the Centre for Policy Research and an army veteran calls the situation ‘close to a civil war’ in the shadow of thousands of cases of arson and looting committed despite the presence of central and state forces.

The Kukis feel deeply aggrieved that the Meiteis are being shielded and favoured by the Chief Minister N. Biren Singh (who is a Meitei) and that his administration is unable to provide safety and security to the hill people. They have been demanding his removal and all 10 Kuki legislators (including the 7 BJP party MLAs from the hill tribes) have signed a memorandum to the Home Minister asking for the CM’s removal and for an autonomous administration in the hills. Despite egregious failures to curb the ongoing violence in the state and inability to instill confidence among the minority tribes the Chief Minister remains in office and the Centre is mysteriously persisting with him and refusing to bring in President’s rule which would allow tempers to cool down with an impartial executive. Invoking of President’s rule has been the standard practice in the past whenever widespread riots, violence and disturbances have broken out anywhere in India on an ongoing basis and the State government appears weak, unable or negligent in controlling the situation.

Walter Fernandes, Director Northeast Social Research Centre (NES-RC) a respected figure in the region says that the religious element in the conflict has made the divisions harder and deeper with hundreds of churches having been burnt by the Meiteis. The symbols of democratic backsliding i.e. dilution of institutional autonomy, political centralization and authoritarian attitudes of the ruling elites are plainly evident in Manipur and have contributed to the conflict and its non-resolution. When distinction between theology as a spiritual moral force and as an expression of identity disappears religions become competing ideologies and the fallout can be devastating. Fascination for publicly displayed religiosity and its emerging dogmatic nature has serious implications and poses a challenge to democracy.

Assam Rifles has a few days back issued a legal notice to a Manipur MP who is National Secretary of the Republican Party of India (RPI, which is mostly Maharashtra centric) for causing considerable harm to the reputation and standing of the oldest para-military force of India. His denigrating assertions in Delhi that Assam Rifles was abetting the Kukis in acts of arson and the defamatory suit filed by AR against the MP are actions unparalleled and never seen before in India. He later declined to apologise stating that he spoke as a Meitei and not as an

Only prudent, astute and wise leadership in the state can impart a healing and calming salve to cool and soothe the inflamed passions and provide trust and confidence to all, in particular the minorities.

MP – an absurd justification. Previously on 10 July, AR was forced to file a criminal case against COCOMI a civil society organization in Manipur for giving a call to the people ‘not to surrender their weapons’.

Caution and Restraint: Earliest Resolution is Critical

The situation in Manipur is assuming a severe and grave substance which can become self-perpetuating with a life of its own. The danger of diffusing beyond the state is ever present and calls for early resolution of the conflict. Protraction and postponement are common tools in politics but can prove very dangerous for peace and accord in this part of the northeast. Only prudent, astute and wise leadership in the state can impart a healing and calming salve to cool and soothe the inflamed passions and provide trust and confidence to all, in particular the minorities. **DI**



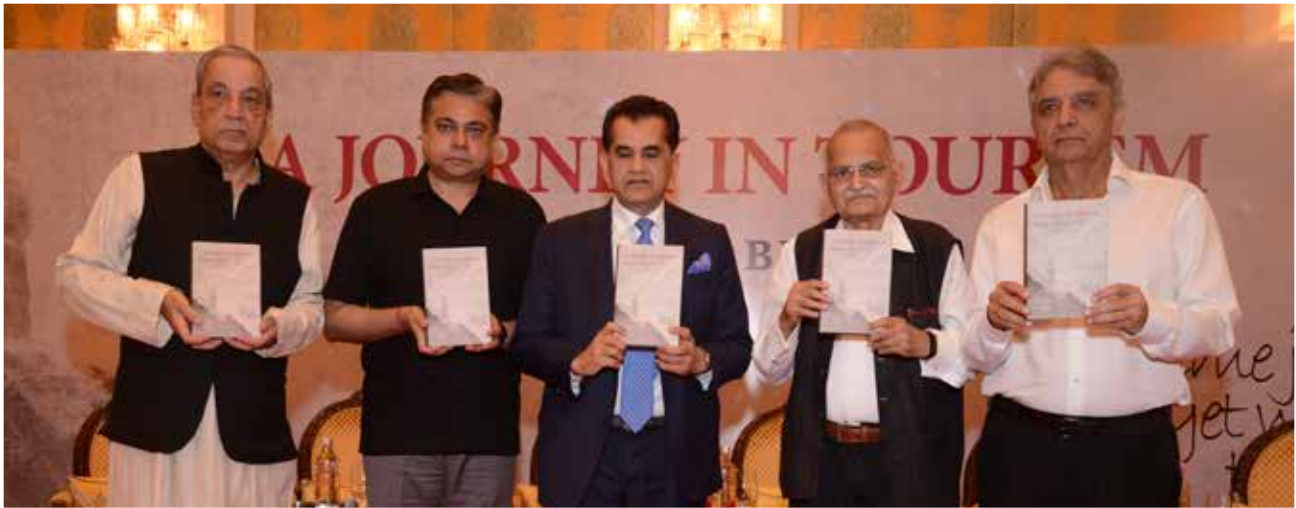
ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Deepak Dadlani was commissioned into Indian Air Force, served for almost 10 years and left

voluntarily. Veteran in the Aircargo and Logistics industry, he is an independent commentator on national affairs

INDIA IS FULL OF EXPERIENCES

NETWORK THEM HOLISTICALLY TO CREATE MORE JOBS IN THE NAME OF 'TOURISM', UNDER A NODAL AGENCY!



What's the road ahead for Indian Tourism? At an event to launch a book, "A Journey in Tourism", by editor Navin Berry, compiling his experiences and learnings from being 50 years in this industry, a high-powered panel discussion featured Amitabh Kant, G20 Sherpa; Patu Keswani, CMD, Lemon Tree Hotels; Rajeev Sethi, art and culture thespian; Aman Nath, hotelier and historian; Iqbal Chand Malhotra, author and film maker; the discussion was moderated by Barkha Dutt, TV anchor and journalist. The book was formally released by Amitabh Kant; SK Misra, chairman, IRTHD and former vice chairman INTACH; Vinod Kumar Duggal, former Governor; and Arvind Singh, former secretary tourism, GOI.



Exclusive report by DESTINATION INDIA

BARKHA DUTT: I grew up in a home where how to make India's tourism story better was a dining table conversation because my father was also in the tourism industry and many of you knew him. Whether you look at aviation or you look at hotels or you look at amenities, there's an interconnectedness at the heart of it. And before I actually come to Navin to talk a little bit about his book, Aman, you wanted to talk about the interconnectedness and the joining of the dots. So, let's start with you. Let's start with each of you giving one takeaway that you had from reading the book and I'll give the last comment then to Mr. Berry. Go ahead, Aman.

AMAN NATH: Navin said that I should look at a particular section where he talks about connecting the dots. So, I think that the tourism industry is an elephant, really a lumbering elephant. And there's nobody to blame because how do you connect an elephant which is with all the legs walking in different directions. So, if I was to do this book, if it was not an art autobiography, I would've called the book 'Ankush'; 'Ankush' being the goad which pokes the elephant and tells him to move. So, I think you've been that goad because you've been trying very hard to connect the dots because there are so many ministries.

BARKHA DUTT: But what's stopping the elephant from moving?

AMAN NATH: The system.

BARKHA DUTT: No, I'm actually asking a serious question. If you had to sort of say this is the elephant and this is why it needs to move, it needs to move, but it's kind of stuck.

AMAN NATH: To move because the ministries can't move by themselves. I often feel that we have many ministries and we need one more, which should be called the Inter-Ministerial Liaison Ministry. Because when you talk to tourism, they say Forest doesn't listen to us when you talk to forest, then they say something. So, if they are not able to coordinate and they need a Navin Berry to kind of put them on a forum to go through the whole exercise of assembling them, I have seen you do it for years. So, I mean this is a kind of in-house thing. I'm not trying to be critical, but since we are introspecting, I feel, let me even take a name. Suppose somebody like a Nakul Anand was the minister of tourism, would things be different?

BARKHA DUTT: So, are you suggesting that if someone from the trade was in government it would be different?

AMAN NATH: I think so. Somebody who's established themselves, because you would never have a situation that you've got funds and they lapse because you don't know what to do because you know the players. If somebody is very good at wildlife tourism, then why should the ministry set up 20 people and have meetings? They should empower that person to do it, and I think private sector would shake it much better.

BARKHA DUTT: Okay, let's take that thought to you Iqbal. Is that what you would pick up that when you were going through Navin's book, what stayed with you? What did you agree with, what did you disagree with?

IQBAL CHAND MALHOTRA: Well, when I got Navin's book last evening. So, I spent quite a bit of time going through it, and then I went to my computer and I switched on Wikipedia and I saw some interesting figures. Foreign tourist arrivals in 1997 were 2.37 million. And in 2022, in 25 years, they'd just gone up to 6.19 million. Of course, there was a spike about 10 million and there was a pandemic, but it came down to 6.19 and earnings from foreign tourism in 1997 were \$2.9 billion and in 2020 there were just \$6.9 billion. Now, I've always wondered how countries like Egypt, Greece, and Peru have been so successful in marketing their ruins and making billions of dollars out of them. And how countries like Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, Namibia, Botswana, you name it, have been successful in marketing their wildlife and made millions out of it.

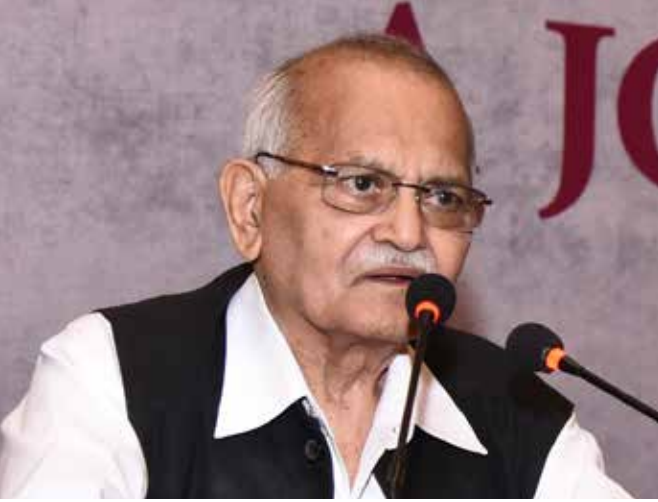
So, I just figured that there must be some reason, and I looked at three factors that struck me. My exposure to tourism is because my wife and I have produced about 6 travel shows over the last 25 years. We haven't done one for the last 10 years. And I came out with three factors. The first was price, and I found that you find that India is not a price competitive market because the burden of indirect taxation, which is levied on the poor tourist is very unattractive for him. And if you look at countries like Sri Lanka and then you look at Cambodia, Laos, Vietnam, you've got much better options at much lower prices. The



Amitabh Kant

“I'm a believer that India needs to grow at rates of 9% to 10% per annum year after year. If India grows, that means infrastructure will grow. You'll get new airports, you'll get new roads, you'll get new convention centres like the one in Pragati Maidan and Dwarka. And I think every state of India, every major city of India should have a convention centre of this quality to drive the MICE, the meetings, incentives, convention, exhibition markets.”

“I'm not in favour of mass tourism. India is full of great experiences from rural areas to wildlife, to heritage to everything. What we should promote and market is unique experiences of India that needs to be done. But the positioning of the product, positioning of the product should always be aspirational.”



Rural Tourism is the Next Sunrise Industry!

SK Misra, chairman, Indian Trust for Rural Heritage and Development

A man Nath mentioned France as a number of tourists they're getting and number of tourists we are getting, we do respect you. I do not agree with you. You cannot compare France. What are the number of days that the tourist spends in France? Compare it to India, multiply that, and then you get the real figures. Apart from that, I entirely agree with Amitabh that mass tourism would destroy the country. Imagine 30-40 million people descending on the country. It doesn't make sense. It has to be selective.

Firstly, what is the objective of tourism? The objective so far as India is concerned should be to improve the lives of millions of people, to have a direct impact on them. In a very small way, when I secretary, I started the Surajkund Mela. The purpose behind it was that our crafts were one of the major attractions, but craftsmen had been neglected earlier. So, we said tourism should act as a patron of the crafts. And we got master craftsmen from all over the country. Now more than 35 years have passed and it continues to be a big success.

So, I think what we need to do is now we have to move to new areas. I remember in the seventies, I had said, domestic tourism is a bedrock of Indian tourism. You must promote domestic tourism and not just be concerned with foreign exchange earnings. Now domestic tourism has caught on; our next step should be to ensure that very direct impact on the people, which will come from rural tourism.

In promoting rural we will be achieving the vision of Mahatma Gandhi. Rural sector will benefit tourism and a large number of tourists who come to India are interested in seeing the real India, not move from one five-star hotel to another, and then you can link the two - they stay in an urban centres like Agra or Banaras or something and then taken into the interior.

second thing I noticed was infrastructure. Now infrastructure is necessary to provide accessibility. So, if you look at, say for example wildlife in Africa, you've got all these plethora of small charter companies, air charter companies that have these single engines and two engine turboprops and they can fly you anywhere and within Africa, across borders.

So why hasn't that air charter industry been established in India to link up all the wildlife sites and all the forts because that's again a great thematic subject and of interest as we come back to the lack of our ability to market our ruins.

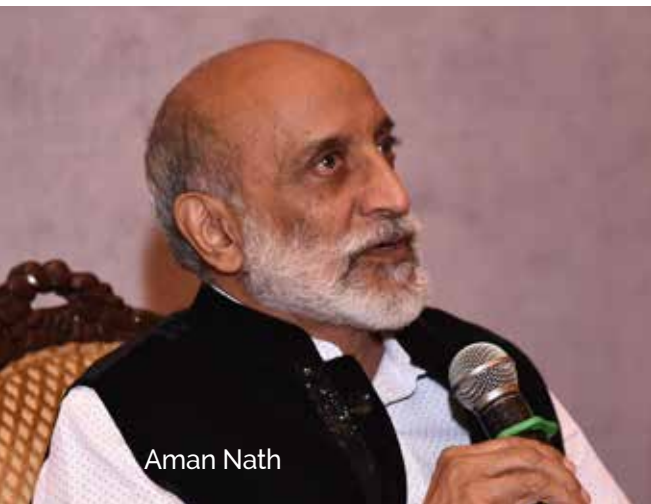
And the third thing is the experience of the traveler who comes to India and does he want to come back and does he want to be preached at, we have moral police in operation. Do people want to be judged when they come here on what they're doing and how they're behaving?

There used to be a lot of tourists in Goa at one time 30 years ago, foreign tourists. And if I remember about 50 years ago we had a family guru called Baba Neem Caroli, and in his ashram I have seen Steve Jobs and Richard Alpert. Richard Alpert was the guy who founded or discovered LSD and Steve Jobs is the founder of Apple. Now these are icons and for some reason nobody in India thought of using them to endorse India as a great destination for spiritual tourism as against religious tourism, but spiritual tourism. So, there are many issues over here and nobody has looked at it holistically and try to figure out that do what we really want to do, we do something about it, or do we just want to say it is ok as is.

BARKHA DUTT: So, let me flip it around and take that to Mr. Keswani because actually when those of us who travel outside India, one of the things, if you're not talking about the East, you mentioned a lot of the countries in the East or Sri Lanka, but if you go to the west, the hotels are crappy, right? And you're paying a lot for really poor service. And I mean most of us would've at some point said, oh my God, our service industry is so much better. Indian hotels by and large really, really are exceptional. Why then or what then is the problem?

PATU KESWANI: I think, well, I have not come here as a hotelier. So, I'm going to go off your question. See, I loved your book. Thank you Navin for sending it to me yesterday and I read it today, and I think it's very well written, very topical, and in fact, I've been talking to the Secretary, she had called me a couple of times about how we should change tourism just in the last three weeks. And it's a very simple thing. When do things work and when do they not work? If there are 50 voices and we are a democracy and we are proud of it, but there is no alignment, then nothing will work. Each individual stakeholder will do what is best for him or herself. I think a very fundamental issue in our country is that we talk about where we want to go, but nobody asks how we're going to execute it and therefore your recommendation that there should be a nodal agency if you are really interested in getting it to work, it needs two things.

The problem is tourism is a state subject. It must be in the concurrent list, number one, which means the centre has some say. Number two, there should be a leader like you recommended who has the power to get things done, obviously with vision, and you can define that vision, that could be a democratic decision. Take the inputs of a hundred stakeholders, but one person to execute. My view is simply that, and what I have been putting forward through the Hotel Association and to various government officials, is whether tourism is a business that could transform our demographic dividend. It has to be seen as a political economic decision,



“I often feel that we have many ministries and we need one more, which should be called the Inter-Ministerial Liaison Ministry. Because when you talk to tourism, they say Forest doesn't listen to us when you talk to forest, then they say something. I'm not trying to be critical, but since we are introspecting, I feel, let me even take a name. Suppose somebody like a Nakul Anand was the minister of tourism, would things be different?”

“If somebody is very good at wildlife tourism, then why should the ministry set up 20 people and have meetings? They should empower that person to do it, and I think private sector would shake it much better.”

not as an economic decision because it could easily absorb the 10 to 15 million guys who need a job every year. We could absorb half of them for the next 10 years. It could change India's, it could improve India's demographic dividends.

So therefore, rather than talk about hotels, which is one subset or X, Y, Z, see we are all visitors here. We are all tourists. I like what you said, visitor economy. Each and every one of us is a visitor somewhere. That's the human condition. So, it's overarching. I wouldn't talk about this aspect of that. I would say somebody has to take a call and it's the Prime Minister, by the way, who has to say, I'm going to give a part of my political capital. I am going to set up this agency, whether it's in the PMO, that is with a structure with his political heft and sure transformation. What has happened with, look, at the National Highways? Is not that led as a mission. It's insane what they've done. Even airports, it's all been unleashed. See, entrepreneurial energy will come, but somebody has to channel it. So that's my only comment that it's a beautiful book. I hope Mr. Modi reads it and gets inspired by it because it's certainly inspired me.

BARKHA DUTT: Yeah, that's a great point actually about the analogy, Rajeev with the highways, that when you put your mind to something, the infrastructure story of India has been pretty great when you look at it in terms of the state of airports, the state of roads, and if you actually think of it as something that benefits the political economy, creates jobs, not just as a niche area that you're having a tourism discussion. Rajeev, you've been in one way or the other in the space of branding India to the world with arts, with textiles, with so much of our sort of heritage as it were. What's holding us back?

RAJEEV SETHI: Great. I see so many friends and as long as I remember Navin, but my five points of intervention would be very brief and I made them briefer. But we've discussed this over so many decades. I recall meeting my friend Navin in the seventies of the last century, and we would often travel on a bus to and fro from Chandigarh. His Destination India magazine - was his passionate article of faith and the sheer invention of tourism in the early sort, newly created state of Haryana was one of his very consistent beats. And I recall Chappy Misra (SK Misra) was central to both of us as young men. And Navin got to write plenty about the many birds perched on state highways as tourist complexes out of creating the highways in fact, but also going into pug dundeeds, which bought out things from the villages, bought out places which nobody would have gone to, they didn't know they existed.

Roads went to that area principally because of what Chappy had in mind to create that network. And then my plans of course were different. I wasn't talking about the tourist complex, although assigned to one to work with, when I finished, was this plan on a rural hub created by villagers themselves, but it never took off.

There was a whole issue of orientation of local people as guides of oral histories connecting the tangible with the intangible resonances. There was an interfacing of traditional knowledge systems with evolving technologies, indigenous like beauty clinics and villages created for small towns and 'basties' as part of health tourism, but never really a curties as health tourism. But creating an annual collection of best souvenirs, our takeaways, a mapping of skilled craftspeople. It's conversion to utilitarian objects offered a huge imaginative canvas. We could have mobile kiosk retails and *haats* near tourist spots, but nothing really happened. And that is a problem. We made the present highway minister a presentation. We made an appeal to the minister saying that, which you mentioned again, again that connecting arts and crafts to infrastructure would be the next thing. It just can't be left to emporiums and museums.

It has to go into rest houses, it has to go into villages, it has to go to



Rajeev Sethi

“Why should all highways be for freight? It could be slow travel and doesn't have to go by air. But I think the poorer one is, the more extraordinary is the hospitality. This is a paradox between poverty and culture and also this whole hospitality thing – Atiti Deva Bhava - we say, but can the motivation for making money be equated to making a visitor feel like a God?”

“Things can't be just put on show. They are important to be able to create what is the magic of India. But I like the parts in your book where you very pragmatically state that unless these facilities are not enjoyed by the people themselves, what are we talking about? There has to be a certain level of integration.”

where people go. And why should all highways be for freight? It could be slow travel and doesn't have to go by air. But I think the poorer one is, the more extraordinary is the hospitality. This is a paradox between poverty and culture and also this whole hospitality thing – Atiti Deva Bhava - we say, but can the motivation for making money be equated to making a visitor feel like a God?

Now the greatest luxury has no price tag attached to it and we know this and have experienced it. I know I'm being totally idealistic. I'm nothing else all these 70 years, but how to make a business out of something that is best offered free is the dichotomy. And I still don't know that hospitality when it gets converted to a business, which most of, I've been talking to Navin known often that all the gatherings always hoteliers and people in the trade. But really when we talk of Atiti Deva Bhava then it's everyone. So there are many, many issues that come on the way when we get to the pug dundee and we get off the highway and these have been taken up over the last 60 years. I know Navin has mentioned them in the book here and there, but I do not know why it doesn't really start showing some concrete results.

BARKHA DUTT: Thank you, Rajeev. Thank you for that. Navin Berry, I think we must bring you into the conversation with this book. Obviously, you've had a ringside view of what's been happening in this space for so many years. The one thing that everybody seems to agree on is a kind of holistic approach. There've been many ideas from this stage itself. A nodal officer, a nodal ministry, someone from the trade in government, air charters between forts and wildlife centuries.

If there was one thing, if you were given a magic wand and you were asked change one thing, you have the power to change one thing immediately, what would that be?

NAVIN BERRY: That's a tough question, but let me try and answer it. Somewhere, I feel that we've been labouring over too many things for too long and they haven't fructified and we are still struggling to say, let's do this. For example, the National Tourism Board or a national committee or something. I mean these are very honestly in my very considered, very personal opinion, old hat. It's all done and dusted now to have a tourism board after Mohammad Yunus committee recommended it almost 40 years ago. I mean it is not relevant anymore and we are still struggling to do those things. The other day I heard about Visit India Year. I mean Visit India Year has been tried, again and again, not by us but by many countries in the region. It is a thing of the past. So, let's do something different. So, we are still struggling with ideas from the past

Secondly, I have written in my book that travel and tourism is going to prosper. Nobody is going to pull back travel and tourism. It is going to happen regardless of governments, regardless of anybody. There is that momentum in our economy, domestic tourism, domestic tourists, foreigners, they will keep coming. So, there is no threat to travel and tourism growing. But if you want to make a quantum difference to how tourism happens, then you'll have to make a break from the past and look at new things to make the difference.

BARKHA DUTT: What's the one fundamental break from the past that you think we have to make?

NAVIN BERRY: I think people haven't understood the magic or the power of tourism and people still are struggling, in my opinion, still to think it's elitist or we think it doesn't matter. All the connotations that we have are all incorrect. The right one has not happened. That it is actually, tourism is the magic wand. Tourism can transform everything that's happening in the country. And the greatest thing that is happening today in the world of tourism is experiential. Now experiential wraps up our hinterland. It captures the essence of India. So, if you want Bharat, that's



Kishore Singh: art curator and journalist

I'm just sharing some key takeaways from this book. The first, which he extols fairly powerfully, is the idea that tourism is everybody's business. It's everybody's business. It's yours and mine. It is, of course the tourist, but is also the 'shakara wallas', the coconut cellars and somehow, it's been seen in isolation as part of a very exclusive club. It has to move out of that exclusive club, out of that 'suit boot' positioning into every man's product, both as a consumer as well as someone who benefits from it.

The corollary that comes from it, and I think Navin mentions it, is the fact that the ministry of tourism, as an enabler, doesn't have the teeth to actually do very much more than state a position and that lack of consistency that he talks about. But tourism is everybody else's business. Every other ministry's business. All the elements that go into serving the civic amenities for you and me as people, as citizens of the country, if that product meets our requirements, it meets the requirements of the tourists.

That, again, is a very important take-away in terms of how to look at and understand the tourism product. These civic amenities include everything from better cities, cleanliness, hygiene, safety, security, transportation, signages, electricity, toilets, drinking water, food, food stalls, friendly police. If we have that for the citizens of our country, the tourism product is automatically enabled.

What he's also talking about is the very nature of the travel economy and the possibility of a national tourism mission. The fact of certain redundancies in terms of the industry associations, because their sheer limitation in terms of the roles that they play, when in fact tourism should represent a much larger body of people.

experiential. It's not sitting in your Delhi, Bombay or Calcutta. So, you have that opportunity to actually cash upon is experiential. The thing is there, somebody has to put it together. And, it can make the difference.

RAJEEV SETHI: Things can't be just put on show. They are important to be able to create what is the magic of India. But I like the parts in your book where you very pragmatically state that unless these facilities are not enjoyed by the people themselves, what are we talking about? There has to be a certain level of integration. And if you utter the word 'Paryatan', it is not a word people understand in the villages of India. So, I think that point that it has to get more than just being tourists is important. So, the tourism wand has to reinvent its name, it has to become part something much bigger.

BARKHA DUTT: Aman, you want to take that?

AMAN NATH: I want to say that the book should also be read because it is the collective memory of tourism in India, post-independence, almost what not to do. Because if you read between the lines, you say, okay, they were fantastic people, some of whom are here, they tried their best, but because the mindset wasn't changed and it still hasn't changed because when you go to a village, I've just come from Benaras, it's shocking to see how desperately our aspirations are to become western. In the news programmes, in conferences, wherever I went, all the girls have to wear red miniskirts. I mean, what has happened to the sari? So if you're talking tourism, and we are still ashamed - in this morning in Benaras, one man was talking to me only in bad English. So, I told him, I am Indian, you can talk to me in Hindi. So, I said he was demonstrating superiority by talking English. So, the double standards I think in tourism have to go, all of us know, for example, the state in which the maximum alcohol is drunk. Do you know which one it is? Gujarat. Okay. And that is meant to be a dry state. So, who's got the dots on the eyes and who are we fooling? So, we have to get it right.

BARKHA DUTT: I think I want to pick up the last point of this homogenizing, Westernization, globalization, which is actually taking us away from our own sort of sub-cultures. Iqbal do you think that's a problem?

IQBAL CHAND MALHOTRA: I think everything has to go together. You cannot say that pass a judgement against malls or you can't pass a judgement against some other kind of structure because the fact is that we need to create employment and tourism is a great means of creating employment. Our country in the last 20 years has suffered from too much competition from China and it has de-industrialized itself. Manufacturing has been badly wiped out. And without those jobs that manufacturing could have produced, if you have returned to the service sector, tourism is a great thing. And right from the micro level right up to the macro level, you need to really give it a big push. Now the question is that who are the minds who are going to get together and figure out an order of how we need to execute this and how we need to push this forward?

BARKHA DUTT: Mr. Kant. We are having a robust conversation about how to sort of optimize India's great potential in the tourism hospitality space. Can I request you to come in with your thoughts on the book and otherwise. And of course, there was a reference earlier to the whole Incredible India moment, but Navin was also making the argument that we need new ideas as we move ahead. So please.

AMITABH KANT: So well, I'm a believer that India needs to grow at rates of 9% to 10% per annum year after year. If India grows, that means infrastructure will grow. You'll get new airports, you'll get new roads, you'll get new convention centres like the one in Pragati Maidan and Dwarka. And I think every state of India, every major city of India should have a convention centre of this quality to drive the MICE, the



Barkha Dutt

“Whether you look at aviation or you look at hotels or you look at amenities, there's an interconnectedness at the heart of it.”



Iqbal Chand Malhotra

“Tourism is a great thing. And right from the micro level right up to the macro level, you need to really give it a big push. Now the question is that who are the minds who are going to get together and figure out an order of how we need to execute this?”

meetings, incentives, convention, exhibition markets.

So, tourism is a subset of the Indian economy. You can never look at tourism in isolation. If India grows, India's hard power grows. India soft power will automatically grow and India's tourism will grow by leaps and bounds. Earlier you didn't have airports, you didn't have airlines, you didn't have carriers which will bring in people, you didn't have destinations. All that is dramatically changing and I think all that you need now is seven, eight state champions.

India's got phenomenal tourism products, if you have about 10 states saying that I'm going to create jobs, tourism has to be seen from the perspective of the fact that while India is going to grow the sector, which is going to create jobs, is travel and tourism. It has the biggest multiplier impact. It's multiplier impact across handloom, handicraft, craft and culture, all that is just phenomenal. For every job that you create in tourism, you create 10 other jobs and therefore we should not talk of tourism in isolation. We should just talk about the failure of tourism industry is that it has never said that it is the biggest job creator. India wants to grow with jobs. Tourism is the answer.

BARKHA DUTT: Yes, actually I think you, Mr. Keswani, you made that point earlier. Aman, if you want, you want to react to that?

AMAN NATH: Actually, the tourism minister, when you look at the hierarchy of ministers is somewhere down the line. For some reason. He's like somebody who makes you laugh in a film, though he should be next to the finance minister and maybe above him because if France has a population of 70 million and can get 92 million tourists, imagine if you got 1.5 billion tourists. I mean the whole economy and the tourism minister would be handing out money to the finance minister.

So, we have to take ourselves much more seriously. You know, the valley of the noir in France gets more tourists than the whole of India. And that is just the size of Shekhawati, which is one seventh of Rajasthan. So, it is a matter of shame even I would say that with everything in place now, we have infrastructure in place also. When you go to the American airports, you think you've come to the third world.

BARKHA DUTT: Navin, did you want to just add to your point about the political economy and I'll give a last couple of comments to Mr. Kant, before we actually launch the book.

AMITABH KANT: No, no. I just wanted to respond to Aman's point. I mean to my mind it's not a correct analogy because tourism is essentially worldwide as regional in character. The challenge with India is that you've got Pakistan on one side, you've got Afghanistan on another side, you've got China on third side. So, the South Asia region is the least integrated region, so you don't get regional tourists, otherwise you'll have a billion plus people travelling to India. India is a long-haul destination. So, people who come to India prepare for coming here, but India gets tourists who have the longest stays here. So, my philosophy always has been that since India is so heavily overpopulated, we should focus on upmarket, high value tourists and not focus on numbers of people. The focus must be on unit value realization. If you get high value tourists, that'll have a huge impact on India's growth story.

PATU KESWANI: See, the thing is that I have 10,000 employees in my company. 8,000 of them are class 10 graduated or less and 1000 of them, are disabled. We did this consciously. These are unemployable people. And let me tell you, across the spectrum of tourism this bunch, because India still has I think 20-30% not literate. Tourism needs functional literacy, not educational literacy. That's the key. What we need is, like we said, a national leader like the Prime Minister himself with that level of political capital. And you need some competitiveness across states. One state proves it works. States are so competitive today that chief ministers go after a single silly project



Patu Keswani

“I’m a believer that India needs to grow at rates of 9% to 10% per annum year after year. If India grows, that means infrastructure will grow. You’ll get new airports, you’ll get new roads, you’ll get new convention centres like the one in Pragati Maidan and Dwarka. And I think every state of India, every major city of India should have a convention centre of this quality to drive the MICE, the meetings, incentives, convention, exhibition markets.”

“I’m not in favour of mass tourism. India is full of great experiences from rural areas to wildlife, to heritage to everything. What we should promote and market is unique experiences of India that needs to be done. But the positioning of the product, positioning of the product should always be aspirational.”

of \$2 billion. The chief minister is running. Can you imagine somebody, a chief minister who transforms his state from the tourism perspective shows that it employs people who otherwise are potentially unemployable in this country, what it would do. So, to me, it’s simply a political economy decision. That’s my view. I mean, everything else will flow from that.

RAJEEV SETHI: I’m just a little uncomfortable with economic indices as the one way to measure travel. And I want another word other than tourism. I think there’s much, much more to people going out, meeting, reaching out than high-end tourists who can pay big bucks for reviving our economy. I think there’s a huge amount to be said about creativity in the rural areas where there are people who want to meet people who want to have extended market. Whether that comes into the formal nomenclature of tourism as you, Amitabh are speaking of, I don’t know. I think these are things that we’ve been speaking about for about 60 years, but they still haven’t been able to see a coherent action on the field. So, you can call it tourism and you can say, okay, domestic tourism or rural tourism, but I think it is a little more than just tourism. I think there’s an ecosystem that creates, and it’s an ecosystem that I’m talking about. Tourism is one end of the spectrum, an important one. But I think we are talking about an ecosystem of appreciation, of conservation, of identity, of values and being just an experience. I think we have to retain something for ourselves.

AMITABH KANT: So Rajeev, I was talking from another perspective, and that is that mass tourism across the world has actually destroyed cultures. And I’ve seen this from very close quarters. It has led to huge unplanned unsustainable development. It has led to encroachments and therefore I’m not in favour of mass tourism. India is full of great experiences from rural areas to wildlife, to heritage to everything. What we should promote and market is unique experiences of India that needs to be done. But the positioning of the product, positioning of the product should always be aspirational. It should never be low value.

BARKHA DUTT: Let me just ask you, before you came in, there was a suggestion from many of the speakers here about having someone who understands the trade in government. Do you think there’s merit in that?

AMITABH KANT: See, my belief really frankly, is that tourism ministry, I’m being very honest, that if India grows, if you’re able to create great infrastructure, if you have created 55,000 kilometres of road in the last seven, eight years, you’ve provided accessibility to all the destinations. If you built 30 new airports, you provided airports to all tier 2 and tier 3 cities now, which didn’t exist earlier. And if you’ve been able to really provide the last mile connectivity to the travel and tourism destinations, which has never existed in my time, and you’ve seen the emergence of 2 tier - clean sheets, clean beds, hotels, and resorts now, which never existed in my time. That means that tourism has come to stay. You don’t need a tourism ministry, according to me, honestly.

BARKHA DUTT: So, who would take the decision?


AMITABH KANT: Why do you need decisions? You need tourism as a state subject. It should be driven by the states.

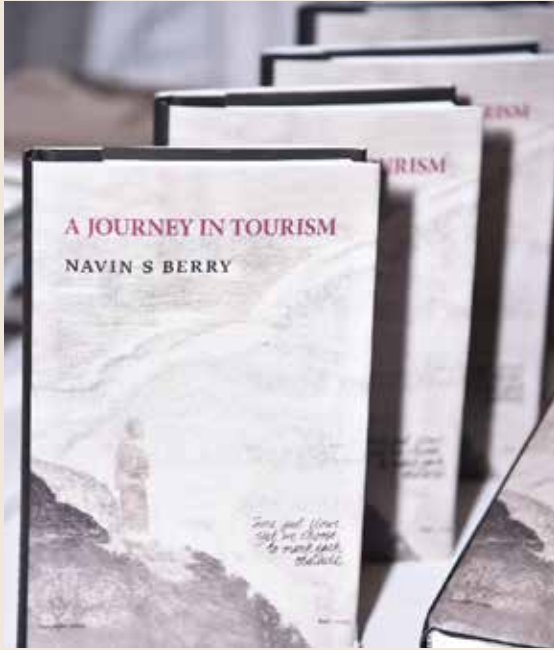
BARKHA DUTT: Well, we had the exact opposite argument here where people are arguing for it to be a central subject.

AMITABH KANT: Absolutely not.

BARKHA DUTT: Why not?

AMITABH KANT: Because Kerala has demonstrated that Kerala grew and became one of the greatest destinations of the world, has been ranked as one of the finest destinations of the world, with zero contribution from central government. Give the ownership to the states, make them responsible. What he’s saying, rank the states, name and shame them, without the states, you can’t deliver tourism.

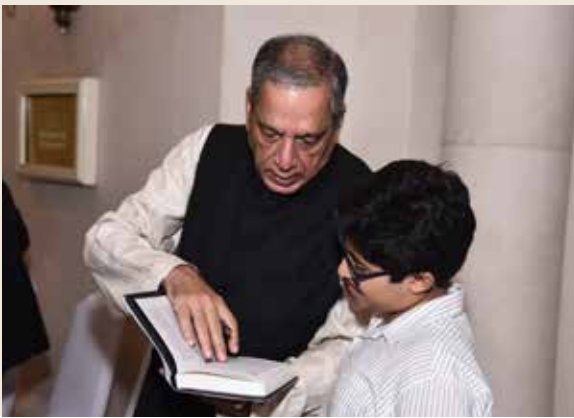
AMAN NATH: No, I think there’s room for both. Your high end is very good and you can also have the rest of India, otherwise they get isolated. 



In celebration of tourism: a book launch

In Celebration of India, a book launch that brought a cross section of critical stakeholders onto a single platform, discussing the way forward for Indian Tourism.







INDIA'S PROGRESS IN TOBACCO CONTROL: GOOD GOING BUT MORE TO GO

WHO released a report on 'Global Tobacco Pandemic Epidemic, 2023: Protect people from tobacco smoke'. The report tracks the progress made by countries in tobacco control since 2008 and, marks 15 years since MPOWER measures were introduced. Read here to learn more about MPOWER and Indian efforts for tobacco control.

by TEAM VHAI

With over 8 million tobacco-related deaths a year, tobacco use continues to be one of the biggest public health threats and tobacco control remains a global health priority. This is the ninth WHO report on the global tobacco epidemic and the fifteenth year since MPOWER was introduced as a technical package designed to help countries implement the demand-reduction measures of the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control. This report shows that, in 2022, more than 5.6 billion people, 71% of the world's population were covered by at least one MPOWER measure implemented at the highest level.

Global Tobacco Epidemic

The global tobacco epidemic refers to the widespread and growing public health issue caused by the use of tobacco products.

- Tobacco use is one of the leading preventable causes of death worldwide and poses significant health risks to both users and non-users exposed to secondhand smoke.
- The epidemic is driven by the consumption and addiction to tobacco products, primarily cigarettes, which contain nicotine and other harmful substances.

The WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (WHO FCTC) and its guidelines provide the foundation for countries to implement and manage tobacco control. To help make this a reality, WHO introduced the MPOWER measures.

- **Monitoring** tobacco use and prevention policies
- **Protecting** people from tobacco smoke
- **Offering** help to quit tobacco use
- **Warning** about the dangers of tobacco
- **Enforcing** ban on tobacco advertising, promotion, and sponsorship
- **Raising** taxes on tobacco

Protecting people from tobacco smoke – the “P” of the MPOWER measures – is the focus of this ninth WHO report on the global tobacco

epidemic and is a crucial component of the MPOWER package.

Key highlights of the report are:

- In 2022, the number of countries implementing at least one MPOWER measure has increased to 151.
- Only 4 countries (Brazil, Turkiye, Netherlands, and Mauritius) have implemented all measures.
- Tobacco kills more than 8 million people each year, including 1.3 million non-smokers who are exposed to SHS (Second-hand smoking).
- India is ranked among the highest achievers in tobacco dependence.

Facts related to the global tobacco epidemic

- Tobacco use is linked to a wide range of health problems, including various types of cancer (e.g., lung, throat, mouth, esophageal), cardiovascular diseases, respiratory diseases, and reproductive disorders. Smoking is responsible for millions of premature deaths each year.
- Nicotine, present in tobacco products, is highly addictive, making it challenging for users to quit. The addictive nature of nicotine contributes to the persistence of tobacco use despite known health risks.
- Non-smokers exposed to secondhand smoke are also at risk of adverse health effects, including respiratory illnesses, cardiovascular diseases, and lung cancer.
- The tobacco industry often targets young people with aggressive marketing strategies and appealing product designs. As a result, many individuals start using tobacco products at a young age, leading to addiction and long-term health consequences.
- The tobacco epidemic has significant economic implications due to the high healthcare costs for treating tobacco-related illnesses and lost productivity from illness and premature death.

The tobacco epidemic is a global health challenge affecting developed and developing countries.

- Low- and middle-income countries are particularly vulnerable due to the increasing prevalence of tobacco use and limited resources for healthcare.
- The tobacco industry's marketing and lobbying efforts have been a significant obstacle to effective tobacco control measures. They have also sought to undermine tobacco control policies and regulations that aim to reduce tobacco use.

Tobacco control efforts

Various countries and international organizations have implemented tobacco control





measures to combat the epidemic.

- These measures include tobacco taxes, smoke-free policies, graphic health warnings on tobacco packaging, public awareness campaigns, and support for smoking cessation programs.

The WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control is an international treaty that aims to reduce the demand for tobacco products, control tobacco advertising, protect people from second-hand smoke, and regulate tobacco product packaging.

India

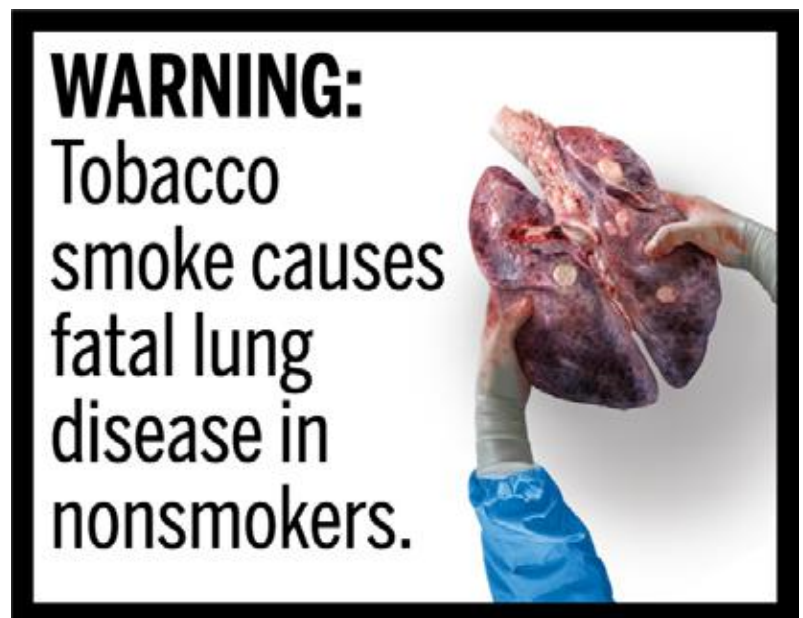
Tobacco control in India is a critical public health priority due to the significant health and economic burden caused by tobacco use. The Indian government has taken several measures to curb tobacco consumption and reduce its harmful effects on the population. Some of the key tobacco control initiatives in India include:

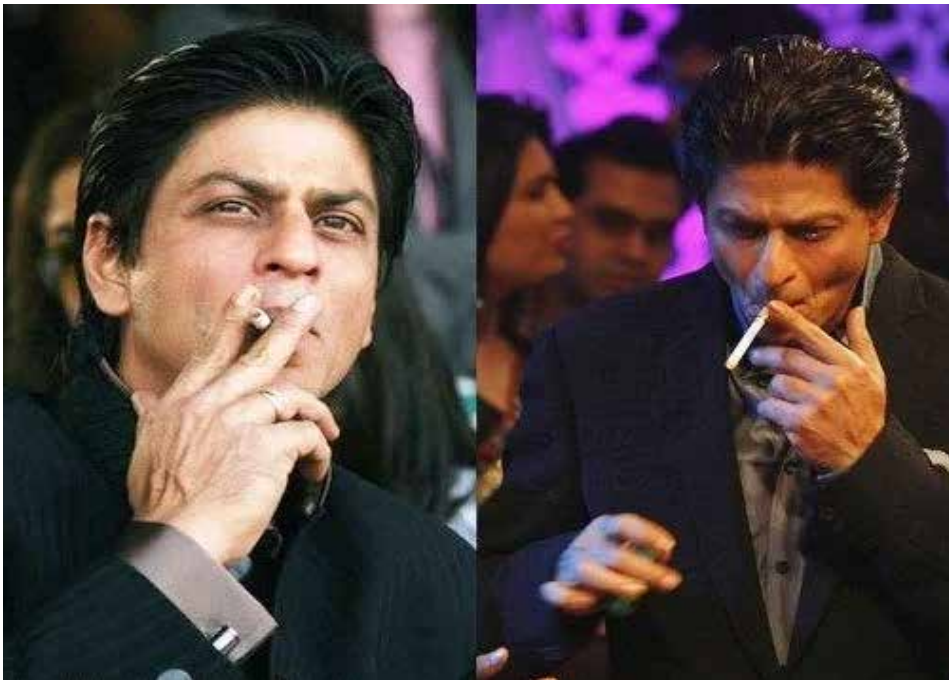
- **Cigarettes and Other Tobacco Products Act (COTPA):** COTPA is a comprehensive law enacted in 2003 to regulate the production, sale, distribution, and advertisement of tobacco products in India.

- It prohibits smoking in public places, selling tobacco products to minors, and using tobacco products near educational institutions.

- COTPA mandates smoke-free policies in public places, including educational institutions, healthcare facilities, offices, and public transport. Smoking is also banned in trains and airplanes.

- **Health Warnings on Tobacco Packaging:** India was among the first countries to implement large, graphic health warnings covering 85% of the principal display area on tobacco product packaging. These warnings illustrate the adverse health effects of tobacco use and serve as a deterrent.





One of the biggest steps in the works is implementing warnings on OTT platform content when actors are seen using tobacco products. This would make India the first country in the world to do so. And, it is needed. Movie theatres already display such warnings but they are missing when it comes to OTT platforms.

■ **National Tobacco Control Program (NTCP):** The NTCP was launched in 2007 to support the implementation of tobacco control measures at the national and state levels. It focuses on public awareness campaigns, monitoring tobacco use, and facilitating tobacco cessation services.

■ **Tobacco Taxation:** The Indian government periodically increases taxes on tobacco products to make them less affordable and deter consumption. Higher taxes also generate revenue that can be invested in public health initiatives.

■ **Ban on Advertisement and Sponsorship:** India prohibits direct and indirect advertising of tobacco products. It also bans tobacco companies from sponsoring events, sports, or cultural activities.

■ **Prohibition of Electronic Cigarettes Act, 2019:** In 2019, the government issued an ordinance to ban e-cigarettes and other electronic nicotine delivery systems (ENDS) to prevent their potential harm to public health, especially among youth.

■ **National Health Policy 2017:** The national health policy targets to reduce tobacco use by 30% by 2025.

■ **Tobacco Cessation Services:** The government promotes tobacco cessation through various programs and initiatives. It provides training to healthcare professionals to offer counselling and treatment for tobacco dependence.

■ **Surveillance and Monitoring:** India conducts national and sub-national surveys to monitor tobacco use prevalence, compliance with tobacco control laws, and the impact of tobacco control interventions.


India is a party to WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control. Tobacco control in India is a dynamic process, and the government, along with civil society organizations and public health stakeholders, continues to work towards reducing tobacco use and its associated health consequences.

What do experts say?

One of the biggest steps in the works is implementing warnings on OTT platform content when actors are seen using tobacco products. "This would make India the first country in the world to do so. And, it is needed. Movie theatres already display such warnings but they are missing when it comes to OTT platforms. During the pandemic, there was a huge increase in the number of people subscribing to OTT plat-

forms. This content is also readily available to children which means the warnings also have to reach them. The initial warnings on movies were brought in because children and adolescents were seeing their icons smoking on screen and taking it up," said Binoy Mathew, an expert in tobacco regulation from the Voluntary Health Association of India.

He said that India already has a comprehensive law on tobacco control, but some amendments are needed in the 20-year-old law. "There is a need for the law to ban the loose sale of cigarettes. What we see is that many people, especially college students, buy one or two cigarettes instead of the whole pack which might cost R 350-400. This means they are not exposed to the health warning and quit-line at all."

He felt there was also a need to increase fines for smoking in public places. "Right now, the fine is just Rs 200. That does not deter people anymore." He even argued for completely doing away with designated smoking areas with restaurants even serving food and drinks in such areas. "Besides, we still see people selling packs of cigarettes from neighbouring countries that do not carry the 85 per cent health warning." 

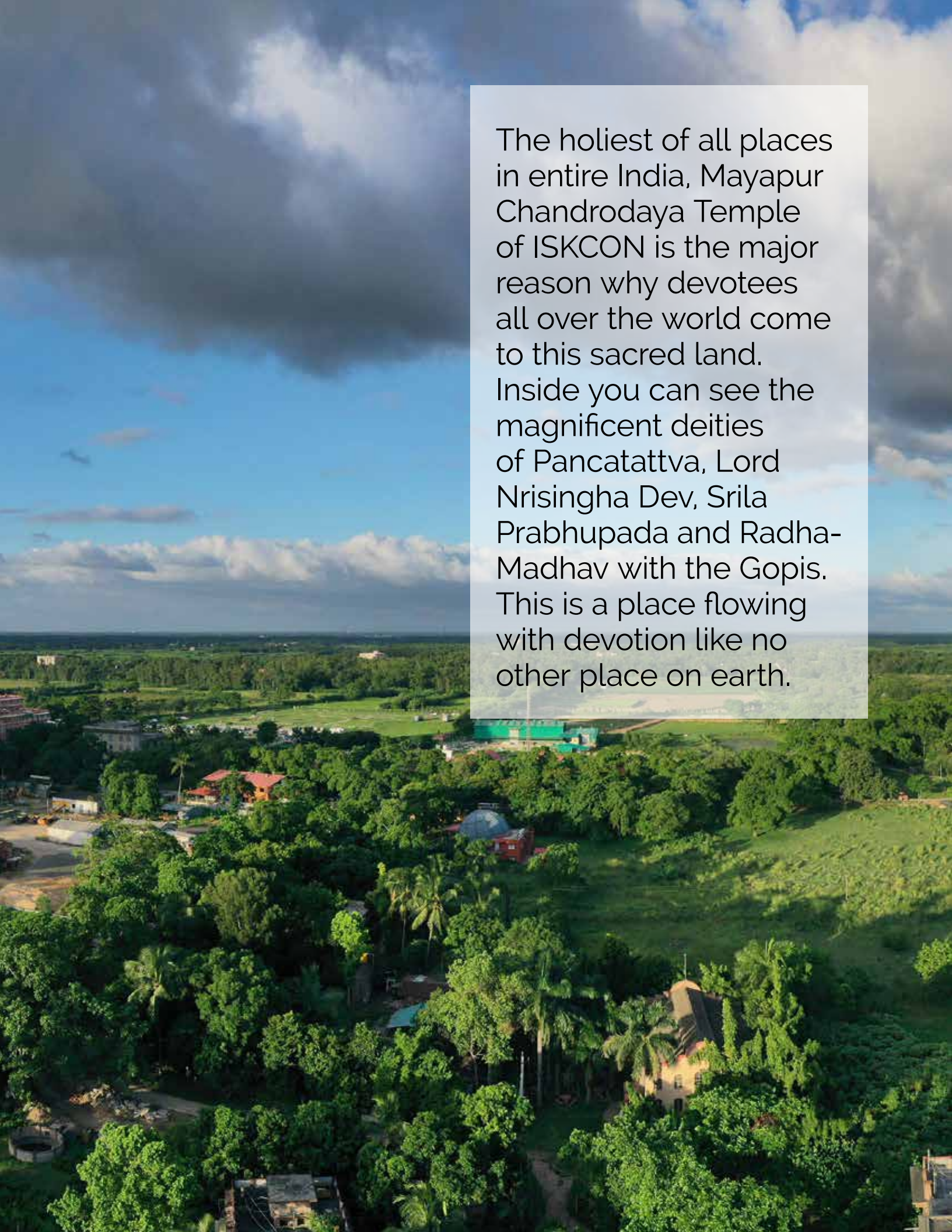
ABOUT TEAM VHAI

Voluntary Health Association of India (VHAI) is a national public health organization dedicated to making health and development a reality for people of India. It is the largest network of non-governmental health organizations in the world. Bhavna Mukhopadhyay is the Chief Executive of VHAI.

HERITAGE

ISKCON MAYAPUR
**THE TEMPLE
OF THE
MILLENIUM**



An aerial photograph of Mayapur, India, showing a lush green landscape with palm trees and buildings under a cloudy sky. The text is overlaid on a semi-transparent white box in the upper right quadrant.

The holiest of all places in entire India, Mayapur Chandrodaya Temple of ISKCON is the major reason why devotees all over the world come to this sacred land. Inside you can see the magnificent deities of Pancatattva, Lord Nrisingha Dev, Srila Prabhupada and Radha-Madhav with the Gopis. This is a place flowing with devotion like no other place on earth.



▼ The Exhibition floor of the Narasimha Deva temple of TOVP under construction.



Text & photographs by TANMOY DAS

This is the largest Vedic temple built in modern history at 600,000 sq. ft./65,032 sq. m. and a height of 370 ft./113 m., with three domes and eight Chattris, encompassing a footprint of 16 acres, and has been built to last for hundreds of years.

The temple hall is the largest in the world at 2.5 acres and capable of accommodating 10,000 people. The main temple dome, at 177 ft./54 m. diameter and 114 ft./35m. height, is the largest stainless-steel dome of its kind in the world.

The solid titanium Chakras and Kalashes atop the three temple domes are the largest of any known Vedic temple, the main dome Chakra measuring at 23 ft./7 m. in diameter.

The exterior temple structure is adorned by in-house-manufactured cornices, volutes, peacock statues and other ornamental pieces, and specially crafted sky-blue ceramic tiles embellished with stars and ribbons have been mounted onto the three domes.

Immense, in-house-manufactured pillars stand throughout the interior and exterior of the temple, set with the highest quality marble in the world. 45 exquisite Jaipur-style sandstone windows have been fitted into the white-marbled exterior walls of the structure.

Inlaid marble walls and floors will cover the entire temple interior, along with beautiful, locally-made bas-relief panels and paintings on its walls.

Within the main temple hall is situated the largest Vedic altar in the world, made from the best blue and white marble with gold inlays (134 ft./41 m. long, 49 ft./15 m. tall, 48 ft./15 m. wide), giving *darshan* of the *murtis* of Radha Madhava and the Ashta-Sakhis, Pancha Tattva and the Gaudiya Vaishnava Guru Parampara.

The Deity Seva Facility (Pujari Floor) consists of 69 dedicated rooms such as kitchens, dress making and storage rooms, arati preparation rooms, festival paraphernalia rooms and flower garland making rooms, spanning an area of 2.5 acres, and is the largest of its kind in the world.

Hanging from the ceiling within the

At the foundation of every civilization lies its world-view, which inspires its art and culture. This shared perspective shapes the values and sets the direction of a society. The Temple of the Vedic Planetarium will give visitors a unique insight into the Vedic world-view which is not only spiritual, but scientific and practical as well.



The sculptural details of the exteriors of The Temple of Vedic Planetarium.

Main Temple Dome is the centerpiece of the temple, a massive rotating cosmic chandelier 200 ft./61 m. high and 100 ft./30 m. wide, depicting the universe according to Vedic authority, ascending from the material to the spiritual world.

The East Wing Dome houses the solid granite and marble-clad altar of Prahlad Nrsimhadeva embellished with gold ornamentation and decorative elements in the form of chakras, peacocks, lotuses and other floral designs, and its size is 37 ft./11 m. in length, 26.5 ft./8 m. wide and 37 ft./11 m. in height.

Under the West Wing Dome will be the 200 seat, full-dome planetarium theater which will be used for screening a range of presentations of Vedic cosmology, philosophy and science, as well as for lectures, conventions and similar events. A Science Center/Exhibition Hall will be on the lower level. Four floors of exhibits encompassing 84,000 sq. ft./7,800 m. will utilize cutting-edge technologies such as projection mapping, virtual and augmented reality, holograms, motion-based simulations and more to present various aspects of Vedic science and philosophy, challenging modern mechanistic and atheistic views of reality.

Situated on over 60 acres of land, the temple will be surrounded by gorgeous gardens and walkways, water displays, residential quarters, shops, restaurants and schools, all within the expanding Vedic City of ISKCON Mayapur.

At the foundation of every civilization lies its world-view, which inspires its art and culture. This shared perspective shapes the values and sets the direction of a society. The Temple of the Vedic Planetarium will give visitors a unique insight into the Vedic world-view which is not only spiritual, but scientific and practical as well.

Modern scientific thought asserts that creation is essentially mechanistic, impersonal, and without basis in a higher intelligence.



Societies which adopt this viewpoint seek to benefit from an increased standard of living on the material level. Unfortunately, a tendency then follows to minimize or criticize religion as an impediment to progress. The results can be seen in societies both developed and developing: disintegration of the family, substance abuse, mental illness, and the general degradation of morality and culture. In a rapidly changing world that is as bewildered as it is bewildering, the Temple of the Vedic Planetarium will re-orient us to our place in the universe, and show us how to arrive at our heart's true spiritual destination through the practice of Krishna consciousness.



A unconventional Vedic class room in Gurukulm Mayapur.



Devotees dancing in ecstasy in Kirtan in the Iskcon Mayapur's Chandrodaya temple.

- ▶ White coffered ceiling
- ▼ International devotees singing at the Kirtan Mela held at Mayapur every year.



Information

How to get to Mayapur

Mayapur is located in Nadia district of West Bengal, not far from the district headquarters Krishnagar. The ISKCON complex may be visited any time of the year but the best time is between November and March. Expect quite a crowd during school holidays and festive days.

How to go

The nearest airport is the Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose International Airport in Kolkata. Mayapur is about 130km by road from the heart of Kolkata and about 117km from the airport. From Kolkata, you have to make the onward journey by road or rail. From the city's Sealdah station, you can take a local train (can be crowded during office hours) to Krishnagar. You may hire a private vehicle or avail a local bus for the rest of the way to Mayapur; or you may take a rickshaw to Mayapur Ghat in Swarupganj, take the local ferry to Hulor Ghat in Mayapur and then take a rickshaw to the temple complex. There are a few trains running from Howrah station (the main railway station across the Hooghly River to the west of Kolkata) to Nabadwip Dham. From Nabadwip, you may take a rickshaw to Mayapur Ghat and then same as before. If you are a first time visitor or planning a short visit, one of the most convenient ways is to take the bus operated by the organisation to and from their office in Kolkata.

There are privately-run hotels and resorts in Mayapur. But the most sought after place to stay are the guest houses operated by ISKCON.

Where to stay

There are privately-run hotels and resorts in Mayapur. But the most sought after place to stay are the guest houses operated by ISKCON. There are four guest houses within the ISKCON campus – Gada Bhavan, Ishodayan Bhavan, Chakra Building and Conch Building. The reception is located in Gada Bhavan, which also has a sweet and snacks corner, a restaurant, and the Prasadam Hall. The Ishodayan Bhavan is the biggest of the guest houses. You can have the Thali Prasadam for lunch and dinner. The Conch Building is behind the main temple. Room rates vary depending on the facilities provided. For example, in Gada Bhavan, room rates range between approximately Rs 500 and Rs 2700. At the Gita Bhavan, there are both rooms and dormitories; you may also avail lunch and dinner facilities at the Prasadam hall. Gauranga Kutir and

Nityananda Kutir have budget rooms with common washroom facilities. Please note advance booking of rooms made only 60 days prior to the check in date will be valid. Online booking is also available. Discounted rates available for long stays. Tip: In case you have not been able to book in advance, beat the reception of Gada Bhavan at 7am and if it is your lucky day, you may be able to avail a room that has been released owing to last minute cancellations. For life members of ISKCON, there is a 20 per cent discount on accommodation round the year and free accommodation and *prasadam* for three days and nights. However, check with the office if discounts are available for online booking or for latest information. Outside the campus, you may also check out the accommodation provided by many of the Gaudiya Mathas. But only a few have online booking facilities; most have to be booked over telephone or in person. There are also apartments for rent in Mayapur town. However, for booking accommodations outside the campus, do check for their nearness to the ISKCON temple complex, the cleanliness and the security of the place. 

*For more details, bookings and other assistance, please contact -
Mayapur Tourism : +91 97335 78071
Uttara Gangopadhyay Kolkata (M)9830221032*



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Tanmoy Das is the Krishna *bhakt*, a professional photographer, who is presently living in Mayapur, in the

service of the Lord.

THE MARRIOTT STORY SO FAR!

GROWTH IS THE COMMON FACTOR ACROSS BRANDS, ACROSS MARKETS



We met with Ranju Alex, Area VP for Marriott International for India. Riding the high wave in hospitality, their story is no different, except more pronounced. India is the big growth story in this part of the world, with a target of 250 operational hotels by 2025.

by NAVIN BERRY

How is it going, the salient features. Like what's been completed, how is the present updated.

The year has run on a very positive note, with the face of business looking very promising. We currently hold the largest room inventory in India with 144 operating hotels, 16 brands and over 27,000 plus rooms, spread across more than 40 cities. The year also marked a significant milestone as we launched our 150th hotel in South Asia, with the JW Marriott Goa. The openings have been steady and consistent over the past 7 months (Jan-July) with an average of 1 hotel opening each month across key markets within India. With a pipeline of 15 hotels set to open for 2023, we have 9 hotels successfully launched to date. India is one of the most important markets for Marriott International, with the largest number of properties and rooms in Asia, after China. The pace of new signing has picked up considerably over the past few months and we expect more activity on the conversion front, both in managed and franchised agreements.

The Westin Hyderabad Hitec City, which opened in June this year, marked the first all women operated hotel within the city and heralds a paradigm shift for the hospitality industry, breaking from the conventional

'Marriott to Post Over \$1b in India Revenue This Year' *says Rajeev Menon, President, APEC*

Marriott International will clock over a billion dollars of top line revenue in India this year, said Rajeev Menon, president, Asia Pacific (excluding China) at Marriott International, to Economic Times in an exclusive interview.

"It will be ₹9,000 crore of top line revenue. In the first six months of the year, our RevPar (revenue per available room) growth in India is at 56% in comparison to 2022, and 35% compared to 2019. Now, 2022 was the year where recovery had just started. The first quarter was a bit soft, and from the second quarter, the business started to bounce back. So, 2019 is a good comparison," he said.

Menon said as the smaller, secondary, and tertiary cities start to get infrastructure and seeing industries coming in, India will see 'explosive growth' across the board.



Ranju Alex



The Westin Hyderabad Mindspace

ways of operating. We also had Homes & Villas by Marriott Bonvoy enter the India market - Jan 2023, with an aim to add close to 500 highly curated, luxury and premium homes in key Indian travel destinations over 2023.

Loyalty continues to be a huge focus area. We want to ensure we make our loyal customers feel valued and special. Marriott Bonvoy is an extremely strong and coveted loyalty travel program, and we are committed to growing our loyalty base. We continue to inspire guests to travel with us offering them promotional offers that are supported by flexible reservation policies and point redemption initiatives. Marriott's customer-centric approach continues its commitment to ensuring a seamless and convenient booking experience for its customers. We have invested effort into building a robust distribution strategy for Marriott South Asia that aims to make it easy and accessible for customers to book and allows us to cater to varied customer preferences.

Marriott continues its people-centric approach to business through its commitment to recruitment, skill development, and nurturing talent. Our focus remains dedicated to attracting top talent, providing opportunities for continuous learning and encouraging a work life balance that helps create an environment where employees feel valued, motivated, and equipped to drive the company's growth and achievements. In keeping with this ethos, we have partnered with 'Gigs Near Me', Ijobs and have implemented Marriott's 'Life on Time' program that is aimed at promoting holistic wellbeing, personal growth and better work-life balance through a wide array of opportunities and workplace practices.

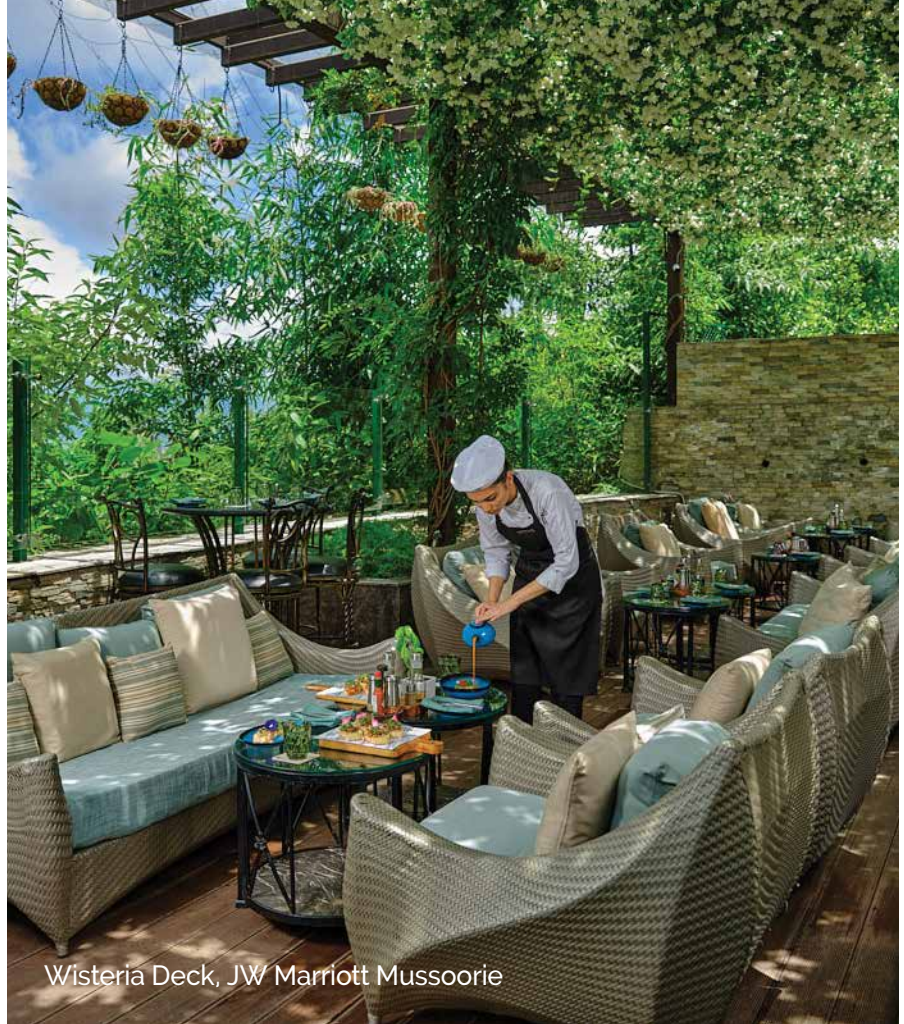
In addition to prioritizing customer satisfaction, Marriott also demonstrates a strong focus on Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) principles and sustainability. Our 'Serve the World' philosophy drives us to undertake various sustainable initiatives aimed at reducing our environmental impact, supporting local communities, and promoting responsible business practices.

“The Westin Hyderabad Hitec City, which opened in June this year, marked the first all women operated hotel within the city and heralds a paradigm shift for the hospitality industry, breaking from the conventional ways of operating.”

“We also had Homes & Villas by Marriott Bonvoy enter the India market - Jan 2023, with an aim to add close to 500 highly curated, luxury and premium homes in key Indian travel destinations over 2023.”

“Our luxury and premium brands are experiencing robust demand, particularly in leisure destinations throughout India. Notably, half of the hotels signed in the year 2022 belong to the luxury and Upper Upscale tiers.”

“In partnership with the Prestige Group, we will launch the New Delhi Marriott Marquis and The St. Regis Aerocity, New Delhi. The brands will open in 2025 and will collectively add 779 rooms to the Marriott portfolio.”



Wisteria Deck, JW Marriott Mussoorie

What’s coming up, in the Pipeline?

Our pipeline for 2023 comprises 15 hotels across our luxury, premium and select brand segments. These openings are aimed at the leading metros and growing tier 2 cities, including some of India’s leading resort destinations such as Rishikesh and Coorg to name a few.

We have 9 hotels opened till date - JW Marriott Goa, Mulberry Shades Bengaluru Nandi Hills, A Tribute Portfolio Resort, Westin Resort & Spa, Himalayas, Courtyard by Marriott Shillong, Marriott Executive Apartments Navi Mumbai, Fairfield by Marriott Agra, Fairfield by Marriott Jaipur, Westin Hyderabad Hitec City and the most recently opened Le Meridien Amritsar.

What’s the overall brand position emerging, where is the supply growth coming, in what segment?

Our luxury and premium brands are experiencing robust demand, particularly in leisure destinations throughout India. Notably, half of the hotels signed in the year 2022 belong to the luxury and Upper Upscale tiers. This trend underscores the sustained preference of owners for our high-end brands. The strategic utilization of conversions further bolsters our growth trajectory, affirming the enduring appeal of Marriott’s brand portfolio as property owners seek to optimize assets

and enhance returns. Conversions represented a significant portion of our progress, constituting about 17% of the total rooms signed in 2022. A good example is the successful conversion of The St. Regis Goa. Our brand positioning is further accentuated by our strong presence and significant demand in the Select service segment. This segment continues to unlock growth prospects and guides our expansion efforts across both established and emerging tier two markets within India.

How is some special development emerging, like the one at Aerocity? Any other?

In partnership with the Prestige Group, we will launch the New Delhi Marriott Marquis and The St. Regis Aerocity, New Delhi. The brands will open in 2025 and will collectively add 779 rooms to the Marriott portfolio. They will have an expected 85,000 sq. ft. of meeting space in total and are anticipated to create the ultimate destination within the Aerocity landscape.

How is the balance between overseas and domestic demand happening with you, pre-covid and now, post covid, after the major resurgence of the Indian domestic?

Domestic travel demand still continues to fuel the overall growth in RevPAR for India. Although there has been a gradual increase in international arrivals the recovery in 2023 is still expected to be at 70% vs 2019. Getting into 2024, we anticipate a steady increase in both domestic and international mix.

How is the ARR changing over time? Where do you see it heading? Across price points, across brands, across territories?

Hotels across all cities have witnessed a significant growth in ADR vs 2019 and 2022. With there not being a significant increase in supply for most major markets and the corresponding demand from Domestic and



Fish Feeding at JW Marriott Mumbai Juhu

International travel expected to be stable, we will see a further push in ADR across segments for most markets. We touched a full ADR recovery in May of last year. This year our H1 ADR growth is more than 30% points ahead of 2019 same period.

How is the destination India emerging for you in your system? I remember being told you are but a fraction in India of your total global inventory! Is India getting a better eye-in?

India remains a very important market for Marriott International within the Asia Pacific region, ranking second to China. We aim to touch 250 properties by 2025 which is a strong testament to the potential and promise of this region. Apart from significantly growing the portfolio, this goal will also help create 10,000 new jobs within the country. While the aim would be to provide the right product in every market, travellers want to visit for any type of trips, Marriott will continue to remain focused on India's "strong and growing" domestic market. This commitment was further reinforced through the recent visit by our global CEO – Anthony Capuano and his meeting with the Prime Minister Narendra Modi to discuss the company's plans for continued growth in the region. We currently operate in over 40 cities across 144 hotels across 16 brands within India. The company is focusing on advancing development in secondary and tertiary markets to attract both business and leisure visitors. Our brands extend to locations such as Mussoorie, Pushkar, Mahabalipuram, Raipur, Siliguri, Bilaspur, and more recently in cities like Rishikesh, and Shillong where Marriott was the first international brand to enter these markets. These openings fuel economic growth, support local employment, and drive interest and tourism to these areas – which both directly and indirectly benefit an extended supply chain.

Which segment is emerging best? Weddings, MICE, pure leisure, pure business?

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All segments are performing to their optimum. Furthermore, the macroeconomic outlook for the region appears highly promising, with anticipated GDP growth that surpasses the global average. The MICE and Wedding segment continues to see robust growth versus 2019 and there remains sustained demand through the rest of the year. While the MICE & Wedding segment is growing the leisure and business segments also continue to be significant contributors to growth. In recent years, there has been a focus on wellness tourism, eco-tourism, and experiential travel, which contribute to the leisure segment's expansion. On the other hand, India's booming tech and corporate sectors ensure a steady demand in the business travel segment. **DI**



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Navin Berry, Editor, Destination India, over five decades has edited publications like CityScan, India

Debates and Travel Trends Today. He is the founder of SATTE, India's first inbound tourism mart, biggest in Asia.

ONE THOUSAND WORDS

A PICTURE FROM OUR TIMES



The FDCI partnered with Reliance Brands Limited for the Hyundai India Couture Week, enhancing the premier showcase for India's bridal and couture designers. The event, an FDCI initiative, serves as a major platform for designer-promoted businesses, featuring 17 top couturiers this season. In its 16th edition, India's renowned couturiers unveiled their exclusive collections, celebrating the exuberance of craftsmanship through mesmerizing visual narratives. Participating designers included Anamika Khanna, Ritu Kumar, Tarun Tahiliani, JJ Valaya, Rahul Mishra, Rajesh Pratap Singh, Suneet Varma, Falguni Shane Peacock, Dolly J, Gaurav Gupta, Rohit Gandhi + Rahul Khanna, Varun Bahl, Shantanu Nikhil, Kunal Rawal, Rimzim Dadu, Rose Room and Samant Chauhan.



GLORIOUS MUSINGS FROM TWO PLANETS; ANOTHER DAY OUT FOR INDIAN SPORTS!

As Vikram took historic baby steps on a faraway planet, India's sporting hero Neeraj Chopra and Chess prodigy Pragm lit up the skyline nearer home with their valiant efforts: It felt like returning from the theatre staging Shakespeare's 'All's well that ends well'.

by V K VERMA

The theatre was the Budapest National Stadium; the play: World Athletics Championship; Act: Men's Javelin and actors vying for the love of their life came from Germany, Finland, Czech Republic and the Indian sub-continent. The subject of their passion was not Helen; it was the crown of the world champion that was to be decided on that hot and sultry evening in Budapest, the 27th day of August.

Unlike Bertram serenading his lady love, Neeraj Chopra went about his mission with clinical precision. After a throw of 88.17 M in his second attempt, he threw down the gauntlet to his formidable rivals who proved no match to him in any of their entitled six attempts. With mission accomplished in Budapest, Neeraj Chopra's vault now has all carets of Gold; Asian, Commonwealth, World Junior, Olympic and the Worlds. He is India's best athlete, supremely talented, passionate and believes that 'hope does not fall from the sky; we create hope ourselves'.

The results from the javelin arena on that night scripted another remarkable story on India's recent strides in the Javelin event. Once considered the exclusive domain of Germany, Czech, Poland and Finland, as many as three of the six finalists in Budapest Worlds were from India!! Well done Kishore Jena and DP Manu with your 80M plus throws; you will be the center of interest in this event for many years. If Athletics Federation of India were a corporate entity in the business of javelin throws, it would be the sole majority share-holder trading on the bourses.

Pakistan's Arshad Nadeem, who won the silver medal with a throw that was barely 30 cm short of Neeraj's, gave his countrymen a justifiable reason for celebrations across the border. Even though the event was made out to be an India- Pak duel, it was sans any



Though Pragm had to concede the crown to the Norwegian, he let the world know that he was the Knight who will one day be the King. Pragm is an alumnus of Chennai's well developed Chess Academy system with some of the finest coaches on ground.

bitterness or ill will and that augers well for the sport. Nadeem was quoted before the finals "Neeraj Bhai, you have already covered yourself with great glory; may you corner more tomorrow and may God give me also some part of it"

To qualify for the finals of a track event in Worlds or Olympics is no mean achievement. India's 400M relay quartet ran their hearts out to become the first ever Indian team to qualify for the finals, create an Asian record and finish at a creditable 5th place. These results have a great bearing on the future



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of athletics in India. Men and women from Punjab and Haryana with body structure suited for throws and those from Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka etc. suited for sprints and middle-distance running are natural choice for harnessing talent that can start an athletics revolution.

While Budapest was the stage for athletics, Baku, Azerbaijan was the theatre for Grand Masters who travelled from across the globe to duel for the Chess World Champion crown.

Pragg, the 18 years old chess prodigy from Chennai, entered the fray as a rank outsider. He had an unenviable world ranking, no previous titles- big or small. Yet in a display of sheer genius that unfolded in the quarters and semis, he overwhelmed the two cowboys from USA (phrase used by Garry Kasparov), ranked 2nd and 3rd in the world to set up the title clash with Norwegian Magnus Carlsen.

Though Pragg had to concede the crown to the Norwegian, he let the world know that he was the Knight who will one day be the King. Pragg is an alumnus of Chennai's well developed Chess Academy system with some of the finest coaches on ground. Lending an edge to this revolution is BR Ramesh who has coached Pragg as well as Carlsen. Vishwanath Anand himself runs a finishing school in Chennai to hone skills of those who make the higher grade. The Chennai story in promoting this game has remained grossly underplayed and needs to be told more emphatically. Chennai and its well managed academy structure can be leveraged to make the city a global center for chess learning.

Pragg's journey in the World Cup underlined the power of a mother in this unique game. Kasparov and Vishwanathan Anand were quick to recall their own journey and applaud Pragg's mother Nagalaxmi for her role in Pragg's success. Nagalaxmi had travelled to Baku keeping him battle ready with home cooked food and a mother's own prescription for quick healing when needed. Nagalaxmi's packing list includes an induction stove, rice cooker, rasam masalas and her book of prayers that works as Pragg's biggest shield. While checkmating the 2nd and 3rd seed in the World Cup, Pragg could well have whispered to them 'Mere paas Maa Hai'


An account of world athletics is never complete without its most awe-inspiring event: the 100M Men final which determines the identity of world's fastest man. In Budapest, a new sprint super star was born. Noah Lyles from the US swept Gold Medals in 100M, 200M and the short Sprint Relay. Lyles even declared that a new dynasty was ready to take over the Jamaican sprint kingdom that was once ruled by Usain Bolt till he hang up his golden shoes in 2017.

Lyles is a story of amazing grit and a mother's sacrifice to whom he dedicated his medals. Brought up by a single mother, Lyles grew up in a household which often lived on leftover food. Added to this was a lung

ailment, so serious that he was more in and out of hospitals than on tracks. But destiny had chosen a different track for him and one can say that 'elements so mixed in him that Nature stood up and said that he was to start where Usain Bolt left'

The World Athletics held in Budapest in August 2023 was the biggest sports event in Hungary's history. The city of Budapest is a charming destination with the hills of Buda with its medieval castles and churches and the plains of Pest with its old Jew quarters, modern pubs and cafes. A poignant site is the front of the Buda castle with old torn shoes of the Jews who were made to stand on the water edge before being shot.

As the heroes of World Championships bid adieu, the next big face off will be in the Olympic Games next year in Paris, home of Pierre de Coubertin.

Athletics is a grueling sport with young challengers with big dreams and amazing levels of energy and aggression. Only Paris will tell us next year who from Budapest were able to weather the march of Time. 



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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