

Foreword by *Prof. Bijayalaxmi Nanda*

THE BHARAT MODEL

Navigating 21st Century

SRIKRUSHNA PATRA



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Stories Matter DIY

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MESSAGES

I am pleased to know about the publication of *The Bharat Model: Navigating the 21st Century*. The book captures India's transformative journey of economic progress, technological advancement, social empowerment, and global engagement. Such works inspire citizens, especially the youth, to actively contribute to the vision of a Viksit Bharat.

I extend my best wishes to the author Shri Omm Srikrushna Ranjan Patra and hope this book motivates readers to embrace innovation, inclusivity, and nation-building with dedication.

Shri Rajendra Viswanatha Arleker
Hon'ble Governor of Kerala

समसामयिक भारत के विविध पहलुओं पर □धारित पुस्तक "The Bharat Model: Navigating the 21st Century" का प्रकाशन अत्यंत हर्ष का विषय है।

यह पुस्तक न केवल भारत के परिवर्तनशील स्वरूप, जैसे डिजिटल इंडिया, □र्थिक सुधार, रक्षा □धुनिकीकरण, महिला सशक्तिकरण, सार्वजनिक कूटनीति, शिक्षा एवं नवाचार को समाहित करती है, बल्कि एक विकसित भारत की परिकल्पना को भी दिशा देने का प्रयास है।

ऐसे प्रयास निःसंदेह युवा पीढ़ी को शोध, चिंतन और राष्ट्रनिर्माण के कार्यों में भागीदार बनाने में सहायक सिद्ध होते हैं। यह कार्य न केवल युवाओं के लिए प्रेरणास्त्रोत होगा, अपितु नवभारत के निर्माण में एक सकारात्मक बौद्धिक योगदान भी होगा।

मैं इस सराहनीय प्रयास हेतु लेखक को हार्दिक शुभकामनाएं देता हूं एवं □शा करता हूं कि यह पुस्तक पाठकों में राष्ट्रीय चेतना एवं नवदृष्टि जागृत करने में सफल होगी।

श्री □चार्य देवव्रत

माननीय राज्यपाल, गुजरात

FOREWORD

The journey of India and its civilization ethos cannot be captured by data and policies alone. It requires a vision that combines the past with the present and future. The author in this book “The Bharat Model: Navigating the 21st Century” strives to bring about these connections. He is able to present a nuanced understanding of India's development narrative and the aspirations of its people.

The author excellently conveys the complexity of India's development story and brings to life the aspirations of its people. Whether it is the spirited women entrepreneurs under Lakhpati Didi, the rise of rural digital creators, or the architectural marvel of the Chenab Bridge, each example reflects the pulse of a nation in motion — confident, compassionate, and committed to shaping its destiny.

The articulation of the Bharat model focuses on participatory governance, the idea of modern development and cultural continuity.

I congratulate the author for this insightful contribution and hope that “The Bharat Model” finds the wide readership it rightly deserves. It is a book that informs, inspires, and above all, instils a deep sense of pride and purpose in being part of the Indian story. This book will be excellent resource for the political leaders, academicians, researchers and students.

Prof. Bijayalaxmi Nanda
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ABBREVIATIONS

- ADITI -Acing Development of Innovative Technologies with iDEX (Innovation for defense excellence)
- AFMS- Automatic fitness management system
- AITP-All-India tourist permit
- APMC-Agricultural Produce Market Committee
- ATAGS- Advanced Towed Artillery Gun System
- BBBP- Beti Bachao Beti Padhao
- BRICS- Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa
- CDS-Chief of Defense Staff
- CIBMS-comprehensive integrated border management system
- CISF-Central Industrial Security Force
- CSC- common service center
- DAY-NRLM- Deendayal Antodaya Yojana – National Rural livelihood mission
- DBT- Direct Bank Transfer
- DDU-GKY- Deendayal Upadhyay Gramin Kaushal Yojana
- DEA-Department of Economic Affairs
- DIKSHA-Digital infrastructure for knowledge sharing
- DISC-Defense India Start-up Challenges
- DMA-Department of Military Affairs

- DPI-Digital Public Infrastructure
- DPIIT-Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade
- EBSB-Ek Bharat Shresht Bharat
- e-NAM- Agriculture National Agriculture market
- FATF-Financial Action Task Force
- FDI-Foreign Direct Investment
- GST-Goods and Services Tax
- HADR-Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief
- IBC- Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code
- I-CRP-Internal community resource person
- ISA-International Solar Alliance
- ISRO-Indian Space Research Organization
- JAM-Jan Dhan-Aadhaar-Mobile
- LCA-Light Combat Aircraft
- MBT-Main Battle Tank
- MGNREGA-Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act
- MMLP- Multimodal logistic park
- MMP-Mission mode Project
- MPI-Multidimensional poverty index
- MSME-Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises
- NCF-National curriculum framework
- NDA-National Defence Academy
- NDEAR -National Digital Education Architecture
- NHDP-National highways development project
- NIOS-National institute for open schooling

- NIP-National Infrastructure Pipeline
- NIPUN-BHARAT-National Initiatives for proficiency in reading with understanding and numeracy
- NISHTHA-National initiative for school heads and teacher's holistic advancement
- NLIP-New India Literacy Program
- NMP-National Master Plan
- NPA- Non-Performing Assets
- NP-NSPE-National program of Nutritional support to primary education
- NYP- The national youth policy
- ORS- Online Reservation System
- PIA-Project implement agency
- PLI- Production-Linked Incentive
- PM GSY-Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana
- PM-AASHA-Pradhan Mantri Annadata Aay Sanrakshan Abhiyan
- PMAY-G - PM Awas Yojana Gramin
- PMGDSA- Pradhan Mantri Gramin Digital Saksharta Abhiyan
- PM-JANMAN- Pradhan Mantri Janjati Adivasi Maha Abhiyan
- PM-KUSUM-PM Kishan Urja Surakhsha evam uthhan Mahabhiyan
- PMKVY- Pradhan Mantri Kaushala Vikash Yojana
- PMMVY-Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana
- PM-SHRI-Pradhan Mantri schools for Rising India

- PM-WANI - Prime Minister Wi-Fi Access Network Interface
- PPE-Personal Protective Equipment
- PPP-Purchasing power parity
- PVTG- Particularly vulnerable tribal groups
- RAC- Reservation against cancellation
- RVSF-Registered vehicle scrapping facility
- SAGAR-Security and Growth for All in the Region
- SANKALP- Skills acquisition and knowledge awareness for livelihood and promotion
- SCO-Shanghai Cooperation Organization
- SEWA -Self Employed Women's Association
- SHG- Self-help group
- SSA-Sarvshiksha Abhiyan
- STEP-Support to Training and Employment Programme for Women
- SVEEP- Systematic Voters' Education and Electoral Participation
- TREAD-Trade related Entrepreneurship Assistance and Development
- UHC-Universal Health Coverage
- UJALA- Unnat Jyoti by affordable LEDs for all
- VLF- Villages level federations



Preface

In a world increasingly searching for inclusive, sustainable, and humane paths of progress, Bharat; with its civilizational depth, democratic values, and grassroots governance offers a unique lens to rethink development. *The Bharat Model* is a humble attempt to understand and present India's distinctive journey of growth not just in economic terms, but in spirit, values, and vision.

This book is born from the curiosity of a student and the concern of a citizen. As I walked the corridors of the University, engaged with social initiatives, interacted with policymakers, and witnessed ground realities I began to ask: Can there be a development model rooted in culture yet modern in application? Can Bharat lead the world not by imitation, but by inspiration?

In these pages, you will find stories of resilience from Indian villages, the rise of local governance through Panchayati Raj, the strength of India's youth and startups, the soft power of Ayurveda, Yoga, and diplomacy, and the bold reforms across transport, education, health, and foreign policy. Special attention is also given to India's response during crises from the pandemic to global conflicts where Bharat acted as a *Vishwa Mitra*, not just a nation-state.

This book is a reflection of 21st-century India an India that is not only the world's fastest-growing major economy but also a nation transforming digitally, socially, and intellectually. Through initiatives like the National Education Policy (NEP), our country is not just imparting academic knowledge to children but nurturing their holistic development through social and value-based education.

India's strength lies in its rich diversity where languages, cuisines, clothing styles, and customs change every few miles, yet the spirit of unity remains unwavering. From the Himalayas to the coastal plains, from the dense forests to the towering skyscrapers, India is a land of immense beauty, culture, and resilience. We are blessed with a civilization that is ancient yet ever-evolving, and people who are not only hardworking and intelligent but also humble and compassionate.

Just as a mother selflessly nurtures her children, *Bharat Mata* our motherland, has nurtured us all, and countless brave souls have made the ultimate sacrifice for her dignity and freedom. While those born before independence had the opportunity to fight for the country's freedom, we, in this *Amrit Kaal*, have the responsibility to live for the nation, contribute to its growth, and uphold its legacy.

It is easy to point fingers at the government or blame systems, but this country belongs to all of us. Its

progress is our collective duty. Through this book, I have aimed to highlight various government initiatives, developmental achievements, and also offer suggestions for further improvement. The chapters explore areas where India has made significant strides from infrastructure and diplomacy to education, women empowerment, science, and innovation.

My inspiration to write this book came from many intellectuals and changemakers in Delhi whose wisdom deeply moved me. I have simply tried, with whatever understanding I possess, to evaluate the path on which India is moving and envision the potential future that lies ahead.

This is my first book. If there are any shortcomings or unintentional errors, I sincerely apologize. The content is based on official government data, verified research reports, and credible articles. I hope this book becomes a valuable read for anyone interested in understanding modern India its journey, its challenges, and its promise.

This work does not claim to be a scholarly treatise but a narrative shaped by observations, research, dialogues, and reflections. It is my tribute to the spirit of '*Viksit Bharat*', where development is not merely GDP-centric, but people-centric.

I extend my heartfelt gratitude to my mentors, fellow students and everyone who contributed knowingly or unknowingly to this work. This book is dedicated to

every Indian who believes in the power of *Jan Bhagidari* (people's participation) and the promise of Bharat's rise. May *The Bharat Model* inspire its readers to participate actively in shaping the future of our beloved nation.

May this effort contribute, however modestly, to the larger vision of a strong, self-reliant, and compassionate Bharat.

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Chapter-1

Shaping India's Destiny

In the 21st century, India stands at a critical juncture with rapidly evolving global landscape that calls for bold reforms and visionary strategies to harness the potential of its vast youthful population. To shape India's destiny, we will have to empower young Indians through enhanced connectivity and cutting-edge learning opportunity. For a long time, Acharya's used to impart education in Gurukul. Eklavya's greatness in the name of Guru Dakshina is not hidden from anyone. India stands on the cusp of transformative era where innovations in science, technology and education are poised to shape its future. By giving importance to education in Bharat since ancient times the key to determining fate has been given in the hands of teachers. It is said that today's child is the future of the coming days. If child-like tree gets suitable resources, then that child will distribute fruits in the society like tree in future. With this indomitable goal the government of India Inspires the students in many ways to move forward according to their entrusts. Education reforms, youth connectivity and technological advancements have become the pillars driving India's transformation into a knowledge-based economy. At the heart of the evolution lies in National education

policy (NEP) 2020, Which represents a historic shift in India's educational philosophy by promoting holistic development, skill based learning and digital literacy.

The chain of this transformation is the connectivity of India's youth. With digital tools and platforms becoming more accessible, students across the country now have unprecedented opportunities to engage with global knowledge systems (collaborate and innovate). Initiatives like Digital India have bridged the urban-rural divide, bringing e-learning resources to remote areas and democratizing access to quality education. Such connectivity vital for nurturing a generation that is informed, connected and driven by purpose. India's scientific community has achieved significant milestone that have captured the world's attention. One of the most notable achievements is the successful launch of Chandrayan-3 in 2023, which marked India's triumphant return to Lunar exploration. The steadfast efforts of ISRO scientists have brought fame to country. This has been possible due to the continuous guidelines of government of India and its unwavering support and faith in scientists. The synergetic impact of science and education and India's development, examining how reforms and connectivity among youth are vital in fostering innovation. By harnessing these advancements, India is well positioned to shape a future driven by innovation, inclusivity and progress.

By 2030, India will have the largest number of young populations in the Globe which will be a boon only if

these young people are skilled enough to join the work force. Quality education will play major role in it. It's a high time to tune the Indian education system with global standards and adopt modern learnings approaches that are responsible and relevant. Also vitalize NEP-2020 which is the 3rd major revamp of the framework of Indian education system since independence. The first education policy in the 21st century that is NEP-2020 aims to address the many growing developmental imperatives of our country. It has recommended a revamp of school education as well as higher education in the country to make education more student-centric and multidisciplinary. It aims to pave way for transformational reforms in school & higher educational systems. It aims to bring 2 crores out of school children back into the mainstream through an open schooling system. School governance is set to change, with a new accreditation framework and an independent authority to regulate both public and private schools' assessment reforms with 360 degrees. Holistic progress card, is tracking student progress for achieving learning outcomes. Moving away from the current 10+2 system to a 5+3+3+4 system will bring the preschool age group formally into the education set-up right mentorship should be given at school (especially in government schools) to ensure that students are guided in the right direction from the start and are aware of career opportunities. A good education institution is one in which every student feels welcomed and cared for, where safe and stimulating learning environments

exists, where a wide range of learning experiences are offered and where good physical infrastructure and appropriate resources conducive to learning are available to all students.

No hard separation between arts, science & commerce, between vocational and academic streams between curricular and extra-curricular activities in order to eliminate harmful orders between different areas of learning. India is a country of diversity and right now India has the largest number of youth so we should think further without separating between academic streams. Opportunities are being provided to youth from every direction. Youth can make their future in every field. Students should pursue the subject in which they are interested. Even if they have to fail, they should do the work of their own choice. A 'light but tight' regulatory framework introduced to ensure integrity, transparency and resource efficiency of the educational system through audit and public disclosure. According to Ministry of Education, the vision of National education policy rooted in Indian ethos that contributes directly to transforming India, that is Bharat sustainably into an equitable and vibrant knowledge society by providing high quality education to all. Students will be given increased flexibility and choice of subjects to study, particularly in secondary school including subjects in physical education, the arts & crafts and vocational skills so that they can design their own path of study and life plans. The three-language formula will

continue to be implemented while keeping in mind the constitutional provisions, aspirations of the people, regions and need to promote multilingualism as well as promote national unity. All efforts will be made in preparing high quality bilingual textbooks and teaching learning materials for science and mathematics so that students enabled to think and speak about the two subjects both in their mother tongue & English. Matrubhasa Diwas was celebrated from 2022 across the country to promote dissemination of mother language of all and create awareness of culture traditions. As so many developed countries around the world have amply demonstrated being well educated in one's language, culture and traditions is not a detriment but indeed a huge benefit to educational, social and technological advancement. India's languages are among the richest, most beautiful, most expressive in the world. "*Ek Bharat*" initiative to learn about the remarkable unity of Indian language including classical Tamil, Telugu, Kannada, Malayalam, Odia. For the enrichment of students and for the preservation of these rich languages all students will have the option to learn these languages from primary level to Graduation level. According to 93rd Amendment, education for all has been made compulsory. The elementary education is a fundamental right of children in the age group 6-14 yrs. To fulfill this obligation Sarvshiksha Abhiyan (SSA) has been launched. Its overall goals include universal access and retention, bridging of gender and social category gaps in education and enhancement of

learning levels of children. Mid-day meals scheme is another central sponsored scheme as the National program of Nutritional support to primary education (NP-NSPE). Its objective was to enhance enrolment, retention and attendance and simultaneous improving nutritional level among children. Beti Bachao Beti Padhao (BBBP) scheme introduced to improve in the sex ratio at birth by 2 points every year. It's main objective to prevent of gender biased sex selective elimination with ensuring education and participation of the girl child. The *Pradhan Mantri schools for Rising India (PM-SHRI)* Yojana is a centrally sponsored scheme for upgradation and development of more than 14000 schools across the country. It will showcase all components of NEP-2020 and act as exemplar schools and also offer mentorship to other schools in their vicinity. The story of Khushbu Kumari, a bright student from Bihar who dreamt of studying science but was forced to opt for arts due to lack of access, is both heart-touching and inspiring. Her determination caught national attention, and what followed was truly uplifting Union Education Minister Shri Dharmendra Pradhan personally intervened and ensured she gets the opportunity she truly deserves. This act is not just about helping one student; it reflects the human face of governance and the power of listening to young voices. Such compassion and timely action remind us that when leaders truly care, dreams don't go unheard.

On the ongoing language debate between Centre and States, I personally believe that language should be a bridge, not a barrier. Regional languages must be preserved and respected, but at the same time, there should be equal opportunities for students in all languages, including English and Hindi, so no one is left behind. Education should unite us, not divide us. In changing the society, I believe that, teachers and leaders Both are very helpful, because a teacher can send children on the right path with the energy of his knowledge & leaders can work in the interest of the public by making right policies. Only with these things society can change.

The Samagra Shiksha scheme has been aligned with the recommendation of NEP-2020. It aims to ensure that all children have access to quality education within an equitable and inclusive classroom environment which should take care of their diverse background and different academic abilities. “Shiksha Shabdkosh”, a document glossary of various terminologies which has been used in the context of school education. This document consists of terms relating to various themes such as education indicators quality curriculum, governance vocational education and schemes of government of India. National initiative for school heads and teacher’s holistic advancement (NISHTHA) introduced with the aim of integrated teacher training program for teacher, heads of schools etc. Nearly 17 lakhs school’s heads and teachers were trained under

NISHTHA in 2019-20 by face-to-face mode. Due to COVID pandemic and in order to provide continuous learning opportunities to the teachers at elementary level 'NISHTHA' online was launched using 'DIKSHA' platform. NISHTHA online on DIKSHA platform covered 18 courses in 11 languages. National Initiatives for proficiency in reading with understanding and numeracy (NIPUN-BHARAT) launched to ensure that every child in the country necessarily attains foundation literacy and numeracy by the end of Grade-3 ICT and digital initiative component of Samagra Shiksha covers government and aided schools. Under this component, financial assistance is provided for establishing ICT labs and smart classroom. From Red Fort, The Prime Minister of India on 15th August 2014 announced that all schools in the country should have toilets within period of one year. After which 4,17,796 toilets had been constructed. The another Swachhata scheme that is Swachhata action plan, Swachhata Pakhwada, Swachh Vidyalaya Purashkar introduced for educational institutions across country. Library component and sports grant under Samagra Shiksha are major interventions for improving the quality of education in every field. The 'Fit India' movement (2019) launched with a view to making physical fitness a way of life which aims to behavioral changes from sedentary life style to physically active way of day to day living. The establishment of Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalayam is to ensure access and quality education to girls from disadvantage group by setting

residential schools and reducing gender gaps at all levels of school education. In order to boost the physical and mental strength of girls and equip them to face any unprecedented situation, government is providing self-defense training to girls Under “Rani Laxmi Bai Atma Raksha Prashikshan”.

National curriculum framework (NCF) aims to help change practices in education and not just ideas indeed; Since the word ‘curriculum’ encapsulates the overall experiences that a student has in school practices do not just refer to curricular content and pedagogy, but also include school environment and culture. PM e-Vidya-NDEAR (National Digital Education Architecture) Ecosystem policy and open standards, specifications were released on 11th November 2022 as key enabler of NEP-2020 and acts as a super connector to cross leverage ecosystem capabilities and catalyze innovation in education. Vidyanjali portal acts as a facilitator connecting contributors directly to the schools. ‘Ek Bharat Shreshth Bharat’ (EBSB-2015) was launched on the occasion of birth anniversary of Sardar Vallabh Bhai Patel to faster national integration by a coordinated mutual engagement process between states and educational institutions across country. YUVA Sangam program also introduced which focuses on conducting exposure tours of youths across the nation. It provides an immersive experience of numerous facets of life, development landmarks, and gets multidimensional exposure under Paryatan (tourism),

Parampara (Tradition), Pragati (Development), and Paraspar Sampark (Technology). 'Manodarpan' is an initiative of MOE as part of Aatma Nirbhar Bharat Abhiyan which aims to provide psychological support to students, teachers for mental health. PM e-Vidya initiative was introduced as part of self-reliant India movement to enhance e-learning. The right of children to free and compulsory Education Act (2009), represents consequential legislation to Article 21-A. The NCERT and AICTE enhances the functional efficiency assistance for infrastructure. Rastriya Uchchatar Shiksha Abhiyan Scheme focuses on unserved and undeserved areas such as educationally backward districts and aspirational districts that have highly backward population. Various components of government initiatives allow scope for benefitting women and women's university and women's colleges. The UGC program for promotion of women's studies envisages financial assistance, infrastructure development and quality education by setting up many women specific study Centre. NIOS (National Institute of open schooling) reaches out to weaker section of society including school dropouts and marginalized groups, Divyangjan and ex-service personnel. As education is the most effective vehicle of social and economic empowerment, UGC started Sugamya Bharat Abhiyan for achieving universal accessibility for PWDs. UGC instructs to various institutes to construct ramps, rail, special toilets to suit the special needs of differently-abled persons. Many categorized

scholarships to differently abled students provide with the aim for encouragements and support to pursue technical education. Many private companies contribute in education sector which helps many students to growth in their career especially ‘Buddy for Study’ a largest scholarship platform that connects scholarships and education loan providers with seekers. Buddy for study encourages students not only by giving financial assistance but also provides career guidance and organizing inspiring events for youths. Recently the approval of the PM Vidyalaxmi scheme by union cabinet, is a landmark step towards empowering India’s youth. This bold initiative is set to transform India’s educational landscape by giving students from every background and fair chance to pursue their dreams without financial constraints. Pradhan Mantri Kaushala Vikash Yojana (PMKVY) skills acquisition and knowledge awareness for livelihood and promotion (SANKALP) Both are strengthening institutional mechanism at the national and state levels and provides short terms skills training and certification to youth across various sectors through vocational trainings. UDAAN is a special initiative for Jammu and Kashmir to improve the employability of unemployed youth in the region. As Prime Minister emphasizes on ‘youth power’ which is both the agent of change and also the beneficiaries of change. We have seen from freedom days many universities like Nalanda, Vishwa Bharti, Delhi University, Nagpur University strengthen the conscious of the Nation.

Prime Minister underlined the need to channel the energy of the youth and students towards achieving common goal of ‘Vikshit Bharat’ Nothing the diversity of ideas, the Prime Minister stressed linking all the streams to go beyond their limits and connect more youth to contribute to the vision of Vikshit Bharat @2047. We need to go beyond the education and skills and called for alertness for the national interest and civic sense among the citizens. The Amrit generation can keep the national interest paramount by preserving national resources through water conservation, saving electricity using public transport, helping to the needy people, spread awareness in the society and giving new energy to Swachh Abhiyan. The national youth policy (2014) reiterates the commitments of entire nation to all round development of youth of India, so that they can realize their full potential and contribute productivity to the nation building process. The NYP-2014 proposes a holistic vision for the youth, which is to empower youth of the country to achieve their full potential and through them enable India to find its rightful place in the community nations. The Schemes like Nehru Yuva Kendra Sangathan, National Service Scheme, National Young leaders program etc. develop the personality of youth to engage them in nation-building activities. Sports have always held significant importance in the cultural tapestry from traditional games played in rural villages to the modern sports areas that grace cities the evolution of India’s sport landscape speaks volumes about its historical significance and nation’s pursuit of

excellence. At the core of India's sports initiatives lie governmental bodies to nurturing talent and promoting sports, The national sports policy, Khelo India program, target Olympic podium scheme functions as a guiding frame challenging the nation's sporting aspirations. Sports possess in extraordinary ability to unite a nation, fostering a sense of national pride and identity. India's performance on the international stage, whether in Olympics, commonwealth games or Asian games evoke emotions. The 2020 Tokyo Olympics saw India win its best ever medal tally, with 7 Medals including gold. The 2024 Paralympics, India finishes with a best ever medal haul with the 18th position. Neeraj Chopra who emerges as youth icon in sports, He got silver medal in 2024 Paris Olympics after achieving gold medal in 2020 Tokyo Olympics. India takes immense pride in its sporting legends who haven't only excelled on the field but have also inspired generations. The youth of India can fulfill the duty through various impactful initiatives like 'Ek Ped maa ke naam', 'Har Ghar Tiranga', National Space Day Quiz with Campus Ambassador initiative. Another initiative to provide internships under PM internship scheme to 1 crore youths to equip youths with the skills necessary to excel in today fast paced economy.

Between 2014 and 2024, India has witnessed a remarkable expansion in its premier institutions of education and healthcare. The number of IITs has grown from 16 to 23, with new campuses established in

Palakkad, Tirupati, Goa, Jammu, Dharwad, and Bhilai, alongside the conversion of ISM Dhanbad. Similarly, the IIM network has expanded from 13 to 21, with seven new “third-generation” IIMs set up between 2015 and 2016 in Amritsar, Bodh Gaya, Nagpur, Sambalpur, Sirmaur, Visakhapatnam, and Jammu. In the healthcare sector, AIIMS increased from 7 functional institutions in 2014 to about 23 approved by 2024, with nearly 20 already operational, though at varying levels of capacity. The broader higher education sector has also expanded significantly, with the number of colleges rising from 27,916 in 2013–14 to 45,473 in 2021–22, marking around 63% growth. This decade-long transformation reflects India’s shift from exclusivity to inclusivity in education and healthcare, ensuring wider geographical representation and accessibility. However, alongside this impressive quantitative growth, challenges such as faculty shortages, infrastructure delays, and the need to strengthen quality standards remain key concerns.

In a democratic and developing nation like India, the principle of equality must remain at the core of every policy aimed at uplifting the marginalized. Caste-based reservation was introduced as a vital and historic step to correct deep-rooted social injustices and centuries of discrimination. It has indeed played a significant role in bringing many communities into the mainstream of society.

However, as India progresses, there is a growing need to fine-tune our approach to ensure that the benefits of affirmative action reach those who are truly in need, regardless of caste alone. In sectors like education, healthcare, and employment, the focus should gradually evolve to also consider economic and social realities alongside caste identity. This would ensure that individuals who are economically disadvantaged regardless of their caste are not left behind in the pursuit of opportunity.

In the education sector, especially in highly competitive institutions like IITs, IIMs, and premier medical colleges, maintaining a balance between social justice and academic merit is essential. Many believe that a more inclusive framework one that identifies and supports all genuinely disadvantaged students can enhance both fairness and excellence. After all, empowering the deserving from all sections of society can lead to a richer, more equitable knowledge economy.

The goal is not to dismantle caste-based reservations but to strengthen their effectiveness by ensuring they uplift the truly marginalized. A future-forward India can embrace both equity and excellence, crafting a system that leaves no one behind while nurturing the best talent to serve the nation

Moreover, in employment, especially government jobs, the same issue persists. Positions that require

administrative competence and national responsibility are being filled based on birth identity rather than economic and intellectual need. This undermines both governance and fairness. Economic-based reservation would ensure that all individuals who are genuinely in need regardless of caste get support and opportunity. It would empower the poorest of the poor and uplift truly marginalized families, whether from upper castes or lower castes.

A merit-based society does not mean neglecting the underprivileged. It means ensuring that aid reaches the truly needy, and that opportunities are distributed fairly, encouraging both excellence and inclusivity. Caste should not be the defining factor of one's access to education or employment; poverty, lack of access, and backwardness should.

In earlier times, many of India's distinguished educationists, lawyers, and scholars went abroad to pursue higher studies, largely because our own education system was still developing. Today, however, the scenario has transformed. Revolutionary efforts from history to the 21st century have strengthened India's education system to a great extent, with world-class institutions like IITs, IIMs, AIIMS, and several central universities creating global impact. Yet, studying abroad continues to hold great appeal, not only for exposure to diverse cultures and advanced research opportunities, but also as a matter of personal aspiration. Sometimes, it is even seen as a status

symbol, where a foreign degree is considered more prestigious than one earned at home.

However, it is important to recognize that excellence is not confined to geography. Many individuals who have studied entirely in India have risen to the highest positions in the country, while countless others who studied abroad have brought back valuable experiences to contribute to national progress. What truly defines success is not the location of one's education but the willpower, determination, and clarity of purpose that drive a student toward their goals. Both Indian and foreign institutions have their own strengths, and together they shape a generation that is globally aware yet rooted in its own values.

INNOVATIONS IN SCIENCE

Innovate, patent, produce the being the motto for young scientist given by PM Modi and due to the efforts of the government, today India is at 39th position in the Global Innovation Index. India has become the centre for global high tech power evolution and revolution. Making the first interplanetary mission to Mars, which is successful in its 1st attempt with 74\$ million budgets, which is less than the budget for the movie "The Martian". PM Modi has also handed astronaut wings to four selected designates for India's 1st manned space mission, Gaganyaan. Shubhanshu Shukla's journey is not just a personal milestone it's a leap for India's space ambitions. From testing life-support in microgravity to

engaging future generations, this mission sets the stage for self-reliant human spaceflight and cements India's emerging stature in global space collaboration. India's history of scientific discovery and development dates back to the Vedic Period. Aryabhata the famous mathematician invented 'ZERO'. The concept of squares, circles, triangles, fractions, algebraic formulae and astronomy have all had their origins in Vedic literature Rigveda describes the concept of Astronomy and metaphysics. Indian scientists and inventors have a protracted history of success in large variety of fields whether it is the missile man of India Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam, Vikram Sarabhai, Homi J Bhabha in the field of space technology and physics. Prafulla Chandra Roy, Jagdish Chandra Bose, Har Govind Khorana in the field of Biology and chemistry or Sundar Pichai, Satya Nadela, Rohit Prasad in the field of AI and Technology. Global space missions by nations involve collaborative efforts to explore space, conduct scientific research and advance technology. Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO) has achieved major milestones like lunar and mars orbitar missions, and Aditya L-1 for sun mission. Other interstellar missions like Shuryayaan, LUPEX aims to boost India's first dedicated scientific mission to study the Sun. Aditya L-1 is an observatory that will be placed in a halo orbit around the sun Earth L-1 point to continuously view the sun and collect data about its Corona, Photosphere and Chromosphere. The Chandrayan-3 which is landed successfully in the lunar south pole brings the world

attention. science should be fundamental but technology should be local which means science and technology can be used as a weapon to find solutions to various issues. Today, India has become the center for global high tech power evolution not only in space but also in medicines and other scientific fields. Once a time when we can't imagine to fly a machine which is heavier than air (due to gravity), with the help of cycle's spare parts which turned human into birds and writ brothers took 16 years in inventing plane. This spirit and confidence always be continued. The capability of India to export Brahmos missiles to Philippines and procurement of Arjun MK2 battle tanks as growing technological strength. Artificial Intelligence mission started in 2024, which is increasing its usage in every sector as this era of AI and future of the world is linked with it. As when two Ais; the aspirational India and the artificial intelligence meet, it accelerates India's Growth.

Shaping India's Destiny underscores the nation's multifaceted growth, driven by innovative reforms, youth empowerment scientist accomplishments and athletic excellence from oldest education system to modern education system, there exists emotional bonding between teacher and students. The educational reforms grounded in the principle of flexibility, creativity and skill building set a foundation that empowers students to thrive a globalized world. India has seen many committees like Kothari Mission,

Knowledge commission, Mudaliar commission to enhance the quality of education. During covid time, after seeing the interest of so many students There are many companies' offering online education through You tube or through specific application. As online education has advantages of flexibility and diverse options, but there are many disadvantages of lack of direct feed back or direct guidance despite the progress made in narrowing the digital divide, several challenges persist infrastructure limitations can hinder access to the internet and digital devices. The cost of digital equipment and connectivity remains a barrier for many low-income families. To overcome these challenges, governments and stakeholders must invest in infrastructure development, offer subsidies for equipment and conduct awareness campaign to promote the value and need of education with enhanced youth connectivity, India's younger generations are bridging regional and social divides, embracing new opportunities and actively participating in shaping nation's future. India's scientific achievements particularly in space exploration and technology position, is a knowledge leader on the global stage, inspiring a new generation to advance in STEM fields. Sport achievements likewise elevate India's international standing and foster a culture of discipline and resilience. Complementing these advancements is the revival of gurukul-inspired duties, emphasizing values like respect, collaboration, practical knowledge

lifelong learning which strengthen community bonds and uphold India's cultural heritage.

Together, these elements converge to form a holistic approach to national growth one that combines modern innovation with timeless values. As India continues on its path to becoming a global leader, these pillars collectively shape destiny of prosperity, inclusivity and sustainable progress, building a future that honors both tradition and modernity.

Chapter-2

A Leap Towards Women Empowerment

In the journey of nation-building and social transformation, empowering women is not just a choice it is a necessity. "A Leap Towards Women Empowerment" signifies a bold and progressive step toward creating a just and equitable society where women are not only participants but leaders, decision-makers, and change agents. Over the years, India has witnessed a remarkable shift in the status of women from being confined within domestic roles to emerging as pioneers in science, politics, business, sports, and education. Women empowerment refers to the process of providing women with equal opportunities, equal rights and freedom in all sectors. Empowerment of women is to give them freedom to make decision for themselves. It allows women to live their lives with dignity and independency in society. The term leap means "a quick change". So, Leap in women Empowerment are the bold steps or big changes which help women have better life with equal chances and rights in every sector, freedom to raise their voices against any discrimination or crime towards them and follow their dreams without any restrictions. A common misconception runs in the society that only wage-

working women are examples of women empowerment, which is not true. Homemakers can also be empowered by providing them freedom in decision-making, having them know about their rights, support them in their initiatives, encourage them to grow out of the old patriarchal society norms and having their voices listened and understood. Now, women contribute to every sector, from being lawmakers in a country to launching rockets into space. They are backbone of functioning of every field.

Women empowerment is about enabling women to realize their full potential by granting them equal rights, opportunities, and freedom. It involves breaking societal barriers, challenging deep-rooted stereotypes, and ensuring safety, dignity, and self-reliance for every woman. Grassroots efforts by NGOs, self-help groups, and youth-led initiatives have also accelerated this movement. India has a long and evolving history of revering and respecting women, deeply rooted in its cultural, spiritual, and philosophical traditions. While there have been fluctuations over time due to socio-political changes, the ideal of "*Yatra Naryastu Pujyante, Ramante Tatra Devataah*" where women are worshipped, there the gods reside remains a guiding principle in Indian ethos.

However, a real leap means going beyond symbolic gestures, it demands action, awareness, and collective will. From classrooms to boardrooms, from panchayats to parliaments, the voice of women must be heard and

respected. This leap towards women empowerment is a tribute to the resilience, strength, and aspirations of millions of women who continue to rewrite the story of India one bold step at a time. India has a rich and evolving tradition of respecting women, deeply rooted in its ancient scriptures and cultural ethos. From the Vedic age, where women like Gargi and Maitreyi were revered scholars and active participants in philosophical debates, to the worship of powerful goddesses such as Saraswati, Lakshmi, and Durga, Indian civilization has long celebrated the feminine force. In those early times, women enjoyed equal access to education, spiritual practices, and social respect. However, during the medieval period, the status of women declined due to foreign invasions, rigid customs, and the rise of oppressive practices like child marriage, purdah, and Sati. Despite this, courageous figures like Rani Lakshmibai and Meera Bai emerged as symbols of strength and devotion. The colonial era witnessed a social awakening led by reformers like Raja Ram Mohan Roy, Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar, and Savitribai Phule, who championed women's rights to education, dignity, and legal reform. Post-independence, the Constitution of India guaranteed gender equality and legal safeguards, and women have since risen to hold significant positions in politics, business, science, and the armed forces. Examples include Indira Gandhi, Kalpana Chawla, Mary Kom, and Nirmala Sitharaman. In modern India, government initiatives like Beti Bachao Beti Padhao, Ujjwala

Yojana, and Mission Shakti, along with increasing representation in grassroots politics, reflect a strong commitment to women's empowerment. Even today, during festivals like Navratri and Durga Puja, women are symbolically worshipped as embodiments of power and divinity. India's journey, though marked by challenges, shows a continuing leap toward honouring, empowering, and uplifting its women transforming ancient reverence into modern recognition and opportunity.

Due to awareness, education and initiatives by government, women now have much more freedom and ease to live in society. Access to education to girls is playing a big role in accelerating women empowerment. As said by our former president of India, Dr. A.P.J. Kalam, "You educate a man; you educate a person. You educate a woman; you educate a family, a nation." According to UNESCO-PRB fact sheet (2023), a child born to a mother who can read is 50% more chance to survive past the age of 5 than a child born to an illiterate mother. Also, according to World Bank PRB fact sheet cites that only a single year of primary schooling of a girl can boost her lifetime earnings by 10-20% and secondary schooling take it up to 15-20%. In India, according to PLFS (2023-2024), overall literacy rate (for age 7+) is 74.6% for women with low contribution from women from rural areas. Appropriate education to women will help them know their rights and freedom better and act as a bridge to better life

socially, mentally and financially. There is no specific age group to have education, it can be acquired by any age group. Women who did not had a chance to study in their childhood can complete their education in any age. Schemes and initiatives by government of India like, New India Literacy Programme (NLIP) launched in 2022, National institute for open schooling (NIOS), Pradhan Mantri Gramin Saksharta Abhiyan which help women with older age group or who belong to rural area to complete their education. For younger females, Beti Bachao Beti Padhao Scheme (2015), Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan, National Scheme of Incentives to Girls for Secondary Education, Udan Scheme, Fees Exemption for single girl child studying in KVS some supportive measures taken by government to nurture and develop quantity and quality of girl education. Savitribai Phule and Jyotirao Phule were one of the pioneers to support girls' education. They opened the first school for girls in Pune in 1848. Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar is also one of the pioneers who promoted Girls' Education by opening schools for them and challenging orthodox practices. Begum Rokeya (Rokeya Sakhawat Hossain) was a Bengali Muslim reformer and champion of girls' education in Muslim communities. She founded Sakhawat Girls' School in Kolkata in 1911. In monarch India, Maharaja Sayajirao Gaekwad III of Baroda, was one of the first rulers to make primary education (including for girls) free and compulsory. Further, he also supported women in pursuing higher studies.

The transformation in India's governance from the previous regime to the current government, emphasizing systemic reforms in women's safety, child protection, education, and social welfare. The Nirbhaya Fund's transformation from underutilized under the previous government to a robust instrument funding fast-track courts, helplines, and crisis centres signifies a shift in administrative efficiency and prioritization of women's safety. It highlights how budget allocation without execution is ineffective, and political intent matters in social justice outcomes.

The Pradhan Mantri Gramin Digital Saksharta Abhiyan is a trailblazing scheme launched by Prime Minister Narendra Modi in 2017 with an aim to make at least one member of every rural family digitally literate. One of the most outstanding achievements of the scheme has been empowering women by making them digitally literate. Lakhs of rural women, who did not even have an idea about digital tools previously, have now become empowered to use smartphones, the internet, access online government services, make digital payments, and even start their own small businesses through digital means. This empowerment, besides enhancing their confidence and dignity, has also made them more independent in managing financial and personal matters. Numerous women have shifted from being passive consumers of technology to active consumers within their families and society.

In parallel with digital literacy, another imperative shift under Prime Minister Modi's regime has been in the field of sanitation, specifically the development of toilets under the Swachh Bharat Abhiyan. Sensing the daily plight of women who did not have access to safe and private sanitation facilities, the government made it a priority to construct more than 11 crore toilets in India, particularly in the rural countryside. This has greatly enhanced the health, safety, and dignity of women and girls, who used to wait for the cover of darkness to relieve themselves in open fields. Proximity to toilets has also helped boost school attendance for girls and overall hygiene standards.

Emphasizing these efforts, Prime Minister Narendra Modi, in his Independence Day address from the Red Fort, claimed proudly:

"Earlier, our daughters would wait till night to go out for relieving themselves. But now they do have a sense of dignity, they have toilets in their houses. We have built crores of toilets and presented our daughters and sisters with the dignity they deserve." He also reiterated the need for digital empowerment saying that "Digital India is not for the educated elite alone. It is for the poor, for the farmer, for the woman in the village, who now knows how to use a phone, make a transaction, and access government services."

India has emerged as a global leader in gender equality, not just through domestic transformation, but by

shaping global agendas and partnerships. India spearheaded the launch of the Global Alliance for Gender Parity at Davos World Economic Forum, an out-of-the-box initiative by over 10,000 global businesses. The alliance aims to create inclusive workplaces through best-practice exchange and policy discussion between nations. With a special focus on education, health, and technology innovation, the alliance leverages India's own success in empowering women recasting these as scalable global models. One of India's most effective financial inclusion schemes, the Pradhan Mantri Mudra Yojana, has been on this journey of empowerment. With over 30 crore loans given to women entrepreneurs, the scheme sees the manner in which financial independence has reached the last mile. Interestingly, the non-performing asset (NPA) ratio is a low 2%, which speaks volumes about the fiscal prudence and credit-worthiness of Indian women—primarily running micro and small enterprises in rural and semi-urban areas.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, Indian women played a critical role in the international and national health response. More than 80% of the labour force engaged in the production of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) were women, who were upskilled by skill development programs. Not only did this prove women's resilience and adaptability but also their contribution towards lifeline supply chains during crisis. But global measures like the Global Gender Gap

Report fail to capture the totality of women's work, particularly in developing nations like India. The report does not capture the sheer magnitude of work being undertaken by Self-Help Groups (SHGs), where thousands of Indian women are leading community savings, running micro-enterprises, and bringing social change. Similarly, in village panchayats, over 1.4 million elected women representatives are making a significant difference at grassroots governance a quiet revolution in women's leadership that has transformed rural development.

India's pledge to gender mainstreaming in the global arena was reaffirmed under its G20 presidency once again. India established specialized working groups on the economic and social empowerment of women and adolescent girls under this presidency, taking gender equality to global economic discussions. India also encouraged trans-border learning platforms so that innovative platforms such as Digi Locker, e-Sanjeevani (telemedicine) could be shared to empower women from developing countries.

Besides that, women in India have also found themselves in leadership roles in every sphere of life. From Nirmala Sitharaman, the globe's most powerful finance minister, to Gita Gopinath, IMF Deputy Managing Director, Indian women are shaping economic thinking, policy, and diplomacy. In Indian business, women are also holding top roles as CEOs,

board directors, and start-ups founders, slowly breaking glass ceilings.

Together, these initiatives provide a bold, integrated vision where women's empowerment is not symbolic but integrated into the very fabric of development. India's bold leadership, domestically and internationally, offers a model of 21st-century inclusive growth. The Government of India has launched a number of pathbreaking schemes in empowering women socially, economically, and legally. Self Help Groups (SHGs) have been a key starting point in organizing rural women into group economic enterprise, with recent efforts like Lakhpatti Didi aiming to empower at least 2 crore rural women to earn over ₹1 lakh annually through skill building, entrepreneurship, and credit facilities. The Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana (2016) for women's health and dignity involved giving over 9 crore free LPG connections to below-poverty-line families, and reducing indoor air pollution and drudgery. The flagship Mission Shakti (2022) integrates safety, security, and empowerment aspects—through sub-schemes like Sambal for security (helplines, One Stop Centres, Nari Adalat) and Samarthya for development (skill training, shelters, crèches, and finance).

The Maternity Benefit (Amendment) Act (2017) increased paid maternity leave in the organized sector to 26 weeks from 12 weeks, with an emphasis on the significance of mother care and early child

development. The Sukanya Samriddhi Yojana (2015) induces parents to invest in girl child's future through high-interest savings for marriage and education. The Support to Training and Employment Programme for Women (STEP) offers skill and training in services, handicrafts, and farming to make them self-employed. The Stand-Up India Scheme (2016) gives financial assistance to women entrepreneurs through bank loans of ₹10 lakh to ₹1 crore for greenfield projects. Among more recent schemes, Nari Adalat has been a bottom-up system providing alternate dispute resolution as well as legal education to rural women, while Shakti Sadan shelters provide relief and rehabilitation to women in distress, including trafficking victims. Palna, with Anganwadi-cum-crèches, provides childcare to working mothers to enable work participation. Lastly, the Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana (PMMVY) provides cash assistance to pregnant and lactating women, particularly for their first and second child (if a girl), to promote maternal and child health and gender balance. These all together constitute a strong ecosystem for women-led development in India.

India's journey towards women empowerment has gained unprecedented momentum in every sphere be it politics to defence, science to railways, business to social media. The Women's Reservation Bill or the Nari Shakti Vandan Adhiniyam was a path-breaking law passed in 2023, legislating for 33% reservation of women in the Lok Sabha and State Legislative

Assemblies. It is a revolutionary step towards giving women a forceful voice in a decision-making process at the highest level of governance.

In the military domain, women have increasingly transgressed gender barriers. The Central Industrial Security Force (CISF) has progressively more women commandos and officers actively deployed in sensitive zones such as airports, metro rails, and industrial estates. Likewise, the National Defence Academy (NDA), which was once an all-male stronghold, admitted women cadets after a Supreme Court order was passed in 2021. Now, women are being trained alongside men to be future officers in the armed forces, a new age of gender equality in India's military academies.

History was made in Indian Railways when Jaya Varma Sinha was made the first woman Chairperson and CEO of the Railway Board in 2023 to lead one of the largest railway networks in the world. Women engineers have also contributed to the design of iconic buildings, for instance, the world's tallest railway bridge on the Chenab River in Jammu and Kashmir, where women civil engineers played an important role in design and project execution. In space research, Indian women scientists at ISRO played a crucial role in Chandrayaan-3, the first Indian lunar mission. Scientists such as Ritu Karidhal and Nandini Harinath, who were known faces of previous missions, served as role models for the new generation, while numerous young women scientists

undertook significant work such as trajectory design, communication, and mission control.

The entrepreneurial spirit of Indian women is best described in the iconic story of Lijjat Papad, started by seven women in 1959 with a small loan of ₹80. Today, it is a cooperative firm empowering over 45,000 women in India, demonstrating the power of collective effort and self-sufficiency.

On the digital stage too, women are scripting their own tale. Rural kitchen influencers are taking the world by storm on YouTube and Instagram with real recipes, sustainable cooking, and home management. Nisha Madhulika and several others have built careers from the comfort of their own kitchens, turning daily chores into routes to stardom and riches.

Together, these episodes indicate that Indian women are not just discovering their space in newer and older environments but are also leading a silent revolution that's shaping the vision of a Viksit Bharat a developed, inclusive India with an equal leadership by men and women.

A number of feminist movements played a vital role in women Empowerment in in India. The term “Feminist” is often misinterpreted by both men and women. According to Oxford Learner's Dictionaries, Feminism is “Advocacy of equality of the sexes and establishment of the political, social, and economic rights of female sex.” It is a faith and aim to provide women with equal

opportunities, rights and respect as any other gender. Feminism is not about women looking down upon other genders neither it is about women having more privileges than men rather it is about women have equality, be it in her workplace or getting education and even at home too. Key figures like Raja Ram Mohan Roy, Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar, Pandita Ramabai, Tarabai Shinde and many more made significant contributions in empowering women and elimination of many practices which were against the rights and betterment of female lives in 19th century. Second wave started in the 1940s-1970s which aimed political rights and legal reforms. Its focus was to help women get legal rights, constitutional equality and rise of women's participation in politics, Education and workforce. One of the key outcomes was Universal Adult Suffrage (1950) in Article 326 of Indian Constitution guaranteed Universal Adult Franchise for citizens aged 21 and above, irrespective of their gender (where age limitation was change to 18 and above in 1989). Another big outcome was Hindu Code Bill which reformed property and divorce laws. Hindu code bills were passed as four separate laws which includes Hindu Marriage Act which legalized divorce and banned bigamy, Hindu Succession Act which gave daughters property rights (act was later amended in 2005 to having equality in succession in their father's property), Hindu Adoption and Maintenance Act and Hindu Minority and Guardianship Act. For workplace and employment equality, Article 14 - equality before law, Article 15(1)

& (3) - no discrimination based on sex and Article 16 – equal opportunity in employment. Movements like SEWA (Self Employed Women's Association) which promoted labour rights for women in private sectors and acts like Equal Remuneration Act (1976) which ensured equal pay for equal work and Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace Act (2013) which was based on Vishaka guidelines (1997) were some notable advances to surge in female participation in workforce. Third wave focused on Violence against women, rape cases, dowry in 1970s-1990s. Criminal Law Amendment (1983) which introduced custodial rape, increased punishment to the rapist and ban on identity disclosure of the victim was major turning point to strengthen laws for female protection. Women faced discrimination and violence and there was no proper governing body to monitor or fight for women's right at a national level. This is where The National Commission for Women Act (1986) came in the picture. It established National Commission for Women (NCW) in 1992. It acts as bridge between women's issues and national platform and defender of women's rights. These waves of feminist movements have empowered women, provided the with legal protection against any discrimination in workplaces, gave them rights and them to be part of the workforce in the country. In 21st century, many feminist movements like #Metoo India in 2018, Pinjara Tod movement and many debates and talks around issues against women are talked upon, which is a major milestone towards women

empowerment. Financially Independent women shape their own present and future. Currently, our country is experiencing a wave of entrepreneurship where people of every age group are entrepreneurs in every sector. Women entrepreneurs like Falguni Nayar, Suchi Mukherjee, Vani Kola, Naina Lal Kidwai, and the list goes on are some fabulous female entrepreneurs who are masters of their fields. They broke out the stereotypes and made their own way in the world and are now inspiring girls. Women in rural and urban India are starting businesses from their homes itself from cloud kitchens to tailoring works, from education sector to beauty business. Schemes like Stand-up India Scheme, launched in 2016 promotes entrepreneurship in women and scheduled castes and tribes. Trade related Entrepreneurship Assistance and Development (TREAD) Scheme focuses on promoting women in non-farm activities by giving them loan and training. Another key scheme, Mudra Yojana which acts under PMMY offers loan upto 10 lakhs to small startups, with keen focus on female entrepreneurs. According to 6th Economic Census (MoSPI) about 13.76% of total entrepreneurs in India are women, over 79% are self – owned enterprises and approx. 59% of women led enterprises are from rural India. This percentage is ever increasing with more awareness and support from the government to women.

India has witnessed the rise of outstanding women who have broken glass ceilings, overcome stereotypes, and

opened doors for generations by excelling in areas as diverse as politics and science, business, sports, art, and grass-root movements, to cite a few. They have redefined success and leadership.

In politics, women like Indira Gandhi, India's first and only woman Prime Minister, forged new paths in a man's world. Today, women like Smt. Droupadi Murmu, India's first tribal woman President, and Smt. Nirmala Sitharaman, India's first full-time woman Finance Minister, are moulding India's policy paradigms with determination and vision.

In science and technology, women scientists & their team have played a crucial role in missions such as Chandrayaan, Mangalyaan, and now Gaganyaan, showcasing the world India's scientific capability and the potential that women possess in the fields of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics.

In the judiciary, Justice B.V. Nagarathna will become the first woman Chief Justice of India in 2027. Her appointment will be a testament to epoch-making gender representation in the uppermost rungs of India's judiciary.

In entrepreneurship and business, Biocon's founder, Kiran Mazumdar-Shaw, has established a global biotech empire and is one of the most influential businesswomen in India. Likewise, Nykaa's founder, Falguni Nayar, founded India's first women-led unicorn startup, demonstrating that age and gender are not

obstacles to achievement. Sports has seen marvellous women like Mary Kom in boxing, P.V. Sindhu and Saina Nehwal in badminton, Mithali Raj in cricket, and Avani Lekhara, the first woman Paralympic gold medallist of India, in shooting. These victories have made individuals proud and have shattered the stereotypical myths associated with women in sports.

In the arts sector and the world of cinema, the likes of Lata Mangeshkar, M.S. Subbulakshmi, and contemporary icons like Deepika Padukone, Kangana Ranaut, Priyanka Chopra, Vidya Balan have employed their platforms to express themselves on social transformation, mental illness awareness, and women's rights.

At the grass root level, social workers such as Sindhu Tai Sapkal, the "Mother of Orphans," who had adopted and raised more than 1,000 orphan children, and Sunitha Krishnan, a social activist who works towards eradicating human trafficking, have made their lives count.

Women like Kiran Bedi, India's first IPS lady officer, have transformed the lives of millions by proving that a strong sense of purpose, determination, and self-discipline can be a game-changer in governance and policing.

From internet content creators transforming kitchens into studios to women engineers constructing the world's tallest rail bridges, Indian women now enrich

every aspect of life. These are not tales of individual achievement but are the emblems of a strong, transforming, and inclusive India where "Nari Shakti" paves the way from the front.

A mother is not merely an individual; she is a world of sacrificial love, silent sacrifices, and unparalleled strength. Right from the time life starts, her presence forms the pillar of our lives. She cares for not just the body but the soul as well—nourishing, guarding, educating, and guiding with unshakeable patience and silent strength. Her efforts, though not always recognized, mold us into who we are, and they cannot be replaced in any phase of life.

A mother is the first teacher of life. She teaches us to walk, to talk, and to live life carefully. She is the one who loses sleep when we fall sick and hides her own tears so that we shall smile. Her lap is the safest place on earth, and her voice the most melodious. She imparts values, not in sermons, but in example kindness, courage, honesty, and love with no frontiers.

As we grow older, she grows up. She is a friend, mentor, and sometimes the unspoken strength behind our most courageous decisions. Even when the world turns its back, a mother stands firm believing in us when we no longer believe in ourselves. Her acts of selflessness are often silent: putting her own dreams on hold, living on less, and quietly fighting through challenges solely to see us rise.

A mother's love never retires. Even as adults, we turn to her in times of joy, confusion, or despair. Her blessings are our shield, and her presence, physically or in memory, continue to inspire and sustain us. It makes no difference if she was a stay-at-home mother or a working mother, her multitasking, her juggling of emotion, duty, and relationship, is unmatched.

Indian motherhood is sanctified. She is compared to "Devi" a goddess who gives life, sustains it, and guards it. As in the Sanskrit shloka:

"Janani janmabhoomischa swargaadapi gareeyasi"
"The mother and the motherland are more than heaven itself."

No manual, no friend, no gadget can ever substitute for what a mother gives. Her gift cannot be quantified in terms of money because it is so ingrained in our existence. Her love is eternal, her presence cannot be substituted, and her blessings the greatest treasure in life.

To revere a mother means to reverence the very source of life and love.

Feminist discourse has become ubiquitous and highly polarized in recent years. While contemporary Western feminism has played a major role in the world's struggle towards gender equality, imposing its blueprints without sensitivity to context at times results in a conflict of cultures such as India where gender arrangements are mediated through cultural, religious,

and historical contexts in more nuanced ways. Instead of discarding our heritage, we need to develop a vision of Indian feminism that derives power from our civilizational prudence and sensibility, inclusive spirit, and multicultural women lived realities.

There is a pressing need to counterbalance the unrealistic beauty standards and early marriage pressures faced by young girls today. Each girl must be celebrated for her individuality, ability, and promise not gauged by superficial standards. Empowerment starts when society makes girls dream fearlessly, without shame and social pressure.

Real feminism must be embracing and honour all women's choices, whether homemaker, CEO, farmer, artist, or activist. A woman who chooses to rear a family with love and respect is just as empowered as a woman who leads a corporation. We must free ourselves from judgment and leave space for each woman's path as valuable and meaningful. But concurrently, we must deal with the actual threats to too many women: trafficking, sexual assault, and systemic injustice. But we must do so in a way that does not allow for the misuse of laws to unjustly charge innocent people men or women. Justice needs to be balanced, fair, and reality-based, not used as an instrument of prejudice. Empowerment is not about causing conflict but empowering dignity, security, and equality for all.

India has a whole list of forgotten heroines right from Rani Chennamma to Durgawati, from Ahilyabai Holkar to Kalpana Chawla. Their tales must be revived and told with pride. When young girls read of courageous, compassionate, and visionary Indian women who became successful, they have role models who are like them and that empowers them.

Most importantly, the path to gender justice must be a collaboration, not a conflict. Men are not the enemy, but change-makers. Boys must be brought up to respect women, respect consent, and be equally responsible at home and society. Feminism must be a human movement, not a sexes' war. Only through collaboration, dialogue, and comprehension can we end patriarchy once and for all and build a society in which all human beings can thrive.

Let India be a shining example to the world not by imitating models, but by creating one on the lines of compassion, strength, equality, and cultural richness. This is not division feminism, but feminism of Dharma, which liberates women as well as men, and guides Bharat towards real Vikas (development) and Vikshit Bharat (developed India).

In every phase of life whether in silence or sacrifice, in guidance or gentle correction a mother remains the unwavering force behind our growth. Her contribution is not measured in words or wealth, but in the values, she instils, the strength she imparts, and the

unconditional love she showers. She is the first teacher, the constant nurturer, and the invisible anchor who holds the family and future together. No role in the world carries as much depth, dedication, and devotion as that of a mother.

As we move forward in life, achieving goals and embracing new horizons, it is essential to pause and acknowledge that much of our strength comes from the hands that once held ours. Her presence, blessings, and sacrifices form the unseen framework of our success. While the world may celebrate heroes, a mother remains the silent architect of every hero's journey. Her contribution is truly irreplaceable a divine gift that shapes not just individuals, but the very soul of humanity. Honouring her is not just a gesture of gratitude, but a reflection of our highest values and cultural depth.

Chapter-3

Indian Economy in Transition

“India is the proverbial elephant that has begun to run. We can debate whether it is a trot or a gallop, but it is certainly not standing still.”

The excitement about India these days is not just within India and Indians but worldwide. India is one of the largest countries in the world, with a highly skilled population that the west just can't hire fast enough, with a history of toppling empires and many more. The Indian economy currently stands as a testament to resilience, policy innovation, and forward-looking governance. With its ascension to the fourth-largest economy in the world by nominal GDP and third-largest by purchasing power parity (PPP). The Indian economy itself is currently in the midst of a fundamental change, which is best characterized as being "in transition." This change represents India's transition from a post-colonial, inward-oriented, agriculture-centered economy of the 20th century to a technologically advanced, globally connected, modern economy of the 21st century. This is not merely an economic transformation but also a social, political, and technological one, which mirrors the evolving aspirations of a new India.

In the 20th century, particularly after independence in 1947, India followed a socialist-inspired mixed economy with a focus on state intervention, public sector undertakings, five-year plans, and import substitution. Expansion was sluggish, bureaucratic barriers were stiff, and the private sector stayed muted. India struggled with poverty, low industry, food shortages, and sparse infrastructure. Economic liberalization started only in 1991, which terminated a tight economic period.

Cut to the 21st century, India has welcomed market liberalization, globalization, and digital revolution. The economy is now diversified with strong contributions coming from services, manufacturing, fintech, renewable energy, and IT exports. GST, Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code, Jan Dhan-Aadhaar-Mobile (JAM) trinity, and programs like Digital India, Make in India, and Start-up India have updated the economic paradigm.

The Indian economy of today is not just GDP growth-oriented but also inclusive development, sustainable environmental, and technological growth-oriented. It has transitioned from scarcity to surplus, planning to performance, and state-dominance to private-public partnership patterns.

This continuous economic transformation is a testament to India's emergence as a future-proof, adaptable, and strong nation, aiming to become a \$5 trillion economy

and a leader in innovation and development on the world stage. As India embarks on Amrit Kaal—the golden period up to 2047, the centenary of independence, it is a singular opportunity to define the future of 1.4 billion Indians by initiating bold reforms, inclusive growth, and global outreach.

"Change is the law of the universe. Those who resist change, resist growth."

PM Modi stressed the necessity of a combined push from all 140 crore Indians to labour "24x7 for 2047," calling upon each citizen to do their part in making India a developed country. The Prime Minister also reiterated India's vision to become the third-largest economy in the world in his third term, with fast-paced endeavours in governance, economic reform, and development of infrastructure.

One of the major points to highlight was India's attempt at attracting foreign investment. PM Modi invited states to compete to attract investors and positioned the nation as a manufacturing and design destination under the tagline "Design in India, Design for the World." This also fits into larger programs such as Make in India, the PLI scheme, and enhancing exports of quality Indian goods.

On the social infrastructure side, he boasted of 4 crore housing units completed and set a new target of 3 crore additional houses for the poor. This push for housing is in addition to other key infrastructure ventures in

transport, tourism, agriculture, and healthcare. Govt. also spoke about the resilience of Indian banks, claiming that reforms have turned them into some of the world's strongest financial institutions, enabling MSMEs to flourish and creating employment opportunities.

PM Modi's Independence Day address encapsulates India's economic transition, a shift from a nation striving for survival to one aiming for global supremacy. With an eye on inclusive growth, sustainable development, and technological leadership, India is scripting a new chapter in its economic history. As the nation marches toward Amrit Kaal, the dream of a Viksit Bharat is no longer distant, it is being built, reform by reform, vision by vision, and citizen by citizen.

The "New India" narrative has been shaped by structural reforms that aim to make the country self-reliant (Atmanirbhar), globally competitive, and socially equitable. In an increasingly volatile world order, India's economy stands out as a model of resilience, balancing rapid growth with fiscal discipline, digital advancement with rural development, and industrial revival with environmental consciousness.

"India's rise to the 4th largest economy is not just about numbers- it's about people, potential, and the promise of the future."

This journey wasn't linear. It involved overcoming colonial legacies, economic crises, political shifts, and global shocks. But through strategic reforms, globalization, and digital innovation, India has successfully rewritten its economic narrative. As of mid-2025, India's economy is one of the fastest-growing in the world, with real GDP for FY25 is estimated at Rs. 187.95 lakh crores (US\$ 2.2 trillion) with growth rate of 6.5%, compared to Rs. 176.51 lakh crore (US\$ 2.06 trillion) for FY24. As on Jan 2025, there are 118 unicorn startups in India, with a combined valuation of over Rs. 3.0 lakh crore (US\$ 354 billion). The government is also focusing on renewable sources by achieving 40% of its energy from non-fossil sources by 2030. India is committed to achieving the country's ambition of Net Zero Emissions by 2070 through a five-pronged strategy, 'Panchamrit'. Moreover, India ranked 3rd in the renewable energy country attractive index. The country has not only recovered from the post-pandemic slowdown but has emerged stronger, owing largely due to the proactive governance, fiscal prudence, and reform-oriented mindset.

when it comes to the question of economy which is going to benefit everybody the politics cannot be so disrupt. Once Upon a Time prime minister Rajiv Gandhi said if I send one rupee to the beneficiary he ends up getting only 15 Paisa. Adopting technology Today's government ensured, that kind of leakage doesn't happen.

The remark by Kerala's Finance Minister that Kerala receives only ₹21 for every ₹100 it contributes to the Centre, while states like UP receive ₹46, Bihar receive up to ₹70 presents a narrow and misleading view of India's fiscal federalism. Such statements ignore the constitutional and equitable principles that guide fund allocation through the Finance Commission, which considers population, poverty levels, infrastructure needs, and fiscal capacity not merely tax contributions. A key point often overlooked is that central expenditure in a state is not limited to what comes through devolution or grants. For instance, in Kochi, the central government has made significant strategic and financial investments, including in the Southern Naval Command, Cochin Shipyard, Cochin Port, and major airport development. These high-value expenditures meant for national security, economic development, and logistics benefit not just Kerala, but the entire nation. Same thing for Tamil Nadu which is protesting because of penalizing the states for investing so much money into building factories when there are states that are just consuming things is not building factories. Presenting partial figures without acknowledging is harmful.

India stands at a crucial juncture where its vast human potential, especially among the youth, can be harnessed for transformational change. With a population of over 1.4 billion, there's immense scope to expand the base of tax-paying citizens currently at around 1.5% and foster

a more participatory and inclusive economy. Comparatively, countries like China and the U.S., with higher percentages of tax-paying populations, show the kind of growth India too can aspire to with the right reforms and awareness.

Encouragingly, trends in technology adoption, such as digital payments and air travel, show that a growing segment of Indians is rapidly integrating into the modern economy. For example, the top 1% accounting for 45% of all flights and a small percentage of users responsible for the majority of UPI transactions reflects both the speed of digital adaptation and the opportunity to broaden digital access across more sections of society.

India also produces one of the largest pools of graduates in the world, with lakhs of students completing degrees in engineering, management, and vocational fields each year. However, this incredible output offers us a chance to introspect and evolve. Reports like the Skill India Report highlight the need to align our education system more closely with industry needs. This is not a limitation, but an opportunity to modernize programs, integrate practical and experiential learning, and equip students with relevant, future-ready skills.

Particularly in Tier 2 and Tier 3 cities, enhancing the quality of education by moving beyond rote learning and offering real-world exposure can create a stronger bridge between academic achievement and

employability. By strengthening industry-academia collaboration, updating curricula, and investing in teacher training and infrastructure, we can ensure that every graduate not only finds a job but thrives in a dynamic global workforce.

India's challenge today is also its greatest opportunity: to ensure that the education system becomes a powerful engine for employment, innovation, and nation-building.

Many initiatives have been taken by current Government to improve ease of living, The agricultural sector, though facing legacy issues, has seen improvements through better irrigation, increased MSPs, and PM-KISAN income support. The employment situation has gradually improved, with formal job creation picking up, especially in manufacturing and services. India's export performance has improved in both goods and services, while strong FDI inflows continue to reflect international confidence in the government's economic agenda. Most importantly, the government's people-centric policies have ensured that the benefits of growth are reaching the grassroots level. Employment levels are improving gradually, with a noticeable shift toward formalization. Programs like e-Shram, Skill India, and Startup India are aligning youth capabilities with the needs of a transforming economy. India's exports are diversified, and the country continues to receive robust Foreign Direct Investment (FDI), especially in renewable

energy, infrastructure, and digital sectors. The economic landscape is now characterized by a unique synergy of welfare and wealth creation; both being pursued simultaneously by the government. India is primarily a domestic demand-driven economy, with consumption and investments contributing to 70% of the economic activity. With an improvement in the economic scenario and the Indian economy recovering from the Covid-19 pandemic shock, several investments and developments have been made across various sectors of the economy. According to the World Bank, India must continue to prioritise lowering inequality while also putting growth-oriented policies into place to boost the economy. Govt. has implemented a wide range of initiatives to boost economic growth, foster self-reliance, promote digital transformation, and improve overall ease of doing business. These initiatives span across sectors and reflect a mix of long-term planning and responsive governance. The Government of India, through the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT) and other Central Ministries/Departments, provides an enabling ecosystem for the overall industrial development of the country through appropriate policy interventions. Atmanirbhar Bharat Abhiyan (Self-Reliant India): Launched in 2020, it became the central pillar of India's economic resurgence post-pandemic. It encourages local manufacturing, strengthens domestic supply chains, reduces import dependency, and promotes entrepreneurship across critical industries.

PLI Schemes: With a total outlay of over ₹2 lakh crore, PLI schemes have incentivized companies to manufacture in India. Sectors such as mobile phones, APIs (pharma), solar modules, autos, semiconductors, and textiles have witnessed massive investments and capacity expansion. PM Gati Shakti National Master Plan: A digital infrastructure platform integrating roads, railways, airports, and logistics corridors. This initiative has drastically reduced project delays and logistics costs, increasing India's competitiveness. Digital India: The government has revolutionized governance and service delivery. With over 1.3 billion Aadhaar enrolments, UPI handling 12+ billion transactions monthly, and platforms like Digi Locker, BHIM, and Gem, India now leads globally in digital public infrastructure. Jan Dhan-Aadhaar-Mobile (JAM) Trinity: This framework has facilitated Direct Benefit Transfers (DBTs) to over 800 million citizens, eliminating leakages and ensuring targeted welfare distribution. Ayushman Bharat and PM-JAY: The world's largest public health insurance scheme, covering 500 million individuals, significantly reducing out-of-pocket expenditure and enhancing access to healthcare. Startup India and Stand-Up India: These missions have propelled India to become the third-largest startup ecosystem globally. With tax incentives, easier compliance, and dedicated funds, innovation has been democratized. Make in India and Defence Corridors: Defence manufacturing and indigenous technology development have received a boost, reduced

import bills and generating employment. Green Growth Agenda: Under the National Hydrogen Mission, FAME-II for EVs, and large-scale investments in solar and wind energy, India is fast transitioning to a green economy. Agriculture & Rural Reforms: PM-KISAN provides ₹6,000 annually to small and marginal farmers. This supports the small-scale farmers to have better yield and also supports them financially. E-NAM and Agri-Infrastructure Fund improves farm marketing and storage facilities. Rural electrification, irrigation, and road development (PMGSY) is done which has led to improvement in rural connectivity. National Infrastructure Pipeline (NIP): The National Infrastructure Pipeline (NIP) for FY 2019-25 is a first-of-its-kind, whole-of-government exercise to provide world-class infrastructure to citizens and improve their quality of life. It aims to improve project preparation and attract investments into infrastructure. To draw up the NIP, a High-Level Task Force was constituted under the chairmanship of the Secretary, Department of Economic Affairs (DEA), Ministry of Finance. Hence, it is an investment plan of over ₹100 lakh crore for roads, railways, ports, energy, and urban infrastructure designed to create millions of jobs and boost GDP growth. GST & Tax Reforms: Implementation of Goods and Services Tax (GST) created a unified national market. It helps the Indian economy by streamlining taxation, boosting compliance, and promoting economic growth. GST replaced multiple indirect taxes with a unified system, reducing tax

complexities and fostering a common national market. This has led to increased tax revenue for the government, greater transparency, and improved ease of doing business. Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (IBC): A landmark reform to resolve corporate debt efficiently and improve the business climate. It has significantly reformed India's economic landscape by improving credit discipline, attracting investment, and facilitating the resolution of distressed assets. It has also fostered a more robust and efficient financial system by addressing Non-Performing Assets (NPAs) and promoting better corporate governance. Together, these initiatives represent a comprehensive and forward-looking approach to economic development.

As and after the lockdown of COVID-19, industries in India were kept under strict vigilance to guarantee that workers did not suffer much difficulty, and the return of work was ensured for them. There was also a change in the dynamics of labour, as with new learnings or improved opportunities in their vicinity, many workers declined to resume work with their former employers. This manpower reset has caused industries to look at training local manpower, particularly in southern Indian regions. Concurrently, issues of the unemployability of engineering, MBA, ITI, and polytechnic graduates have been voiced, with figures showing that many of them are not adequately prepared for the needs of the job market. The spate of poor-quality engineering colleges, many of which are interested more in profits than in

education, has been the cause of this crisis. The Centre has taken steps to overcome the gap between industry and academia, particularly by creating innovation hubs in institutions such as IITs and IISc.

In the field of taxation, the introduction of GST has been termed a revolutionary reform. While all-round satisfaction among stakeholders has been reported, opposition from some of the states has been emphasized, particularly because of the changeover to destination-based from origin-based taxation. Misconceptions regarding revenue distribution under GST and the divisible pool of taxes have been addressed. Technological integration has been attributed to enhancing tax compliance and bringing to light fake claims, particularly through the application of AI to identify GST filing and logistics records abnormalities. Avenues have also been explored to improve states' revenue collection effectiveness, as seen in the case of Maharashtra reforming stamp duty regulations amid COVID to accelerate real estate activity. Looking forward, the vision of the government for 2024–2029 has been charted keeping in mind the realization of the third-largest economy status globally, ease of doing business, harmonizing manufacturing, agriculture, and services, and getting India ready for Viksit Bharat by 2047. Through policy consistency, digital empowerment, and universal reforms, a planned path to sustainable and inclusive economic growth is being conceived for the future of India.

India has officially surpassed Japan to become the world's fourth-largest economy, crossing the remarkable \$4 trillion milestone. This is not just a number, it's a celebration of India's resilience, visionary reforms, and unwavering drive for economic progress. Having overtaken the UK and now Japan, India has cemented its position as a key player in the global economic arena. For many, this moment marks the coming of age of the Indian economic dream.

Yet, what makes India truly unique is the coexistence of two parallel narratives, both powerful in their own right. One India is soaring, led by innovation, global entrepreneurship, fintech unicorns, and a growing class of investors and consumers. This India reflects confidence, ambition, and the spirit of new-age progress. It is building a future that competes with the best in the world.

At the same time, there is another India, resilient and determined, that is still striving for basic necessities like clean water, stable income, quality education, and reliable healthcare. It's the India where every rupee is stretched with care, where students study under streetlights, and families sacrifice for a better tomorrow. It is this India that inspires the truest meaning of courage and hope.

The good news is that we are making significant strides. The current government's welfare initiatives have lifted millions out of poverty and brought social infrastructure

to the forefront. Schemes for rural electrification, digital inclusion, affordable housing, and financial empowerment are bridging the gap faster than ever before.

But as we move forward, we must ensure that our economic success is both inclusive and sustainable. A \$4 trillion economy should reflect rising quality of life across all regions and communities. This is an opportunity to build an India where both urban startups and rural farms thrive, where growth is measured not just by GDP, but by opportunities created at the grassroots.

To realize this vision, we must continue to strengthen rural demand, invest in skilling and education, and carry forward reforms in land, labour, and governance. The goal is not just to grow bigger, but to grow better and to ensure that every Indian, regardless of background, becomes a proud stakeholder in the nation's progress.

India's economic journey is not just a success story it's a work in progress, full of promise and purpose. Together, we can complete the story and make it a model for the world.

The Union Budget 2025-26 brings a strong focus on improving the lives of common citizens through targeted economic reforms and welfare measures. Income tax relief has been extended, with the tax-free income limit raised to ₹12 lakh under the new regime, significantly benefiting the middle class. A ₹1 trillion

Employment-Linked Incentive scheme aims to create 35 million new jobs, while MSMEs and start-ups enjoy tax breaks and easier credit access. The rural economy is bolstered through increased allocations for MGNREGA and schemes like the PM Dhan-Dhaanya Yojana, enhancing farmers' incomes and credit access. Healthcare spending has jumped to ₹1.35 lakh crore, with expanded infrastructure under Ayushman Bharat and new AIIMS facilities. Massive investments are being made in digital and physical infrastructure, including high-speed broadband in villages, new educational hubs, and improved healthcare access. The government is also investing in agritech, green energy, and manufacturing to make India future-ready. Overall, the budget reflects a balanced push toward inclusive growth, ensuring tax relief, better jobs, social welfare, and infrastructure development for every section of society.

Furthermore, India must engage with the global economy from a position of strength—negotiating smart trade deals, securing energy partnerships, and leveraging its large market to attract technology transfers and green investments. As new technologies like AI, green hydrogen, and quantum computing shape the future, India's public and private sectors must invest in R&D, innovation, and human capital. The Indian Economy right now is a remarkable blend of resilience, revival, and reinvention, shaped by a decade of robust governance under Prime Minister Narendra Modi. The

country has moved beyond incremental reforms to embrace transformational policies. From digital empowerment and infrastructure growth to manufacturing revival and welfare delivery, the Modi government has shown that a proactive state can catalyze private sector innovation and citizen-led progress.

India is being seen as “The Shining Star in the global economy” that too at the time when we are talking about Western economies slipping into a recession. There's financial tightening and all other factors are there as well, but there is a general confidence that India is relatively insulated. For instance, Apple is shifting its production of iPhones from China to India. A clear sign that the country is growing and desirable. So, despite some political tensions and a lot of corruption that needs cleaning up, India seems to be a pretty solid investment. It is perhaps unsurprising that many are predicting that India could become one of the world's most dominant economies within this Century. Hence, India can be considered to be the growth engine of the world. Looking ahead, the road to becoming a \$5 trillion economy lies in deepening reforms, strengthening human capital, and building institutional capacity. Priorities should include improving education and healthcare outcomes, modernizing agriculture, expanding green infrastructure, and ensuring regional equity. The government must also continue to foster public-private partnerships and support MSMEs as job

engines. As India marches into Amrit Kaal, the 25-year journey toward its centenary of independence in 2047, the foundation laid by the Modi government provides not only a roadmap but a reason for hope. With the right blend of policy, political will, and people's participation, India is not just rising, it is leading the way toward a more equitable and empowered global future.

India's path from a farming economy to a \$4 trillion economic giant of the world is one of resilience, reform, and indefatigable drive. But the actual strength of the Indian economy is not only in its growing GDP, but in its potential to bring every citizen, especially the poor, the underprivileged, and the ignored, gradually into the mainstream.

Intuiting this, the Government of India has put inclusive growth at the centre of its economic policy. Through flagship programs such as PM Awas Yojana (housing for all), PM Garib Kalyan Anna Yojana (free rice for 80 crore people), Ayushman Bharat (free healthcare for the poor), Jal Jeevan Mission (tap water in every rural household), and Ujjwala Yojana (clean cooking fuel), the state has made efforts to improve basic living standards throughout rural and urban India.

Further, digital empowerment through Digital India, financial inclusion via Jan Dhan Yojana, and skill development through Skill India are ensuring that every Indian, regardless of background, can participate in the new economy. Programs like Startup India, Mudra

loans, and Stand-Up India are nurturing grassroots entrepreneurship, particularly among women and marginalized communities.

Infrastructure expansion, labour law reforms, and targeted investment in industry and agriculture are setting the stage for a self-reliant and sustainable Bharat—Atmanirbhar Bharat. Notably, the government remains committed to delivering quality education, improved healthcare, employment opportunities, and climate-resilient development, not merely economic figures, but for all-around human development.

In short, Indian economy is not only shifting, it is changing. The way forward has to combine ambition with empathy, growth with equality, and prosperity with well-being. The vision of a Viksit Bharat (Developed India) by 2047 is achievable *only if no Indian is left behind*.

"सबका साथ, सबका विकास, सबका विश्वास, सबका प्रयास" —, India is not only heading towards becoming a wealthier country, but also a more equitable, humane, and empowered nation.

Chapter-4

Democracy in Action

Bharat is the mother of democracy which is an age-old concept of India. The Indian Democracy Comprises the values of freedom of speech, acceptance among people, equality in a society and allow its common citizens to lead a respectful life. In the ancient India, there was also existence of Sabha, samiti and Sansad. We can take reference of the Rigveda and the Atharvaveda texts. In the Ramayana and Mahabharata, the great epics of this land, also talk about involving people in decision making. The Indian democracy is truly a festive proclamation of peace, cooperation and collective strength of the people. India is known as the world's largest democracy and a country rich in diversity and culture. Ever since India attained freedom in 1947 and brought out its Constitution in 1950, it has stood by the principles of liberty, equality, justice, and fraternity. Like many other countries, India too provides universal suffrage with every citizen above the age of 18 eligible to vote. The country is ruled under a parliamentary system within a federation where powers are shared between the Center and the States in a balanced and unified manner.

The Indian multi-party system gives room for regional and ideological political expression and it contributes to

the preservation of equity in elections. Lastly, the Judiciary in India is independent which is able to maintain sovereign order and shield the nation's sacred ethos along with fundamental rights. This is done through the system of checks and balances. Constitutional values such as freedom of speech and press alongside expression enables the citizens to interrogate the government which enhances accountability.

Democracy on a local grassroots level continues to be strengthened due to the 73rd and 74th amendments which empower local self-governing bodies, Panchayati Raj institutions as well as urban local councils. Despite facing challenges like corruption, caste-based politics, and voter apathy, the Indian democratic framework continues to evolve and reform. India not only champions democracy within its borders but also upholds democratic values in its international diplomacy, emerging as a beacon of democratic resilience and participation in the global arena. India's democratic republic journey started with the implementation of the Constitution on 26th January, 1950, when an independent, secular, and democratic country was born. In the 1950s, the concept of democracy was both revolutionary and ambitious for a nation evolving from the heritage of centuries of foreign domination, socio-economic underdevelopment, and entrenched inequality. However, under the able and visionary leadership of Jawaharlal Nehru, Dr. B.R.

Ambedkar, Sardar Patel, and others, India established a robust foundation of parliamentary democracy. During the very first general elections in 1951–52, millions of people most of them voting for the very first time in their lives took part. The system was manual, people were mostly illiterate, but electoral participation and trust in the ballot box left the world in awe.

The 1950s were characterized by the ethos of constitutionalism, respect for dissent, and institution-building. Independent institutions like the Election Commission, the Supreme Court, and the Comptroller and Auditor General were accorded great respect and operated without political interference. Nation-building was the emphasis, and although there were ideological differences, the Parliament saw intellectual debates, policy-oriented discourse, and a collective national commitment to uplift the poor and maintain unity in diversity.

Fast forward to the current era, and Indian democracy has become the biggest and one of the most active democracies in the world with more than 960 million registered voters in the 2024 General Elections and elections being held with Electronic Voting Machines (EVMs) at over 1 million polling stations. Utilization of technology, enhanced logistics, voter education programs, and social media participation has accelerated the process and made it more inclusive. But modern-day Indian democracy is also confronted with some complicated issues. Political polarization,

perpetual questioning of institutions, charges of media bias, and abuse of online platforms have begun to impact the confidence of the common citizen in democratic processes. Opposition parties frequently allege EVM tampering or institutional partiality, which, if not supported by proof, can undermine the legitimacy of electoral mandates and perplex the voter. The constant disruptions in Parliament, personal insults rather than discussions on policy, and governor-state government conflicts in states ruled by the opposition are indications of growing strain in the federal structure.

On the positive side, increased youth, women, and marginalized people's participation is building democratic inclusivity. The recently passed Women's Reservation Bill is a major thrust towards legislative gender balance. Campaigns like Systematic Voters' Education and Electoral Participation (SVEEP) are encouraging first-time voters to become more responsible.

Today, India's democracy is more engaged but also more contentious. The freedom of speech is guaranteed in the constitution, but issues of press freedom, internet censorship, and media bias are still contentious. Social media, as empowering citizens, has also turned out to be a conduit for disinformation and political propaganda. While the 1950s were spent establishing the base of democracy, today is spent preserving, revitalizing, and consolidating it. The ethos of democracy is not merely in polls, but in institutional

faith, citizen participation, accountability, and tolerance for criticism. Indian democracy has endured the test of time paper ballots to electronic surfaces, village panchayats to global leadership. But the burden of guarding its integrity rests today more than ever with aware citizens, responsible leaders, autonomous institutions, and a watchful civil society.

India's parliamentary democracy is itself a beacon of inclusivity, opportunity, and constitutional empowerment. It is here that the son of a tea vendor, Shri Narendra Modi, came to ascend to the position of Prime Minister of India three times, representing that any ordinary citizen can ascend to the very peak of the world's largest democracy. The Indian Constitution does not distinguish on the basis of origin, caste, gender, or background it only selects on the basis of merit, leadership, and popular will. The election of Smt. Draupadi Murmu as the 15th President of India stands as a historic milestone in the journey of Indian democracy. Hailing from a humble tribal background in Odisha's Mayurbhanj district, her rise to the highest constitutional office of the Republic reflects the true power and inclusiveness of Indian democracy. As the first tribal woman and the second woman overall to become President, her life story is a shining example of how the Constitution of India empowers even the most marginalized citizens to occupy the highest positions of authority. Her journey from a small village, overcoming personal hardships, serving as a teacher, social worker,

MLA, and Governor to Rashtrapati Bhavan, is not just inspirational but a testament to India's commitment to social justice, equality, and representation. It sends a powerful message to every Indian, especially young girls and tribal communities, that no dream is too big in a democracy as vibrant and open as India's. In the same vein, Smt. Sonia Gandhi, who was not Indian by origin, gained the overwhelming trust and admiration of Indian citizens, being elected to Parliament several times and even becoming the President of the Indian National Congress for decades. Further, the growing integration of women into Indian politics, be it panchayats or Parliament, is a testament to constitutional devotion to gender parity and representation. From local self-rule to national leadership, India has demonstrated that its democratic structures are not circumscribed by privilege but are enhanced by the voice of all Indians and testifies to the real power and autonomy of its Constitutional structure.

The 2024 Indian General Election once again highlighted the strength and scale of the world's largest democracy. With over 642 million voters participating across all corners of the country, it became the largest democratic exercise in human history. The smooth, peaceful, and technology-driven conduct of this massive electoral process drew admiration globally. Even U.S. President Donald Trump praised India's democratic strength by calling the election "an incredible achievement" and a testament to the "spirit

of the Indian people.” His statement not only acknowledged the magnitude of the event but also emphasized how India has become a global symbol of democratic resilience and efficiency. The Election Commission of India, through transparency and innovation, ensured that every voice was heard reflecting the deep-rooted democratic values enshrined in the Indian Constitution.

In a monumental advancement for gender equality and inclusive governance, the Women's Reservation Bill was approved by the Indian Parliament which will now provide for 33% reservation for females in the Lok Sabha. This decision epitomizes India's constitutional commitment towards women's advancement and their participation in leadership roles. Even more impactful was the unwavering commitment shown by the Parliament towards legislative change, proceeding with sessions even past midnight to also include the Waqf Amendment Bill which sought to provide enhanced transparency and Waqf property management accountability. These midnight deliberations and legislative activities showcase the emphasis placed on responding to the enduring issues in India's democracy. In unison, these actions illustrate the commitment of the Parliament towards social equity alongside institutional change and encourage progressive governance highlighting not just the essence but the obligation of democracy in India.

India's resilient democracy is also augmented by the open and institutional method adopted in selecting central constitutional offices like the CBI Director, Chief Election Commissioner (CEC), and Election Commissioners. Such appointments are now made by high-level committees consisting of the Prime Minister, the Central minister and the Leader of Opposition, making these non-partisan, merit-based, and open selections. This process not only maintains democratic ethics but also sustains public confidence in essential institutions. This is a notable shift from earlier practices where appointments, especially of the CEC, were often seen as being made solely at the discretion of the ruling party. In the past, such decisions even led to controversies—for instance, there have been cases where former Chief Election Commissioners, soon after retirement, contested elections or were given political postings, raising questions about the neutrality and independence of the office. These concerns prompted public debate and judicial scrutiny, ultimately resulting in a more transparent and accountable selection process. This evolution showcases India's commitment to institutional integrity, where democratic systems are constantly refined to uphold the spirit of the Constitution and public trust. Moreover, India's Supreme Court has been instrumental in securing federal values and constitutional propriety. In its recent statement, the Court held that the President of India has to act reasonably within time while giving assent to bills tabled by the legislature so that the elected

representatives' will is not held up indefinitely. Further, the judiciary also stepped in various times to settle growing disputes between State Governments and Governors to reiterate the point that Governors are constitutional heads, not political arbiters. These changes highlight the checks and balance inherent in the Indian system, illustrating how democratic institutions are constantly evolving with accountability, transparency, and constitutional morality as their foundation.

The Emergency in India between 1975 and 1977 is one of the country's most important and contentious phases in the history of democracy. On June 25, 1975, then Prime Minister Indira Gandhi announced a national Emergency under Article 352 on the grounds of internal disturbances. This was followed by 21 months of repressed civil rights, censored press freedom, random arrests of opposition figures, and politicization of institutions such as the judiciary and bureaucracy. Basic rights were suspended, dissent stifled, and elections delayed reducing the world's largest democracy to a quasi-authoritarian regime. The government embarked upon campaigns of forced sterilization and evictions in the interests of discipline and development, which generated immense public resentment. These black days of Indian democracy remind us of how power, when unhindered, can supplant constitutional values. Yet in 1977, Indians answered back with the strength of the ballot, democratically voting out of office the

governing regime in a historic general election demonstrating that the essence of democracy is indeed the will of the people. The Emergency period is today examined as both a lesson and a warning, to ensure that this concentration of power never happens again in a free and democratic India.

India's democratic journey continues to evolve with bold reforms and deep respect for constitutional values. The proposal of "One Nation, One Election" aims to bring efficiency, continuity in governance, and reduced election expenditure by synchronizing elections across the country a step towards electoral stability and policy consistency. In a symbolic and structural stride, the government inaugurated the New Parliament Building in 2023, blending modern facilities with cultural heritage, and marking a new era in legislative functioning while reinforcing the sanctity of the Constitution. Alongside institutional development, there has been a strong push towards youth voter awareness, with campaigns led by the Election Commission and civil society encouraging first-time voters (yuva shakti) to actively participate in shaping the nation's future. These efforts, taken together, reflect the government's firm commitment to constitutionalism, democratic reforms, and ensuring that India's next generation becomes both a guardian and a beneficiary of its democratic legacy.

From the historic ramparts of the Red Fort, Prime Minister Narendra Modi has often highlighted the

strength, inclusiveness, and resilience of Indian democracy. In one of his statements, he said:

"India is not just the world's largest democracy, but the mother of democracy. Our nation is a living example of democratic traditions that go back thousands of years. Here, diversity is not a weakness, but the foundation of our unity."

In India, the persistent narrative by certain opposition figures calls into question the credibility of Electronic Voting Machines (EVMs), especially following losses in elections. While democracy thrives on criticism and transparency, EVMs in particular, and technology in general, can only be scrutinized if there is credible evidence to back claims. Such rhetoric, when echoed continuously, creates confusion among the masses and undermines the spirit of free and fair elections, a cornerstone of our Constitutional democracy. At the same time, there are growing concerns regarding the freedom of expression and neutrality of media outlets. As much as the media has an obligation to report accurately, the rising tide of political polarization coupled with selective reporting creates toxic public discourse that is devoid of reason, led by ideology. This alters the public perception of journalism, impeding not only trust but also the healthy interchange and dialogue that is a prerequisite in any democracy. An accountable Opposition, a balanced yet free media, and well-informed citizens are the true defenders of democracy

in India. The absence of any one group risks endangering the constitutional framework.

One of the greatest pillars of Indian democracy is its independent judiciary, which stands as a guardian of the Constitution, the protector of fundamental rights, and a check on the excesses of the legislature and executive. Over the years, the judiciary has played a vital role in upholding justice, equality, and the rule of law, even during the most turbulent phases of Indian politics. However, while the judiciary remains a beacon of hope, the conduct of many elected representatives and political leaders across the country has been a cause for concern. From hate speeches, corruption, use of abusive language in public forums, to violent behaviour and criminal backgrounds, such actions not only violate democratic ethics but deeply hurt the conscience of the people who place their trust in these leaders. When those entrusted with the responsibility of lawmaking themselves disrespect the law, dignity, and public decency, it sends a troubling message to society especially to the youth. This growing disconnect between constitutional values and political behaviour tarnishes the very spirit of democracy. In such times, the judiciary becomes the last line of defence, reminding the nation that no one is above the law and that accountability must prevail. It is essential that political leaders lead by example, upholding the morality, humility, and service-mindedness that democracy demands because when they fail, it is not

just rules that are broken, but the faith of the people in the system.

India's democracy is a living, growing, and strong system that continues to be a source of inspiration for the world. Starting with the then-manual paper ballots in the 1950s to the arrival of Electronic Voting Machines (EVMs) and now moving on to mobile-based e-voting pilots in states such as Bihar, India has consistently embraced technological innovations to make the election process more inclusive, accessible, and transparent. The recent experiments of e-voting via smartphones in Bihar to assist migrants and far-off citizens in casting their votes are evidence of India's will to leave no voter behind.

Through difficulties such as political polarization, institutional disillusionment, and irresponsible action by some elected members, the resilience of Indian democracy rests in its robust institutions, its autonomous judiciary, and most importantly, its engaged and vigilant citizenry. From tribal women such as President Draupadi Murmu ascending to the highest constitutional office, to young people's movements and online participation, each segment of society continues to contribute towards the shaping of India's democratic trajectory.

A nation governed by the Constitution – India, the Great!

In the world at large, India is not only the largest democracy, but also a moral leader of democratic ideals, consistently supporting democratic change and citizens' rights all over the world. While India moves towards a Viksit Bharat, democracy will continue to be its firmest pillar. The true strength of democracy is in participation, accountability, and public trust and as long as these values are respected, India's future as a democracy will keep on shining brightly across the globe.

Chapter-5

Digital Transformation; Impact On Society

India has experienced several phases, with multiple narratives always being an intrinsic part of this land. In this 21st century digital transformation has reshaped societies across globe. Now India is the world's largest digitally connected country with 83 crores + internet users. Since 2014, digital transformation has accelerated at an unprecedented pace, fundamentally altering the fabric of modern society. This period has witnessed profound changes across multiple sectors from business and healthcare to education, governance and social interaction. From a village shopkeeper to a great businessman all are connected digitally. Prime Minister's vision for making Digital India for every corner people improved connectivity and Technological capability. India's digital journey began modestly in the late 20th century with the introduction of computers and basic telecom services. However, the true transformation unfolded in the 21st century with the Digital India mission launched in 2015. The spread of affordable smartphones and high-speed internet, especially through Jio's revolution, brought connectivity to the masses. Landmark initiatives like Aadhaar, UPI, DigiLocker, and e-governance portals

have empowered citizens with digital identity, seamless payments, and efficient services. Rural areas are now digitally connected, enabling education, banking, and telemedicine across the country. The success of India's digital infrastructure has become a global model for inclusive growth, bridging the urban-rural divide. Today, India stands at the forefront of digital innovation, transforming governance, economy, and society in unprecedented ways

In this Amrit kaal period, the government's clarion call is for adoption of next generation reforms by bridging gap between government and citizen through Digital technology. Crores of Indians hope for a better future with decent standard of living. To meet their aspirations Government of India initiates many Abhiyan or programs which increases the digital access and inclusivity. The One of the most notable impacts has been on how we communicate now a days, The rise of remote work, E-commerce like Flipkart, Amazon and online collaboration platforms like Zoom and google meet has transformed workplaces but also introducing challenges around work life balance and cyber security. During Covid-19 pandemic, the majority of students, readers has learnt lessons from online platforms (Zoom and Google meet). Not only in education but also in healthcare, digitalization has fueled the growth of telemedicine, making services more accessible. The government's vision of digital India focused on utility

to every citizen, good governance and timely service on Demand and Digital empowerment of citizens.

Digital India program has no limit.

It aims to touch every corner of villages and small cities in India. PMGDSA – Pradhan Mantri Gramin Digital Saksharta Abhiyan (2017) is prompting digital literacy in rural areas. The PMGDSA has resulted in improved accessibility, connectivity and affordability Pan India. It has trained almost 6 crore candidate and certified more than 4 crore students in digital literacy. It is the world's largest digital literacy program under which approx. 7 crore candidates have been registered. Bharat Net, one of the biggest rural telecom projects of the world, aims to connect Gram Panchayats with broadband. As per data, more than 1 lakh Gram panchayats connected with optical fiber under Bharat Net program, in which Wi-Fi access points installed in over 1 lakh gram panchayat by 2021 which is remarkable achievement especially for rural areas. PM-WANI scheme aims at encouraging technology solutions triggering "Make in India". It increases proliferation of internet services with 44334 access points deployed by public Data office aggregators. PLI scheme (2021) for an Atma Nirbhar Bharat facility in making India a global hub of manufacturing telecom equipment. Under Telecom development plan for Islands foundation stone for submarine, optical fiber cable connectivity between Chennai and Andaman Nicobar Islands (2312 Km) laid. Along with Submarine

optical fiber between Kochi and Lakshadweep Islands (189 Km) being implemented with 100 GB per seconds bandwidth. Under Renewed focus on North-east scheme ,1358 towers constructed and 1528 villages with mobile services covered. It shows from East to West, North to South every part of India has transformed digitally. The government aims to take connectivity to the last miles with purpose of 'Reaching the Unreached'. At the core of this transformation the integration of digital technologies such as artificial intelligence (AI), big data, cloud computing into all areas and life fundamentally altering our work and livelihood. In a recent conversation between PM Modi and Bill Gates emphasized on advantages and disadvantages of digital technology. PM Modi's One of suggestion to manage AI tools that is to place watermark in AI generated thing, where no one can be confused between reality and expectations.

By National Digital communication Policy (2018) and National Broad band Mission, High quality broadband for every citizen by affordable digital communications, infrastructure and services provided. During Covid-19 pandemic, Digital India plays a vital role to connect people for providing reliefs alert system for Covid positive person to move quarantine, online booking for vaccination. Through Cowin and Arogya Setu & Ayush Sanjivani application people got the services related to Covid-19. To revolutionizing Indian agriculture National Agriculture market (e-NAM) networks the

existing APMC mandis to create a national market for agricultural communities. - e NAM covers 1000 APMC markets. 'KISAN RATH' mobile app launched to improve digital access to logistic services. For Faceless assessment scheme, no need to visit IT office for tax payer and Under Faceless appeal scheme (2019) appeal proceedings conducted in electronic mode. Domestic production of electronic goods increased at a compound growth rate of 23%. Digital signature certificate migrated to complete electronic mode reducing issuance time. It helps to issue marksheet and degree certificate in board, college and university. Over 166 crore e-way bills generated since 2018. E-invoicing system expanded to the taxpayers with turnover of 1000 crores. In recent years India has seen unprecedented growth in Digital payment transaction. UPI is the best Project of the decade. India ranked first in digital payment transaction globally in 2020. In FY-2020, 5475 crores transaction have done. Recently many foreign dignitaries used this in India, praised it especially in G20 time. In UMANG app 1.64 crore transactions made. Now Aadhar card linked to bank for which the government spends money through Direct Bank Transfer (DBT) to beneficiaries account. Using Online Reservation System (ORS) We can take appointment from Hospitals. 19.62 crore OPD/Lab registrations completed by using e-hospital.

6.6 crores citizens issued their certificate from Digi locker eliminating the need for carrying physical

documents. The common service center (CSC) One of the Crucial enablers of Digital India Program and a key point for delivery of various electronic services to villages providing Aadhar, government certificate etc. now increased from 83,950 (2014) to 3,74,000 (2021). Another technological achievement has done in NAMO app where any person picture with Hon. PM Modi, make available in App within seconds by giving a selfie. If only 10 percent of a person's photos appear with PM MODI, then that too becomes available.

In Judiciary, to improve justice system especially during pandemic E-lok Adalat introduced which is cost effective and saves time. 56 E-lok Adalat have been organized in 24 states since June 2020. 18,735 courts have now been computerized as compared to 13,672 courts in 2014. National service and tracking of electronic processes launched in 2019 for serving and issuing summons through GPS enabled device. 235 e-sewa kendras was founded in 2020 for being rolled out in District and high courts. Multilingual and disabled friendly e-courts portal records about 35 lakh hits daily. E-courts services portal has recorded more than 338 crore transaction in last one year. E-court mobile app made available from 2017 has registered 58.15 lakh (Now) downloads. Over 18 crore emails, 9 crore autogenerated SMS on case information sent till date. On the theme of Digital India, Atma Nirbhar India; Digital infrastructure for knowledge sharing (DIKSHA) enables learning in 30+ languages. Crores learning

sessions have been delivered through DIKSHA. It is a platform for school education Under PM e-vidya program and Atma Nirbhar Bharat initiative. Indian Post which connects every corner of the country, networked postal system in the world. India post citizens portal hits 1 crore every day. Over 51.81 crore transactions carried out on Darpan devices. Introducing LED micro manufacturing unit through CSC which is increasing energy efficiency and longer life. CSC LED bulbs are free of any chemical which can be hazardous for environment or public health.

Anita Bageria, A Digi pay Sakhi is taking banking to the doorsteps of citizens in far flung villages in Bhind, Madhya Pradesh. She is helping women from marginalized communities to withdraw cash through Aadhar authentication via Digi pay. As today, in this Amrit kaal period, the citizens of India digitally empowered almost in every sector. The question is what amount of work has been done till today. So, I am thrilled to describe that thing, in digital India 138.33 crore Aadhar card generated, 715 on Boarded e-hospital introduced, 673 crore Document issued through Digi locker, 9.07 crore Applications received for E-Scholarship, 5.89 lakh common service Centre, 483.93 lakh my gov users, 6.71 crore UMANG users, 7.42 crore registered beneficiaries for Digital literacy and so on. 1851 e-meghraj established, Swayam portal (2017) is a platform providing educational opportunities for a vast number of learners. It creates ecosystem that

supports professionals and career development for learners, course providers, industry and academia. The internet subscription increased by 150% in India in 2019-21, There are 95.76 million internet subscribers in Rural area followed by 92.81 million subscribers in urban area which emphasizes the digital penetration. Under Aspirational district scheme, telecom development plan, nationwide establishment of common service Centre and E-health sector improved ease of living and enhance the accessibility, inclusivity in Pan India. From online booking, virtual tour to online content creation is driving revolution which bring the world to our fingertips reshaping how we connect, create and experience. National electronic toll collection is a corner stone of digital innovation, streamlining travel with contactless payments, reducing congestion, and making journeys faster, smarter and more efficient across the nation.

The most popular Digital transformation is introducing unified payment scheme (UPI). It is seamless and convenient way of digital transaction with high security. The UPI transactions expected to reach one billion per day by 2025. In 2022 India has highest digital transaction per day i.e. 89.5 million followed by Brazil, China and Thailand. After Introducing UPI in 2016, which is one of the revolutionary products of India. Now it is popular among globe. From street vendors to showroom owner, the phenomenal adoption of UPI is remarkable. In 2022 PM Narendra Modi

emphasized the success story of UPI in his speech i.e. “UPI has taken India’s financial inclusion to new heights. 40% real time digital payments happen only in India.”

In 2023, India launched cross border connectivity between UPI. Another nation like Singapore, Bhutan, Nepal, Australia now been adopted UPI. As like UPI in India, The Singapore has named “Pay Now” equivalent to this. UPI hailed in G20 among foreign dignitaries.

One of the G20 delegate from Saudi Arab, Rasha Khali praises after purchasing dress using UPI; she added “I am not even surprised because India as the pioneer of Digital technology. This is so amazing because I have no card or cash now to purchase.”

E-Rupee voucher, DBT helps to become more effective for digital transaction. Digitally Data Development is the overall theme of one earth, one family, one future during India’s G20 presidency. On the occasion of Digital Data protection bill – 2023, Minister Ashwini Vaishnav delves the protection of data technology and said, “We wanted entire bill to be drafter in a way which is technology agnostic, it should be able to stand the progress of technology without acquiring Amendment again and again when new technology comes”.

The world bank president Shri Ajay Banga said, “India is digitalizing infrastructure and I am a big fan of this and I am more optimistic today about India.”

Now Digital India is a landmark legislation to safeguard India's future. It will enable the flow of global tech-based investment making a key sector for becoming India a 5 trillion-dollar economy. If anyone questioned, what do you do online? The answer is, people are educating themselves, connecting loved ones, creating and sharing videos through online platforms. For example – In India, the homemaker who shares cooking videos through social media; Nisha Madhulika who has millions of followers on YouTube making vegetarian recipes. Another one is a truck driver, who usually travels from one state to another, He shared many cooking videos through YouTube. His channel 'R Rajesh Vlogs' consists of millions of followers. One water retailer started business online from Chandigarh and now it is spread over India. These stories are not unique and happen every day in India. India has thousands of start-ups, also a fastest startup growing nation by many metrics. Companies like Flipkart, Zomato, Snapdeal are the evidence of happening all around us. This is not an India's success story, it is a global success story as they create thousands of jobs. We don't need to look at the calendar to know whose birthday it is, we can just find out by opening Instagram, WhatsApp or other social media platforms. Computing and connecting is the foundation of digital India, we have two large platforms today i.e. Chrome and Android. The Android revolution penetrated to purchase smartphones. To push digital literacy forward it's really important for people to be able to

type in keyboard in their native language. Now more than 10 Indian languages have been introduced for smooth using and sending messages especially in rural areas.

The CEO of google Sundar Pichai said on Digital India – “PM Modi understands that technology is an enabler to drive charge of a massive scale that India needs. India is the fastest growing country in the world at which it’s adding internet.”

Giving access and information to people is the core mission of GOOGLE. Hence it also plays a key role in Digital India which has now Indian origin CEO. Undoubtedly India has innovative spirit that lies in her DNA and it’s doing great things.

In order to take the digital India forward, the PM Modi interacted with many stakeholders who have benefitted from it and took stock of their experiences and benefits.

Ms. Suhani Shahu from Uttar Pradesh got benefit from DIKSHA scheme in COVID-19 days. They express gratitude to government after certified in many courses from DIKSHA portal. *Pahlad Borghad* from Maharashtra got benefit under E-NAM scheme where he described that it enhanced ease of living, cost effective, fast payment process, Auctions have done transparency. No need to go to mandi for farmers. They worked online in PAN India. Under Digi bunai scheme, *Varanasi’s Ms. Anupama Dubey* designed so many products which helps her economically strong and

socially respectful. It proves to be a boon for the Handloom community. Under one nation and one ration card, Shri Hari Ram a taxi driver from Dehradun who originally belongs to UP's Hardoi got benefit from this scheme. This system empowers around more than 50 crore beneficiaries particularly migratory beneficiaries/households. The inter states portability enabling of this scheme. Shubham Kumar from Bihar got benefitted from E-Sanjivani online OPD seva where he used the consultation service from Doctor in Lucknow for his grandmother. This scheme aims to provide healthcare services to patients in their homes. This is the first time the government of a country is offering a service of this kind to its citizen. CSC Gramen E-store is a revolutionary e-commerce enterprise that reaches world class products in rural areas of India which covers 10,000 pin codes in India. The PM Swanidhi scheme provides affordable loans to street vendors under Atma Nirbhar Bharat Abhiyan across various areas. The Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision of minimum government and maximum governance reduces the gap between citizens and government. IMF also lauds India's Digital transformation.

While Digital India mission strives to connect rural areas with high-speed internet it faces several challenges hindering its progress. Shortage of skilled manpower with adequately trained professions in Digital technology posing significant challenges with

proliferation of digital platforms and transactions there is a pressing need for cyber security experts to combat the growing menace of digital crimes. Addressing these challenges is crucial for the successful implementation and sustainability of the digital India mission requiring concerted efforts from government agencies, industry stakeholders and educational institutions to overcome barriers and ensure inclusive digital empowerment for all citizens. However, digital transformation poses significant challenges. As access technology widens the gap between those with digital literacy and those without, societies must navigate ethical and regulatory frameworks to ensure that the benefits of digitalization are shared equally.

Chapter-6

Public Diplomacy & Global Cooperation

Public diplomacy, in the 21st century, has developed as a crucial instrument of influencing international relations by creating mutual understanding, dialogue, and exchange of cultures between nations. Contrary to mainstream diplomacy, which works through official state channels, public diplomacy reaches out to the people directly; shaping perceptions, developing trust, and creating long-term relationships. In this context, Bharat, as the world knows her, India, has had a unique and significant contribution. Foreign Policy by its very nature is all about the world out there. If we consider a nation like a person then we must consider Foreign Policy to be the manner in which a person negotiates with surroundings around. Therefore, every person has some objectives and aspirations which he wants to fulfill within a network of relationships (family and friends, rivals and enemies, etc.).

The word 'Bharat' is rooted in Sanskrit word, derived from the name of the ancient king Bharata, and also interpreted as "Bha" meaning knowledge and light, and "Rat" meaning devoted symbolizing a land devoted to knowledge and enlightenment. This rich etymology

reflects India's civilizational identity of peace, wisdom, and unity. Being the largest democracy in the world and a country that has never sought to invade another nation in more than 10,000 years of history, India's vision of international collaboration is based on non-violence (Ahimsa), respect for others, and harmony.

India's foreign policy is quite rooted in Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam, a Sanskrit expression from the Maha Upanishad translating as "the world is one family." This concept not only summarizes India's cultural and spiritual ethos but also best aligns with the essential values of international cooperation. Bharat's public diplomacy model, therefore, focuses on people-to-people interaction, cultural outreach, humanitarian aid, and inclusive dialogue.

One of the signature features of India's public diplomacy is the "Atithi Devo Bhava" guest is like God philosophy. Not only has this influenced India's tourism diplomacy all over the world, but it also symbolizes its age-old tradition of hospitality, inclusiveness, and respect. From yoga diplomacy to Ayurveda, classical dance and music, literature, and cinematic narrative, India extends its soft power as a bridge for civilizational connection.

India's rise peacefully in international relations is characterized by its proactive role in multilateral organizations such as the G20, BRICS, SCO, and the United Nations, where it tirelessly promotes fair

development, climate justice, and cooperation. Through efforts such as the International Solar Alliance, Vaccine Maitri, and sharing of Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI), India has become a responsible international partner, providing scalable and sustainable solutions.

In addition, India's diaspora, present in 200+ nations, serves as cultural envoys and deepens India's public diplomacy through people-to-people contact, academic high performance, and innovation. From support in times of crises to representing the voice of the Global South, India's contributions are now increasingly based on a vision for shared prosperity, global harmony, and inclusive development.

Bharat's own method of public diplomacy is not only strategic but profoundly civilizational. It is infused with the ethos of Dharmic values, global justice, and universal brotherhood. In an age where the world is in a multipolar moment of uncertainty and possibility, India's non-violent nature, cultural richness, and cooperative leadership represent a timelessly effective and transformative paradigm for international cooperation.

At the center of this engagement was the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA), which efficiently managed India's strategic engagements, emphasizing reform of multilateral institutions, strengthening the Global South, and support for a rules-based international order. India actively participated in multilateral platforms

such as the G20, G7, BRICS, Quad, SCO, and the United Nations. As the previous G20 President, India played an important role in setting Brazil's 2024 agenda social inclusion, transition to energy, and institution building while retaining robust cooperation in IBSA and Troika formats. India's leadership was appreciated for fostering development-oriented, people-centered dialogues during the G20 Summit in Rio de Janeiro.

India's leadership was also seen at the 3rd Voice of Global South Summit, where 173 leaders from 123 nations, including 21 Heads of State, attended. Prime Minister Modi introduced a "Global Development Compact" that would include trade, building capacity, technology, and funding. This was India's obvious commitment to narrowing gaps between developing and developed nations. Equally, during the G7 Outreach Session in Italy, India stressed a human-oriented strategy for AI, promoted "AI for All," and reaffirmed its participation in making the African Union a permanent G20 member.

India's diplomatic and humanitarian reputation as a "first responder" continued to increase through critical Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR) operations. Operation Indravati brought back Indians from Haiti, and the sad repatriation of 45 mortal remains of Indians from Kuwait and relief to Myanmar following Typhoon Yagi were executed with discretion. Medicines and materials were sent to Syria and Palestine among others. Nine sailors were also rescued

from a sea disaster off Oman, with evident display of operational preparedness and empathy.

Bilateral relations were elevated appreciably in 2024. Strategic and overall strategic partnerships were formed or raised with countries such as Singapore, Malaysia, Kuwait, and Poland. At the top level, visits were made to more than 15 countries, including historic visits to Austria (first visit in 40 years), Ukraine (first ever), and Kuwait (first visit in 43 years). Awards like the Order of Saint Andrew the Apostle (Russia), Order of Mubarak Al Kabeer (Kuwait), and Grand Commander of the Order of Niger reflected widespread international appreciation for India's diplomacy.

The International Solar Alliance (ISA) grew as a member inducts fresh ones, a demonstration of India's climate diplomacy leadership. Humanitarian support to Syria, Palestine, and other strife-torn areas was stepped up. India's proactive impulses were even extended to security, engaging in counter-terror discussions and meeting Financial Action Task Force (FATF) norms for anti-money laundering and terror financing.

India pursued steady interaction with other leading world powers the US, Russia, EU, China, and Japan via bilateral visits, strategic dialogues, and defense cooperation, such as the Ice-T dialogue with the US and enhanced trade with Russia. India also placed a premium on multilateralism through engagement in the

BRICS, SCO, and Quad summits, promoting digital, health, and infrastructure cooperation.

Particular emphasis was given to India's neighborhood according to the Neighborhood First and SAGAR (Security and Growth for All in the Region) policies. Bhutan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Nepal, Maldives, and Myanmar were strengthened with ties through high-level visits, development schemes, cross-border infrastructure, and humanitarian assistance. For instance, the Gyaltsuen Jetsun Pema Wangchuck Mother and Child Hospital in Bhutan and cross-border rail connectivity with Bangladesh are recent examples of region-led development by India.

The revival of Nalanda University was a symbolic return of India to its ancient position of being a world center of knowledge and ideas, echoing the values of international cooperation and public diplomacy. India's diaspora, its soft power in the form of yoga, Ayurveda, and cinema, and its concept of Atithi Devo Bhava (Guest is God) remain the cornerstones of public diplomacy tools.

One of the best proofs of India's dedication to international cooperation was its exemplary role in the COVID-19 pandemic. While the entire world fought a health crisis like never before, India reached out not only to its nationals, but to humanity as a whole. With the foresightful leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, India initiated "Vaccine Maitri", a vaccine

diplomacy program that distributed more than 200 million doses of life-saving vaccines to 100+ nations, including those from Asia, Africa, Latin America, and the Caribbean. By providing Covishield and Covaxin to countries such as Nepal, Bangladesh, Brazil, and South Africa, India continued the ancient belief that "the world is one family" Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam.

"India's culture imparts to us: the entire world is one family. We will live for others, we will battle for others, and if necessary, we will lay down our lives for others."

- PM Narendra Modi, UNGA, 2021

Prime Minister Narendra Modi has been awarded numerous of the highest civilian honors by other nations, indicative of international acclaim for his leadership. He was awarded Russia's Order of St. Andrew the Apostle, Bhutan's Order of the Druk Gyalpo, France's Grand Cross of the Legion of Honour, and Egypt's Order of the Nile. In 2024 alone, countries such as Nigeria, Dominica, Barbados, and Guyana awarded him their highest national orders. Mauritius, Sri Lanka, and Cyprus also awarded him their highest civilian decorations in 2025. These honours highlight India's rising global influence and Modi's role in strengthening international partnerships.

Operation Sindoor, carried out in May 2025 by India, was one of the most important and powerful military responses against terrorism in recent years. This action was initiated following a brutal terror strike in

Pahalgam, Jammu and Kashmir, in which 26 innocent civilians were killed. The terrorists were backed by Pakistani-based groups. India, in turn, struck nine large terror camps in Pakistan and Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (Pok) in a 25-minute high-precision airstrike. The operation targeted terrorist infrastructure in locations such as Bahawalpur, Muzaffarabad, Kotli, and Sialkot and even killed high-value terrorists.

The title 'Sindoor' was symbolic it described the vermilion that married Indian women wore, symbolizing the loss of husbands in the Pahalgam attack, and demonstrated India's determination to ensuring justice. But Operation Sindoor was not merely an airstrike. The Government of India also initiated a diplomatic campaign to highlight Pakistan's support for terrorism. Indian Members of Parliament (MPs) and ambassadors were dispatched to over 30 nations to elucidate how Pakistan was covertly aiding terrorist organizations while appearing to be a tranquil country. These leaders provided evidence to international bodies and foreign nations on how terror training camps were being funded and trained in Pakistan.

Most nations such as the France, Japan, the UAE, and the UK stood by India's position and agreed on its self-defense right. Some even addressed global forums like the UN in favor of India. Pakistan, on the other hand, was found spreading misinformation, attempting to conceal the extent of harm inflicted by Indian attacks, but satellite images and media surveillance unveiled the

truth. Pakistan also surreptitiously requested a ceasefire following the strikes, which revealed that it was not ready for India's robust reaction.

To ensure such attacks do not recur, India is now updating its defense forces, enhancing surveillance with 52 defense satellites by 2029, bolstering its navy and air force, and equipping security forces with more advanced technology. This action also enhanced India's reputation in the world as a peace-loving yet powerful nation that acts when necessary, and refuses to accept terrorism. In general, Operation Sindoor proved that India is a peace-loving nation but, if attacked, it knows how to fight for its citizens with valor, planning, and global backing.

India has gained worldwide appreciation for its rapid and humane evacuation operations, demonstrating the nation's intention to safeguard its citizens anywhere on the globe. From Operation Raahat in 2015, which rescued over 4,700 Indians and 900 foreigners from war-torn Yemen, to Operation Vande Bharat and Samudra Setu during the COVID-19 pandemic, where over 60 lakh Indians were brought home from across the globe, India has consistently shown its humanitarian leadership. In 2022, Operation Ganga evacuated more than 22,000 Indian students from Ukraine during the Russia-Ukraine war. Likewise, Operation Kaveri (2023) facilitated the evacuation of almost 4,000 Indians and others from Sudan during civil disturbances, while Operation Devi Shakti in 2021

evacuated Indians and Afghan minorities during the Taliban's occupation of Afghanistan. Operation Indravati recently evacuated Indian citizens from the blood-soaked streets of Haiti. All these operations, carried out by the Indian Air Force, Navy, and diplomatic staff, demonstrate the confidence Indians have in their government. India operated Operation Sindhu, a massive evacuation of Indian citizens from war zones in Iran and Israel after the Iran–Israel war broke out, in June 2025. Between June 18 and 24, more than 3,170 Indians were evacuated safely through 19 special flights, three of which were flown by the Indian Air Force. In the spirit of regional fraternity, India also repatriated Sri Lankan and Nepali nationals stuck in Iran following official requests from their governments, demonstrating humanitarian diplomacy beyond Indians themselves. The ethos behind such operations was aptly described by late External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj, who once proclaimed, "Even if Indians get stuck on Mars, the Indian Embassy there will help them". This attitude is still defining India's activist and human-centered foreign policy strategy based on the philosophy of "Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam" the world is one family.

The basic connotation and the implications of foreign policy on a country has been changing with every passing generation. India had maintained its foreign relations with other countries since time immemorial. Though the way foreign policy is pursued in the

contemporary times was not the same during the ancient period. Trade formed a major element of foreign policy during the ancient times. During the era of Indus Valley Civilization also many objects and coins can be traced to the foreign land. This is testament to the robust trade that India had pursued since the Harappan times. Our history is replete with examples where the Indian rulers have established diplomatic relations with foreign rulers and had sent their ambassadors to those countries. In Ramayana, Lord Rama sent Hanuman and Angada as his ambassador to Ravana. In Mahabharata, Lord Krishna himself became the envoy of the Pandavas and negotiated of their behalf with the

Kauravas. In the court of Chandragupta Maurya, Megasthenes was the Greek ambassador and also wrote a book named Indika. In the court of King Bindusara, Delmachos was sent as an ambassador by then king of Syria and Dinyosus was sent as an Ambassador by King Ptolemy of Egypt. Ashoka sent his daughter Sanghamitra and son Mahindra to Ceylon to spread the message of Buddhism. The Chola Empire had a dynamic and robust foreign policy. The Chola period was a time of amalgamation of navy, diplomacy and trade. At its peak, the empire extended its control over modern day Sri Lanka, Thailand, Malaysia, Indonesia. The advent of the Islamic rulers brought a marked change in the way; the foreign policy was pursued. Most of the Islamic intruders who came to rule India happened to be raiders whose objective was the loot the

resources of India to fill their assets. While the Indian rulers who ruled charted their foreign policy with an aim to benefit the local population. Whereas the Islamic rulers happened to be extremely hostile to the native population. They oppressed the native population and tried to destroy their culture. They tried to impose a lot of restrictions on the local population. The primary objective of those who formed part of Delhi Sultanate and Mughal empire conducted their foreign relations with an objective of further strengthening their empire. The narrow-minded policies being pursued by Aurangzeb and later by his successors, who were indulged in long domestic conflict with their own kinsmen left the western border very vulnerable to foreign attack. After the British colonized India, foreign policy was not conducted according to the needs and benefits of the native population. Indians produced the world-famous handicrafts that were in great demand in the foreign markets. The Britishers destroyed the handicrafts industry and imposed trade restrictions on the Indians to trade with foreign countries without prior approval from them. During the British rule, foreign policy was pursued to serve the needs of their mother country Britain. They transformed India as source to provide raw materials and a destination of British finished goods.

There was a terrorist attack on the Indian Parliament in the year 2001 and there was also a military standoff with Pakistan. This was also distributed with

accordingly. The tenure of Dr Manmohan Singh witnessed the signing of the Civil Nuclear Deal in 2005 with United States of America. His tenure was also witness to the deadly terrorist attacks that took rocked the financial capital of India, Mumbai. The inability on part of the government to react militarily against Pakistan gained further criticism within the country. This inability to deal with Pakistan backed terrorism led to further terrorist attacks in Kashmir valley and also a series on bomb blasts rocked the country. The advent of Narendra Modi as the Prime Minister of India led to a perceptible change in the way foreign relation was conducted. At the very outset, the government made it very clear that it prioritized its neighbouring countries. It launched the Look East policy to specifically focus on the eastern neighbours of India. The Indian Ocean region which was considered as the nautical backyard for our country was neglected by the previous government, this approach led to a vacuum that an assertive China took advantage of, it tried to increase its influence in the region. The Narendra Modi government increased its focus on the IOR region by engaging with countries associated with this region. Fast – Track diplomacy was noticeable feature of this government. This referred to a system under which diplomacy will be done in a swift manner. The government launched Para- Diplomacy under which each state and cities would encourage to establish a link with other city or province of another country on the basis of culture and history.

In conclusion, India's changing role in global cooperation and public diplomacy underscores its unique cultural alchemy of ancient civilizational philosophies and modern strategic imagination. Underpinned by the eternal philosophy of "Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam" India has at all times demonstrated that diplomacy is not government-to-government but people-to-people. Through its humanitarian interventions, as well as through vaccine outreach under Vaccine Maitri, India has shown its ability to be a reliable and responsive global partner. Its response in crises whether in Ukraine, Sudan, Afghanistan, or Iran betrays not only logistical ability but moral leadership. India has also demonstrated to the world that its public diplomacy is not confined to its frontiers, providing assistance to neighbouring citizens from Sri Lanka, Nepal, and others, without any reciprocation expected.

India's growing acceptability through global civilian awards bestowed upon Prime Minister Narendra Modi represents a wider acceptability of India's peaceful emergence and cooperative nature. With a strong mix of cultural diplomacy, strategic engagement, people-to-people connections, and technological innovation, the global influence of India is expanding further.

The path forward entails further deepening this model by:

- Fostering deeper regional cooperation through South-South engagement and Global South platforms.

- Advocating for education, health, and climate diplomacy as the central pillars of foreign engagement.
- Using digital platforms, diaspora communities, and youth exchanges to strengthen people-focused relationships.
- Remaining a voice for peace, stability, and sustainable development in multilateral forums such as G20, BRICS, and the United Nations.

With the world unfolding in uncertainty, India's trust-based, truth-led, and tradition-based public diplomacy can be used as a world model of positive and empathetic engagement. Through sustained effort, India is not just creating opportunities for bridge-building between countries but also offering a vision of a shared responsibility and worldly harmony future.

Chapter-7

Enhancing Livelihood

Rural development is an integral part of enhancing livelihood. It has always been at the core of India's progress, given that nearly 65% of the country's population still resides in rural area. In this decade India's approach to rural development underwent a significant transformation with the government focusing on bridging gap between rural and urban areas through targeted schemes, technological integration and infrastructure development. India is a country of contrasts, where rapid economic growth co-exists with persistent poverty and social problems. The rural areas are undergoing significant changes in terms of living standards, education, health, and environment. The goal has been not just to improve agricultural productivity but to elevate the overall quality of life in rural regions by addressing related issues. Even today the soul of the country resides in the villages. It is not hidden from anyone how much havoc slavery had wreaked on the village farmers. Then the country broke chain of slavery by rating it. India the union of states is known by its villages. As two-thirds of the people of India live in the rural areas, which shows that no matter how much modernization happens, villagers don't want to leave the village where they are connected with the soil,

water, air, and people. That is why instead of going in other direction we should think about how to provide facilities to the people living in the villages itself so that their standard of living can improve and they can also become competent in employment. In this decades the government has tried hard to take rural development to a higher place and especially the farmers of the villages can also become self-reliant. Many historic schemes have been implementing and economically backward people can take advantage of these yojanas. As India's rural landscape undergoes a transformative journey marked by a commendable decline in multidimensional poverty, a complex tapestry of changes emerges with the main focus on skilling the rural youth, increasing livelihood opportunities, providing social safety and infrastructure development. The government yojanas plays a pivotal role in the welfare and development of rural citizen. In past year apart from strengthening the implementation structure in ongoing livelihood programs, the primary object of govt. is sustainable and resilient development of rural areas by adopting multiple strategies to address poverty, improve the economic well-being of the people. To fulfill the aim of uplifting the deprived rural households through multidimensional support including for assets, livelihood, infrastructure, and services; It is necessary for convergence of programs and schemes as well as monitoring of measure outcomes. Some flagship programs like Pradhan Mantri awas yojana and Swachh Bharat Abhiyan to transformative initiatives such as

Pradhan Mantri fasal Bima yojana, Deen Dayal Upadhyay Gram Jyoti yojana etc. has taken rural development to Centre stage. These efforts not only target poverty alleviation and employment generation but also aims at providing access to basic amenities. By integrating technology, promoting self-reliance and enhancing agricultural productivity, the Modi government is striving to create Atma Nirbhar and empowered rural economy. This focus on rural upliftment reflects the government's broader vision of prosperous and inclusive India, where every citizen, regardless of location can lead a dignified life. The emphasis enhancing livelihood through these comprehensive measures has the potential to bridge the urban-rural divide and propel the nation towards sustainable growth and equitable development. Even after 78 years of independence we are still talking about this thing again and again. I am not saying that no previous government has worked for rural areas, everyone contributed during their tenure but the question is how deeply the work has been done, did anyone do monitor at extreme or not? In the current decade, the government of India has left no stone unturned in taking rural development to new heights. The Prime minister himself keeps an eye on it. The government's goal is not just to distribute freebies, but government has also made efforts to make people Atmanirbhar. So, while mentioning some of these development works, I would like to tell how the government makes people empower and self-reliant

through schemes. As we celebrate ‘Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav’ The New India strategy broadly identifies the sector specific interventions for furthering the mandate of development in rural areas. Mission Antodaya is a signature approach is identifying the gram panchayat level development priorities signed with the sectors mentioned in the 11th schedule of constitution. To develop a model for convergence that could consolidate the efforts to eradicate poverty, ‘Mission Antodaya’ was announced in the union Budget 2017-18. This is an accountability and convergence framework for transforming lives and livelihood on measurable outcomes. The mission is focusing to improve accountability and outcomes of large pool of resources spend for the sustainable growth of rural areas in the country. The key features of the Mission antodaya are seeks convergence of various government schemes with Gram panchayat as the basic unit for planning. It also encourages partnerships with network of professionals, institutions and enterprises to further accelerates the transformation of Rural livelihood. In framework of implementation, it has been visualized as a convergence saturation approach that is capable to attend both geographical and individual aspects of deprivation and poverty. The MA survey database provides an idea about geographical deprivation and identifies self-help group (SHG) of DAY-NRLM as key enabler to mission antodaya because of their social capital. The Deendayal Antodaya Yojana – National Rural livelihood mission

(DAY-NRLM) is a flagship program which seeks to aeriated rural poverty through building sustainable community institutions of the poor. The centrally sponsored scheme seeks to mobilize about 10 Crore households into SHGs and link them to sustainable livelihood opportunity access formal sources of finance and services from both public and private sectors. This mission seeks to achieve its objective through social mobilization, sustainable livelihoods, social inclusion and convergence. The key features of DAY-NRLM includes universal implementation by the poor, funds to the community as the resources in perpetuity. Promotion of community institutions and their capacity building program one of the core components of DAY-NRLM. The community institutions a collective platform for the rural poor to overcome poverty through access of financial, technical and marketing resources. A revolving fund provided to SHGs as an incentive to protect the habit of thrift and accumulate their own funds. DAY-NRLM facilitates universal access to the affordable cost effective reliable financial services to the poor and it works on both demand and supply. More than 6 lakh villages affected by these initiatives. With an ambitious agenda to benchmark wage placement – linked programs to global standards, government revamped the placement linked under NRLM as Deendayal Upadhyay Gramin Kaushal Yojana in 2014. DDU-GKY is a critical component of the national skill development policy with a unique focus on rural youth. This program has evolved out of a need to diversity

incomes of the rural poor and to cater to the occupational aspirations of rural youth. DDU-GKY is a critical to the national skill agenda and to the 430 million young people i.e. 15-35 years age groups. It has great potential to transforming nation's demographic surplus to the much needed 'Demographic Dividend' through building the productive capabilities of rural youth. It has a clear mission to reduce poverty by enabling the poor households to access gainful self-employment and skilled wage employment opportunities, resulting in appreciable improvement in their livelihood. DDU-GKY initiated project implement agency (PIA) where youth in rural area gets overseas placement. It provides funding support for placement linked skilling projects ranging from Rs. 40,088 per person depending upon their duration of project. DDU-GKY mandates independent third-party certification of every trainee to assess skill, knowledge and attitude of each person. It is a strategic partner in industries; it looks at the industry internship program as a valuable approach promoting employment. So far from 2014-2024 (March) a total of 10,52,889 candidates has been given placement which includes north-eastern states & Jammu Kashmir region. Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana has been a corner stone in transforming rural India's infrastructure landscape which is playing a crucial role in realizing the vision of sustainable and inclusivity. As I mentioned before, with more than 65% of the India's population living in the rural areas, the economic growth and development of country hinges

on the development of rural areas to a large extent. PM-GSY has been instrumental in bridging the urban-rural divide by enhancing accessibility with the primary objective of providing all weather road connectivity to unconnected habitations in rural areas. Over the years, PM-GSY has not only enhanced rural mobility but also contributed poverty alleviations. The access of rural population to the driver of development is severely united in the absence of rural connectivity. Rural roads not only provide physical connectivity but also open to enormous possibilities by increasing access to healthcare, educational institutes etc. A total 7,67,556 road length has been sanctioned till 2024 (October) and a total 11,529 bridges also sanctioned. During budget speech 2023-24 It was announced to improve socio-economic conditions of the particularly vulnerable tribal groups (PVTG) subsequently PMPVTG mission was launched with an aim to saturate families and habitations with basic facilities. The union cabinet approved Pradhan mantri Janjati Adivasi Maha Abhiyan (PM-JANMAN) to focus 11 critical interventions. Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi launched PM-JANMAN on Janjatiya Gaurav Divas in 2023. Under PM-JANMAN total 12400 districts with 2954 habitations affected. After buildup roads a quality monitoring also happens to verify the work. In order to effectively monitor the entire program and bring about accountability and transparency in implementations. PM-GSY not only develops connectivity, but also initiates 17 sectors (e-mark, Meri

Sadak App) with integration of CPGRAMS (centralized public grievance referral and monitoring system). PMGSY's impact evaluation studies have been done by World bank, Niti Ayog, which decodes that connectivity towards road in rural area get ahead a step towards Vikshit Bharat during this Amrit kaal. It is very surprising that while we are celebrating Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav, we are talking about how many houses have been allotted to poor people by the government but still many areas people don't have a roof over their head. This inconvenience is seen not only in rural areas but also in the country's capital Delhi. The government has tried their best to provide this facility through the poor welfare scheme PM Awas Yojana. Till 2024-25(March) total 2.5 crore house completed under PMAY-GRAMIN. It is one of the flagship schemes with government's commitment to provide housing for all by 2024. This yojana came to effect from April 2016. Under PMAY-G assistance of Rupee 1,20,000 provides for construction of house. The identification of beneficiary is done by government officials. In the Pradhan Mantri awas yojana financial help goes directly to the beneficiary's account, but in some places, people take advantage of it by showing fake identity. Due to which deserving people are deprived. Not only this but information has been received that the sarpanch, Gram Pradhan, some leaders are earning as middlemen. Due to this, the target of this scheme is not achieved. The government works firmly on this and considering these work with transparency & help in empowering the

deserving people. Any ways, this flagship program also achieved milestones as provide rural mason training construction and house empowerment of women involving SHG in PMAY-G caring for Divyang and tribe people. As population rises every day in India, the main challenges for government are to provide employment for its citizen. Under MGNREGA, it provides not less than one hundred days of unskilled manual works as a guaranteed employment to every household in rural areas as per demand. Article 41 of the constitution of India directs state to provide public assistance to its citizens in case of unemployment, sickness, and disability. So National social assistance programme introduced as a fully centrally sponsored programme targeting to provide basic level of financial help. Under Annapurna scheme 10 Kg of forward grains per month provided free of cost to senior citizens. Sansad Adarsh Gram Yojna (2014) is a unique scheme where members of parliament are being leveraged directly for development gram panchayat level. It aims to engage with the community help enable the initiation of start-up activities to build up the right environment and facilitate the planning process. It brings transparency, accountability and probity in public life and nurturing local self-governance. Under PM Poshan Shakti Nirman Abhiyan, the mid-day meal provides to school children in free. This Abhiyan grouped under the umbrella scheme 'Saksham Anganwadi and poshan 2.0'. It expands aims include reducing stunting anemia and low birth weight. Swamitva yojana helps in napping of

properties in village with the help of drones. It aims in helping to reduce disputes over property. Under Garib kalyan rojgar yojana it provides employment to poor especially in covid-19 pandemic days. To addressing good sanitation waste related practice on the aim of clean India mission, the Swachh Bharat Abhiyan introduced on Gandhi Jayanti 2014. Separate toilet facilities for male and female students have been established in schools under the 'Swachh Bharat, Swachh Vidyalaya' scheme. Also, PM emphasizes on lady's toilet from ramparts of Redfort on Independence Day.

National career service scheme (2015) acts as a common platform for job seekers, employers' skill providers placement organization and councilors. It aims to help job seekers land up at the job they deserve. PM Bharat Janaushadi Kendra is a public welfare scheme provide quality medicines at affordable prices to the masses through special Kendra. Ayushman Bharat is a flagship health initiative by the Government of India aimed at achieving Universal Health Coverage (UHC). More people in India depends upon agriculture, government launches many schemes i.e. E-NAM, Atal Bhujal yojana to improve ground water manager. PM Kishan Samman Nidhi for minimum support scheme, PM fasal Bima yojana, PM Krishi sinchai yojana introduced with a clear aim of improving agricultural productivity through irrigation support. Unnat Jyoti by affordable LEDs for all (UJALA) was a project to

distribute efficient LED lighting. It reduces the cost of energy saving fluorescent lamp. For nationwide welfare measures for farmers in the fisheries sector PM Matsya Sampada yojana launched. To provide to each rural household through individual taps, JAL JIVAN MISSION launched. “HAR GHAR JAL” affiliated to above mission provides 55 liters of tap water to every rural household per capita per day regularly on long term basis. PM Kishan Urja Surakhsha evam uthhan Mahabhiyan (PM-KUSUM) aims to increase the income of farmers and provide sources of irrigation. For the installation of solar pumps and other renewable powerplants across the nation targeted towards the farmers PM-KUSUM mission helps. It has been done as per Paris agreement treaty on Climate change for renewable energy. PM Ujjwala yojana provides LPG connection to million women from BPL households. Enhancing livelihood in health sector Ayushman Bharat yojana came to effect which aims to provide free access to healthcare to 50 crore people in the country. By march 2022 hospitalizations under AB-NHPS has crosses 30 million with a valuation of 35,000 crore. Now this scheme also gives facility to each people over 80 years by providing better treatment as they need. PM Annadata Aay Sanrakshan Abhhiyan (PM-AASHA) also known as umbrella scheme to ensure a price are fulfilled. It aims for farmer welfare through creating a profitable ecosystem for selected products. As I discussed in my previous chapter, Digital India program also enhances the lifestyle by providing latest

information and communicating electronically. It has expanded into production linked incentives, improvement of national knowledge network and electronic governance. A pension program 'Atal pension Yojana' which allows people to make voluntary contributions within a certain range with a matching government contribution to receive pension in future. All efforts have been made by the government so that the poor, backward and deprived can get help according to their needs. All the yojanas mentioned above are taking a step towards a developed and Atma Nirbhar Bharat. The goal of Vikshit Bharat can be achieved only by serving every Bhartiya with the basic mantra 'Sabka Sath Sabka Vikas'.

Now after the schemes, I am mentioning another interesting thing especially about Indian women, whose living habits, social concern and faith in the government have changed due to above welfare schemes. Through the concerted efforts of two villages level federations (VLF) the top chingtha Gram Panchayat in Imphal, Manipur became a plastic free zone, collected plastic waste amounting to 1000 Kgs from the village and converged with PRIs and with Manipur Pollution control board to generate awareness and economic gain. For a community where women and their SHGs have been underestimated. It was a marvelous achievement when a Gram Panchayat declared itself free of plastic use and litter free community under the efforts of rural livelihood mission. Ms. Vaishali Naik from Rivona

village, Goa is a spirited woman whose energetic nature made start her catering service in the village and gradually through SHGs association. She went onto became the sarpanch of her village. Story of a mother who refused to give up; This is the story of a widowed woman whose persistent efforts to support her family throughout the hard work and dedication. After death of her husband, she joined SHG and became an Internal community resource person (I-CRP) under Rural livelihood mission. Through turmeric cultivation and processing enterprise she is able to earn decent income and supporting her family. Not just a man's world becoming financially independent through mobile service business; B. Rajeshwari from Kollabailu village Andhra Pradesh, took loans from SHG, bought a cow and started a dairy business. Doing so, she continued her studies then she got trained in mobile servicing through a paid course in Vijayawada . After completion of the course, she started Akshaya mobile servicing Centre in 2007 at Madanpille. All of the above stories imply wings of self-confidence to get success through Rearing practice. As per Nitin Aayog's MPI (multidimensional poverty index), The incidence of poverty in rural areas have witnessed a significant decline in poverty to 19.28%. The MPI reflects the deprivations that a poor person faces simultaneously with respect to education, health and living standard. NITI Aayog also plays a vital role to address rural issues by facilitating collaborations between

government agencies, NGOs, private sector and communities for comprehensive solutions.

DISASTER MANAGEMENT; -

Natural disaster used to be a hindrance in enhancing livelihood especially in coastal states. Every possible help is provided by the government of India and the state government to deal with these. In Ancient India civilization thrived despite the uncertainty of nature confronting challenge. Early Indian Writings including the Vedas and Epics such as the Mahabharat showcase a profound recognition of this natural force. In the years after India gained independence the nation encountered a succession of natural calamities that tested its fortitude and highlighted the necessity for efficient disaster management. As October 1999, drew near the eastern coast of India prepared for what was to become one of the most intense cyclones in its history. This super cyclone unleashed powerful winds and a storm surge that flooded extensive in Odisha. In the immediate aftermath, the enormity of disaster necessitated an extraordinary response. PM AB Vajpayee and HM LK Advani led national relief initiative, mobilizing resources and coordinating aid on a scale that matched the severity of crisis. The insights gained from the 1999 cyclone were profound and prompted substantial reforms in India's strategy towards disaster management following 1999 Odisha super cyclone, Indian meteorological Department (IMD) upgraded its forecasting abilities to provide

more precise and timely warnings, a vital step in reducing the impact of future cyclones. 2013 Uttarakhand floods, 2015 HudHud cyclone 2018 Kerala flood, 2019 Fani cyclone, 2022 cyclone Asani, 2023 Wayanad land slide, 2023 Assam flood etc. All of these Disaster managed by agencies responded with timely evacuations and relief efforts, but long-term solutions to prevent such disaster remain critical in the field of disaster management. Odisha is a notable example of resilience and proactive leadership, particularly under Shri Naveen Patnaik with a Beacon of Hope and preparedness. As eye witness of Odisha's Cyclone Phailin (2013) and 2019 Fani cyclone I have seen the support from central government and Naveen Patnaik's management demonstrated the effectiveness of these preparations. Cyclone Fani made landfall near Puri as a category of storm. The PM Modi's direction and Patnaik's administration concentrated on prompted recovery efforts restoring power, water supply and other critical services swiftly. The dedication of PM Modi (who continuously monitored the rescue operation) and Patnaik's leadership has earned recognition both domestically globally. The well-coordinated initiative involving the NDRF, Indian army and local volunteers between central government and state government successfully evacuated over a million individual. Conversely Bihar has struggled with recurrent flooding in Kosi River Basin (Assam continued to face severe flooding in Brahmaputra and Barak River Valleys), Despite ongoing efforts

including embankment construction and river management projects Bihar highlighted the difficulties of managing transboundary river systems. The challenges possibly nature will remain unpredictable, but India's unwavering spirit and resolve to protect its people, signify its determination to a step towards fulfilling Aim of Vikshit Bharat.

In Naxalite affected areas children between the ages of 12-20 are targeted. If they are uneducated and unemployment, they will soon join the Naxalites. In view of this, the central government has taken many steps after which many children have been saved from Naxalite influence. The government started many awareness camp and free education for not too caught in Naxalite trap. Especially in Odisha's Malkangiri district, the government has succeeded to a great extend in its work, which is commendable. Making permanent houses from mud houses, doing a respectful job, providing free gas to poor women, creating a different identity in the society, making everyone self-reliant promotes India's livelihood and makes the goal of developed India firmer. Even now everyone is thinking that nothing is over rather this is the time, we can say 'Yahi Samay Hai, Sahi Samay Hai'. Which reduce the use of word '*impossible*' in this century. In 1955 the scientist Dr-lee Forest once said "It's impossible for a human being to cross the Indian globe Or Earth's globe, Neil Armstrong proved wrong this statement in 1959 and put his foot on the moon and astonished the whole

world. This trend is still going on at that time, when the world suffers most, no technology established, people move forward only with determination and strong believe then they succeeded in their field. But now we have too much facilities, extraordinary technology, just think where we can reach. If we get some help from government, it doesn't mean that we sit without work, we also have to move ahead and help the government too, so that service work can reach out to a great extent.

Enhancing livelihood in India requires holistic approach that address the socio-economic agricultural and infrastructural needs of the population. Improved connectivity access to basic amenities can mitigate discontent and restoring peace by preventing the spread of violent ideologies. In essence enhancing livelihood involves a multi-faceted strategy. By aligning rural development, agricultural growth, Disaster management; central government creating more resilient and prosperous society. This holistic vision contributes to a Vikshit Bharat where every citizen, regardless of their locality access to opportunities, security and a better-quality life.

Chapter-8

Integrating Transport Solutions

India's transport system is the pillar of its economic development & social integration, linking millions along the length & width of the country. Being the world's one of the populous nations & one of the fastest developing economies, India's transportation infrastructure is critical to supporting trade, improving mobility & regional development. The Indian railways, which are commonly called the lifeline of the country, is among the world's largest railway systems; offering mass connectivity at affordable rates, making a significant contribution to freight & passenger transport. The network of roads covering more than 6.4 million kilometers, is the 2nd largest in the world & is the main mode of transportation for rural as well as urban regions. Civil aviation experienced unprecedented expansion during the last few years with India emerging as 3rd largest domestic aviation market globally, the projects aimed at enhancing port infrastructure & inland waterways under Jalmary Vikas project are transforming the maritime sector. Indian Railways has also witnessed grand reforms with the launch of high-speed trains, electrification of tracks, new amenities under the initiative such as the mission rafter, the introduction of Vande Bharat express etc.

Equally, road infrastructure has experienced geometric expansion with abitur initiatives like Bharat mala pariyojna, which is the development of highways, express ways, & rural connectivity of roads. Civil aviation has made leaps and bounds with UDAN (Ude Desh Ke Aam Nagarik) scheme making air journeys affordable & increasing regional connectivity to uneconomical regions. Moreover, the emergence of green mobility solutions, including metro rail system, electric vehicles, & upgraded public transport, reflects India's dedication to a greener & more efficient transport network. These initiatives not only intend to make transport more efficient & accessible but also attempt to develop a future ready sustainable network to enable India's vision of becoming an economic power globally & achieving the vision of Vikshit Bharat.

National highways account for 2% of the total network & carry over 40% of total traffic. Highway construction in India increased at 17% CAGR between FY16-FY21. Despite pandemic & lockdown, India has constructed 13298 km highways in FY21. By Integrated public transport, non- motorized transport, last mile connectivity & smart technology enhances efficiency & a belief in transport system.

India has 13 major ports along its more than 500km long coastline. Ports play a very significant role improving foreign trade. In ancient times, Odisha was renowned for its maritime heritage, with the brave and skilled *Sadhaba Pua*; the traditional Odia Sea traders

sailing across the seas to distant lands like Java, Sumatra, Bali, and Sri Lanka. Using large boats called *Boitas*, these merchants set sail from the ports of Odisha, especially from places like Cuttack and Paradip, carrying valuable goods such as textiles, spices, and precious stones. The famous festival *Boita Bandana*, celebrated on Kartika Purnima, commemorates this glorious era of maritime trade. The journeys of the Sadhaba Pua not only fostered economic exchange but also enriched cultural and spiritual ties between Odisha and Southeast Asian nations, leaving a lasting imprint on history.

The national highways have a total length of 1,46,145 km, which in totality serve as the arterial network of the country. The development of national highways is the responsibility of the Govt. of India. The govt. had launched initiatives to upgrade & strengthen national highways through various phases of National highways development project (NHDP) & is taking initiatives forward through the umbrella program of Bharatmala pariyojna and other projects. National Highways Network spread in 1,46,145 KM in year 2024. Length of 4 lanes and NH also increased to 48,422 KM lane augmentation is at all time highest during 2023-24 (9642 KM). 4 Lakh KM of roads including expressways is at all time highest at 5193 KM pace of NH construction increased to 33.8 KM/day (2023-24) from 12.1 KM/day (2014-15). It is really remarkable that in year 2023-24, The Transport department of GoI

achieved many milestones by breaking record of previous year's progress work. It has also succeeded in achieving highest capital expenditure. The Bharat Mala Pariyojana phase-1 entails a total length of 34,800 KM in 38 states and UTs, districts multimodal logistic parks to be developed under Bharat Mala Pariyojna. A Network of 35 Multimodal logistics parks is planned to be developed as part of Bharat Mala Pariyojna. MMLP jogighopa (Assam) in Advanced stage such as Execution of enabling development work in Road, Rail and water connectivity, sewage treatment plan etc. The Multimodal logistic parks will serve as the distribution of centre for all North-Eastern states and facilitate cross-border trade with Bangladesh, Bhutan, and Nepal. As per ministry of transport and highways, The Karnataka government allocated more land (400 Acres) and investment (21770 Cr) in MMLP.

India has coastline of 7500 KM across 13 states/UT'S to ensure adequate least mile connectivity to all the operational ports in the country, a comprehensive port connectivity plan was developed by Road, Transport and Highway Ministry. Then 51 additional critical infrastructure projects of length 1300 KM selected for implementation in improving last mile required road connectivity to all ports in India with seamless movement of goods. To improve the comfort and convenience of the highway's users, GOI has planned the development of state-of-the-art WSA about 40-60 KM along the National Highways. It aimed to provide

multiple options of rest and refreshments for highway commuters during their journey. National Highway logistic management limited has planned to award ropeway projects. The first urban ropeway of India constructed in Varanasi. As announced by the Hon'ble Finance Minister in Union budget 2022, The transport department of Govt. of India undertaken development of cable ropeway transit i.e. Ropeways under the National Parvatmala Pariyojna across the country to improve connectivity and convenience for commuters in hill stations and decongest urban areas. The Parvatmala Pariyojna and optical Fiber cable (OFC) infrastructure projects are key initiatives under India's infrastructure awarded in Sangam, Shankaracharya Temple in Jammu and Kashmir, Dhosi Hill (HR), Bijli Mahadev (HP), Mahakaleshwar temple (MP) and 27.8 KM bids invited. 13 states/UT'S signed MOU to feasible the progress of the project further more on expression of interest (EOI) has been announced for two major ropeways to kedarnath and Hemkund sahib simultaneously; to strengthen India's digital infrastructure, the government is developing a nationwide OFC network to support the expansion of 5G and 6G services. In line with PM Gatishakti Initiative, OFC is being laid along national highways ensuring highspeed-internet connectivity even in remote areas two pilot projects covering 1900 KM on the Hyderabad-Bangalore and Delhi-Mumbai expressways are currently in progress enabling seamless and faster adoption of next generation telecom

technologies. The Public Transport Terminal Infrastructure initiatives aim to create world-class integrated transport hubs. A PTI policy is finalized after which pilot project will commence. The Govt. introduced initiatives like Bhoomi Rashi portal, which has digitalized and expedited the land acquisition process for highways. Since April 1, 2018 under PM GatiShakti National Master Plan, The Govt. is leveraging a GIS-based system for coordinated infrastructure planning. This NMP portal integrates highway networks ropeways, MML's and other infrastructure projects streamlining project tracking and planning through API's, GIS-referenced data and digital project management tools. The NMP optimizes National Highway Planning, reducing clearance delays and ecological impact while enhancing multimodal connectivity. By March 2024, 67 NPG meetings reviewed 69 NH projects worth 2.35 lakh crore for approval. Additionally, the E-tolling system (FASTAG) has been implemented nationwide, ensuring seamless toll collection. By March 2024 over 8.81 crore FASTAGs have been issued, achieving 98.5% penetration with 190.68 crore collected daily across 1365 toll plazas. The Ministry of Road, Transport and Highways under leadership of Shri Nitin Gadkari, has prioritized national highway development in the North-Eastern Region, allocating 10% of its total budget for the Area. The North-Eastern region has a total length 16,125 KM managed by NHIDCL, state PWD's, NHAI, and BRO. The NHIDCL, established in 2014,

play a key role in accelerating infrastructure in border and strategic area.

Key projects include the completion of a 110 KM stretch of NH-44 in Meghalaya & various initiatives under EI & ISC, CRIF, NH (0), and SARDP-NE. In Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, and other NE states has seen many enhance connectivity, economic growth and strategic infrastructure in the North-East for ensuring smooth vehicular movement, many regulations like motor vehicles act, 1988 Road, Transport corporations act, 1950 carriage by Road act have been regulated by concerned ministry. The e-Transport mission mode Project (MMP) is a digital initiative that modernize services like vehicle registration, driving licenses taxation and permits. The m-vahan mobile App simplifies vehicle inspection and other RTO operations many states and smart cities system (ITMS) to detect traffic violations and issuing of e-chalan system. The Nirbhaya Framework has established command and control centers in multiple states to increase the Road safety. The all-India tourist permit (AITP) system has been digitalized to streamline tourist vehicle permits across states, making it easier for operators to obtain permit through a centralized online portal. Govt. also introduced faceless, contact less Aadhar e-KYC based services for transport related process. The Automatic fitness management system (AFMS) enables smooth vehicle fitness testing, while the Registered vehicle

scrapping facility (RVSF) facilitates online vehicle scrapping with financial incentives.

Indian Railways has undergone a remarkable transformation focusing on modernization digitalization, safety and passenger convenience. Significant investment in infrastructure have led to the development of high-speed rail corridors like the Mumbai-Ahmedabad bullet train and increased track electrification targeting 100 % electrification soon. Major stations have been redeveloped with world class amenities and over 1300 stations now have wi-fi access. Technological advancements include smart ticketing through IRCTC next generation e- ticketing system, AI-based application like Rail-madad for grievance redressal and GPS-enabled tracking for real time updates introduced. Safety measures like eliminating unmanned level crossing and implementing Kavach, an indigenous automatic train protection system and improved passenger security. The introduction of Vande Bharat expresses and Tejas express has elevated the standard of travel, showcasing India's capacity for advanced manufacturing, financial reforms include increased budgetary allocation, public-private partnerships and diversified revenue through advertising and station redevelopment. There is no denying the fact that Modi Govt. has completely transformed the face of Indian Railways.

Green initiatives like bio toilets, solar-powered trains and energy-efficient lighting demonstrate a

commitment to sustainability. Social welfare measures for Divyang friendly facilities enhanced women's safety through Meri Saheli Teams and significant employment opportunities. Indian Railways achieved 6,450 KM of complete track renewal 8550 turnout renewals, and raised speeds to 130 Kmph over 2000 KM in 2024. The Government of India has recently launched several transformative initiatives to modernize Indian Railways. From June 29, 2025, reservation charts will be prepared 8 hours before departure instead of 4, offering better clarity to wait-listed passengers. Starting July 2025, Tatkal ticket bookings will require Aadhaar-based OTP verification to curb fraud. A major technological leap includes the rollout of a next-generation Passenger Reservation System capable of handling over 1.5 lakh bookings per minute. To enhance safety and comfort, all Chandigarh-origin trains will shift to LHB coaches by year-end, and Chennai will receive its second AC EMU train by October. The government is also working on a new blueprint to modernize railway control systems and operations. Additionally, 50 Namo Bharat AC trains and 100 MEMUs will be introduced for short-distance travel. On the infrastructure front, the Cabinet has approved two significant track-doubling projects—Koderma–Barkakana and Ballari–Chikjajur—covering 318 km at a cost of ₹6,405 crore. These efforts reflect a strong push toward safer, smarter, and more efficient rail travel for the nation.

In today's time, Indian Railways is moving in a revolutionary direction, either it is to build the world's highest railway station or to maintain transparency in buying tickets, but in future our goal should be how to make economic progress of Indians possible, then we can increase the number of bogies of AC class leaving the sleeper class. The usage of Vande Bharat Express can also increase. In today's India, sleeper class bogies are the highest in comparison to earlier times. The reason for this is that it helps people economically. But the question arises that if the situation is the same even today, whether it is infrastructure development in the economic sector or something else, even after so many years of independence, we have not been able to increase the standard of living of the people so much that people are able to travel in AC class.

In recent times, India's transport sectors railways, civil aviation, and roadways have faced significant challenges, exposing critical gaps in safety, infrastructure, and crisis management. The tragic Balasore train accident in Odisha (June 2023) claimed 296 lives and injured over 1,200, due to a signalling failure that led to a horrific three-train collision. More recently, in February 2025, a deadly stampede at New Delhi Railway Station during the Mahakumbh Mela resulted in at least 18 deaths and dozens injured, as mismanagement and overcrowding created chaos on platforms. These incidents have pushed Indian Railways to introduce crowd control war rooms,

platform zoning, and AI-based surveillance. Meanwhile, the civil aviation sector is grappling with an unprecedented crisis following the Air India Boeing 787 crash near Ahmedabad on June 12, 2025, which killed over 260 people. The cause is under investigation, with possible sabotage or engine failure being explored. In the aftermath, over 80 flights were cancelled, many aircraft grounded for inspections, and public confidence severely shaken, with a reported 15–20% drop in bookings. Road transport paints an equally grim picture India recorded over 480,000 accidents and 172,000 deaths in 2023, the highest in the world. Alarming trends show that two-wheeler riders and pedestrians make up a significant portion of these fatalities, often due to over speeding, helmet neglect, and license violations. Even regions like Nagpur rural saw 436 deaths in 2024 alone, and Uttarakhand reported 45 road deaths in June 2025 due to monsoon-triggered mishaps. These events underscore the urgent need for comprehensive reforms, stricter enforcement of safety regulations, modernization of infrastructure, and investment in human-centred design to prevent such avoidable tragedies in the future.

The President of India acts as the ex-officio commander-in-chief of the Indian Armed Forces with policy being handled by the Ministry of Defence. The air branches of the armed forces are the Indian Airforce (IAF), led by the Chief of Air Staff, the Indian Naval Air Arm, the Army Aviation Corps, and Indian Coast

Guard Aviation. This method of transport is unavoidable when speed and time are the primary limitations. It is a very easy matter to cross and enter distant inaccessible and hostile regions such as towering mountains, dense forests, wet marshes and sandy deserts through air transport which is simply impossible through other means of transport. Indian air transport had a modest start in 1911 when air mail services began over a short distance of 10 km from Allahabad to Naini. Air transport was introduced by the British, French and Dutch in 1929-30. Indian National Airways was established in the year 1933 and it began air services between Karachi and Lahore. By the conclusion of World War II, key cities such as Karachi, Mumbai, Delhi, Kolkata, Lahore and a few other destinations were offered air services.

There were four companies i.e. Tata Sons Ltd./Air India, Indian National Airways, Air Services of India and Deccan Airways at the time of partition of the nation in 1947. In 1951, there were four more companies viz. Bharat Airways, Himalayan Aviation Ltd., Airways India and Kalinga Airlines. In 1953, air transport was nationalized and two corporations emerged: Air India International and Indian Airlines.

India's transportation industry has witnessed unprecedented change over the last few years, mirroring the country's path toward a Viksit Bharat. In the railways, introduction of the made-in-India Vande Bharat Express, massive electrification of more than

90% of broad-gauge tracks, redevelopment of stations such as Ayodhya and New Delhi under the Amrit Bharat Station Scheme, and work on the Mumbai-Ahmedabad Bullet Train are some of the highlights of modern mobility. The Kavach anti-collision system has increased safety, whereas Make-in-India coach and locomotive manufacturing has deepened self-dependence. For civil aviation, India became the third-largest domestic market, driven by the UDAN scheme linking remote locations, growth of world-class airports like Delhi and Bengaluru, and mega projects like Noida International Airport. The restructuring of Air India under Tata Group and massive aircraft procurement have raised India's international aviation footprint. Concurrently, the highways and roads sector has thrived under the Bharatmala Pariyojana, Delhi-Mumbai Expressway, and Char Dham project and the success of FASTag for electronic tolling. Wonders such as the Atal Tunnel and Chenab Bridge reflect the engineering prowess of India. Collectively, through holistic efforts such as PM Gati Shakti, India is creating a multi-modal transport infrastructure that powers economic growth, regional connectivity, and sustainable development,". As the Rigveda states, "संगच्छध्वं संवदध्वं सं वो मनांसि जानताम्." — Let us walk together, talk together, and think together — a true mirror to India's collective movement towards integrated development.

Irrespective of how bad the situation is, there has never been a shortfall in the human side in the Indian transport

sector. In the Covid pandemic time, individuals arriving at their destinations on trains or other means is truly praiseworthy. I pay tribute to all those pilots, transport assistants who endangered their lives to transport others to their destinations. The trend of trains not arriving at the destination punctually continues to date as well. I do agree that officials need to consider many things while traveling by train. But if the flight or railway cannot transport the passenger to the destination within the time as assured, then collecting full payment from passengers is not right. As per the regulations of the railways, the passengers receive only half berth in an RAC (reservation against cancellation) ticket, but compared to this, we are paying as much as full berth to the railways, which is not justifiable for the passengers. The railways need to consider this and refund some amount to the RAC ticket holders. In the transportation of road, proper information should be provided to individuals at the appropriate time so that the incidents do not happen because of any carelessness. Everything in India is transforming, regardless of what the industry is. Change is the law of the world. It is quoted in the Gita "युक्ताहारविहारस्य युक्तचेष्टस्य कर्मसु युक्तस्वप्नावबोधस्य योगो भवति दुःखहा॥" means "Moderation in everything food, behaviour, work, and rest leads to the end of suffering."

In short, India's vibrant development throughout the railways, civil aviation, and road highways is not merely a tale of infrastructure, but a potent expression

of national vision, imagination, and broad-based growth.

From the quiet pace of Vande Bharat trains and the ascending wings of connectivity of the regions, to the uninterrupted expressways traversing varied geographies each milestone reverberates with the vision of "New India." These changes are not siloed; they are a cohesive ecosystem through programs such as PM Gati Shakti, making transport the driver of economic empowerment, tourism, and national integration. India is not simply connecting locations; it is connecting dreams of a farmer in Odisha, a student in Delhi, a pilgrim in Uttarakhand, and an entrepreneur in Gujarat. This cohesive pace in transport is the spirit of our civilization "Ek Bharat, Shreshtha Bharat." With steel tracks, concrete highways, and open skies, India is not advancing alone it is advancing together towards a self-sufficient, developed, and world-respected nation. Construction of tunnels at high altitudes, building the world's highest railway bridge Chenab, digitalization through adoption of digital tools such as FASTag, and airports going green demonstrate that India's growth is not just fast but also futuristic and sustainable. In making our multi-modal connections stronger, we are also making the emotional, cultural, and economic connects of the nation stronger. This is not just infrastructure this is a celebration of oneness by mobility, and a testimony that when India walks, the future comes sooner.

Chapter-9

The Evolving Indian Defence

India's defence odyssey is a fascinating mirror of its evolution from a post-colonial nation to a self-assured world power. During the post-independence decades, India's defence strategy was governed by regional security interests and the imperative of self-protection. Now it is at the cusp of tradition and change creating an indigenous, technology-led, and strategically independent military force capable of addressing 21st-century challenges.

From the snow-capped peaks of the Himalayas to the Indo-Pacific blue ocean, India's military forces have become among the most esteemed in the world. The transformation remains intense from reactive to proactive defence strategy, from import-dependence to indigenization under *Atmanirbhar* Bharat, and from border security to taking a leading role in international peacekeeping and disaster relief operations. India's defence transformation is not merely about building its weapons, but remaking security merging hard power with strategic diplomacy, cyber strength, space power, and regional influence. It is a march where the soldier, the scientist, and the strategist go hand-in-hand to safeguard the vision of a *Viksit Bharat*.

“नाभिषेको न संस्कारः सिंहस्य क्रियते मृगैः।विक्रमार्जितराज्यस्य स्वयमेव मृगेन्द्रता ” A Lion need not be coronated to be the King of the Jungle, he wins it through his valour. India has always been a land of diversities, not just cultural and linguistic, but intellectual too. India serves as an inseparable part of the Global History with kingdoms like the Gupta Empire, the Chola Empire and the Mauryan Empire. These empires provide an exemplary outlook of the ancient Indian Defence and Governance Strategies. While their defence mechanisms comprised of vividly composed military which included infantry, cavalry, archers, and barrier engines, these empires also deployed the strategic geo-political position of India to strengthen their borders. These empires also stationed strong maritime security strategies and naval warfare. The geographical position of Indian Subcontinent and its dynamic terrain comprising of Rivers, Valleys, Mountains, Cliffs, and Plateaus have provided it not just a separate identity as a subcontinent, but also an edge over the enemies in times of wars. The Indian Ocean connects the Middle East and the Europe to East Asia; this adds to the importance of the Indian Subcontinent in the strata of International Relations and Trade. Due to this Geopolitical position, India has always been eyed upon by Foreign Powers, as control over the Indian Territory meant an implied monopoly over Global Economy. Even after falling prey to the foreign powers in the Medieval Era, India had a well-established industry for manufacture of Indigenous Defence and

Armour for example Wootz Steel of Mysore, The Mysore Rockets, Steels, Blades, Shields, Armours, Matchlocks and Artillery, with main production centred being Delhi, Lahore, Kashmir, Agra, Fatehpur, and Ahmedabad.

In the 21st century, India's defence industry has experienced a deep shift, changing from an import-based system to a futuristic, self-reliant, and technologically driven ecosystem. This shift is a manifestation of a larger strategic vision that converges national security, economic power, innovation, and global outreach.

Central to this change is the vision of self-reliance, which is the flag bearer of Make in India. Indian government has made sweeping reforms to enhance indigenous defence manufacturing, such as the liberalisation of FDI, corporatising of Ordnance Factory Board, and the Defence Acquisition Procedure (DAP) to encourage domestic procurement. Consequently, India has indigenously developed and deployed a variety of platforms like the HAL Tejas, Arjun MBT, INS Vikrant, Dhanush artillery gun, Brahmos missile, and Akash air defence systems. Start-ups and private sector enterprises, fuelled by programs such as iDEX, are also developing drones, AI systems, and intelligent surveillance technologies. The Defence Industrial Corridors in Uttar Pradesh and Tamil Nadu are gradually becoming centers for aerospace and ordnance production. Public sector companies like

HAL, BEL, and DRDO have delivered important systems, including the Tejas fighter jet, the Akash missile, and the Advanced Towed Artillery Gun System. The private sector, led by Tata, L&T, and Mahindra, is now heavily involved in defence production. Internationally, India has balanced arms procurement and partnerships. French Rafales, Russian S-400s, and American MH-60R helicopters have filled critical gaps while joint ventures offer technology transfers. Defence diplomacy, through exercises like Malabar, Yudh Abhyas, and Milan, has improved cooperation with international partners.

India's military Army, Navy, and Air Force are also being rapidly modernized to face multi-domain wars. The Indian Air Force has inducted advanced aircraft like the Rafale and bolstered its transport and combat support with the likes of the C-17, Apache, and Chinook. Indigenous assets such as the Tejas and Astra missile represent technological advancement, while UAVs, electronic warfare platforms, and space-based surveillance are driving real-time responsiveness. The Indian Navy has strengthened its blue-water aspirations with domestically constructed ships and submarines, including the Kalvari-class and INS Arihant, and asserted maritime superiority through deployment and exercises in the Indo-Pacific. The Indian Army is moving towards a technologically led force with initiatives such as F-INSAS, intelligent artillery systems, and advanced surveillance devices, along with

digital battlefield management and counter-insurgency operations.

India's defence partnership with the world has become much more profound. Bilateral and multilateral military exercises Malabar, Yudh Abhyas, Indra, and Varuna have been increasing interoperability and strategic trust. India has concluded logistics and defence pacts with nations in the Indo-Pacific and is fast becoming a defence exporter, providing weaponry and technology to more than 85 nations. Initiatives such as the India-U.S. iCET program, joint missile and aerospace ventures also reflect India's expanding footprint in global defence strategy.

Simultaneously, India has made unprecedented investments in border infrastructure and surveillance. As a counter to border frictions with China and Pakistan, the government has stepped up the development of strategic roads, tunnels (such as the Atal Tunnel), bridges, and advance landing grounds in forward locations. Advanced surveillance systems such as smart fencing under CIBMS, drones, thermal imaging, and AI-powered sensor grids have enhanced the surveillance and security capabilities of India along its long land borders. Coastal monitoring systems and satellite tracking add to the maritime security of the Indian Ocean Region.

In order to achieve integrated and future-proof defence planning, structural changes such as the appointment of

Chief of Defence Staff (CDS) and establishment of the Department of Military Affairs (DMA) have been made. The proposed Integrated Theatre Commands are supposed to introduce synergy between the services, enhance combat preparedness, and optimize resource allocation. At the same time, the strategic deterrence of India has been strengthened by achieving missile technology advancements, space warfare capacity (such as Mission Shakti), and nuclear triad readiness.

From securing distant borders to establishing maritime supremacy, from defence diplomacy to technological foresight, India's defence industry now reflects a comprehensive, forward-looking, and visionary mindset. It is no longer limited to conventional combat but is better geared up to tackle hybrid threats, cyber warfare, space-based attacks, and regional instabilities. The transformation from a consumer to a manufacturer, from passive defence to active readiness, characterizes the new image of Bharat's defence in the 21st century.

During the British Era, the Indigenous production and ownership of arms and ammunition were suppressed. British policies and laws like Indian Arms Act, 1978 restricted Indian access to arms and ammunitions and dismantled the Indian Arms Industry. This was a deliberate policy of the British to weaken the Indian Arms industry and the Indian populace. Post Independence, the government made several attempts to strengthen the military. Many ordnance factories and public sector units were established to make India Self

Reliant in Defence Systems, in spite of this, the major requirements of Military hardware were addressed through imports. India began diversifying its sources by acquiring military hardware from other Western countries like France (Dassault Ouragan fighters), and the Soviet Union, apart from the British, on whom it already highly relied. Thus, self-reliance in defence manufacturing remained a distant dream till Make in India came into being. In 1962 Indo-China war, when India faced sad shortage of arms, ammunition and aircrafts, the same were supplied to it by Israel. In the wars of 1965 and 1971, India managed with old World War II Vintage fighter aircrafts and outdated weapon systems. In both these wars, Israel served as the major supplier of arms and ammunition to India. By the 1980's, India emerged as Soviet Defence's largest importer. It also signed agreements to licence the production of MiG Aircrafts and Tanks. In the 1990's the Indian Economy was liberalized and diversified, and so did its defence imports. India started exploring military hardware from Western countries, including France (Mirage aircraft) and Israel (unmanned aerial vehicles), and acquired several high-profile defence procurements, such as INS Vikramaditya (from Russia) and Scorpene-Class submarine (from France). It entered into strategic partnerships and defence diplomacies with the US, Europe, Israel and Russia to diversify its defence portfolio. Some examples of these are Rafale jets from France, advanced missile systems from Israel, and S-400 missile systems from Russia.

Although these imports continued to strengthen and empower the Indian Army, India still lagged in indigenous industry laced with modern technologies and continued to heavily rely on imports till 2017.

Make in India proved to be a “GAME-CHANGER” in the Defence Manufacturing Sector and the development of Indigenous Modern Technologies.

India has always been wary of forming any military alliance and prefers to maintain strategic autonomy. For avoiding getting into any binding alliance India has no option but to grow her military capability in terms of technology and become self-reliant in defence production. - Lt General Abhay Krishna (Retd)

Under Make in India, the role of MSME's was recognized, they were provided support for Research and Development support to showcase their technologies, along with mentoring through government platforms, for the first time since independence, India inducted big ticket indigenous weapon platform and systems to include medium guns, radars, surveillance systems, battle tanks, rifles, night vision devices, fighter aircrafts, combat helicopters, trucks, armoured personnel carriers and so on. Driven by strategic government policies, the Ministry of Defence reported an unprecedented production of ₹1.27 lakh crore in domestic defence. Around 65% of defence equipment requirements are now manufactured within India. With the advent of Make in India, there has been

a dramatic qualitative and quantitative surge in the Defence Industry of India, with over 430 licensed companies, and approximately 16,000 Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) involved in research, development and production of defence hardware. As part of the Make in India initiative, major defence platforms such as the Dhanush Artillery Gun System, Advanced Towed Artillery Gun System (ATAGS), Main Battle Tank (MBT) Arjun, Light Combat Aircraft (LCA) Tejas, submarines, frigates, corvettes, and the recently commissioned INS Vikrant have been developed. Once reliant on imports for around two-thirds of defence requirements, India is solidifying its position as a global manufacturing hub for defence. India's defence exports have increased from ₹686 crore in FY 2013-14 to ₹21,083 crore in FY 2023-24, showcasing a remarkable increase of over 30 times in export value over the past decade. This remarkable growth trajectory underscores the positive impact of the government's focused policies and initiatives aimed at promoting indigenous manufacturing.

The initiative also adopted the guiding principle embodied in the slogan "Zero Defect Zero Effect," coined by Prime Minister Modi, which emphasized the need for the domestic defence industry to produce high-quality products with no defects while also ensuring minimal adverse environmental and ecological effects.³ India's export portfolio boasts a diverse range of

advanced defence equipment, including bulletproof jackets and helmets, Dornier (Do-228) aircraft, Chetak helicopters, fast interceptor boats, and lightweight torpedoes. A noteworthy highlight is the inclusion of 'Made in Bihar' boots in the Russian Army's equipment, marking a significant milestone for Indian products in the global defence market and showcasing the country's high manufacturing standards. Apart from the policies, challenges and competitions like ADITI (Acing Development of Innovative Technologies with iDEX) and DISC (Defence India Start-up Challenges) provide lucrative openings to youth to explore and innovate in the direction of national security.

The "Make in India" program is the basis for a fundamental and lasting change in the defence industry of India, with the long-term focus on achieving significant self-reliance ('Atmanirbharta') in defence manufacturing. Through increasingly diminishing reliance of the country on foreign suppliers to fulfil its defence requirements, the program is intended to improve the strategic autonomy and national security profile of India in an increasingly unpredictable international environment. In addition, "Make in India" is likely to drive India's rise as a major and credible exporter of defence hardware in the world market. Improved production capacity, complemented by firm policy support and increasing focus on quality and innovation, is likely to make India an affordable alternative to conventional arms suppliers in the

international defence industry. This shift from being a large importer to a major exporter will not only strengthen the national economy but also increase India's strategic autonomy and status as a net security provider in the Indian Ocean region and beyond. Although there are challenges in technology transfer and infrastructure development, the long-term trend indicates that India is poised to greatly increase its self-reliance in defence and slowly rise as a leading player in the global arms market.

India's defence is not only a story of guns and battles it is a narrative of strategic maturity, technological ascendance, and unwavering devotion to national service. The momentous events of the Surgical Strike of 2016 along the Line of Control and the Balakot Air Strike of 2019 within Pakistan's borders, Operation Sindoor of 2025 heralded a new direction for India's defence strategy shifting from restraint to measured reprisal. These operations not only established India's operational accuracy and political resolve, but also communicated a very clear message to the world: India will not permit any threat to its sovereignty.

Globally, India is a responsible and emerging defence power enhancing its alliances, participating in multi-national exercises, playing a role in peacekeeping operations, and becoming a credible defence exporter. From defending the Indo-Pacific to evacuating civilians from war zones, India's defence diplomacy is a

demonstration of strength and delicacy. Bharat is no longer a regional balancer but a global stabiliser today.

At the core of this mighty force is the invincible Indian soldier's spirit whether fighting at Siachen heights, defending borders in the northeast, performing UN duties, or dashing to evacuate flood-drenched villages. Their discipline, sacrifices, and unflinching loyalty enable more than a billion Indians to rest peacefully, aware that someone is ever vigilant at the border, defending the motherland. The Indian Armed Forces are not only a reflection of power they are the spirit of Bharat Mata, always willing to sacrifice everything, even their lives, for their country.

While India marches towards its dream of Viksit Bharat by 2047, a new, self-sufficient, and ethical defence force will be its best-supporting pillar guarding its aspirations, ethics, and independence with unparalleled pride and dedication.

Chapter-10

The Bharat Model

FROM Sri Lanka's Shankari Devi (लङ्कायां शाङ्करी देवी) to Sharda Shakti Peetha of Kashmir (काश्मीरेषु सरस्वती) in the Ashta Dasa Shakthi Peetha Stotram, 'उत्तरं यत् समुद्रस्य हिमा द्रेश्चैव दक्षिणम् | वर्षं तद् भारतं नाम भारती यत्र सन्ततिः ||' – This stanza from the revered Vishnu Puran categorically states that the idea of Bharat is not a 20th-century phenomenon but in fact as old as time itself. In my limited understanding, this millennia-old, living, breathing, and ever-evolving civilizational statesman that Bharat represents will be explored in this piece of art. Bharat has always been on a civilizational journey, sometimes in the terra firma of the northwest, with tales of invasions etched into the stony Himalayas, and at other times, in the petrichor of the coast, where tactful traders carried alien stories that eventually became part of mainstream Hindustan's—or rather, India's—narratives. This land has undergone a complex journey since the collision of the Eurasian Plate and the Indian Plate, which led to the subduction that formed the Himalayas and established the fertile land that has been on a civilizational journey ever since.

In the diverse landscape of global civilisations, few nations represent a blend of history and hope quite like

Bharat. Long before modern maps defined nation-states, Bharat not just as a place but as a shared way of thinking, had developed a perspective based on diversity, spiritual exploration, self-governance, and peaceful coexistence. Today, in the 21st century, as geopolitical realities change and the neoliberal order faces challenges, the world is looking east, searching for a model that is both sustainable and humane. In this context, the Bharat Model emerges, a unique approach that combines ancient wisdom with modern energy, showing that India is not a copy of the West but an innovator rooted in its own enduring principles. To grasp the Bharat Model is to journey through time. It involves comparing the dreams of a post-colonial nation in the 20th century with the confident strides of a revitalized Bharat in the 21st century. The 20th century saw India breaking free from colonialism, striving to establish itself while grappling with socialism and bureaucracy, all while facing poverty, partition, and a sense of despair. This period was marked by moral strength yet economic vulnerability a nation with Nobel Prize winners living alongside famines, a society full of ideas held back by inertia. In contrast, the Bharat of the 21st century, has experienced a significant transformation in policy and perception. The atmosphere around Raisina Hill now buzzes with revived civilisational confidence. The language has shifted from "Developing nation" to "aspirational power," and from "third world" to "third eye." Bharat no longer seeks approval through Western perspectives

but insists on its own understanding of progress one that values Dharma, harmony, and the dignity of life, not just GDP figures.

This change is deep and genuine. It is structural, systemic, and meaningful. The push for Aatmanirbharta (self-reliance) marks a clear move away from dependency. The Digital India mission has empowered millions, making governance more accessible than ever. UPI, an innovation from India, has surpassed many developed nations in real-time digital transactions. Welfare programs now prioritize dignity; Swachh Bharat Abhiyan redefines sanitation with a Gandhian spirit, while PM Awas Yojana builds not just homes but also an environment of respect. What sets the Bharat Model apart from monotonous technocratic governance is its deep connection to cultural roots. Unlike the Western model, which celebrates individualism and material gain, Bharat draws from its civilisational heritage that values Dharma over dogma, service over self-interest, and harmony over domination. Here, sacrifice is held in the same regard as yoga, and the pursuit of Artha (economic growth) is always aligned with a higher moral purpose. Bharat's soft power is strikingly evident in the global spread of yoga. What once seemed like obscure mysticism during colonial times has now become a vital part of global wellness. The International Day of Yoga, celebrated across continents, is not just about physical flexibility; it symbolizes that Bharat's ancient practices can address

the mental struggles of modern life. When leaders roll out yoga mats in places like Times Square or Paris, they honour not just a practice but a shift in perspective.

Bharat's rise as Vishwa guru is not a self-serving boast. It calls for a balance in the world. In a time when excessive consumerism harms the environment and identity politics threaten diversity, Bharat presents a civilisational framework of *Sarva Dharma Sambhava* and *Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam* — the world as one family. This is not mere idealism but a lived experience. In a world divided by faith and commerce, Bharat offers a model of coexistence built on diversity rather than uniformity. Critics are plentiful. Some claim that Bharat's pride in its civilisational past leans towards cultural superiority. However, that perspective misunderstands the essence. Having pride in one's heritage does not mean having disdain for others. The Bharat Model seeks not to replace the West but to enrich global discussions with homegrown ideas. It champions a multipolar world where no single culture holds a monopoly on virtue or vision. This civilisational revival is both political and philosophical. The government today reflects not only administrative changes but a reawakening of local traditions. The promotion of local crafts through One District One Product, the acceptance of

Ayush, and the digital revival of Indic texts illustrate a cultural affirmation that is confident without being defensive. On the global stage, Bharat's voice, whether

at the G20 or in climate talks, resonates with a moral perspective: development must connect to justice, and technology must include compassion. Indeed, the Bharat Model is not a one-size-fits-all blueprint. It does not offer a standard approach to governance or economic growth. Rather, it is a philosophy. It views the world not as a market but as a mandala; not as a battlefield of winners and losers, but as a space for shared prosperity.

As we stand on the brink of a new chapter, the need for such a model is more pressing than ever. The West struggles with crises of meaning, while the East faces challenges of memory.

Bharat offers a bridge connecting tradition with technology, the local with the global, spiritual heritage with scientific reasoning. This duality, this fusion of the sacred and the secular, is what makes the Bharat Model relevant and necessary. In the following sections, we will explore the various aspects of this model: its economic vision, cultural revival, governance innovations, and moral outlook. However, this introduction must conclude with an important note: the Bharat Model is not about reliving the past. It focuses on envisioning a future based on timeless truths. In a time of broken promises and borrowed ideas, Bharat charts a path that is uniquely its own a civilisation reclaiming its voice not through arrogance but through joy; not through domination but through compassion.

As the world looks for new guiding stars in uncertain times, Bharat rises, not just to compete but to contribute; not to assert control but to guide; not to lecture but to lead by example. This is the essence of the Bharat Model an offering from an ancient civilisation to a weary world, a model whose time may finally have come.

India, fondly referred to as Bharat, is not merely a country she is a throbbing, living civilization that has developed over the centuries of wisdom, values, and abundant diversity. Bharat is an embodiment of this philosophy of unity in diversity, where each area, culture, language, and tradition has room in a common vision of advancement based on our civilizational ethos.

Bharat is an extremely culturally diverse country. From the north's snow-covered mountains to the south's sea shores, from the west's deserts to the east's lush green meadows each tastes differently. Each state, each village, and even each festival is different, but they all merge into one national character.

Our linguistic richness cannot be surpassed. With 22 officially recognized languages and a couple of hundred widely spoken dialects across the subcontinent, Bharat is the living testimony of the power of language to unite, and not divide. The Bharat Model embraces such multilingual richness as a strength, and not a weakness, which adds Vigor to communication, letters, and the ethos of coexistence.

As far as traditional apparel is concerned, Bharat is a leader in diversity. From Tamil Nadu's elegant sarees to Punjab's vibrant phulkari, from Bengal's dhotis to Rajasthan's turbans, Odisha's Sambalpuri, every article of clothing is a reflection of local ingenuity, climatic flexibility, and age-old craftsmanship. Bharat's apparel traditions are part of the country's cultural legacy and have a tendency to resonate with spiritual, geographical, and even vocation-related identities.

Folk arts, customs, rituals, cuisine, and music also reveal a lot about Bharat's affluent heritage. Odissi dance of Odisha, Kathak of Uttar Pradesh, Carnatic music of the south, Bharat's art finds its beginnings in devotion, storytelling, and centuries of fine-tuning.

The Bharat Model is not uniformity. It is diversity in harmony, where all tradition and identity are retained, respected, and allowed to flourish as part of the larger national narrative. It is all about adapting to the times and remaining rooted in the ethos of our nation *Bharatiyata*. As we proceed along the path of a Viksit Bharat (Developed India), this model strongly reminds us: development is not a denial of our heritage, but its celebration, and a synthesis of it with innovation, openness, and probity.

The true soul of Bharat lies in its people simple, strong, spiritual, and deeply rooted in tradition. From the rugged mountains to the coastal plains, from deserts to rainforests, the sweetness of Indian hearts flows in

every handshake, every shared meal, and every warm “Namaste.” Each state and union territory of Bharat adds a unique flavour to this living civilization, making it not just a country, but an experience.

In Jammu & Kashmir, often called *heaven on earth*, the people are known for their unmatched hospitality, warm kehwa, and poetic hearts that echo Sufi traditions. In Ladakh, simplicity and resilience shine through their mountain lifestyle, with smiles warmer than the sunlit valleys.

Punjab is a land of bold hearts and open arms. The Punjabis are full of zest, celebrating life with bhangra beats and butter-laden parathas. Just beside it, the people of Haryana reflect honesty and strength, with rooted values and a fierce pride in their language and land.

Himachal Pradesh boasts people as serene and caring as its hills, while Uttarakhand’s residents *Devbhoomi ke log* are spiritual, disciplined, and grounded and kind in nature and the divine. In the plains of Uttar Pradesh, one finds the heart of India beating strong, where people express kindness through poetic speech and deeply embedded cultural rituals.

In Bihar, intellect meets humility. From ancient wisdom to modern aspirations, Biharis are resilient, grounded, and deeply aware of their roots. Jharkhand adds tribal pride and unity to the mix, with a spirit that dances with the beat of nature.

Odisha, the land of Jagannath, has people full of devotion, simplicity, and quiet dignity. They balance tradition with progress, and their gentle speech and warm hospitality are second to none. Chhattisgarh and Madhya Pradesh reflect the raw charm of central Bharat people who live close to nature, rich in tribal culture, and pure in heart. Their folk arts and spiritual traditions are deeply cherished.

Rajasthan, the desert jewel, is home to people whose grand hospitality, honour, and colourful attire make every visitor feel like royalty. Meanwhile, the folks in Gujarat are known for their entrepreneurial zeal, Garba energy, and sweetness both in their speech and snacks.

In Maharashtra, people carry a balanced blend of tradition and modernity, with a spirit of service, strength, and pride in their Maratha legacy. Goans, in contrast, are joyful, music-loving souls whose easy-going charm wins hearts instantly.

Heading south, Karnataka stands tall with its intellectual depth and cultural richness, and the people are known for their humility, discipline, and deep respect for heritage. In Tamil Nadu, tradition runs deep. The people there combine ancient wisdom with modern innovation, upholding values through their devotion and classical arts.

Kerala, God's own state, is blessed with people who are literate, aware, and deeply cultural. Their calm, caring demeanour and progressive outlook make them stand

out. In Andhra Pradesh and Telangana, the people's warmth matches the spice of their food bold, friendly, and vibrant in festivals and daily life alike.

The North-Eastern states Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Tripura, Arunachal Pradesh, and Sikkim bring ethereal beauty and unmatched simplicity. Their people are respectful, artistic, and live harmoniously with nature, preserving unique cultures that enrich the nation's soul.

West Bengal, the land of Tagore and revolution, is home to culturally rich and emotionally expressive people who take pride in art, intellect, and deep emotional bonds. In Delhi, the national capital, you find a cosmopolitan mix of people ambitious, outspoken, yet deeply respectful of Indian values.

Among the Union Territories, Chandigarh blends modernity and discipline. Puducherry offers French elegance with Tamil humility. The people of Andaman & Nicobar and Lakshadweep embody peace and harmony, living closely with nature. Dadra and Nagar Haveli & Daman and Diu reflect coastal charm and traditional lifestyles, while Ladakh, now a UT, continues to awe with its simplicity and spirituality.

From Kanyakumari to Kashmir, Gujarat to the Northeast, the sweetness of Bharat's people lies in their diversity, their ability to respect differences, and their shared sense of *Bharatiyata* the spirit of being Indian. Despite differences in language, customs, and clothes,

their hearts beat with one rhythm: *Unity in Diversity*. This is the human foundation of The Bharat Model a people-powered civilization, where humanity is the biggest religion.

Since June 2024, India has witnessed spirited action across all the major sectors, an indication of the government's vision to make Viksit Bharat a self-reliant, futuristic, and inclusive country. In the energy domain, India has witnessed record growth in renewable energy production with over 24% growth in renewable energy alone in six months and nearly 17% of the total power generated from non-hydro renewables. Colossal additions to solar and wind capacities and the Green Credit Programme under the Life mission have placed India in the best possible position to meet its climate objectives. In the infrastructure domain too, path-breaking efforts such as the inauguration of the world's tallest railway arch bridge over the Chenab River in Jammu & Kashmir and improved Amrit Bharat stations are linking remote locations and transforming the travel experience. The soon-to-be-built Vadhavan mega port, new national highways, and metro connectivity in Bengaluru, Pune, and Thane are enhancing multimodal connectivity.

Economically, the government approved an ₹1.17 lakh crore Employment-Linked Incentive program to create 35 million jobs by 2027. Reversal of angel tax and establishment of a ₹1,000 crore space startup venture capital fund was a confidence booster to India's startup

ecosystem, whereas the PLI schemes and rising semiconductor investment were an industrial turnaround signal. India also recorded its highest-ever GST collection of ₹2.37 lakh crore in April 2025, an economic resilience indicator. Digital India push continued with National Broadband Mission 2.0 launched to provide high-speed fiber connectivity to 270,000 villages and strong growth in UPI and digital credential systems like the National Academic Depository.

In health and wellness, Ayushman Bharat increased its free ₹5 lakh medical insurance cover to all above age 70, adding more healthcare protection. Housing was also included with ₹5.35 lakh crore being allocated for construction of 3 crore homes under PM Awas Yojana for more than one million families already. In governance, Modi 3.0 made a historic leap by replacing colonial-era laws with the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita, Bharatiya Sakshya Adhinyam to herald a people-centred judiciary. A new bill even addressed the question of exam cheating with strict penalization, evincing concern for the youth as well as integrity.

Defence, science, and technology witnessed the semiconductor mission of India taking flight with large foreign partnerships, and BioE3 policy propelled the biotech industry forward. Defence was bolstered with the induction of INS Arighaat (a nuclear submarine), while strategic tunnels and infrastructure were pushed

in border regions. In transport, the Indian civil aviation industry made future-proofed plans with more than 2,000 aircraft being ordered by Indian carriers, and Vande Bharat trains ran in the country, including sleeper models in trials. Such achievements in less than a year and a half indicate the bold, inclusive, and forward-looking strategy—putting the foundation stones of a confident, capable, and committed Viksit Bharat by 2047.

Bharat, with its age-old civilizational wisdom and modern-day developmental achievements, is now a global model across many sectors. In the field of digitalization, India's efforts like the Aadhaar platform and UPI (Unified Payments Interface) have set global benchmarks in inclusive digital administration and real-time money transactions, inspiring similar models in Asian and African nations. In space exploration, ISRO's low-cost and precise missions like Chandrayaan-3 and Aditya-L1 have established India as a reliable space partner, giving envy to advanced space agencies. As the "Pharmacy of the World," India was a global model during the COVID-19 pandemic through its Vaccine Maitri programme, sending vaccines to over 100 nations. Bharat's IT industry, with Bengaluru at its centre driving software exports, has become a global talent pool, offering digital solutions and services across the world.

With leadership in renewable energy through the International Solar Alliance (ISA) and global adoption

of solar and wind power, India is a beacon of green energy revolution. As the world's largest democracy, India boasts of peaceful and huge elections, reflecting electoral integrity and inclusivity the world wishes to emulate. In the startup space, Bharat has become the world's third-largest startup ecosystem, generating innovation in fintech, healthtech, and agritech, supported by initiatives like Startup India and the Atal Innovation Mission. India's very old tradition in handicrafts and textiles also enables sustainable fashion, while Yoga and Ayurveda, becoming global wellness trends, reflect India's soft power and cultural heritage.

On the agricultural front, India not only provides food security for its huge population but also plays a major role in foreign export of grains, and digital platforms such as e-NAM are changing farm transactions. India's role as the voice of the Global South, particularly during its G20 presidency, focused on equity, climate leadership, and inclusive growth. And last but not the least, with the WHO Global Centre for Traditional Medicine, Bharat is transforming global health paradigms by integrating traditional healing with evidence-based medicine. All these accomplishments make Bharat a living example that a traditional nation can be an innovation, resilience, and sustainable development world leader.

The journey of Bharat (India) from the 20th to the 21st century is one of resolve, re-birth, and re-emergence. It

is the tale of a civilization rediscovering itself, re-defining its resilience, and re-locating itself on the global map. From a recently independent country grappling with partition and poverty, Bharat is today one of the world's fastest-growing economies, a technology, space, and innovation hub, and a voice of peace and justice in global forums.

In the 20th century, Bharat was confronted with humongous issues. Post-independence in 1947, the country had to overcome the legacy of colonial plunder, trauma of partition, and the task of building a multicultural country from scratch. The first few decades were spent in institution-building by visionaries like Jawaharlal Nehru, who planted the seeds of democracy, scientific temper, and planned economic development. The Green Revolution of the 1960s converted India into a food-surplus country from a food-deficit one, and the White Revolution converted Bharat into the world's largest milk producer. Amidst wars, political instability, and economic slumps, India remained wedded to democratic values, while most post-independence countries moved towards authoritarianism.

The turning point was in 1991 economic reforms. Through liberalisation, privatisation, and globalisation, Bharat opened up its market, foreign investment, and unleashed entrepreneurial forces. This transformation propelled India from an agrarian economy to a services giant, especially in IT and pharma. Bengaluru was a

global tech hub, and Indian talent started to shine on the international stage. Bharat has also evolved further social, digital, infrastructure, and cultural during the 21st century. The Digital India program has brought the remotest of villages onto the web, facilitated e-governance, fintech services like UPI, and e-learning. Infrastructure took a quantum leap with roads, metro, better railways, and smart cities. India's Chandrayaan-3 and Aditya-L1 space missions have made India a world player in space, and the Make in India and Startup India programs have cultivated a culture of indigenization and innovation.

Socially, Bharat too has passed through the process of empowerment and inclusion. Women are taking over science, business, politics, and sports. Middle-class dreams, rural electrification, housing for all at reasonable cost, and healthcare in the form of schemes like Ayushman Bharat are a reflection of high hopes for inclusive progress. Indian youth, who comprise more than 65% of the population, are leading the transformation through innovation, grit, and connectivity.

Spiritually and culturally, Bharat has been restored to its soft power. Yoga, Ayurveda, Indian classical arts and philosophy are being celebrated all over the world. Simultaneously, India's democratic culture, climate leadership (through the International Solar Alliance), and search for peace make it a global model of ancient wisdom that fuels modern innovation.

It is not just the economic rise of Bharat from the 20th to the 21st century it is the renaissance of the civilization, in which tradition and technology, diversity and expansion, faith and visionary thought are hand-in-hand. Bharat is today an assertive, empathetic, and capable country a country which can lead the world not by domination, but by dharma.

Bharat's journey towards a Viksit (Developed) Nation is not only led by government efforts but also by vision-led efforts of its entrepreneurs and philanthropists, who are filled with the spirit of Seva (service), Dharma (duty), and Nation First. They and they alone have set world standards of corporate governance, social responsibility, and nation-building and therefore are fine examples of the Bharat Model.

One of the most widely recognized names in Indian philanthropy is Azim Premji, the chairman of Wipro. Through living a simple life and being highly devoted to the welfare of the public, Premji has donated more than ₹2 lakh crore via the Azim Premji Foundation to become the world's largest individual philanthropist. Premji's philanthropic activities range from education, rural development, and healthcare to livelihood with a specific emphasis on institution-building in remote and underserved areas. His work demonstrates how money with sense could transform the lives of hundreds of thousands quietly with immense effect.

Ratan Tata, Emeritus Chairman, Tata Group, is another one of the giants who embody the spirit of Bharat in each act of kindness and service of the country. Through the Tata Trusts, which own more than 66% of Tata Sons' profits, billions have been spent on cancer care, education, rural development, nutrition, and disaster relief. Whether building the Indian Institute of Science in the bygone era or startups and mental health in the era of today, Tata's legacy is one of humility and dignity, national pride, and continued social commitment.

Gautam Adani, on behalf of the Adani Foundation, is working on a mass scale in the education, women empowerment, health, and sustainable living sectors. His recent commitment of donating ₹60,000 crore to charities over the next few decades on his 60th birthday is an exhibit of visionary leadership for future service. The Adani Vidya Mandirs and rural health centres are themselves examples where corporate success meets grassroots change.

Reliance Industries Chairman Mukesh Ambani is also India's biggest growth driver. Reliance Foundation, headed by Nita Ambani, is operating in the sectors of education, disaster relief, women's empowerment, and rural development. Reliance established hospitals, oxygen units, and gave huge relief in the COVID-19 pandemic, projecting corporate India as a national first responder. Reliance Jio's digital revolution also

empowered crores, especially rural India, with affordable internet access.

Some of the most well-known names are Shiv Nadar, the founder of HCL, who has transformed the educational system with the Shiv Nadar Foundation by establishing institutions like SSN College and Shiv Nadar University. Biocon chairperson Kiran Mazumdar-Shaw has popularized healthcare and scientific research, while Narayana Murthy and Sudha Murthy of Infosys have been at the forefront of several education, sanitation, and literacy empowerment initiatives around the nation through the Infosys Foundation.

Both of them are a new generation of dharmic capitalism, success not only in returns but lives transformed. What they do is in keeping with the Bharat Model—one of giving rather than getting, country rather than self, and legacy rather than luxury. They encourage every Indian to dream big but give back bigger, creating a golden path for inclusive growth, ethical leadership, and overall development.

As Bharat moves from its great civilizational past to a dynamic future, the shift from the 20th to the 21st century stands as a testament to the nation's resilience, unity, and vision. From breaking the chains of colonial rule to becoming a hub of innovation, technology, and democratic values, Bharat has not only evolved but also inspired. Today, as the world watches India rise, it is

not just witnessing economic progress it is witnessing the resurgence of a nation deeply rooted in Dharma, diversity, and development.

The goal of Viksit Bharat by 2047, marking 100 years of independence, is not merely a political vision it is a national mission. It envisions a Bharat that is economically powerful, socially inclusive, technologically advanced, environmentally sustainable, and culturally confident. A Bharat where every citizen has access to quality education, healthcare, housing, and livelihood; where youth become global leaders and innovation flourishes with Indian values at its core.

This journey demands collective action from governments, institutions, businesses, and every individual. With unity, integrity, and determination, Bharat is poised not just to be a developed country but a model for the world one where growth is human-centred, peace is paramount, and progress is guided by timeless wisdom. Viksit Bharat is not a distant dream; it is a destiny we are shaping today together, with pride, purpose, and unwavering resolve.

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Feedback

We Value Your Feedback

Your thoughts and reflections matter. After reading *The Bharat Model*, if you have suggestions, constructive feedback, or simply wish to share how the book impacted you, please feel free to write to us at vikshitbharatb@gmail.com. Every response will be appreciated with utmost sincerity, as your insights can help us improve future editions and continue meaningful conversations on India's journey toward becoming a *Viksit Bharat*.

