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An Analysis of India - ASEAN Trade in Agricultural Commodities with Special Focus on Indonesia, Malaysia and Vietnam

Anil Varma R.

The present paper seeks to analyse India -ASEAN bilateral trade in agricultural commodities during 2001-2018 period in the background of the ASEAN India Free Trade Agreement (AIFTA). India engaged in a Free trade agreement with the ten member ASEAN economies in 2009. The paper briefly examines the trend, pattern and composition of India's agricultural commodities export and import basket in her trade with ASEAN economies. The paper focuses on the trade of major plantation commodities of pepper, coffee and tea with Indonesia, Malaysia and Vietnam. There is strong evidence to suggest that the imports of India, of pepper and coffee increased from Indonesia and Vietnam after AIFTA operationalised in 2010.

Free exchange of goods and services between economies is widely accepted for the mutual benefits that it brings to the nations engaging in such exchange. Over time, economies evolved alternative methods for free exchange of goods and services to obtain the optimum outcome. As a result, Regional Trade Agreements (RTAs) as opposed to multilateral free trade system were widely propagated and largely implemented. RTAs are based on preferential treatments as opposed to the most favoured nation (MFN) treatment of multinational free trade regime. In 1996 there were 88 such preferential treatments worldwide, in different forms like declarations of intent, unilateral preferential trade agreements, free trade treaties, customs unions, and the common market. They covered half of the world trade during that time (Moser 1997). The assertion that 306 regional trade agreements were there in force as on September 2020, (WTO.2021) may be the manifestation of a breakdown of multilateral trade negotiations programme.

Introduction

India adopted the policy of engaging in regional trade agreements to maximise her economic interests in the external sector. To name a few, India signed India-Sri Lanka Free Trade Agreement (operational since March 2000), Agreement on South Asian Free Trade Area (SAFTA - operational since January 2006) and Asia Pacific Trade Agreement (APTA - Operational since September 2006). India also signed bilateral agreements with Bangladesh, Singapore and Thailand in early 2000s. As a major foray in to regionalism, India signed a preferential trade agreement with the ten-member Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) in 2009.

General objective of the present paper is to analyse India's trade relations with major ASEAN economies in the context of ASEAN - India Free Trade Agreement (AIFTA). Specifically, the paper seeks to examine the trend, pattern and composition of India's trade in agricultural commodities with Malaysia, Indonesia, and Vietnam during 2001 to 2018 period. With this objective the present paper wishes to deal with the following research questions. What is the trend of commodity wise agricultural exports and import of India in her trade with major ASEAN economies during 2001-2018 period? What is the composition of India's agricultural exports and imports?

The present analysis may be important at least for five reasons. Agricultural sector contributes around 15 % to national output of the selected economies, except for Malaysia. However agricultural sector provides employment and livelihood for majority of the population in these economies. A reduction in trade barriers of the products belonging to agricultural sector, will thus affect the living standards of majority of the people

in these economies. The present paper in this context focuses on the trade in agricultural commodities between India and selected ASEAN economies.

Secondly, the AIFTA treats tea, coffee and pepper as ‘special products’ in india’s tariff reduction commitments. As it is identified that the tariff rates of these commodities are high in international standards, the AIFTA sought to bring down them in a phased manner by 2019. This was expected to increase their imports from Vietnam and Indonesia, where they enjoy very high productivity. This was expected to reduce production, income of the farmers and agricultural workers (Harilal, 2010). In these premises, the present paper analyses the trend in imports of pepper, tea and coffee from Indonesia, Malaysia and Vietnam.

Thirdly, Among the ten country ASEAN economies, Malaysia, Indonesia, and Vietnam emerged as major trade partners of India among the ASEAN economies, since the formation of AIFTA. A detailed analysis of India’s trade in agricultural commodities with these economies is essential to understand the strength and weakness of Indian export direction and import sources as it may benefit potential bilateral trade. This may also indicate the welfare implications of trade for India and major ASEAN economies.

Fourthly, for last three decades, Malaysia, Indonesia Thailand and Vietnam were fast growing with relatively better social indicators of health and education. They transformed from a poor traditional economy to more modern, lower middle-income economies (World Bank, 2020). India also emerged as one of the fastest growing economies of the world, for quite some time during the last three decades.

Fifth reason and perhaps most important is the expansion of trade of these economies with non-traditional trade partners in recent years. Writing in the context of Vietnam it is pointed out by Dinh Thi Thanh Binh. et al (2010) that she expanded her trade relations with countries in western Asia and Africa, as the traditional markets are saturated. India is a not a traditional trade partner of Indonesia, Malaysia and Vietnam.

The rest of the paper is arranged as follows. Following the introduction part, there is a brief review of the data sources and methodology. Subsequently the paper examines the country specific selected economic variables. There after the paper examines India’s trade with Indonesia, Malaysia and Vietnam over the last two decades. The following section is to analyse India’s agricultural trade with the selected economies. Conclusion is given in the last section.

Data and Methodology

Data on bilateral trade between India and the selected economies, at the HS2-digit and HS6-digit classifications, for the period of 2001-2018 is obtained from the International Trade Centre (ITC), World Integrated Trade Solution (WITS) and the COMTRADE databases. The paper seeks to examine the trend pattern and composition of India’s exports, imports and total trade. The compound annual growth rates of exports and imports of agricultural commodities are also obtained. For obtaining the trend in trade flows three log linear regressions with the following functional forms are undertaken for each trade flow of each country.

$$\ln TT = \beta_0 + \beta_1 t + u_1$$

$$\ln IM = \beta_0 + \beta_1 t + u_1$$

$$\ln IE = \beta_0 + \beta_1 t + u_1$$

Where TT is total trade, t is time, IM is Indian import from these economies, IE is Indian export to these economies. The estimations of these equations provide us the growth rate of total bilateral trade, Imports, and Exports of India viz a viz the selected ASEAN economies. The paper also seeks to identify the agricultural commodities actually exported and imported by India from the selected economies during 2001-2018 period. For this purpose, the trade data at HS-6-digit level is analysed.

Country Specific Economic Aspects of Selected Economies

The following table provides an overall picture of the country specific economic aspects of the selected economies.

Table 1: Selected Economic and Social Indicators of Selected Asean Economies and India (2018)

COUNTRY	INDIA	VIETNAM	MALAYSIA	INDONESIA
GDP(US\$b)	2713.17	245.21	358.58	1042.24
GDP growth	6.12	7.08	4.74	5.17
GDP per capita (current US\$)	2005.86	2566.60	11373.23	3893.85
Population (million)	1352.617	95.5404	31.52859	267.66
Population ages 15-64 (% of total)	66.77	69.55	69.33	67.59
Agriculture	15	15	8	13
Industry	27	34	38	39
Manufacturing	15	16	22	19
Service sector value added	49.1	41.1	53	43.41
Exports as percentage of GDP	19.74	105.83	68.76	20.97
Imports as percentage of GDP	23.64	102.47	61.75	22.03
Life expectancy	69.4	75.3	76	71.5

Source: Author's preparation from World Bank, IMF, UNDP data bases.

From the above table it may be noted that, more than 65% of the population of all these economies are in the working age group (15 to 64 years). This demographic dividend is expected to lead the economy towards greater growth. Demographic dividend refers to the growth potential that results from shifts in a population's age structure (United Nations Population Fund, 2020). India also enjoys a demographic dividend as its working population comes around 67 percent of its total population. However, India's rank in the Human Capital index is 115. India's current population of 1.3 billion is projected to rise to 1.4 billion by 2025, 1.5 billion by 2030 and 1.6 billion by 2050. However, it may be noticed that India's labour participation rate is falling. This may be because of the character of labour market, education and skill development process in India. Enhanced education and skill development facilities and better utilisation of Indian labour market is essential to capture the benefits of demographic dividend (Atri Mukherjee, et al., 2019).

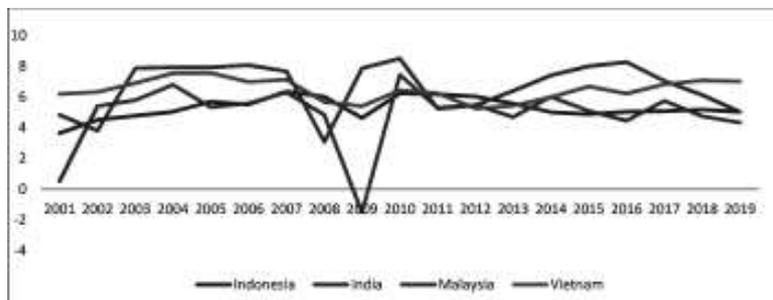
Though Vietnam lags behind Malaysia and India in terms of per capita income and GDP, she fares well in terms of social indicators. Vietnam's infant mortality rate was 32.6 in 1993. It improved to 16.7 in 2019. Life expectancy was 70.53 in 1993. It improved to 75.3 years in 2019. In many of these indicators, Vietnam lagged behind Malaysia. This social progress is reflected in the Human Development Index value and Rank of Vietnam. Vietnam occupies 118th rank in Human Development index (HDI) in 2019 with an index value of .693 (United Nations Development Programme, 2020). India's Rank in HDI is 129. Vietnam has lifted 40- 45 million people out of poverty thereby reducing the poverty rate from 70% in 1993 to just 6 percent in 2019 (Busch, M. 2017, World Bank, 2020).

India's Bilateral Trade with Selected ASEAN Economies

The selected ASEAN economies are fast-growing economies of Asia. Their economies had a strong growth due to the high domestic demand, strong manufacturing and processing industry and high Foreign Direct Investment (Asian Development Bank, 2020). Besides, ASEAN economies had shown relatively stable growth rates during the analysis period. The fall in external demand during periods of recession (for example

2008-09), might have impacted their manufacturing sectors performance, as their goods and services markets depend much on external demand. However, it may be noted that Indonesia and Vietnam managed to maintain the trend of growth rate even when their economies depend much on external demand, there by fairly decoupling from the global economic turmoil.

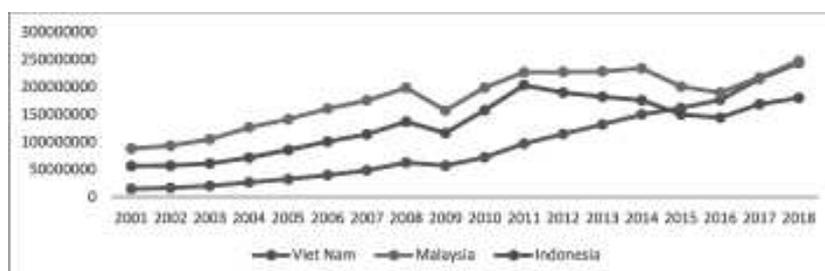
FIGURE 1: Annual GDP Growth Rate of India and Major Asean Economies (2001 – 2019)



Source: Author's preparation from World Bank data

The degree of openness of an economy may be indicated by the share of value of exports and imports, to GDP. It may be seen from the data that Vietnam and Indonesia depend much on trade for its growth. Their share of trade value in GDP is much higher compared to India and Malaysia. In the case of India, the ratio of the value of exports to GDP is just 19.34 and the ratio of the value of imports to GDP is 23.64. On the external sector the economic reform policy initiatives in Vietnam envisaged a shift from substitution of imports to promotion of exports (Nguyen Thi Tue Anh, 2016). The following diagram examines how the selected economies trade with the world.

Figure 2: Total Trade of the Selected Economies (2001-2018)



Source: Author's preparation from ITC database.

Vietnam had a lower level of trade with the rest of the world in 2001. However, Vietnam could overcome the initial level difference over the period under analysis and by 2016, she could catch up Malaysia's trade with the world, with highest annual growth. More importantly, difference between Vietnam's export and import growth is very small suggesting a balanced external sector performance by the country.

Table 2 : Growth of export, import and total trade with the world

COUNTRY	EXPORT	IMPORT	TOTAL TRADE
Vietnam	16.74	16.06	16.40
Malaysia	5.91	6.19	6.04
Indonesia	6.68	10.56	8.34

Source: Author's preparation from ITC database.

It may be seen that the total trade of Vietnam (with the world) has been growing at an average annual growth rate of 16.4 percentage during the period of analysis. Value of Vietnam's total export to the world grew

at the rate of 16.74 percentage. Value of Vietnam’s total import grew at 16.06 percentage through the period of analysis. Indonesia also registered a growth rate of 8.34 percentage in its total trade.

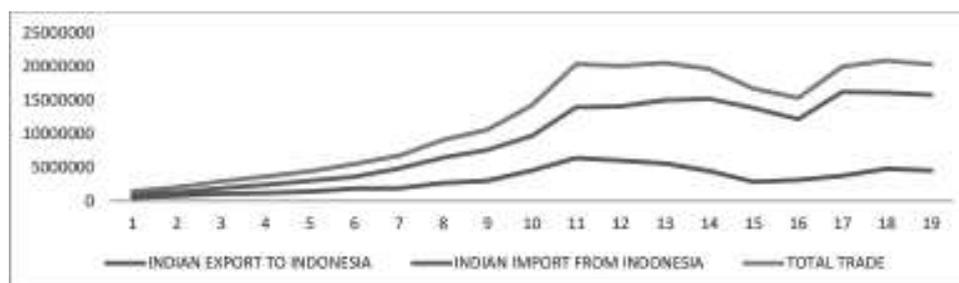
India - Indonesia trade

Indian exports to Indonesia grew at a compound annual growth rate of 13.29 % during 2001-2018 period. About 70 percentage of imports of Indonesia in 2001 from India consisted of intermediate goods and agricultural commodities (HS 1-24). About 42 percentage of total import of Indonesia (export from India) consists of raw materials. Capital goods and chemicals also played an important part in the import basket of Indonesia in 2018.

Indian import from Indonesia grew at a compound annual growth rate of 18.19% during 2001-2018 period. About 40 percent of Indonesian exports to India (Indian import from Indonesia) consisted of vegetables and another 40 percent consisted of intermediate commodities in 2001. Consumer goods and fuel also were important items of import basket of India. In 2018, 47 % of total exports of Indonesia (Indian import) consisted of raw materials and about 40 percentage of imports consisted of fuel. The percentage of vegetables in total export of Indonesia have come down significantly. The percentage of intermediate commodities and raw materials have significantly gone up. India is the second largest importer of coal and crude palm oil (CPO) from Indonesia. India imports minerals, rubber, pulp and paper and hydrocarbons reserves.

India’s share of exports of intermediate commodities to Indonesia declined to 41.03 % in 2018 from 50.44 % in 2001. This is about 42 percent of Indonesia’s import from India in 2018. The share of raw materials in India’s total import was 49.61% in 2018.

Figure 3: India indonesia bilateral trade (2001-2018)



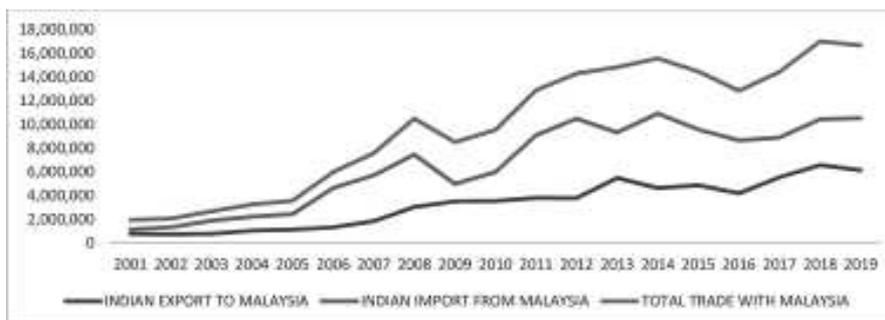
Source: Author’s preparation from ITC database

India - Malaysia Trade

Malaysia has very high trade relations with all major Asian economies. It is seen that 43.67 % of its export and 43.57 % of its imports are capital goods in 2018 (WITS). Indian exports to Malaysia grew at a compound annual growth rate of 14.54% during 2001-2018 period. Except few items there is an increase in the exports of industrial raw materials from India to Malaysia. It is known that 46.98% of Malaysia’s import from India consisted of consumer goods in 2018. It is also revealed that 36.75 % of Malaysia’s import from India consisted of fuel and 32.28% consisted of intermediate commodities.

Indian imports from Malaysia grew at a compound annual growth rate of 13.65 % during 2001-2018 period and 32.18 % of exports of Malaysia (imports of India) consisted of vegetables in 2001. Nearly 26.73% of exports of Malaysia consisted of raw materials and 25.97% consisted of consumer goods. It is seen that 42.69 % of Malaysia’s total export to India (Indian import from Malaysia) consisted of Intermediate commodities. Hence, we may conclude that intermediate commodities emerged as an important component in the trade between Malaysia and India by 2018. 25.64 % and 24.95% of Malaysia’s total export to India (Indian import from Malaysia) consisted of raw materials and fuel respectively. The share of consumer goods has drastically come down to 14.21 in 2018.

FIGURE 4: India Malaysia Bilateral Trade (2001-2018)



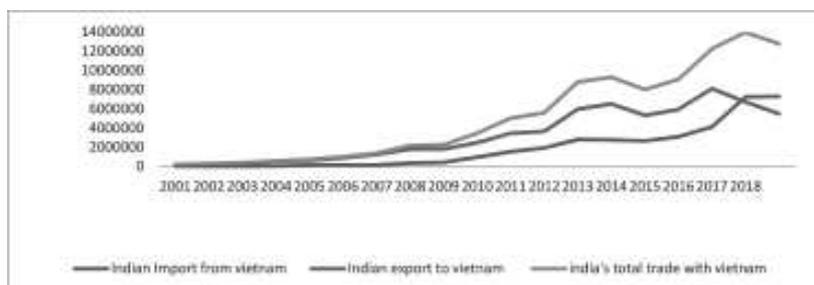
Source: Author's preparation from ITC database.

India - Vietnam trade

India granted the most favoured nation status to Vietnam in 1975. Subsequently both nations signed a bilateral trade agreement in 1978. The Bilateral Investment Promotion and Protection Agreement (BIPPA) was signed in 1997. In 2010 the ASEAN-India free trade agreement came into effect. Trade between the countries increased since the agreement was signed.

Total bilateral trade between India and Vietnam grew at an average annual rate of 25.46 percentage during 2001 to 2018 period. Indian exports to Vietnam grew by 20.98 percentage and imports grew by 39.82 percentage. It may be seen from the following figure that the total bilateral trade between India and Vietnam took off for an increase after 2010. It may also be seen that the trade balance remained more or less stable before turning against India in 2017.

FIGURE 5: India Vietnam Bilateral Trade (2001 - 2018)



Source: Author's preparation from ITC database

India's total trade value remained below US\$ 3000000 until 2009. Total exports, Imports and total trade began to increase thereafter. India's export increased slightly in 2012 before it declined in the 2014-15 period. Though the imports didn't show much increase during 2012, it finally began to increase in 2017. The rise in imports and a fall in exports of India finally lead to a negative trade balance by 2018.

It may be seen that the share of raw materials in Indian exports have significantly gone up during 2001-2018 period. It was just 10.64 percentage of India's total exports in 2001. However, it went up to 56.93 in 2018. Animal products occupy 51.5 percent of exports to Vietnam in 2017. It is just 11.57 percentage of Vietnam's imports from India. The share of consumer goods import from Vietnam to India was 59.22% in 2001. It declined to 17.91% in 2018. The share of capital goods and intermediate goods increased. It may be noted that electric machinery items occupy 39.25 % of India's import in 2017. This is 38.55% of total export of Vietnam to India in 2017.

The increase in demand for raw materials and metals may be due to the missing middle¹ nature of the Vietnamese economy. Majority of the products that is exported by Vietnam is produced with low local content. Vietnam's textile and footwear industry are labor intensive industries with low-cost structure. This lower cost structure is expected to benefit Vietnam in its recent preferential trade agreements (Hansjörg Herr et

al.2016). India could export textiles and leather products to Vietnam at lower costs than many of Vietnam's lower cost suppliers.

TABLE 3: India - Asean Trade in Agricultural Commodities

YEAR	INDONESIA			MALAYSIA			VIETNAM		
	EXPORTS	IMPORTS	TOTAL TRADE	EXPORTS	IMPORTS	TOTAL TRADE	IMPORT	EXPORT	TOTAL TRADE
2001	4,76,779	9,66,886	14,43,665	7,88,125	11,52,337	19,40,462	17,383	2,17,964	23,5347
2002	7,69,612	12,63,250	20,32,862	7,42,787	13,30,504	20,73,291	28,053	3,04,441	3,32,494
2003	10,39,615	18,79,766	29,19,381	7,93,087	18,94,285	26,87,372	33,557	3,78,841	4,12,398
2004	12,05,594	24,27,665	36,33,259	10,40,207	22,14,486	32,54,693	73,208	5,34,846	6,08,054
2005	13,90,066	30,18,949	44,09,015	11,43,775	24,35,996	35,79,771	1,27,378	6,33,465	7,60,843
2006	18,69,806	36,10,443	54,80,249	13,31,365	46,55,925	59,87,290	1,59,826	8,74,098	10,33,924
2007	18,78,196	48,40,346	67,18,542	18,50,254	57,25,558	75,75,812	1,53,134	12,41,477	13,94,611
2008	26,59,314	64,31,337	90,90,651	30,34,408	74,61,390	1,04,95,798	3,71,605	18,12,607	21,84,212
2009	30,02,991	75,99,638	1,06,02,629	35,24,714	49,90,269	85,14,983	4,42,906	18,33,500	22,76,406
2010	45,57,083	96,95,329	1,42,52,412	35,55,312	59,95,904	95,51,216	9,93,512	24,75,596	34,69,108
2011	64,00,248	1,39,64,663	2,03,64,911	37,98,820	91,06,225	1,29,05,045	15,54,280	34,66,525	50,20,805
2012	60,21,918	1,40,68,291	2,00,90,209	37,91,196	1,04,94,094	1,42,85,290	19,45,485	36,58,160	56,03,645
2013	55,57,939	1,49,84,084	2,05,42,023	54,96,821	93,30,737	1,48,27,558	28,26,668	59,87,614	88,14,282
2014	44,44,760	1,51,84,884	1,96,29,644	46,42,233	1,09,28,503	1,55,70,736	27,81,693	65,26,524	93,08,217
2015	28,38,951	1,38,41,476	1,66,80,427	48,89,374	95,68,161	1,44,57,535	26,81,722	53,30,982	80,12,704
2016	31,31,114	1,21,88,631	1,53,19,745	41,88,132	86,52,905	1,28,41,037	31,05,465	59,56,938	90,62,403
2017	37,63,710	1,62,28,107	1,99,91,817	55,47,733	88,97,929	1,44,45,662	41,40,090	81,16,919	1,22,57,009
2018	48,02,577	1,60,98,059	2,09,00,636	65,67,583	1,04,36,691	1,70,04,274	72,46,953	67,15,614	1,39,62,567

Source: Author's preparation from ITC database.

INDIA-ASEAN TRADE IN AGRICULTURAL COMMODITIES

Agricultural sector remains as the primary livelihood of 58% of Indian population. However, it contributes to about 17.8 % of India's Gross Domestic Product (Economic Survey, 2020) thereby suggesting the presence of disguised unemployment in the sector. Agriculture contributed 13 to 15 percentage to GDP of Vietnam and Indonesia in 2018. They enjoy greater factor productivity in several agricultural commodities (World Bank 2016). Indonesia and Vietnam are world's leading producers of many plantation commodities (pepper, rubber, tea and coffee) in which India has some of comparative advantage.

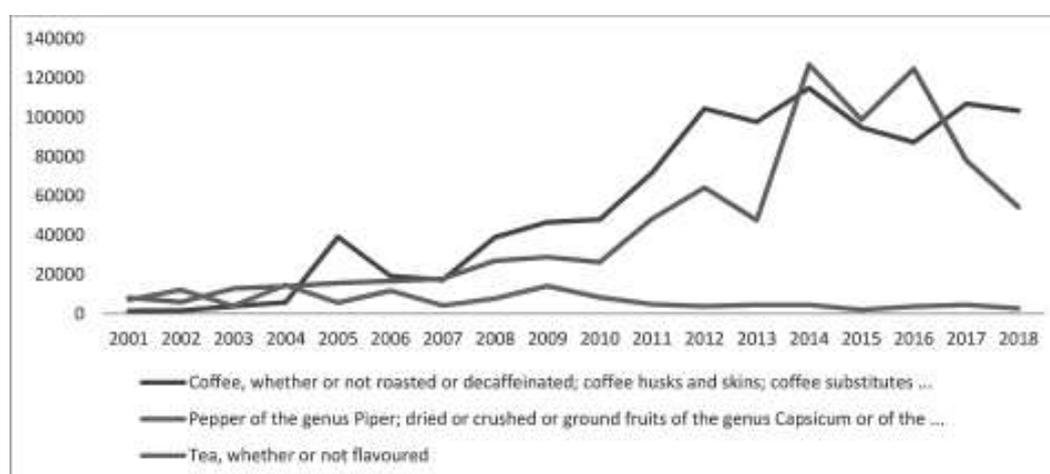
India's total Agricultural trade with ASEAN grew at a compound annual growth rate of 14.46 per cent during the period of analysis. Export to ASEAN grew at 16.35 percentage and imports grew by 13.41 percentage during 2001-2018. The growth in exports of agricultural commodities were larger than overall growth of exports but the growth in agricultural imports were smaller than total imports during the period. This suggests the increasing presence of non-agricultural commodities in India's import basket over time. The following table summarizes the results of the log linear equations to find compound annual growth rates of exports and imports of agricultural commodities, with the selected economies, during the period of analysis.

TABLE 4: Compound Annual Growth Rate of Exports and Imports of India to Selected Economies

	Agricultural Exports	Agricultural Imports	All Exports	All Imports
ASEAN	16.35	13.41	14.46	15.8
Vietnam	31.30 %	23.56 %	24.30 %	42.27 %.
Malaysia	9.89 %	13.35 %	14.54 %	13.65 %
Indonesia	8.51 %	14.41 %	12.46 %	18.19 %

Author's preparation from ITC database.

Pepper, tea and coffee are imported primarily from Indonesia and Vietnam. The imports of these commodities were minimum till 2009. Thereafter the value of imports began to increase. The value of coffee imports increased by 28.31 % and that of pepper increased by 17.51%.

FIGURE 6: India's Import of Pepper, Tea and Coffee From ASEAN

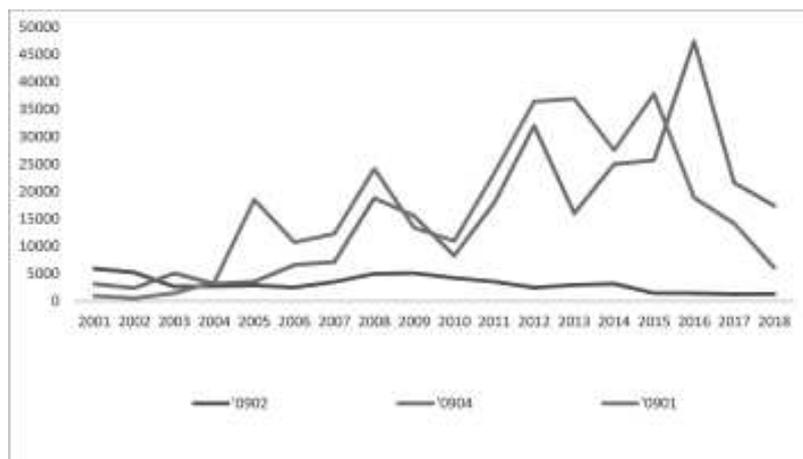
Author's preparation from ITC database.

Agricultural Trade with Indonesia

Agricultural exports consist of 14.34 % of India's total export to Indonesia in 2018. In 2001 this was 49.69 %. The export share declined continuously till 2010 to 9.81%. There after it began to increase and finally declined in 2018. The declining trend shows the rise in exports of non-agricultural commodities from India to Indonesia during the period of analysis. Agricultural exports increased at a compound annual growth rate of 8.51 % during the period of analysis. Non-agricultural exports of India increased at a compound annual growth rate of 13.97%, while its share in total exports remained around 80 % during large part of the analysis period. India's agricultural import from Indonesia consisted of 41.73 % of total Indian import from Indonesia in 2001. It declined to 23.43 % in 2018. Compound annual growth of imports of agricultural commodities constitute 14.41% and for non-agricultural goods 20.95% during the period of analysis.

Analysis of trade data of agricultural commodities at HS 6-digit level reveal that the following commodities are traded between India and Indonesia. Indian exports to Indonesia include frozen, boneless meat of bovine animals, pepper, coriander, ginger, coffee and tea, vegetables, groundnuts and other oil seeds etc. Indian imports consist of coffee, pepper, ginger, tea, cloves, cardamom, coca powder, coca paste and coca shells, Palm oil and copra. It may be seen that the Import basket of India consists of large varieties of commodities than the export basket.

FIGURE 7: India's Import of Pepper, Tea and Coffee from Indonesia



Author's preparation from ITC database.

Agricultural Trade with Malaysia

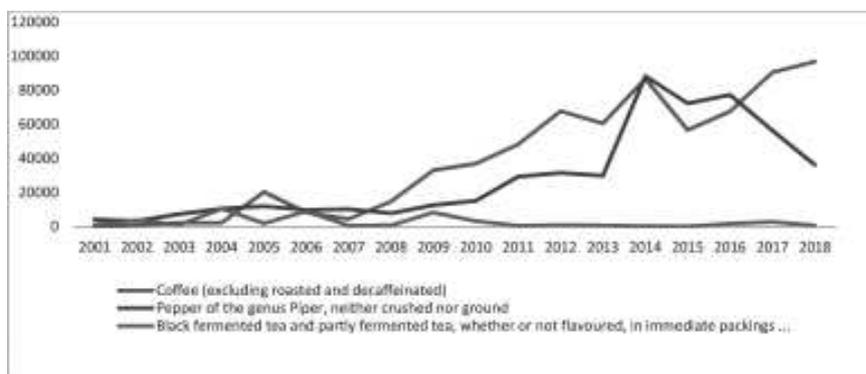
Share of Agricultural exports from India to Malaysia were 26.24% of total exports of India in 2001. It declined to 13.21% in 2018. The share of India's agricultural imports from Malaysia decreased from 37.13% to 13.63% during the analysis period. Agricultural exports from India to Malaysia grew at a compound annual growth rate of 9.89% during 2001-2018 period. Non-agricultural exports grew by 16.18% during the period of analysis. Indian imports of agricultural commodities grew at a compound annual growth rate of 13.35% during the period of analysis.

Analysis of trade data of agricultural commodities at HS 6-digit level reveal that the following commodities are traded between India and Malaysia. Indian exports to Malaysia include Frozen, boneless meat of bovine animals, pepper, coriander, ginger, tea, coffee, onion, potato, dried vegetables, groundnuts and other oilseeds, rice etc. India imports palm oil, coconut copra, animal and vegetable fats etc from Malaysia. India's export basket consists of large varieties of commodities than India's import basket.

Agricultural trade with Vietnam

Indian export of agricultural commodities to Vietnam grew at a compound annual growth rate of 31.30% during the analysis period. Total exports of India to Vietnam increased to 24.30% during the period. India's agricultural import from Vietnam grew at a compound annual growth rate of 23.56% while total imports grew by 42.27%. India exports bovine meat and meat products (02) fish (03) groundnuts and other oilseeds (12), pepper, Ginger, cardamom etc. to Vietnam. India's import items from Vietnam include coffee, pepper, tea, coriander, ginger etc.

FIGURE8: India's Import of Tea, Pepper and Coffee from Vietnam (2001-2018)



Author's preparation from ITC database.

Conclusion

India's look east policy is considered as a major shift from its traditional external sector policies that gave major thrust to multilateral engagements for free trade. The new initiatives for regional co-operation resulted in the signing of an agreement with the ten member ASEAN economies. The AIFTA was operationalised in 2010. Indonesia, Malaysia and Vietnam emerged as major trade partners of India by the second half of 2010's. This article analytically examined India's bilateral trade with these economies for the period 2001-2018, in the background of AIFTA. The analysis has revealed the trend, pattern and composition of India's trade with three major trade partners of ASEAN. The study also critically examined India's export and import of Agricultural commodities with these economies.

It is clear from the analysis, that India's trade with the selected ASEAN economies significantly increased after 2009, the year AIFTA was signed. There is strong evidence to suggest that the AIFTA catalysed growth in trade between India and the ASEAN economies. India found these economies as potential market for its products while ASEAN economies identified India as a non-traditional export destination. Indonesia, Malaysia and Vietnam emerged as major trade partners of India. India's export, import and hence total trade with these economies grew considerably after the agreement came in to existence. Comparison of growth rates of agricultural and non-agricultural imports suggests the increasing presence of non-agricultural commodities over time. AIFTA is the major reason for these dynamics. The highest growth rate was in the case of exports and imports from Vietnam.

Trade in agricultural commodities between India and major ASEAN economies registered significant growth during the period of analysis (2001-2018). Growth in agricultural exports to ASEAN was greater than overall exports. Agriculture is the primary occupation of all the members of AIFTA except Singapore. Growth in India's imports of agricultural commodities were lesser than overall imports from ASEAN. Exports destined to Vietnam from India registered highest growth rate among export flows of agricultural commodities to ASEAN economies. Imports of agricultural commodities from Vietnam also registered highest growth rate among import flows from ASEAN economies. However, the annual growth rate of imports of agricultural commodities from Vietnam were lesser than the growth rate of all products imports from Vietnam. This suggests that India maintained its competitiveness in exports of its agricultural commodities, while she protected her agriculture sector from excessive imports from ASEAN economies.

Ex-ante analysis of AIFTA suggested higher imports of three major plantation commodities (pepper, tea and coffee) as a result of the implementation of AIFTA. They were also identified as critical commodities that decide the net welfare impact of the AIFTA on agricultural sector. The present paper also did an ex-post examination of data on imports and exports flows of India, in these commodities. As of now, there is strong evidence to conclude that India increased its import of pepper and coffee from Indonesia and Vietnam during the period of analysis. Imports of tea remained more or less the same from all the three major economies during the period of analysis. The analysis clearly suggests that the import of coffee and pepper increased only after AIFTA operationalised in 2010.

Notes

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China's 'Art of War' with India

B. Vivekanandan

Sun Tzu's The Art of War gives detailed instructions, to the Chinese leadership of how to defeat an opponent/enemy by playing cunning and guile. Deception and fooling the opponent/enemy are its watch words. Know your enemy is the preliminary exercise. It tells that "if you know yourself and your enemy, you can always win", and that "If you know neither yourself nor your enemy then you will most likely lose". It states also that "all successful warfare is based on deception", and that "success is best achieved by fooling opponents with misinformation, deceit and decisive actions.... There is no such thing as fairness in war or competition. One has to do whatever is necessary to win". The strategy contained in The Art of War is the one which China has been, and is, applying in its bilateral relationship with India. Therefore, if any Indian leader who deals with China, without studying the strategy contained in this little handbook, like what Jawaharlal Nehru did in 1950s, and what Narendra Modi is doing now, would be fooling himself at the cost of India's national and territorial interests, and would end up in deep disappointment.

The Art of War is China's hallowed strategic manual which steers China's relationship with India. Written by Sun Tzu, a military General of the Wu nation of the mainland China, about 2500 years ago, *The Art of War* is a manual of how to deceive and defeat an opponent/enemy in a planned way.¹ It contains a strategy which easily outwits the strategies incorporated in Kautilya's *Arthashastra* and Machiavelli's *The Prince*. Though Sun Tzu wrote this handbook for the use of Chinese war strategists, Beijing quietly uses it now as also a strategic manual of its international, political, diplomatic and business relationships. Nonetheless, the strategy contained in *The Art of War* is the one which China has been, and is, applying in its bilateral relationship with India. Therefore, if any Indian leader who deals with China, without studying the strategy contained in this little handbook, like what Jawaharlal Nehru did in 1950s, and what Narendra Modi is doing now, would be fooling himself at the cost of India's national and territorial interests, and would end up in deep disappointment.

Sun Tzu's Strategy

Sun Tzu's *The Art of War* gives detailed instructions, to the Chinese leadership of how to defeat an opponent/enemy by playing cunning and guile. Deception and fooling the opponent/enemy are its watch words. Know your enemy is the preliminary exercise. It tells that "if you know yourself and your enemy, you can always win", and that "If you know neither yourself nor your enemy then you will most likely lose".² It states also that "all successful warfare is based on deception", and that "success is best achieved by fooling opponents with misinformation, deceit and decisive actions.... There is no such thing as fairness in war or competition. One has to do whatever is necessary to win".³

Deception

Sun Tzu explains that since "all warfare is based on deception", "when able to attack, we must seem unable; when using our forces, we must seem inactive; when we are near, we must make the enemy believe we are far away; when we are far away, we must make him believe we are near".⁴ He suggests to "hold out baits to entice the enemy. Feign disorder and crush him",⁵ "attack him when he is unprepared, appear where you are not expected".⁶ He holds that: "In all fighting ... indirect methods will be needed in order to secure victory".⁷ According to him: "In war, the way is to avoid what is strong and to strike at what is weak". If the

enemy is “in superior strength, evade him”. If the enemy is “quite unequal in every way, we can flee from him”.⁸ Thus flows from Sun Tzu a galore of lessons on how to defeat and destroy an opponent / enemy by the art of deception.

India – A Target

Chou En-lai and Nehru

During the last seven decades, the Chinese leadership has diligently followed all these instructions, contained in Sun Tzu’s *The Art of War*, in Beijing’s dealings with India. As per the scheme of “know your enemy” first, Prime Minister Chou En-lai took ten years to “know” prime minister Jawaharlal Nehru before he launched a full-scale war with India in 1962 on the border question. Chou En-Lai’s study of Nehru passed through Nehru’s attitude towards China’s annexation of independent Tibet in 1950, his insipid approach during the India-China negotiations between 1951 and 1954, on Tibet, his decline of the offer to India to become a permanent member of the UN Security Council, and his disastrous presentation at the India-China summit in 1960, in New Delhi, on the border question.

Annexation of Tibet

In *The Art of War* Sun Tzu said: “In the practical art of war, *the best thing of all is to take the enemy’s country whole and intact*”.⁹ Chairman Mao Tse-Tung adopted this strategy of Sun Tzu, for China’s annexation of independent Tibet in 1950. At the time of this annexation, India, under the Simla Convention of 1914, which also drew the McMahon Line border between India and Tibet, enjoyed certain rights in Tibet, which were adequate for India to insist upon the maintenance of Tibet’s unfettered autonomy, and to ensure its continued position of a buffer state between India and China. But, no attempt was made to protect those rights. Sensing potential danger from China to India’s security in future, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, Deputy Prime Minister, in a letter on 7 November 1950, asked Jawaharlal Nehru to view China as “a potential enemy” of India.¹⁰ Despite this considered and timely warning of Sardar Patel, Nehru took a complacent attitude towards the Chinese occupation of Tibet. During the four-year long negotiations between India and China on Tibet, from 1951 to 1954, Nehru adopted an accommodative attitude towards China’s annexation of Tibet, ignoring the fact that Indo-Tibetan border would instantly become the India-China border, and would lose the advantage of having Tibet as a buffer state. As a result, during the negotiations, Nehru stupidly conferred China’s sovereignty over Tibet, without even seeking China’s formal recognition of then existing border between India and Tibet - from Ladakh to Assam, including the McMahon Line. He repeatedly rejected proposals, that came from the senior officials of India’s Foreign Office, like G.S.Bajpai, K.P.S.Menon and T.N.Kaul, to include the border issue on the agenda of discussion with China and get the Chinese unequivocal recognition of the existing border, including the McMahon Line.¹¹ In the end, by the Treaty signed in April 1954, India conferred China’s sovereignty over Tibet, without any reference to the McMahon Line. As Nehru’s biographer, Sarvepally Gopal wrote: “The Chinese had secured all they wanted and given away little”, and “the chance of securing a clear and explicit recognition of India’s frontier at a time when India had something to offer in return had been lost”.¹²

US Offer

The next opportunity Chou En-lai got to “know” Nehru was in mid - 1950s, from the meek attitude he adopted when the United States, backed by Britain, France and the Soviet Union, offered India a permanent seat in the UN Security Council representing Asia, which was then occupied by Taiwan. The Communist China was not a UN member at that time. Nehru declined that offer of the United States saying that let that seat in the Security Council remain reserved for the People’s Republic of China, when it becomes a member of the United Nations¹³ (China became a UN member 16 years later in 1971).

Chou En-lai Nehru Summit

The final opportunity Chou En-lai got, to “know” Nehru directly was in 1960, when he came to New

Delhi to meet Nehru at the summit meeting organised to discuss the border question between the two countries. Chou En-lai took the summit seriously, and came to attend it after doing a year-long thorough home work. He appointed a special officer to meet him everyday, for one hour, and brief him about the details of the landscape of the Himalayas where the border between India and China lay. It was a year long daily exercise. Therefore, Chou En-lai was thorough with every bit of the Himalayas. It was with that preparation Chou En-lai came to the meeting. On the other hand, Jawaharlal Nehru came to the meeting without any special preparation on matters which he was going to speak at the summit, except doing the usual routine reading of the notes sent to him by the officials on the eve of the summit. So, when the summit began, Nehru was the first to present proposals. Referring to the India - China border between Ladakh and Nepal, Nehru, in a flamboyant way told Chou En-lai: "Mr Prime Minister, we have to solve this border question on the basis of *watershed* in the Himalayas". Chou En-lai immediately intervened, and asked Nehru: "Mr Prime Minister, you have said about 'watershed' in the Himalayas. To my knowledge there are three watersheds in the region. Which watershed you are referring to?" "Nehru was perplexed. Unable to answer that loaded question, he looked left and right, at the Indian officials present, and then stopped his speech without answering the pointed question Chou En-lai had posed. Nehru could not answer it because the distances between watersheds in Himalayas were about 200 kms. That was the end of that summit meeting.¹⁴ That disastrous presentation of Jawaharlal Nehru at that summit meeting marked the end of Chou En-lai's long-drawn agenda of 'Knowing' Nehru, the opponent, stipulated in Sun Tzu's *The Art of War*.

Chinese Aggression on India

From that summit meeting, Chou En-lai inferred that Nehru did not know where exactly India's border in the Himalayas lay. He went back to Beijing, and sent his army to incrementally occupy Indian territory all along the 3,225 kms long Himalayan border, to their hearts content, which culminated in the India-China War in October 1962. By the time the Chinese declared the unilateral cease-fire on 21 November 1962, they had already annexed about 45,000 sq.kms of Indian territory, all along the border from Ladakh to Assam, including the strategically important Aksai Chin, in Ladakh, which itself was about 38,000 sq.kms. The government of India belatedly knew about this quiet Chinese aggression in the Himalayas, not from its own military intelligence, but from a Praja Socialist Party MP, Hem Baruah, from Assam, who saw the Chinese troop movements in the northern parts of his Lok Sabha constituency, and reported the matter to the Lok Sabha. That was a time when India was totally unprepared for a war with China. Though the quickly assembled Indian army units were sent to the Himalayas, in the face of advances the large Chinese forces were making, the Indian forces were engaged in "strategic withdrawals", until the Chinese became panic, hearing, on 20 November 1962, that the British and US Airforce were going to pound China in support of India, and declared a unilateral cease-fire on 21 November 1962.¹⁵ Nehru foolishly thought that if he gave good to China, China would also give good in return. But, to his shock, for the good he gave, the Chinese leadership returned to him evil only.

Xi Jinping And Narendra Modi

If Chou En-lai took ten years to 'know' Jawaharlal Nehru, the Chinese President Xi Jinping took only five years to complete the process of "knowing" Narendra Modi, in Sun Tzu's *The Art of War* sense. That task has been done directly by President Xi Jinping himself. To scan Modi from his roots, Xi Jinping chose to descend at Narendra Modi's private home in Gujarat, met his aged mother, and went to the extent of doing swinging with Narendra Modi at the latter's home. While President Xi was happily swinging with an overwhelmed Narendra Modi, true to Sun Tzu's *The Art of War*, his Chinese troops were carrying out their assigned task of occupying Indian territories at the tri-junction point in Doklam quietly, after ignoring a standing bilateral agreement between India and China, in 2012, to maintain the *status quo*. But, *The Art of War* has eternally permitted the Chinese leaders to do such perfidies.

President Xi Jinping got more opportunities to 'know' Narendra Modi during the latter's five visits to China. Behind the back of the orchestrated bonhomie of a plethora of inauguration ceremonies and other pleasant

get together during those visits, President Xi has been completing his task of 'Knowing' Modi, the opponent, more thoroughly, as per Sun Tzu's prescriptions. Simultaneously, Xi was fostering anti-India feeling in all India's neighbouring countries, like Pakistan, Nepal, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, and Maldives. His establishment taught the leaders of Nepal how to raise a border dispute with India through cartographic aggressions first and enticed them to do it and drive a new wedge in the relationship between India and Nepal, and India and Pakistan. Earlier, China helped Pakistan to build up nuclear weapons against India. Besides, and encirclement of India policy has also been quietly launched by China in the politics of the Indian Ocean region. This is a relatively recent Chinese initiative in the Indian Ocean region, where, until the dawn of the 21st century, China was not a notable factor.¹⁶

New Attack on India

It appears that the process of 'knowing' Narendra Modi by Xi Jinping was complete by 2020. The result is the recent deceitful action of China to occupy more Indian territory in the Galwan Valley in Aksai Chin, Pangong Lake, and Gogra-Hot springs after ignoring all agreements between India and China to preserve tranquility in the Line of Actual Control (LAC) in the Himalayan border. Reports based on satellite images say that the Chinese did this aggression after an extensive build-up of over 10,000 Chinese troops, 26 new Chinese encampments, 22 new support bases, and two new heliports, on its side of the LAC to back up the invading force and to deter Indian counteraction, and to stayput in the newly occupied areas of the Galwan Valley.¹⁷ Notably, when the Chinese troops entered the Galwan Valley and other areas with arms, there was a standing agreement between India and China that the patrolling military personnel in the LAC should not bear any arms. But in the Galwan Valley, and other areas of new aggression, the Chinese troops had violated this agreement deceitfully, to kill the patrolling Indian military personnel. The weapons the Chinese carried were barbarous, which included nail-fixed sticks and clubs, typical of the still existing Chinese standard.

After the new Chinese aggression, there is a piquant situation in the Galwan Valley and other territories where the Chinese have forcefully occupied. As per the new agreements, concluded by Special Representatives of India and China, both sides should withdraw their troops to their old positions, and restore the *status quo ante*. While the Indian troops withdrew promptly to their earlier position, as per agreements, the Chinese troops, following the Sun Tzu strategy of fooling the opponent, made a phoney withdrawal, and stayed on in their newly occupied Indian territory and made a mockery of those agreements between the Special Representatives. This tactic of playing cunning and guile, contained in *The Art of War* has been repeatedly used against India during the present aggression too. It has been found that the Indian side gets fooled every time, since they do not keep in mind that they are dealing with the Chinese who ardently follow Sun Tzu's deception strategy.

In the meanwhile, Narendra Modi has exposed his knowledge deficit, by his noisy assertion, after the Chinese occupation of the Galwan Valley and other areas, that "no one has intruded into the Indian territory", which was factually incorrect and damaging, and which implied legitimisation of all 45,000 sq.kms of the Indian territory which is now under the Chinese occupation. However, the fact remains that the Chinese have shown consistency in their practice of 'deception' in all their moves on the India-China border question. That trick has been played again and again. Sun Tzu's *The Art of War* is in full operation against India.

The Strategy of 'Flee'

Pertinently it is important to understand a stipulation in Sun Tzu's *The Art of War*, that if the enemy "is superior strength evade him"; and that if the enemy is "quite unequal in every way, we can *flee* from him", to grasp what made China to declare a unilateral cease-fire during the India-China War in October - November 1962. It also reveals the language, the language of power, which China understands and respects. When China launched its aggression on India and occupied 45,000 sq.kms of Indian territory, the Chinese army was in a superior position. There were no serious combats (though there was considerable loss of human lives from the Indian Side) between the two armies since the Indian army followed a methodology of continual "strategic withdrawal". That situation made Jawaharlal Nehru to send an urgent request to the British Prime

Minister, Harold Macmillan, and to the US President, John F. Kennedy, on 19 November 1962, to send 15 squadron air force to combat the advancing Chinese forces. The British Cabinet met on 20 November 1962, and decided to accede to India's request. President Kennedy also took a similar decision. But there was a 'diplomatic leak' to the Chinese on 20 November 1962 about the imminent aerial attack of the British and US Air Force on China, from the side of India. China, which had a weak air force at that time, became panicky over that prospect, since, it apprehended, these air forces would target not only the Chinese army positions, but, by using this opportunity, would also destroy other vital Chinese strategic installations, and connected scientific establishments. It created a *de facto* 'flee' situation for the Chinese, as per *The Art of War*. As a result, on 21 November 1962, China unilaterally declared cease-fire, which made the British and the US Air Force operations against China unnecessary.¹⁸ China listened only to the language of power.

India Followed Appeasement

The record of bilateral agreements between India and China, since 1954, show that after negotiations, ultimately India signed up agreements on Chinese terms, accommodating Chinese aggressions. The pattern was set in the agreement signed between the two countries on Tibet in 1954, by accepting China's annexation of Tibet, a big country with an area of 1.2 million sq.kms, and by conferring China's sovereignty over Tibet, without making any reference to the McMahon Line as the border between India and Tibet.¹⁹ Though the Mc Mahon Line was drawn at the tripartite Simla Convention in 1914, attended and signed by representatives of India, independent Tibet and China as equals, the omission of reference to the McMahon Line as the new border between India and China in the 1954 agreement on Tibet, provided a leeway for China to raise border disputes all along the old Indo-Tibetan border, and to make unabashed claims on Indian territories, including Aksai Chin in Ladakh and Arunachal Pradesh, with the instinct of an insatiable expansionist country. Similarly, during the Chinese aggression of India in 1962, China had occupied 45,000 square kilometres of Indian territory, which became a *fait accompli*, through a unilateral cease-fire, which China declared on 21 November 1962. These 45,000 sq.kms of Indian territory are still in the Chinese hands, with no follow up action to get China out of these large newly occupied areas. Since then Chou En-lai started asking Nehru to forget the McMahon Line, and accept the Line of Control as the border between India and China, to legitimise the illegal occupation of 45,000 sq.kms of Indian territory. Beijing let another thirty years to pass with its demand of the Line of Control, and waited for a "helpful circumstance" to come. That helpful circumstance came when India's Prime Minister, Narasimha Rao, a poet, visited China, in 1993, and signed up a border agreement with China incorporating, not even the "Line of Control", but the "Line of Actual Control", as a fluxian demarcation line, which China demanded as the *de facto* border between India and China. By accepting LAC, Narasimha Rao had virtually conceded all Chinese occupied 45,000 sq.kms of Indian territories, as part of China. That was a quiet betrayal done, with no understanding of the deception strategy embedded in Sun Tzu's *The Art of War* which the Chinese leadership follows. The fluxian character of the "Line of 'Actual' control", from the Chinese perception, is explicit in what Sun Weidong, the Chinese Ambassador to India, said in July 2020, in the context of recent Chinese occupations in the Galwan Valley and elsewhere in Ladakh. He said that China was not in favour of resuming the process of clarifying the "Line of Actual Control" because it could "create new disputes", saying that China's troops were on the side of its "traditional customary boundary line", making the LAC more fluxian, and keeping it a constant testing ground of China's approach of might is right against India.²⁰ Moreover, the term the "Line of 'Actual' control depiction is pregnant with future endless aggressions, the expressions of which have been found in the Chinese aggressions in the Doklam Tri-Junction in 2017, and in the Galwan Valley and other areas in 2020, to establish altered 'Line of 'Actual' Control', awaiting its *fait accompli* acceptance, in due course, by New Delhi, as done in the past. This appeasement approach of India to aggressions of an expansionist China, can only lead to more dangerous situations in future.

China: A Potential Menace to World Peace

As China acquires more power in economic, military and territorial terms, its expansionism would also

acquire new dimensions and pose a menace to world peace, as Hitler's Germany had done in Europe in 1930s and early 1940s, which led the world to a devastating Second World War. History tells that whenever China was strong, it practised unabashed expansionism. China is strong now. It is significant that the 67 year old Xi Jinping has now installed himself as a life-long President of China.

China's Neo-"Lebensraum" in Asia

To prevent such a disastrous situation developing in Asia in the coming years, its imperative for the international community to pay more attention to China's activities in the World, and adopt effective preventive measures. It should be recognised that China is the only country in the world today, which is not satisfied with its legitimate territory, and is on constant prowl for more territories from its neighbours, and from the neighbouring seas. It should be noted that China has territorial disputes with all its neighbours. The annexation of Tibet, illegal occupation of 45,000 sq.kms of Indian territory, and the support Beijing got for its 'One China' policy have whetted its avarice for more territorial expansion. The unprecedented expansion of its military, naval and air forces is further rousing its expansionist appetite. What the international community can do to curb China's over ambition and expansionist instinct, and to bring balance in its approach, is to withdraw support to Beijing's 'One China' policy, which has now taken the form of '*Lebensraum*' doctrine of Adolf Hitler, support the freedom of Tibet, and support aspirations of people in some regions in China for freedom and independence. It should also entail more concerted economic, fiscal and trade measures on the part of the international community too to curb China's expansionism.

Compensation for Losses Due to Corona Virus

China is the procreator of the Corona Virus which plunged the world into an existential crisis, causing unprecedented losses and suffering, since the beginning of 2020. Though the Chinese experts could successfully use their deception strategy to cleverly hoodwink the seemingly gullible World Health Organisation team, which went to the Chinese government laboratory in Wuhan to discover the origin of the Corona Virus, and made them to return without even getting into the concerned government laboratory, and by carrying only ear-full of cock-and-bull stories told to them by their Chinese hosts regarding the origin of the Corona Virus, authentic information regarding the Chinese government laboratory origin of the Corona Virus is bulging out after lifting up the lid. It reveals that the Corona Virus was crafted in the Chinese government laboratory in Wuhan, with the objective of large scale use of it as a biological weapon in wars against China's enemies.

It is revealed that way back in 2015 top Chinese defence scientists and virologists had discussed the prospects of using the Corona Virus, as a biological weapon, against China's potential enemies during the next apprehended world war. They envisaged that the Corona Virus would unfold a new era of warfare of biological weapons, and that wars in future would be fought more with biological weapons. This Chinese anticipation on the use of Corona Virus has been detailed in a Chinese document, "Un-natural Origins of SARS and New Species of Man-made Viruses as Genetic Bio-weapons", jointly prepared by the Chinese Defence Scientists and Virologists. That original Chinese document has now been translated into English by a Chinese Virologist, Li-Meg Yan, and made public in Washington.²¹

Therefore, clearly, the Corona Virus is China's ominous gift to the world to battle against and perish. It constitutes a new kind of undeclared world war China has launched against the humanity, without bringing in any visible usual weapons - nuclear and non-nuclear - , military hardware, Army, Navy, and Air Force, into the arena, to establish China's hegemony in the world. Therefore, China is squarely responsible for all death and destruction various countries, across the world, have suffered due to the Corona Virus. Therefore, it is imperative for the world community to take a collective view on the death and destruction caused by the Corona Virus and make China liable to pay compensation for the losses countries have suffered due to the Corona Virus. It would be similar to the war indemnity imposed after the Second World War. If China refuses to pay the compensation, the international community should take concerted penal actions against

the Beijing regime before it becomes a menace to World peace. Already, as on 15 May 2021, the Corona Virus has killed more than 3.345 million persons across the world. Many more millions of deaths are expected due to this virus during the next 18 months.

Sun Tzu's *The Art of War* operation area should be reduced to the minimum, by stimulating more demands on its energy and resources for its own internal stability, equal welfare, and survival as a nation, and create conditions which makes China work with the spirit of co-operation with other countries, away from the philosophy and spirit of deception and expansion, embedded in the Sun Tzu's *The Art of War*.

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Transition from Incumbency to Development: Voting Behaviour in Karnataka, India

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Beauty of democracy is its voting power. Various reasons are cited as major factors for people to vote in elections. Very few of them are empirically testable. However, using 'voting rate' for different political parties and indicators of development in the voting regions, this paper tests the relevance of 'voting for development' versus an attitude of incumbency using empirical data over five state level elections in Karnataka, India. Other factors such as caste, religion or regionalism, or money power are also examined and commented upon. There are some evidence of voting for development emerging as a major factor, while incumbency is weaning out over the years.

Introduction

'Why do people vote in elections' has been a quest raised time and again. From the time of ancient Greeks in the fifth century (when pebbles used as votes) or Roman empires (with rights to vote in two assemblies- the *comitia centuriata* and the *comitia tributa*, to elect a magistrate), or during the *Chola* periods (about 9 century BC, to elect local representatives, as engraved on the walls of the *Uthiramerur* temple in the present day Tamil Nadu) in India, various forms of voting and election processes have been in practice. Much of its formal shape took only during the 17th century in western Europe, though. Today, one may accept with minimal controversy that 'Beauty of democracy is its voting power by the people, for the people and in ruling by themselves'¹. According to The Economist's Democratic Indices, (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Democracy_Index), as many as 75 countries today are categorised as full or flawed democracies, India's rank being 41. One of the instruments of democratic status is the citizen's power of voting. Having completed 16 rounds of federal elections since 1952, India or her states are good cases to analyse on this exercise of voting power.

This paper analyses the voting behavior and trends in Karnataka, a state within Indian Union, over the last five state level elections from 1999. While various factors influence and dominate the attitude and behaviour of the voters, a basic premise of voting as an incumbency attitude versus voting for an expectation for development and enhanced welfare are examined and tested. Various other factors such as caste factors, or expectations of monetary benefits are also examined and commented upon. Constituency wise voting rates and indicators of development are used as basic data to test various hypotheses econometrically. The major conclusion reached is that while voting for development is surfacing fast in Karnataka as an attitude, incumbency is giving up the way, partly retaining historically caste and money power latitudes.

Reasons for Voting

People may vote under a democratic system, treating it as a power to elect a political party or a leader to represent them, for their welfare and development. But, equally important are their psychological pleasure and self-esteem of going to the polls to vote (Lee, 2013), expressions of democratically enshrined empowerment and show of equality of every citizen (Christiano, 2014). However, during any elections (be they at the national or federal level, state or provincial level, or local body levels) there are also many other reasons for people to vote for different political parties and candidates keeping in mind many other objectives and aspirations. These can be summarized into four different theories or postulates. They are, psychological

cognitive theory of pleasure, pride or self-esteem, or conscious intellectual behavior (Lee, 2013; Christiano, 2014); economic theory of democratically voted majority political parties bringing about economic development and upliftment of social welfare (Jensen and Justesen, 2014; Kaplan, 2006; Chauvet and Collier, 2008; Lewis-Beck and Nadeau, 2011); political theories of 'vote bank', monetary rewards and incumbency (Luca, 2016; Manor, 2008a, 2008b; Persson et al, 2001; and Sociological theory of reign based on caste, religion, or sects (Rodrigues, 2018; Assadi, 2013, 2018; Vasavi 2008). All these alternative motives may require some explanation.

Welfare and Development are the end result of policies of the governments (apart from national security). How much do the voters value this in a democratic system? The scholarly views are quite at variance. An economic argument for voting is primarily based on the promise of bringing about social and economic development (Jensen and Justesen, 2014), or the 'developmental status' delivered or promised by them (Kaplan, 2006; Chauvet and Collier, 2008). Chauvet and Collier (2008) also argue that efficacy of democracy has very little to do with improving economic performance. Good economic performance has to follow good public policy designs. But at the time of elections, 'political parties often resort to illicit means of securing electoral victory, such as bribery, ballot fraud, and voter intimidation'; and underplaying the thrusts on policies towards development. Hence the voters do not get a flavor of development assurances. Likewise, Kaplan (2006) argues that election promises made through development budget announcements, are often neglected because of poor capacities of the parties to deliver them, or sloppy implementations leading to inflationary impacts. Based on a 47 country-level data, he shows that pre-election budgetary expansions do not produce any major social welfare or economic development, but rather leave the countries with increased fiscal deficits or detrimental outcomes such as inflation.

Apart from the 'right to vote', the most common argument for people to participate in elections can be their self-interest of some personal or financial gain. This is a psychological cognitive behavior on the part of the voter. In recent periods, as observed by Lee (2013) this attitude has been changing. Two divergent arguments are made by him. One, people go for voting either as a 'source for satisfaction', or as an easy expression for showing 'moral superiority'². Second, with the stages of development, people vote with some 'public interest'. Then, voting is not necessarily for a particular political party or candidate but for welfare or development of state. However, on the eve of elections, be they at the state assembly or national level, one only hopes that people keep remembering the delivery of development (either delivered or deliverable as a promise) at the back of their mind while voting for one or the other political parties.

Several alternative arguments and reasons for people opting to vote also have been made by various scholars. There is evidence of both continuing incumbency attitude and declining incumbency, as noticed by several writers (Saikia, 2014; Barooah, 2016). While Barooah (2016) shows the existence of incumbency in one of the two major political parties studied in India, Saikia does not find any strong evidence in Indian national and state elections between different political parties. James Manor (2008) talks about the money motive (though not a decisive power but a significant factor), while Assadi (2013) refers to the return of minorities, or with Other Backward Classes (OBC) and *Dalits* together as a powerful group in the background as the *Ahinda* motive; on the same wave length, Vasavi (2008) draws the fall back on a mix of caste, capital (i.e., money mower) and captainship as relevant in state elections. Breeding (2011) analysed the 'vote bank' factor as an obligation and reciprocal between the political parties and the voters. This is still remnant, according to her, but more as a historic patron-client relation or some degree of incumbency. Over the years, the kinds of obligations and loyalties citizens expect from parties have changed. All these mean to convey that it is a mix of the money power, caste and religion, factionalism, and the 'vote-bank' links that have dominated the voting patterns in India. However, with a secret ballot procedure, and a ban on declaring loyalties in public election outcomes by the Election Commission, elections in India have attained a very high degree of transparency³.

Among these theories and many reasons for voting, only some factors are truly testable empirically.

They are, an argument of ‘incumbency’ of political party regimes (Luca, 2016) versus pure ‘Economic motive of voting for development’ (Lewis-Beck and Nadeau, 2011). However, there can also be some degree of complementarity or substitution between the two⁴. In good economic times (with or without incumbent political parties performing well) people may vote for the incumbent parties; likewise during bad economic periods, people may throw out the incumbent political parties. Therefore, ‘incumbency’ versus ‘pure economics of development’ can be two contrasting hypotheses for gauging voters’ behavior. This hypothesis is looked into with data from Karnataka’s latest elections in 2018.

Development versus Incumbency, as Arguments for Voting

Talking of development policies, in the Indian context there has been a long history of planning as a tool for delivering development. That used to remain as the major bait, promising the voters about social and economic upliftment in the country. But, as argued by Kashwan (2014) the wait has been too long for the people. The Nehruvian socialistic pattern of development has been a long drawn vote bank promise. Generations are not keen to wait that long. Instead, the globalization in India since 1991 and the Gujarat state model of development, opening the gates for all in an inclusive manner brought some hope of receiving the benefits of development to the voting citizen. Recent reforms in India such as Right to Information Act of 2005, or Rural Employment Guarantee Schemes (MGNREGS) or innovative Skill Development and Make in India programme etc., and a large number of people oriented welfare programmes such as *Jan Dhan* Banking Scheme, *Mudra Yojana* (small loan programme), *Awas yojana* (Free Housing scheme) etc., have reinforced people’s faith in India on development as a drive for voting. Therefore, this question about ‘development motive to vote’ is a viable hypothesis to be examined for its dynamics.

How to measure incumbency? Barooah (2016; p.78) defines incumbency in terms of the party which won the constituency in the previous election returning back in the current election as ‘party incumbency’; she also defines ‘candidate incumbency’ as a case of the same candidate returning in the next elections. Since it is extremely difficult to track the candidate incumbency, he attempts to test ‘party incumbency’ in the Indian parliamentary elections for over 50 years.

Data Base for the Analysis

The hypotheses are tested by using data from Karnataka state level election results. In terms of geographical area Karnataka state is of 191,976 sq. kms in size and the total population according to the 2011 census comes to 6.11 Crores. The eligible total voters in 2018 state elections were 4.97 crore or 81.34% of 2011 population. Several relevant variables or factors are developed to test the hypotheses under question. There are 226 electoral constituencies in the state, each electing one representative (called Member of Legislative Assembly, MLA) in the elections normally held once in five years. Three major political parties of Karnataka state are considered. They are Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), Indian National Congress (INC) and Janata Dal (Secular) JDS. These three parties dominate almost 22.5% of candidates contested in elections. The ‘Percentage of votes captured by a political party is treated as a measure of voting rate for that party. This is measured in two dimensions: (i) as percentage of votes captured by a contesting candidate (irrespective of whether she/he wins or not, (ii) percentage of votes captured by a winning candidate (and party). The developmental status of the constituencies is measured in terms of a Comprehensive Composite Development Index (CCDI) estimated for the year 2015⁵. Election outcomes from five elections in the years, namely 1999, 2004, 2008, 2013 and 2018 are analysed.

Analysis of the Data

The party-wise ‘Percentage of Votes Captured’ (PVC), irrespective of winning or not in the 226 constituencies is treated as an indicator of voting with some reasons. A correlation between a development indicator such as CCDI and PVC for different political parties can be an indicator of the voting behavior for development. Table 1 shows such partial correlations between these two factors for the five elections for the major political parties considered.

Table 1: Correlation between ‘Party wise Votes Captured (PVC)’ and the ‘Level of Development (CCDI)’ in the electoral Constituencies

Election Year	Major Political Parties					
	INC	BJP	JD(S)	JD(U)	Others	All Votes
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
1999	0.05	0.41	-0.22	-0.21	-0.11	-0.26
2004	0.18	0.35	-0.28	-**	-0.18	-0.23
2008	0.08	0.24	-0.17	-**	-0.16	-0.13
2013	0.10 (1.5)	0.30 (4.69)*	-0.11 (-1.65)	-**	-0.24 (-3.68)*	-0.28 (-4.28)*
2018	-0.00 (-0.01)	0.21 (3.22)*	-0.14 (-2.08)	-	-0.09 (-1.35)	-0.64 (-12.30)*

Notes:**: JD(U) having won only few seats in these years, their voting patterns are not analysed further. INC=Indian National Congress, BJP=Bharatiya Janata Party, JD(S) Janata Dal (secular), JD(U)= Janata Dal (United), CCDI=Comprehensive Composite Development Index.

Figures in brackets are t-statistic values of the correlations; * stands for their significance at 5% level of significance.

The correlations for ‘All votes’ (col.7 in Table 1) has a definite message. All through the last five elections, lesser and lesser number of people from ‘more and more developed constituencies’ have ‘actually voted’. Development by itself did not enthuse people to vote or to participate in democratic processes.

But there is a puzzle about link between the voting rates of individual political parties and development status of the constituencies.

As far as JD(S) is concerned (col.4), over the last five elections, more and more developed constituencies/regions voted less and less for them (indicated by the negative and declining correlation between share of votes of the candidates and CCDI). This is in line with the overall state level total voting pattern. On the other hand, BJP (as can be seen from col.3) has in all the past four assembly elections consistently maintained voting rates positively linked with the level of development (share of BJP votes positively correlated with the CCDIs). These were noted by Vasavi (2008) as attributed to BJP’s ‘planned assault’ and by Assadi (2013) as ‘caste realignments’. But, in the case of BJP also, the voting rates are becoming less and less prominent (as can be interpreted by declining positive correlations). On the other hand, voting for INC reveals a positive link (very marginally) to the rate of development; but became insignificant by the 2018 elections. Some of these findings were also noted by Breeding (2011, p.76), in saying that ‘Increased party competition in Karnataka politics; changes in the structure of caste and identity politics; and economic growth.... have led to changes in the existing social structure of day-to-day life in Karnataka and have enhanced electoral competition, as well as changes in vote bank politics’⁶. The link between the voting power and development status vis-a-vis ‘incumbency’ is examined only between 2103 and 2018 election outcomes. For this purpose, a definition of incumbency is defined as ‘any specific political party having won a seat in 2013, retaining the same seat in the 2018’. A relevant hypothesis to test is, ‘if the returns of political parties in 2018 show any tendency of having retained the wins from the 2013 returns’. This is a vote bank dependency incumbency hypothesis. Table 2 shows the number of seats returned in these two years, keeping track of such incumbencies. For instance, in 2018 BJP won in all 104 seats; of these, 27 seats (out of 40) as retained from 2013; 58 were grabbed from those held by INC (from their total of 122 in 2013); 10 from JDS and 9 from other parties. Clearly, BJP made a major dent into INC holds. Likewise, INC won in all 80 constituencies in 2018; of these, 49 were those retained from 2013, 20 grabbed from BJP holds, 13 from JDS, and 8 from

other parties and independents. Alternatively, it can be said that in 2013 INC had won in 122 seats, of which it could retain only 49 seats in the 2018 elections; 58 of those winning seats were grabbed by BJP in 2018, 13 seats by JDS, and 2 by others. JDS also has been able to retain 17 seats in 2018 out of 40 won by them in the 2013 elections.

Table 2: Retainment or Incumbency Rates of Winning Political Parties between 2013 and 2018 Elections

2013'→ 2018'↓	INC	BJP	JDS	Others	Total
INC	49	58	13	2	122
BJP	20	27	3	0	40
JDS	13	10	17	0	40
Others	8	9	4	1	22
Total	80	104	37	3	224

Notes: Others=Other parties; a X2test for independence between the 2013 and 2018 election outcomes (excluding 'Others' as a category) indicates that the 2013 election outcomes did influence the 2018 results (significant at 5% level, estimated X2 is 30.59 against a significant value of 9.49).

A statistical analysis of this contingency table reveals that the election outcomes in 2018 are in fact influenced by the winning status of respective political parties in 2013⁷.

An econometric model is also specified to examine the 'incumbency' vis-a vis 'development' hypotheses, with the 2018 election returns.

$$\text{Log } V_{ij}(2018) = \alpha + \beta \log V_{ij}(2013) + \gamma \log \text{CCDI}_j$$

i=BJP, INC, JDS; three major political parties.

j=1....n; number of constituencies, depending upon the parties contesting

V_{ij} =Percentage share of Votes in constituency j for the party i in the year 2018 and 2013 elections

CCDI is a development indicator estimated for the year 2015

The 'percentage of votings in 2018' are proposed to be explained by (a) 'percentage of votings in 2013 election, and (b) the development indicator CCDI of the constituencies. Log-linear regression techniques are deployed. Furthermore, for the 'ex-ante' analyses, the 'voting shares of the candidates irrespective of win or no win' in 2018 and 2013 are considered. For the 'ex-post' analysis, only the 'voting rates of winning' in 2018 and 2013 elections are considered. Table 3-5 show the estimated elasticities for the three major political parties. Furthermore, the cases of all the 224 constituencies and a special case of 196 (i.e., excluding Bangalore constituencies⁸) are separately analysed.

Table 3: Elasticity of 2018 voting rate wrt 2013 voting rate (incumbency) versus 2015 CCDI (Development)

Bharatiya Janata Party: Total constituencies considered				
	224		196\$	
Percentage of votes captured in a constituency'↓	El. of Voting in 2013	El. of CCDI	El. of Voting in 2013	El. of CCDI
Considering all votings irrespective of whether the candidate wins or not	0.414**	-0.118	0.411**	-0.157

Considering votings of only such constituencies where the candidate wins	0.016	0.064*	0.013	0.099*
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\$= In this case, all constituencies from Bangalore (28 of them) have been excluded, because, they all get the same estimated CCDI.

El= Elasticity: This means, the percentage change in '% of votes captured in 2018', in response to either 'Percentage of votes captured in 2013', or CCDI of the constituency.

**= at 10% level of significance; *=at 5% level of significance

Table 4: Elasticity of 2018 voting rate wrt 2013 voting rate (incumbency) versus 2015 CCDI (Development)

Indian National Congress: Total constituencies considered				
	224		196\$	
Percentage of votes captured in a constituency ↓	El. of Voting % in 2013	El. of CCDI	El. of Voting % in 2013	El. of CCDI
Considering all votings irrespective of whether the candidate wins or not	-0.065	0.560**	0.546**	-0.098
Considering votings of only such constituencies where the candidate wins	0.086**	0.066*	0.102**	0.106

\$= In this case, all constituencies from Bangalore (28 of them) have been excluded, because, they all get the same estimated CCDI.

El= Elasticity: This means, the percentage change in '% of votes captured in 2018', in response to either 'Percentage of votes captured in 2013', or CCDI of the constituency.

**= at 10% level of significance; *=at 5% level of significance

Table 5: Elasticity of 2018 voting rate wrt 2013 voting rate (incumbency) versus 2015 CCDI (Development) Janata Dal, Secular: Total constituencies considered

Janata Dal, Secular: Total constituencies considered				
	224		196\$	
Percentage of votes captured in a constituency“↓	El. of Voting in 2013	El. of CCDI	El. of Voting in 2013	El. of CCDI
Considering all votings % irrespective of whether the candidate wins or not	0.678**	-0.169	0.678**	-0.425
Considering votings % of only such constituencies where the candidate wins	0.059	0.074	0.046	0.181

\$= In this case, all constituencies from Bangalore (28 of them) have been excluded, because, they all get the same estimated CCDI.

El= Elasticity: This means, the percentage change in '% of votes captured in 2018', in response to either 'Percentage of votes captured in 2013', or CCDI of the constituency.

**= at 10% level of significance; *=at 5% level of significance

Several important inferences follow from the above analyses. First, as far as BJP is concerned, as an ex-ante behavior, the party can rely upon encumbrance to return.; but, to win an election in effect, 'development assurances' are important. For the INC, as an ex-ante voting pattern, development drives, goals and assurances pay the rewards; but, for actual winning both incumbency as well as development assurances are equally important. The JDS has a different story. By and large, only encumbrance is most reliable force for them to return to win. Development assurance do not seem to pay much return to them.

Figure 1: Retainment or Incumbency Rates of Winning Political Parties between 2013 and 2018 Elections



The position of incumbency can be better viewed from a constituency-wise Karnataka state map (Figure 1). Some observations do merit mentioning. Geographically speaking, much of retainment of seats took place in Southern Karnataka and north-west Karnataka. Such retained seats are from one or the other parties -BJP, INC or JDS. The exchange of seats between INC and JDS is very scattered, spread all over the state. Such switchings do not seem to have come about from any pre-planned strategy. In the central part of the state, by and large the switchings have been odd, not linked to any pre-planned strategies between the political parties.

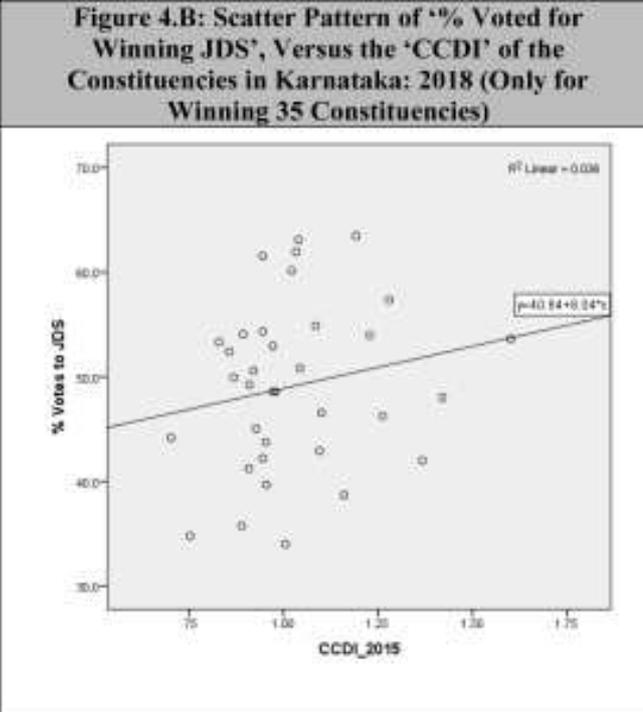
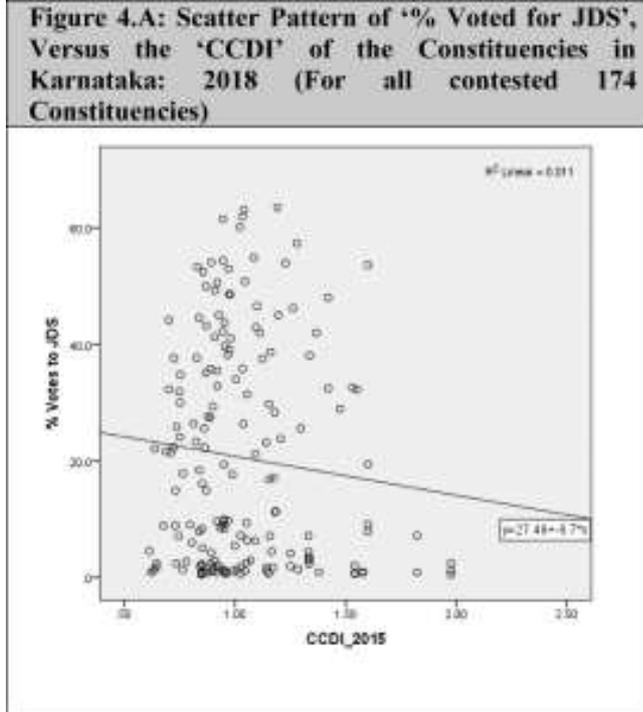
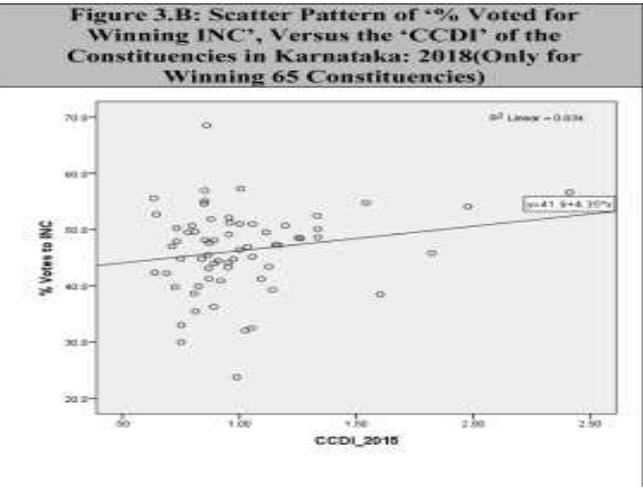
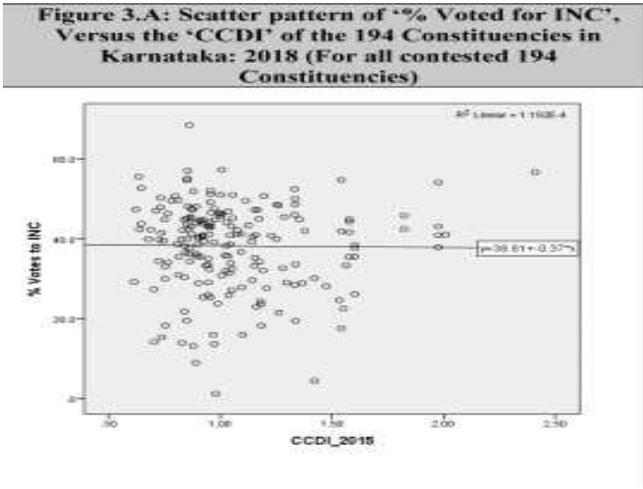
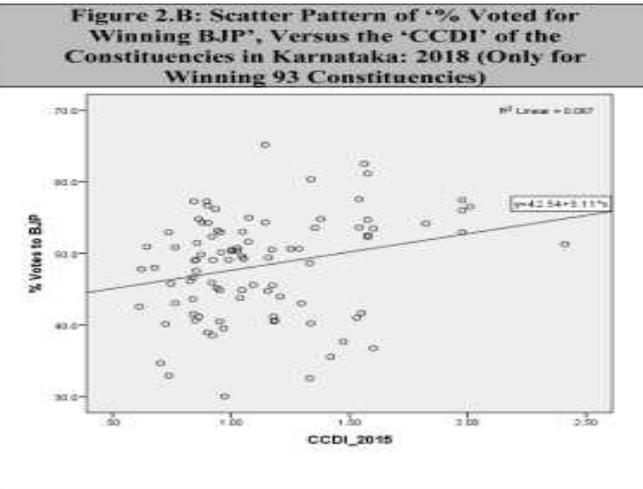
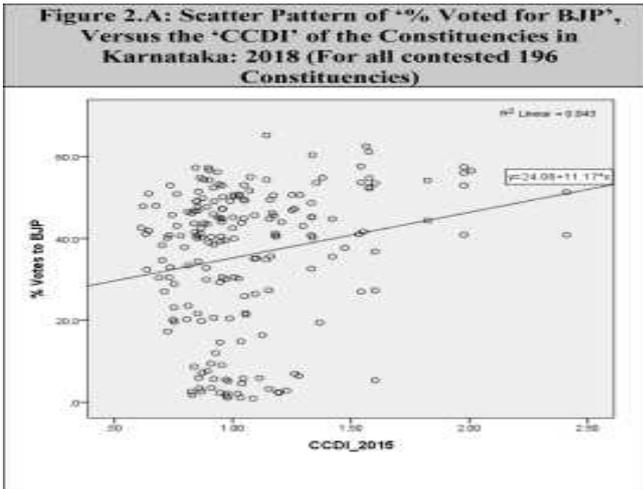
A comparative analysis is further attempted to examine the ex-ante and ex-post links between voting patterns and development deliveries. First, the entire 224 constituency wise voting rates in the year 2018 for the three major political parties (irrespective of whether they win or lose) are contrasted against the respective CCDI indicators as drivers for voting⁹. They reflect the ex-ante behavior. Figures 2.A, 3.A, and 4.A show them for BJP, INC and JDS parties. As against these, the revealed preference of the voters who actually made the party to win are shown in Figures 2.B, 3.B, and 4.B for BJP, INC and JDS, respectively. These reflect the ex-post behavior on the part of voters¹⁰.

For the BJP party, in the ex-ante analysis (Figure 2.A), a correlation of 0.21 was observed

between ‘% share of votes’ vis-a-vis the CCDI in the 196 constituencies considered; but the ‘majority of votes’ actually making BJP to win (Figure 2.B) reveal a stronger positive link with ‘development status’ (with a correlation of 0.26). In general, the regressions also indicate that people vote for BJP more and more elastically if the deliverable or delivered development status is higher. There is some evidence of development being relevant in the voting patterns for BJP.

How is the story for INC? As can be seen from Figure 3.A, the correlation between ‘Percentage votings’ for INC party in all the 196 constituencies with the corresponding CCDIs was a very low of (-)0.01. The corresponding regression lines are also not very strong because of a high degree of variability of ‘% voted’ against the CCDI indicators. But the voting rate in the INC winning constituencies (see Figure 3.B) has tuned into pro-development, but very marginally (correlation being 0.18).

As far as JDS is concerned, there is a dramatic message from the voting patterns in general, and exclusively on behalf of their winning candidates/constituencies. As can be seen from Figure 4.A, the general trend in voting rate for JDS is against development (correlation being (-) 0.105). But, wherever JDS has won (see Figure 4.B) the voters have voted in favour of development (the correlation being 0.19).



Note: Bangalore South and Bangalore North have been excluded. Further, only 174 constituencies are considered where JDS has contested.

The overall conclusion that can be drawn is that, over the years the winning status of the political parties is increasingly dependent on development deliveries.

Concluding Outlook for the Future

At the time of elections most political parties universally promise delivery of development as the primary goal. But, to what extent that is a true reality still remains as a basic question. One finds from the analysis of last several elections in Karnataka, India more so from recent 2013 and 2018 elections, that 'promise and delivery of development' are reasonably emerging as convincing instruments to win elections, but with varying degree of emphasis between political parties such as BJP, INC and JDS. At least the majority of winning political parties do have some clearly stated and delivered development linkages. Secondly, it was always noted that incumbency continues to play its power; but over the elections, it is at a declining rate.

Other factors such as money power, caste politics, bribery and corruption are still very dominant at the election hour. They do provide several private and immediate benefits to the voting community.

But the state's responsibility to provide public goods and services (Luca, 2016) is fundamental, embedded in the Indian Constitution. Under the Constitution of India, the Directive Principles (Articles 36-51) stress upon states to become responsible for free primary education (Article 45-46), raising nutritional level and public health delivery (Article 47), public assistance for securing work, assistance to old age and disabled (article 41) and many others. Fundamental Rights Article 21 further guarantees right to life.

It may still take several more future elections to make people realize to vote with an exclusive objective or receiving some social development benefits from the elected and ruling political parties. One always hopes that, as the notion of 'one man, one vote' under democracy is a promise for the citizen, it should enable people to realize that such voting powers can be converted to make demands for social, economic and regional development. A recent report by Madheswaran and Vani (2018) highlights the facts that nearly 87% of people in Karnataka have realized that 'voting is their right; 75% consider voting as their duty'. If so, people should convert their rights into social responsibility by voting and electing a candidate or a political party who can deliver the social goods. It also becomes the responsibility of the governments and Election Commission to create awareness about the importance of voting for deriving development benefits¹¹. It should also become the larger social responsibility of non-governmental organizations to make people aware that the money power, caste politics and incumbency are very discriminatory, against the poor and the needy, reducing the long term social public benefits.

How many more elections do we have to wait to realize these?

Notes

1. Plato did not believe in general public voting and running a government as good. He thought that Rule by the mob leads to tyranny of the government.
2. Media interviews at the Exit polls do invariably reveal this attitude as a matter of pride, or source of being relevant as a citizen.
3. Read a recent report by Madheshwaran and Vani (2018) about the revealed expressions of attitudes, knowledge and election practices in Karnataka.
4. During the financial crisis the world over during 2008-09, the UPA government in India returned back to form the government in 2009 mainly because of its delivering reasonably high GDP growth rates of above 7% during 2004-08- an example of incumbency based on good economics. A great humanitarian Herbert Hoover, Republican party President of USA during 1929-33 was defeated by Franklin Roosevelt, a Democratic party President in USA, mainly because President Hoover could not handle the world depression of 1932-33- an example of voting out for bad economic management.

5. Appendix 1 presents the methodology followed in constructing the CCDI indices for the constituencies. This is given after the Notes and Reference pages.
6. Lee (2013) argues that both self-interest and market forces (in contrast to political forces) have been driving the voters to vote. See also Brennan and Lomasky (1993) for some more theoretical arguments on these lines.
7. A X^2 test of independence, with only three major parties (i.e., INC, BJP and JDS) in 200 constituencies (excluding the Bangalore Rural and Urban constituencies) does not support the independency hypothesis of 2013 and 2018 election outcomes. The estimate value of the X^2 is 30.60, against a significant value of 9.49 at 5% level with 4 degrees of freedom.
8. This special case of '196 constituencies only' is considered for the reason that 28 constituencies from Bangalore North and South have the same estimated CCDI as the development indicator. Therefore, in order to avoid 'degeneracy' in the regression estimates, they have been excluded.
9. In analyzing the 224 constituency data, Bangalore North and South constituencies are excluded, as they would appear as extreme outliers; and there are no individual estimates of CCDI for those 28 constituencies. Therefore, there are at best 196 observations in these analyses.
10. A linear regression line and the corresponding correlations between the voting patterns and the CCDIs are also shown the same diagrams.
11. Madheswaran and Vani (2108) highlighting various approaches to make voters aware of 'knowledge about the importance of voting'.

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Appendix: Using data on 35 major development indicators (based on data in 1999–2000), the D M Nanjundappa Committee (HPC 2002: Chapter 6) estimated a comprehensive composite development index (CCDI) for 175 *talukas* in Karnataka for 2002. Summarily stated, data on 35 indicators at the *taluka* level are grouped into (a) agriculture and allied activities (nine); (b) industry, trade and finance (five); (c) economic infrastructure (nine); (d) social infrastructure (seven); and (e) population characteristics (five). All the data were normalised, and indexed to a range between 0 and 1 (using the range and state average as the mean).

A composite index is constructed at each *taluka* level for the five groups of indicators using the inverse of the standard deviation as the weight for each indicator. The five group-level composite indicators are aggregated as the CCDI, using the share of these groups or sectors in the state gross domestic product (GDP) as weights. These form the first set of development indicators ever available for Karnataka (HPC 2002). Subsequently, Hanagodimath and others (2017) estimated it for 2014-15.

Methodology to extend the CCDI data from *talukas* to constituencies: There are 224 constituencies and 175 *talukas* in Karnataka. Constituencies have been adjusted to *talukas* based on population proportion. If a *taluka* covers more proportion of population than a constituency, the CCDI value of that *taluka* has been given to the constituency. During 2008, MLA constituencies of Karnataka were reshuffled, hence adjustments have been given in two tables—one for 1999 and 2004 and another for 2008 and 2013. For 1999 and 2004, CCDI 1999–2000 has been used. For 2008 and 2013, CCDI 2009–10 has been used.

I Meera vs. Meera: Devoted Saint-Poet or Determined Queen?

Saurav Kumar Rai

A saint does not merely have a life, but also an afterlife. In fact, many a time, afterlife of a saint overshadows his/her life. The saint remains alive in the folklores sung by ballads, hagiographies written by chroniclers, and tales told by story-tellers. In these afterlife narratives, life and time of the saint is often imagined, reconstructed and popularized from the vantage point of the narrator and not that of the saint. This can be seen explicitly in the case of Kabir, Nanak, Ravidas, Ghazi Miyan, and various other bhakti and sufi saints. In this context, Madhav Hada resorts to relocate Meera, a prominent bhakti saint, in her life and time. While the popular imagery of Meera is that of a wandering saint-poet who rebelled extraordinarily against the patriarchal oppression, Hada presents her as a mortal being with emotions and frailties of her own (p. 182). According to Hada, Meera's protest was neither too extraordinary, nor an embittered fruit of marginalized sentiments (p. 161). Instead, Hada focuses upon the life events of Meera, the queen, which dictated the course and actions of her life.

Meera of the present volume is not 'outworldly'; rather she is very much located in the world around her. Hada has exquisitely shown how the personal and political tragedies which Meera faced in her lifetime were reflected in her poetry. Early loss of her husband, father as well as father-in-law, subsequent tensions with her brother-in-laws, intrigues and jealousies of royal households, recurrent feudal conflicts and consequent political instability of the age, etc. collectively impressed upon the writings as well as positioning of Meera in her life. As remarked by Hada, the devotion and wandering life of Meera had little to do with ascetism and was more a kind of personal as well as political compulsions. After the death of her husband and father-in-law, Meera suddenly lost the favourable position in the royal household of Mewar. Filled with grief, she sought relief in devotion to Krishna cult which she inherited through her paternal ancestry.

Meanwhile, tensions started brewing between Meera and her brother-in-laws at Mewar. As a result, Meera decided to leave Mewar and went to her natal home at Merta which was then ruled by her uncle Viramdev. However, following the defeat of Viramdev by Maldev (the eldest son of Rao Ganga of Jodhpur), Meera was forced to leave Merta along with her uncle. She subsequently travelled along with her family members to Ajmer, Didwana, Banawali, Ranthambore and eventually reached Agra. She further moved on and travelled to Vrindavan and then Dwarka, two major centres of Krishna cult. Thus, Meera's life as a widow was gravely affected by a series of tragic events in Mewar and Merta, involving endless invasions from external forces, internal feuds, and deaths of her loved ones (p. 38).

Despite all these odds mentioned above, Meera was never a destitute, homeless, and saffron clad wandering ascetic as she appears to be in popular literature and modern media. Instead, as argued by Hada, whenever she went on pilgrimage, she was accompanied by her royal retinue that included servants, caretakers, a large number of men and women, elephants, horses, chariots and similar such vehicles etc. aligned with her grand status of being a princess of Merta and wife of the deceased heir of Mewar (p. 41). She inherited the source of her income to maintain all this through the landed estates of Pur and Mandal of Mewar bequeathed to her by Rana Sanga after her marriage with his eldest son Bhojraj. Thus, she was more of a royal bhakti saint than a wandering ascetic. In this regard, Meera had the unique position vis-à-vis other bhakti saints who belonged mostly to lower or middle strata of the society.

Similarly, commenting on the society of Meera's time, Hada argues that it provided her scope to express herself. Here Hada eschews dominant characterization of Meera's society as being ridden with caste hierarchies and patriarchal norms. According to Hada, while Brahmanical texts of the time do talk about maintenance of caste hierarchy and upheld subordinate position of women; it was more prescriptive in nature than what was there on ground in reality. The fact that Meera was celebrated by the same society testifies the openness of the contemporary society.

Lastly, Hada, in the final chapter, has an interesting discussion on modern day adaptation of Meera in devotional literature (such as by Hanuman Prasad Poddar of Gita Press and Giriraj Sharan Agrawal of Diamond Books), comics (by Amar Chitra Katha, Macaw Books and Wilco) and films (by Gulzar in 1979 starring Hema Malini). Here Hada is of the opinion that popular films and mass media mostly portray idealized tales of her life depending upon their own convictions thereby stripping Meera of her temporal and earthly life.

In short, this book sheds light on the journey of Meera as a human being with all the associated worries, vulnerabilities and reactions integral to every human life.

(Madhav Hada, Vani Book Company, New Delhi, 2020, Pp. 237, ₹. 399/-)

II The Presidential Years (2012-2017)

N. Shanmughom Pillai

The book offers a fascinating account of how the author as President of India reshaped the functioning of Rashtrapati Bhavan and responded to tumultuous events leaving behind a legacy that will be hard to match. He recalls the challenges and the tight rope walk he had to undertake to ensure constitutional propriety. The book gives us a glimpse of Pranab at his best : we can see the man in his long journey from the flicker of a lamp in a remote village in Bengal to the chandeliers of Rashtrapati Bhavan which he confirms is the product of Indian democracy. The book proceeds in 11 chapters with an introduction and an epilogue. He assumed office as the 13th President of India on 25 July 2012.

The author believes that every MP/MLA should legislate for the greater good of the people. But he was appalled at the callousness with which disruptions have been used as a tool to hold a Government accountable. He recalls the value of debates, discussions and dissent in the deliberations of the constituent Assembly and Parliament. Heated dissent in the Constituent Assembly did not lead to disruption or deadlock, instead it facilitated the creation of the best possible Constitution.

He was concerned about the drop in the number of days of Parliament sessions in the 1950s and 1960s. The author says, sadly the Narendra Modi government during its first term (2014-2019) failed in its primary responsibility to ensure the smooth and proper functioning of Parliament.

The author was firmly against ordinance route in legislation. He always favoured a clear mandate for the ruling party as a fractured government becomes a hostage to whimsical opportunists. Populist anarchy cannot be a substitute for governance. Government is not a charity shop; only what's possible should be promised to the voters. He believed that people were dejected with coalitions. He did not believe the Congress would have survived had he been made the Prime Minister in 2014. But the party lost political focus after his elevation as President. His presence in active politics could have avoided the drubbing of 2014. The poorest of our land must feel that they are part of the narrative of rising India. He never showed his prepared speech to any government official. But he had chosen not to be reckless or populist and avoided criticism of government policies. But he never shied away from taking up issues of contemporary concern behind closed doors. The national Institution for Transforming India (NITI AYOOG) was setup in 2015 replacing the Planning Commission. He felt that it was a mistake indeed a blunder to do away with it but refrained from raking up a controversy. He was against left wing extremism. He was also against attack on less privileged and minorities and also against attempt to erase the legacy of Nehru who played a stellar role in building up India. He recalls Mrs. Gandhi's confession about emergency when she told a journalist in London. '...in those 21 months we comprehensively managed to alienate all sections of the Indian people'.

The majority of a Government should be tested only on the floor of the house and not in a hotel or club house. He was in favour of continuing Art. 356 but was against its misuse. The judiciary should refrain from stepping into the jurisdiction of the executive or the legislature. He notes that the appointment of judges done by the collegium adopted by the Supreme Court is not as per provisions of the Indian Constitution. It is only in India where courts take cognizance of the grievances of the common man through a simple post card.

He believed that bilateral disputes including border conflicts should be resolved through civilizational

wisdom and political acumen. Demonetisation was declared without consulting the President but it was not a move initiated only by the Modi government. GST, the idea of which came in 2006 from P. Chidambaram became a reality on 1 July 2017. GST is a disruptive change in the sense it required a constitutional amendment which altered the very structure of the constitution.

In brief the book sheds light on various issues of Parliament and our polity which makes it worth reading.

(Pranab Mukherjee, Rupa Publications India (P) Ltd. 2021, Pp. 197, ₹. 695/-)

India's Widening Gender Inequality: A Look into the Global Gender Gap Report 2021

Jyolsna S.

Gender inequality is a characteristic of most societies, with males on average better positioned in social, economic, and political hierarchies. Gender equality is a fundamental human right. It can boost economic growth and improve development outcomes. Therefore there is increasing acceptance that gender equality is not a women's issue, but should concern and fully engage men as well as women. On 31 March 2021, the World Economic Forum (WEF) released its fifteenth edition of the annual Gender Gap Report. India's lethargic efforts to bridge the gender gap have been exposed again in its low ranking in the 2021 Index. Several factors have led to this poor performance by India. Since its first dip in rate of progress in 2016, this is a repeat, predictably because the pandemic has affected more women than men. In these circumstances it is important to examine the current status of gender inequality in India and also to analyse whether the virus pandemic has deepened existing inequalities for females. This article examines the current scenario of the gender inequality in India on the basis of 'The Global Gender Gap Report 2021' published by the WEF.

Introduction

Women and girls represent half of the world's population and therefore also half of its potential. Women's economic empowerment boosts productivity, increases economic diversification and income equality in addition to other positive development outcomes (IMF, 2018). Investing in women's economic empowerment sets a direct path towards gender equality, poverty eradication and inclusive economic growth (UN Women's work on Economic Empowerment). Economic development contributes to gender equality in itself as the households have more resources available and therefore there is less economic pressure to discriminate against women or girls who tend to do worse in the resource allocation under conditions of poverty (Mikkola and Miles, 2007). But, today gender inequality persists everywhere and stagnates social progress (UN, 2018).

The United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women, also known as UN Women, defines equality between men and women (gender equality) as: the equal rights, responsibilities and opportunities of women and men and girls and boys. But gender equality can be said to have been achieved when women and men enjoy the same rights and opportunities across all sectors of society, including economic participation and decision-making, and when the different behaviour, aspirations and needs of women and men are equally valued and favoured (UNCTAD, 2016). This entails that women's and men's rights, responsibilities and opportunities do not depend on whether they are born male or female and that the interests, needs and priorities of both women and men are taken into consideration (WEF, 2006). According to UNESCO's Gender Mainstreaming Implementation Framework, gender equality means that women and men have equal conditions for realizing their full human rights and for contributing to, and benefiting from, economic, social, cultural and political development. Gender equality is therefore the equal valuing by society of the similarities and the differences of men and women, and the roles they play. It is based on women and men being full partners in their home, their community and their society.

Regardless of one's socio-economic class, there are systematic gender differences in material well-being, although the degree of inequality varies across countries and over time. As a result, gender inequality is a characteristic of most societies, with males on average better positioned in social, economic, and political

hierarchies (UNDP, 2013). There are many potential variables that could account for this inequality - societal norms, gender discrimination, or the challenges surrounding childcare - but what is becoming more obvious is that this gap is negatively impacting entire populations (Klasen and Lamanna, 2009). “The struggle for women’s rights has been the subject of the written word for at least 500 years. Yet progress towards equality is breathtakingly slow. Despite decades of struggle and empirical evidence on the shared benefits of gender equality, however, the march towards equality faces deeply entrenched challenges” (Helen Clerk, 2019). Persistent gender gaps not only impact women, but are damaging to the socio-economic development of entire populations (Sean Wiley, 2014).

This acknowledgment has led to the development of a number of global efforts to promote gender equality. The UN General Assembly adopted Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) in 1979 commits member states to preventing “any distinction, exclusion or restriction made on the basis of sex which has the effect or purpose of impairing or nullifying recognition, enjoyment or exercise by women, irrespective of their marital status, on a basis of equality of men and women, of human rights and fundamental freedom in the political, economic, social, cultural, civil or any other field”. It is often described as an international bill of rights for women. The Platform for Action adopted at the United Nations Fourth World Conference on Women, held in Beijing in 1995 emphasized the need to make sure that gender equality is a primary goal in all areas of social and economic development. Since 1997, the United Nations has urged gender mainstreaming as a globally accepted strategy to promote gender equality. Finally, at the Millennium Summit in 2000, promoting gender equality and women’s empowerment was adopted as one of eight Millennium Development Goals and as an essential component in achieving all of the other goals.

World Economic Forum’s Global Gender Gap Report

In spite of the global concern and significant steps forward, gender inequality cannot be considered as a phenomenon of the past or one that is limited to a small subset of the world’s population. In spite of global awareness and obligation at the pinnacle, systematic tools for tracking progress are limited. The World Economic Forum (WEF) is an international NGO founded in 1971 and is headquartered in Geneva, Switzerland. The WEF’s primary aim is to drive positive change for the world by conducting research, producing data and leading collaborative projects and initiatives. The report ‘Women’s Empowerment: Measuring the Global Gender Gap’ launched in 2005 was the initial attempt by the WEF to add to the literature in the area of gender-related indexes and develop an instrument that can aid policy-makers, business and civil society in defining their agendas. This study attempted to assess the size of the gender gap in 58 countries using economic, educational, health and political based criteria.

The WEF Centre for the New Economy and Society has published the Global Gender Gap Index (GGGI) since 2006. The Centre for the New Economy and Society is focused on closing economic gender gaps, fostering diversity and promoting inclusive growth. The Global Gender Gap Report (GGGR) 2006, the first of this series, was based on an innovative new methodology that examined the gender gap in over 115 economies, representing over 90 percentage of the world’s population to create the GGGI 2006.

There are three basic concepts underlying the GGGI. The first basic concept is that it measures gender-based gaps in access to resources and opportunities rather than actual levels of the available resources and opportunities with a view to making the GGGI independent of the level of development. The second goal is to evaluate countries based on outcome variables rather than input measures in order to provide a snapshot of where men and women stand with regard to some fundamental outcome variables related to basic rights such as health, education, economic participation or political empowerment. The third distinguishing feature is that it ranks countries according to their proximity to gender equality rather than to women’s empowerment. The goal of this concept is to focus on whether the gap between women and men in the chosen variables has declined, rather than whether women are “winning” the battle of the sexes (WEF, 2006).

The GGGI examines the gap between men and women in four fundamental categories (sub indices) and 14 different indicators that compose them. The sub indices are Economic Participation and Opportunity, Educational Attainment, Health and Survival and Political Empowerment. The scores are based on the level of access women have to resources and opportunities relative to men. Countries are given a score from 0-1. A score of 1 indicates full equality between women and men and a score of 0 indicates full inequality. Through Global Gender Gap Reports, for the past fifteen years, the WEF has been quantifying the magnitude of gender based disparities and tracking their progress over time.

Book Review

The growing literature on development economics recognized a significant gender gap in various sectors including health, labour market opportunities, education and political representation in India. Amartya Sen (1990) was the first to speak about 'Missing Women' while noting the unbelievably low sex ratio in some parts of the developing world, which could not be disbanded simply using biological, cultural or economic explanations. The worsening sex ratio in countries such as India and China is a sign of the gross neglect of women.

Gender inequality is not perpetuated exclusively through differential access to and control over material resources. Gender norms and stereotypes reinforce gendered identities and constrain the behaviour of women and men in ways that lead to inequality (Ridgeway, 2011). The consultation on the Post-2015 Development Agenda noted "gender equality is not about transferring opportunities from men to women, but about realizing the rights of everyone, and creating conditions where all have the right and ability to realize their full human potential".

The 2011 UN Gender Inequality Index has ranked India below several sub-Saharan African countries. According to this report Gender disparities are even more pronounced in economic participation and women's business conditions in India. According to the World Bank Report (2012) on gender disparities in India, "Despite recent economic advances India's gender balance for entrepreneurship remains among the lowest in the world. Improving this balance is an important step for India's development and its achievement of greater economic growth and gender equality". Duflo (2012) provides an outstanding overview of the literature by reviewing the relationship between gender inequality and economic development.

According to the Report of the UN Secretary-General's High-Level Panel on Women's Economic Empowerment (UNHLP, 2016), hundreds of millions of women worldwide work informally, without social and labour protections in law or in practice. Bringing these women under the protection of regulatory regimes - specifically through measures covering recognition as workers, regulated access to public spaces, freedom of association and collective bargaining, and access to social protection - will be important to addressing gender inequality in countries with large informal sectors, such as India. In its 2018 report, McKinsey Global Institute (2018) stated how advancing women's equality can add \$12 trillion to global growth and \$700 billion to India's growth by 2025.

Thus the existing literature has recognized a significant gender gap in various sectors in India. Gender equality is a fundamental human right. More important, it can boost economic growth and improve development outcomes. Therefore there is increasing acceptance that gender equality is not a women's issue, but should concern and fully engage men as well as women. On March 31, 2021, the World Economic Forum (WEF) released its annual Gender Gap Report. India's lethargic efforts to bridge the gender gap have been exposed again in its low ranking in the 2021 Index. Several factors have led to this poor performance by India. Since its first dip in rate of progress in 2016, this is a repeat, predictably because the pandemic has affected more women than men. It is therefore important to examine the current status of gender inequality in India and also to analyse whether the virus pandemic has deepened existing inequalities for females.

Objectives and Methodology

This article will analyse the current scenario of the gender inequality in India on the basis of ‘The Global Gender Gap Report 2021’ published by the WEF. It will also compare its overall index scores and scores in the fields of Economic Participation and Opportunity, Educational Attainment, Health and Survival, and Political Empowerment with the previous Gender Gap Reports, and then examining whether the pandemic has affected India’s falling in rank through the score changes of sub-dimensions and indicators. The data sources of this study mainly include the Global Gender Gap Reports from 2006 to 2021 published on the website of the WEF.

The Global Gender Gap Report 2021

The GGGI benchmarks the evolution of gender-based gaps in four areas: Economic Participation and Opportunity, Educational Attainment, Health and Survival, and Political Empowerment and tracks progress towards closing these gaps over time. The GGGR 2021 has taken 156 countries across eight regions of the world. The 14th edition of the report, the GGGR 2020, was launched in December 2019, using the latest available data at the time. The 15th edition, the GGGR 2021, was published one year after COVID-19 was officially declared a pandemic. Data generated by prior research suggests that the health emergency and the related economic downturn have impacted women more severely than men, partially re-opening gaps that had already been closed.

According to the WEF’s 2021 report, no country in the world has ever achieved full gender parity. To date 2021, the global gender gap is 67.7%, meaning hereby, 32.3% gap yet to be closed globally. When considering only the 107 countries covered continuously from 2006 to 2021 it is 68.0%. The GGGR 2020 had taken 153 countries and the score based on the population-weighted average was 68.6%. Out of the 153 countries and economies covered both 2021 and in 2020, 98 have improved their score while 55 have regressed or stalled. The 2021 results reduce the total progress made towards gender parity to just a 3.6 percentage-point gain since 2006. Hence, on average, over the past 15 years the gap has been reduced by only 0.24 percentage points per year. According to the report if progress towards gender parity proceeds at the same speed observed between the 2006 and 2021 editions, the overall global gender gap is projected to close in 135.6 years. Although no country has yet to achieve full gender parity, the top two countries, Iceland and Finland, have closed at least 85 percentage of their gap, and another seven countries, Lithuania, Namibia, New Zealand, Norway, Sweden, Rwanda and Ireland, have closed at least 80 percentage of their gap. The Report also says the pandemic has rolled back years of progress towards equality between men and women world over.

Table 1: The State of Gender Gap based on Sub Index

Sub Index	Gender Gap Index closed (%)		Gender Gap yet to be closed (%)	
	2020	2021	2020	2021
The Global Gender Gap Index	68.6	67.7	31.4	32.3
Health and Survival	95.7	95.6	4.3	4.4
Educational Attainment	96.1	96.1	3.9	3.9
Economic Participation and Opportunity	57.8	58.0	42.2	42.0
Political Empowerment	24.7	22.3	75.3	77.7

Source: World Economic Forum, Global Gender Gap Report (2020, 2021)

The overall global gender gap scores across the four main components of the index shed light on which factors are driving the overall average decline in the global gender gap score. The gender gap in *Political Empowerment* remains the largest of the four gaps tracked, with only 22.3% closed to date (meaning 77.7%

of the gap is therefore yet to be closed), having further widened since the 2020 edition of the report (24.7%) by 2.4 percentage points. At the current rate of progress, the WEF estimates that it will take 145.5 years to attain gender parity in politics. GGGR 2021 reported that, the global gender gap has widened by 0.5 percentage points, returning to its 2018 level since the previous edition, driven for the most part by a retrenchment of the average Political Empowerment score, after an increase registered in the 2020 edition.

The gender gap in *Economic Participation and Opportunity* remains globally the second-largest of the four key gaps tracked by the index. According to 2021 index, the gap this year has remained almost as large as last year, with a minor improvement in score from 57.8% in the 2020 edition to 58.0% in the 2021 edition. Since 2006, the score has increased by just 2.4 percentage points, translating to an average per year progress of 0.16 percentage points every year over the 2006–2020 period. As a result, it will take another 267.6 years to close this gap. The report says that this figure could well increase once the full effects of the COVID-19 pandemic are reflected in the statistics.

Global Gender gaps in *Educational Attainment* and *Health and Survival* are nearly closed. On Educational Attainment, gender gaps can be fully closed in just 14.2 years. Global performance is unchanged at 96.1%, marking a progress of 4.9% since 2006, or 0.33 percentage points per year. In Health and Survival, there has been a very slight decline in the global score this year from 95.7% to 95.6%. The report says that this marginal decline since last year is not due to the COVID 19 pandemic and the time to close this gap remains undefined. The report alerted that even though for both education and health, the progress is higher than for economy and politics in the global data, there are important future implications of disruptions due to the pandemic, as well as continued variations in quality across income, geography, race and ethnicity.

Global Gender Gap Index and India

The Global Gender Gap Report groups countries into eight broad geographical groupings: East Asia and the Pacific; Eastern Europe and Central Asia; Latin America and the Caribbean; Middle East and North Africa; North America; South Asia; Sub-Saharan Africa; and Western Europe. Regional performances also differ in terms of speed of convergence towards gender parity. According to the GGGR 2021, Western Europe is the region that has the narrowest gender gap (77.6% so far) and has further improved this year. North America (76.4%) is ranked second, with an average score five points below Western Europe, followed closely by Latin America and the Caribbean (72.1%), and the Eastern Europe and Central Asia region (71.2%). East Asia and the Pacific is approaching the 70% mark (68.9%), more than a full point ahead of Sub-Saharan Africa (67.2%), which is followed by South Asia (62.3%) and the Middle East and North Africa (MENA), which is the region with the widest gap (60.9%).

Table 2: The Global Gender Gap Index by Region -Performance of South Asia, 2021.

Country	Rank		Score
	Regional	Global	
Bangladesh	1	65	0.719
Nepal	2	106	0.683
Sri Lanka	3	116	0.670
Maldives	4	128	0.642
Bhutan	5	130	0.639
India	6	140	0.625
Pakistan	7	153	0.556
Afghanistan	8	156	0.444

Source: WEF- The Global Gender Gap Report 2021

The South Asian region is home to 860 million women, three fourths of whom live in India. Among the eight regions of the world, South Asia's gender gap (62.3%) is the second-largest after the MENA region. In addition, progress has been too slow in the recent past, and this year has actually reversed. In the 2020 edition the overall gender gap in the region was 66.1 percentages. According to 2021 Report, a decline of 3.8 percentage points has resulted in a significant delay in the projected time needed for this region to close gender gaps, now estimated at 195.4 years.

Within the region India is the third-worst performer. India's status is, in fact, worse than Bangladesh, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Maldives, and Bhutan of South Asia. With the overall score of 0.625, which is less than the global average (0.677), it stands at 140th position globally and regionally (South Asia) at the 6th position in the GGGI. The data reveals that there is a huge inequality existing between men and women. India, ahead of only Afghanistan and Pakistan, has much to learn from better-performing countries. Because of its large population, India's performance has a substantial impact on the region's overall performance

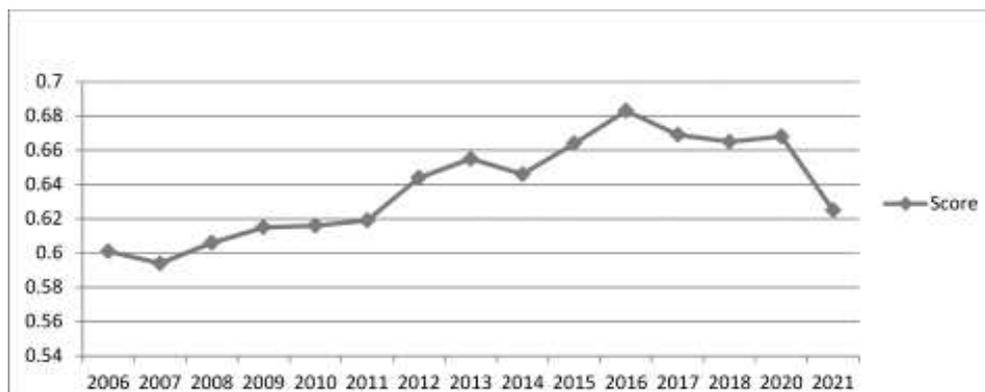
Table 3: The State of the Gender Gap - Performance of India (2006-2021)

Year	Score	Rank
2006	0.601	98
2007	0.594	114
2008	0.606	113
2009	0.615	114
2010	0.616	112
2011	0.619	113
2012	0.644	105
2013	0.655	101
2014	0.646	114
2015	0.664	108
2016	0.683	87
2017	0.669	108
2018	0.665	108
2020	0.668	112
2021	0.625	140

Source: WEF Global gender Gap Report (2006-2021)

Home to 0.65 billion women, India has widened its gender gap from almost 66.8% closed in 2020 to 62.5% in 2021, ranking the country 140th globally. In 2020 ranking the country had ranked 112th among 153 countries. India fell by 28 positions to 140 and WEF estimates India will need 265 years to close this gap. India's gender gap index experienced a great change from 2006 to 2021. Over the years, India's rank has slipped. The irony is that the country that aims to become economic superpower is falling behind its peers on inclusive economic growth.

Figure 1: Trends in India's Overall Global gender Gap Index



Data Source: WEF-Global Gender Gap Report (2006-21)

There is a significant diverse gap between the four different dimensions of the global gender gap.

Over the last 15 years (2006-2021), ranks have significantly slipped in every dimension. In the two sub indices namely- Educational Attainment and Health and Survival- only 3.8% and 6.3% respectively still needs to be closed. In contrast to that, the differences between men and women on the Political Empowerment and Economic Participation and Opportunity have remained significantly larger. According to GGGR 2021, only 27.6% and 32.6% gap have been closed so far on Political Empowerment and Economic Participation and Opportunity respectively.

Table 4: India's Status

Sub Index	Global Gender Gap Index- 2021		
	India	South Asia	Global average
	Score	Score	Score
Health and Survival	0.937	0.942	0.677
Educational Attainment	0.962	0.933	0.961
Economic Participation and Opportunity	0.326	0.338	0.580
Political Empowerment	0.276	0.281	0.223

Sub Index	Global Gender Gap Index- India					
	2006		2020		2021	
	Rank	Score	Rank	Score	Rank	Score
The Global Gender Gap Index	98	0.601	112	0.686	140	0.625
Health and Survival	103	0.962	150	0.944	155	0.937
Educational Attainment	102	0.819	112	0.962	114	0.962
Economic Participation and Opportunity	110	0.397	149	0.354	151	0.326
Political Empowerment	20	0.227	18	0.411	51	0.276

Data Source: WEF – GGGR (2006, 2020, 2021)

Political Empowerment is the most disturbing dimensions as far as gender parity is concerned. The indicators of this sub index are women in Parliament (%), women in Ministerial positions (%), years with a female head of State (last 50 years), and the share of tenure years.

India had regressed the highest in the sub-category of Political Empowerment (13.5 percentage points). In India the share of women ministers decreased from 23.1% in 2020 to 9.1% in 2021. In addition, the share of women in parliament stands low at 14.4% and the share of the last 50 years in which a woman has been head of state is 15.5%. India has deteriorated to 51st place from 18th place in 2020 on Political Empowerment. This is a shame for a country that is a most populous democracy in the world.

Decline also took place on the *Economic Participation and Opportunity* sub index, though to a lesser extent. According to the report, India has declined by 2.8 per cent in terms of offering men and women equality in Economic Participation and Opportunity. So from 35.4 per cent in 2020, India has come to 32.6 per cent in 2021 of closing the gap. Among the drivers of this decline is a decrease in women's labour force participation rate. India has also slipped in labour force participation from 24.8 per cent to 22.3 per cent. Furthermore, the share of women in professional and technical roles declined further to 29.2%. Only 14.6 per cent women occupy senior managerial position in India and only 8.9 per cent when it comes to top management, CEO positions. In addition, a woman's estimated earned income is only one-fifth of men's, i.e., for every five rupees that men earn in India, women earn only one. Indian women's earnings are only 20.7 per cent of men's, which puts India among the bottom 10 globally on this indicator.

Discrimination against women is also reflected in *Health and Survival* sub index statistics. Globally the gap on Health and Survival has remained substantially stable over the past few years and also it is the second-best sub index in terms of progress towards gender parity. With 93.7% of this gap closed to date, India ranks 155, among all 156 countries assessed by the index. 93.7% score in Health and Survival means women have 6.3 per cent less chance of surviving or getting healthcare as opposed to men. According to the GGGR 2021, all countries have closed at least 93% of their health gender gaps so far, but populous countries such as China, India, Azerbaijan and Pakistan have achieved scores that are lower than 94%. The main driver of cross-country variation is the skewed sex ratio at birth. In India there are 91 girls born per 100 boys born, which is lower than a natural and biological relatively constant ratio of about 94%. This ratio can be attributed to the norms of son preference and gender biased prenatal sex-selective practices. China and India together account for about 90%–95% of the estimated 1.2 million to 1.5 million missing female births annually worldwide due to gender biased prenatal sex selective practices. Further, China, India and Pakistan register excess female mortality rates (below age 5) related to neglect and gender biased postnatal sex selection practices. In addition, more than one in four women in India has faced intimate violence in her lifetime. Violence, forced marriage and discrimination in access to health remain pervasive. Hence India urgently needs to focus on “Health and Survival” which points towards a skewed sex ratio because of high incidence of gender-based sex selective practices

Progress is relatively more advanced in terms of *Educational Attainment*, where 96.6% of the gender gap has been closed in India. It is the sub index with the smallest global gender gap and relatively low variation. A sign of hope in India's performance has been the enrolment of female students in primary, secondary and tertiary classes which compares with the best countries in the world. From primary to tertiary education, the share of women attending school is systematically larger than the share of men. But a large difference persists for literacy rate; only two-thirds of women are literate compared with 82.4% of men. Yet the gap has been narrowing in the past decade, because the literacy rate has significantly increased among women (66%) and slightly decreased among men to 79%.

Discussion

Gendered inequality is a global concern. Despite rapid economic growth, gender disparities have remained deep and persistent in India. India is the third-worst performer country in South Asia in World Economic Forum's Global Gender Gap Report 2021 with Pakistan and Afghanistan trailing and Bangladesh being at the top. The report said India has slipped 28 places to rank 140th among 156 countries. In the 2020 edition, the country had ranked 112th among 153 countries. India has closed 62.5% of its gender gap to date. This gap is 4.2 percentage points larger than recorded in the previous edition. India has deteriorated to 51st

place from 18th place in 2020 on Political Empowerment. Still, it has slipped to 155th position from 150th position in 2020 on Health and Survival, 151st place in Economic Participation and Opportunity from 149th place, and 114th place for Educational Attainment from 112th. Since its first dip in the rate of progress in 2016, this is a repetition. According to the report “preliminary evidence suggests that the health emergency and the related economic downturn have impacted women more severely than men, partially re-opening gaps that had already been closed”.

Across the globe, Covid-19 has devastated livelihoods, lives and economies. The Covid-19 pandemic affected women the worst across the globe and added on new barriers to build inclusive and prosperous economies and societies. The GGGR 2021 states that the hardest hit sectors by lockdowns and rapid digitalization are those where women are more frequently employed. Combined with the additional pressures of providing care in the home, the crisis has halted progress towards gender parity in several economies and industries.

The pandemic has also added decades to the trajectory towards closing the gender gap, the report said. A range of studies have shown that the COVID-19 pandemic has had a disproportionate impact on women. The effects will be felt in the long-term, according to WEF, which found that the goalposts for gender parity appeared to be moving further away. In its previous report, published in December 2019 right before the pandemic hit, the organization had found that gender parity across a range of areas would be reached within 99.5 years. But this year’s report shows the world is not on track to close the gender gap for another 135.6 years. The WEF said in a statement “another generation of women will have to wait for gender parity”.

In India also the pandemic has a major role in widening the gender gap. With schools and nurseries partly open, women are engaging most of the unpaid care work, shrinking their hours or quit paid work. They are more often than expected to care for the family and, are fit into the stereotypical roles of cooking, cleaning, parenting, etc. Many women are also on the frontline, delivering essential services, usually the lowest paid or in insecure work. Definitely, the pandemic has excessively affected the lives of women who are now into double duty and required to cope with works and home. This is exhausting them both mentally and physically, thus forcing many women out of what might have otherwise been well-paid careers. The widening of economic participation gender gap in India by 3% as per GGGR 2021 is a reflection of this fact.

Definitely, the WEF report has revealed a distressing situation for the entire world. The average gap has widened worldwide over the course of the pandemic year. Of the four pillars of the index, India suffered badly in Political Empowerment and Economic Participation and Opportunities. In just one year, India’s position in Political Empowerment of women fell from 18 to 51. As against a global average of 50%, India has just 12 percent political participation. India has one of the lowest labour participation of women (22%) in the world. The gender gap is further exacerbated by the inadequate representation of women in professional/technical or senior management roles. In terms of Health and Survival, India ranks among the bottom five countries in the world due to an imbalance in its sex ratio at birth and a low healthy life expectancy.

But a good deal of India’s failings is pre-COVID. For example, some of the drop in India’s global rank over the past two years has to do with lapse in the field of political power. Even if the number of female Parliamentarians remains stagnant over a long period of time, the share of women ministers more than halved to 9.1% of the total. Several other factors have also led to this disappointing performance by India like skewed distribution of resources and opportunities between men and women and female literacy. The report showed India’s country-wide female literacy rate at 70.3% and male literacy rate around 84.7%. Decreases in women labour participation and culturally ingrained preferences for the male child leading to more discrimination against women have also contributed to this. Perhaps a greater cause for apprehension is our unsatisfactory performance over the past decade-and-a-half on women’s Economic Participation and Opportunities. While there is preliminary evidence that the health crisis has asymmetrically impacted labour force participation of women, the status quo was already penalizing India even before the arrival of the pandemic. In India only 22.3% of women participate in the labour market. At the aggregate level, our income disparity is strikingly

noticeable. Women earn only one-fifth of men, which puts India among the world's worst 10 on this indicator. We are very poor in women's Health and Survival. The gender gap of the sex ratio at birth is above 9.1%, and healthy life expectancy is almost the same.

Conclusion

The GGGR 2021 points out that while the pandemic has affected women adversely across the globe, the shock has been less in countries where active interventions were made to stop the decline. According to the report, while in some economies, women have experienced deeper hardship than men, in others, governments set up gender-sensitive policies to tackle the issue. The pandemic has ruined what was already a fragile gender divide in India. A gender-positive economic recovery is the need of the hour. India must focus not only on improving its health infrastructure, but must also reexamine the trajectory of its social and economic policies. In the recovery phase, for a gender-positive recovery, India will have to design systems and policies that boost gender equality in economic participation. Investments in the care-giving sector, equitable access to care leave for men and women, helpful mid-career skilling policies and managerial practices which implant sound, unbiased hiring and promotion practices, policies to focus on overcoming occupational segregation by gender are some of the recommendations. The WEF Report points out that in India, care work continues to be informal and poorly funded, and this under-investment reflects the misunderstanding that care work is 'low-productivity'. This conception ignores the significant impact of this sector on human capital development.

At the macro level, there is a need for policy initiatives to empower women and tighter implementation of existing ones to reduce the gender disparity in India. Participating in labour markets has been an important channel for economic empowerment of women and for building diverse, inclusive and innovative organizations. Therefore, addressing normative and legal barriers for women to work and move ahead remains a priority area for policymakers and businesses in all countries. Empowering half of the potential workforce has significant economic benefits beyond promoting gender equality. In addition, small steps must also be taken into account. Higher representation of female leaders can be a source of inspiration for others to pursue their dreams and aspirations. Improved access to information among women can build their professional interest and increase their economic participation. Joint effort between the local and national levels can make change. With the WEF 2021 report data staring in our face, the country must invest and commit towards this for a more promising future to meet its commitments towards achieving the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals. Women are not ready to wait for another century for equality. It's time India accelerates its efforts and fight for an inclusive, equal, global recovery.

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Dr. Ambedkar's Vision of Social Change through Democracy

Kavitha D.

Dr.B.R.Ambedkar was a genius par excellence - an economist, a sociologist, a political scientist, a great historian, a legal luminary, a constitutionalist and above all a great champion of the downtrodden. As a staunch believer in democracy, Dr. Ambedkar says 'Democracy is not a form of government, but a form of social organisation'. He visualized a new society based on the principles of liberty, equality and fraternity. He believed that in democracy revolutionary changes in the economic and social life of the people are brought about without bloodshed. He firmly believed that political democracy cannot succeed without social and economic democracy. Social and economic democracies are tissue and the fibre of a political democracy. For him political democracy is not an end in itself, but the most powerful means to achieve social and economic ideals in society. State Socialism within the framework of parliamentary democracy can defeat dictatorship. He made it clear that the ideal society of his conception would be a society based on liberty, equality and fraternity. This paper highlights Ambedkar's views on democracy to bring social changes.

Introduction

Bhimrao Ramji Ambedkar was born on 14th April, 1891 in Mahar caste, which was one of the 'untouchable' castes. With the help of a scholarship from Sayagirao Gaekwad, Maharaja of Baroda, he attended Columbia University, U S A, and later on with hard work he managed to study at the London School of Economics. In England he attained a doctorate and also became a barrister. On returning to India he virtually dedicated himself to the task of upliftment of the untouchable community and he became their supreme leader. To mobilize his followers he established organisations such as Bahishkrit Hitkarni Sabha, Independent Labour party and the All India Scheduled Caste Federation. He established many educational institutions and propagated his views from news papers like the 'Mooknayak' 'Bahishkrit Bharat' and Janata'. He participated in the Round Table Conference in order to protect the interest of the untouchables. He became the Chairman of the Drafting Committee of the Constituent Assembly and played a very important role in framing the Indian Constitution. He was also the Law Minister of India up to 1951. Right from 1935 Ambedkar was thinking of renouncing Hinduism. Finally, in 1956 he adopted Buddhism and appealed to his followers to do the same. He felt that the removal of untouchability and the spiritual upliftment of the untouchables would not be possible by remaining a Hindu. Hence, he embraced Buddhism.

Ambedkar was not only a political leader and social reformer but also a scholar and thinker. He has written extensively on various social and political matters. His well known writings include 'Annihilation of Castes', 'Who were the Shudras', 'The Untouchables', and 'Buddha and his Dharma'. Besides this he had also authored many other books and booklets.

Ambedkar's thinking was based on a deep faith in the goals of equity and liberty. Liberalism and the philosophy of John Dewey also influenced his thinking. Phule and Buddha have exercised a deep influence on Ambedkar's ideas on society, religion and morality. His political views were also influenced by his legal approach. Ambedkar's personal suffering, his scholarship and his constant attention to the problem of bringing about equality for the downtrodden untouchable community forms the basis for his thinking and writings.

Apart from studying the views of Dr. Ambedkar on democracy, this paper also explains how democracy and constitution can be used as tools to bring social change.

Ambedkar's Views on State and Democracy

State: Ambedkar believed that the state is an essential political organisation for the welfare of society, by preventing the disorder for development. The role of the state is to remove social, political and economic inequalities by providing better opportunities to the exploited communities. State is also a positive institution for the protection of the down-trodden and minorities and their rights to enjoy freedom. And finally it has to ensure internal peace and prevent external aggression. In order to realise effectively the goals of the state, Ambedkar argued for parliamentary system of government which he endorsed as government by discussion. A democratic government for Ambedkar is one that presupposes a democratic form of society.

Democracy: Ambedkar's vision of democracy was closely related to his ideal of a "good society". He envisaged a good society as one based on 'liberty, equality and fraternity' (Sukhdeo & Narendar: 2008). Democracy, as he saw it, was both the end and the means of this ideal. It was the end because he ultimately considered democracy as coterminous with the realisation of liberty, equality and fraternity. At the same time, democracy was also the means through which this ideal was to be attained. The formal framework of democracy is of no value and would indeed be a misfit if there was no social democracy. For Ambedkar democracy is 'a form and a method of government whereby revolutionary changes in the economic and social life of the people are brought about without bloodshed' (Mungekar:2017).

In Ambedkar's view the elections, parties and parliaments are after all formal institutions of democracy. They cannot be effective in an undemocratic atmosphere. Political democracy recognizes the principle of 'one man one vote' which indicates political equality. But if oppression and injustice exist, the spirit of political democracy would be missing. Democratic government, therefore, should be an extension of a democratic society. For Ambedkar 'democracy' meant much more than democratic government. It was a way of life. He defined democracy as "a form and a method of government whereby revolutionary changes in the economic and social life of the people are brought about without bloodshed". Another crucial feature of democracy is that it was geared to social transformation and human progress. Democracy is another name for equality. Ambedkar felt that "morality", in the sense of social ethics, was indispensable for the realisation of liberty and equality.

Ambedkar warned of three possible dangers to the new-born democracy. These related to social and economic inequalities, the use of unconstitutional methods and hero-worship. The caste system is the most difficult obstacle in the successful functioning of democracy. Caste system is the biggest challenge for democracy. Caste will create barriers in the development of healthy democratic traditions (Vidhyasagar: 2011). This means that unless we achieve the task of establishing democracy in the social field, mere political democracy cannot survive. The caste system was primarily based on the principle of economic inequality and exploitation. Exclusion and discrimination are thus an obvious consequence of this system. The caste-based economic order entails adverse consequences on economic growth and income distribution. The consequences of the caste system are denial of equal rights, exclusion, discrimination and subordination of one by another caste.

Factors necessary for the successful operation of Democracy

Ambedkar favoured the parliamentary form of government. For the successful functioning of this form of government, it is necessary that certain other conditions must be fulfilled. They are

1. Political parties are necessary for the effective working of parliamentary democracy.
2. The existence of a neutral and non-political civil service.
3. Success of democracy depends on many ethical and moral factors also.
4. Democracy can be successful only when every citizen feels duty bound to fight injustice and it does not put him into any difficulty personally.

5. Majority must always respect the views of the minority. It is very essential that the minority must feel free, safe and secure.
6. There must be no glaring inequalities in society.
7. The existence of opposition and a multi-party system.
8. Public conscience.
9. Equality in law and administration.
10. No tyranny of the majority.

Ambedkar was also aware of the practical difficulties in the way of democratic functioning (Chand: 2007). Therefore he emphasises that mere liberty cannot be an adequate goal. Liberty is meaningful when accompanied by equality. The western ideas of liberal democracy and parliamentary form of government do not ensure equality. So Ambedkar turned to socialism. He felt that socialism must function within a democratic framework. Democracy and socialism need not be opposed to each other. So Ambedkar propounded the idea of 'state socialism'. State socialism means that the state would implement a socialist programme by controlling the industrial and agricultural sectors. The idea of State socialism shows that Ambedkar was aware of the problems of poverty and economic inequality. He suggested separate remedies against social discrimination and remedies against economic exploitation. As a remedy against economic exploitation he proposed to adopt state socialism as a general solution to the problem of poverty and economic exploitation.

Ambedkar opined that democracy rests on four principles to attain social justice. They are

- The individual is an end in himself.
- That the individual has certain inalienable rights which must be guaranteed to him by the Constitution.
- That the individual shall not be required to relinquish any of his constitutional rights as a condition to the receipt of a privilege.
- That the state shall not delegate powers to private persons to govern others.

Ambedkar considered social and economic democracy as the backbone of political democracy. Political democracy must result in social and economic democracy. For Ambedkar, democracy is equality and parliamentary democracy ensures an infatuation for liberty and equality in the individual. He attaches much importance to political participation of the oppressed classes. He did not believe in social reform on the basis of humanitarianism, sympathy etc. Equal status and just treatment was a matter of right and not pity. He believed that education would greatly contribute to the improvement of the untouchables. Reforms regarding marriage and divorce laws for instance, would benefit women who were as oppressed as the untouchables. He strongly criticised the degradation of women in the Indian society. He believed that women were entitled to an equal status with men and that they must have the right to education. Thus Ambedkar always gave first priority to social reform. He believed that economic and political issues should be resolved only after achieving the goal of social justice. According to Ambedkar, 'Social justice' is based upon equality, liberty and fraternity of all human beings. The aim of social justice was to remove all kinds of inequalities based upon caste, race, sex, power, position and wealth. The social justice brings equal distribution of the social, political and economical resources of the community. The major area of Ambedkar's work was on constitutional democracy (Rodrigues:2002). For him democracy is another name for equality. Thus in the opinion of Dr. Ambedkar the conditions for successful working of democracy are, there must be no glaring inequalities in the society, need of strong opposition, equality in law and administration, observations of constitutional morality, no tyranny of majority over minority, moral order in the society and strong presence of public conscience.

Ambedkar's Views on Social Change through Democracy and Constitution

Social change is a term used to describe variations in or modifications of any aspect of social processes, social patterns, social interaction or social organisation. So, social processes and interactions of a society or social relationships lead to social change (Mohapatra: 2016). The notion of democracy and constitution of India has brought many social changes through public policies. Ambedkar's legal expertise and knowledge of constitutional laws of different countries was very helpful in framing the Indian constitution. He wants to bring social changes by adopting democracy and constitution. They are as follows:

1. The Nature of State

Being the sovereign, socialistic and democratic state, several socialistic measures have been taken to end poverty, ignorance, disease, inequality between man and woman especially in wages, insecurity of the old, disabled, orphans, invalid and widow, exploitation of the working class etc. India is a secular state that accords same status to all religions in the country and the state is prohibited to make discriminations on the grounds of religion, caste etc.

2. Objectives and Values

The objectives and values such as liberty, justice and equality have wider social implications. The Constitution has guaranteed to all the Indians a set of Fundamental Rights. These rights are not only given but also protected by the courts. Untouchability has been declared as a punishable crime. Hindu temples of a public character are thrown open to all classes and sections of Hindus. Minorities have been given protection by the state for their language, culture and education etc. The system of reservation has been an instance of justice given to the marginalised or underprivileged sections of Indian society. The application of Directive Principles in the making of laws is very important so that socio-economic justice could be provided to all sections of society. The reforms introduced by Ambedkar through the 'Hindu Code Bill' have been adhered to and have been accepted by and large. By codifying Hindu law in respect of marriage, divorce and succession he rationalised and restored the dignity to women.

Thus Dr. Ambedkar's most important contribution to the Indian Constitution may be seen in the areas of fundamental rights, strong central government and protection of minorities. All these brought enormous changes in Indian society. In India, constitution provides that the state as a form of social welfare organ will distribute the essential needs to the Indian people. Ambedkar's main intention was to protect minorities and weaker section of the society.

Ambedkar was the chief architect of the Indian constitution. He was fully aware of the pattern and problems of the Indian society. To Ambedkar real democracy was a social democracy. He viewed democracy as an instrument of bringing about change peacefully. His idea of democracy is much more than just a scheme of government. He opined that democracy is a way of bringing about drastic changes in the social and economic spheres of society. He emphasised the need for bringing about an all- round democracy.

Conclusion

Ambedkar firmly believed that the progress of the nation could not be realised without first removing untouchability. Social reform was always the first priority of Ambedkar. He believed that economic and political issues should be resolved only after achieving the goal of social justice. Social reform was the precondition of revolutionary changes in our society.

In Ambedkar's opinion "For the successful working of democracy there must not be an oppressed class. There must not be a suppressed class. In case of inequalities state intervention is a must. Right to treatment as an equal must precede the right to equal treatment as a state policy. Equality of opportunity is a misleading term. There should be opportunity for equality."

In conclusion we can say it would have been a different India without him and in all probability a

much more inequitable and unjust one. He repeatedly announced that an ideal society will be based on liberty, equality and fraternity. Casteism and communalism on the one hand and economic exploitation on the other continue to provide strength to the prevalent inequality in the Indian society. Ambedkar fought for a society free from caste- domination and class- exploitation.

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Dr.Manmohan Singh – The Man Behind 1990 – 91 Economic Liberalization with Scientific Tenor

Mary George

“Deeds, like seeds, take their own time to fructify”

– Mahatma Gandhi

The path breaking change in Indian economy took place not through upheavals but through structured and scientific policy changes. 1991 reforms are different to different people. When P.V. Narasimha Rao was sworn in as the Prime Minister of the country, the economic situation was grave and he did not believe in a mere politician to rescue the economy from the dangerous situation. He choose the reticent and soft spoken economist Dr. Man Mohan Singh as the fit person to handle the portfolio of finance. Over whelmed by the retail price inflation of 16.7% and low foreign exchange reserve of \$2.5 billion, Man Mohan Singh devalued the currency in two steps of 16% and 6%, slashed exports subsidies and mostly abolished industrial licensing. While Presenting his maiden budget, Man Mohan Singh said: “there is no time to loose. Neither the government nor the economy can live beyond its means year after year. The room for monoeuvre to live on borrowed money or time does not exist anymore....” The stellar performance of Dr. Man Mohan Singh shines as morning star in the development horizon of India. A paradigm shift from license raj to liberal democracy was the call of the time. That transformation was smooth, strategic and scientific.

This article is a response to Dr.B.Vivekanandan’s article in the Social Science in Perspective, Vol.13, January-March 2021, titled “Dr.Manmohan Singh : A Fit Case for Impeachment”.

While somebody makes allegations in the nature of a character assassination on somebody who held prestigious positions including Prime Ministership for two terms of the largest democracy in the world, he should have made in-depth studies regarding the genuineness of the allegations raised. The article is a boundless onslaught on his great personality and his fathomless dedication for his mothercountry. He was only one of the members of the government and the ministry which took up the decision to open up the way to liberalisation, privatisation, and globalisation policies. Prime Minister Narasimha Rao identified Manmohan Singh as a suitable finance minister capable of hand holding the economy from the deep fiscal and balance of payment crisis. As KausikBasu (2012)¹ rightly puts it “Economic policy is a strange mixture of the precise and the nebulous. Unlike engineering on the one hand and art on the other, it requires scientific knowledge, intuition and common sense”. Rao, with his versatility, could observe the above mentioned qualities in Manmohan Singh and decided to hand over the baton of Finance Ministership to his safe hands.

A Brief Retrospect

Eminent economists have identified two discernible phases of economic growth in India since Independence, 1950 to 1980 and 1980 to 2005. Deepak Nayyar (2011)² observes that “growth matters because it is cumulative. If GDP growth is 3.5 percent per annum income doubles over twenty years. If it is 5% per annum, income doubles over fourteen years, if it is 7% per annum, income doubles over ten years and if it is 10% per annum income doubles over seven years.” During the first phase, GDP growth was around 3.5 percent in India. Within the framework of a relatively closed economy with the “commanding heights” in the public sector, any advancement in growth depended on public investment. While the economy during the period 1947-90 acquired a great degree of internal strength and viability in terms of promoting a large and diversified industrial base and attained self-sufficiency in food, inequality was slow to decline. Health

and educational infrastructure were also growing inadequately. Economic growth during the period 1950s to the 1970s was averaging about 3.5 per cent, which is commonly known as ‘the Hindu rate of growth’. During the 1980s considerable improvement in growth was recorded and attained an average growth of 5.9 per cent. Though most of the economist are under the impression that structural changes were started with the process of liberalisation, privatisation and globalisation in 1990 - 1991, many renowned Indian economists pay credit to the reality that structural break which was a second turning point in the economic performance of Independent India, occurred around 1980. According to them growth acceleration since 1990 was attributable to factors like:

- i. Expansionary macro-economic policies which led to an increase in aggregate demand
- ii. Increased investment – GDP ratio from the late 1970s,
- iii. Increase in public investment since late 1970s
- iv. Trade liberalisation started in the late 1970s and
- v. Deregulation of industrial policies enunciated slowly from early 1980s

Yet another factor which influenced pursuit of new policies was the fact that a number of developing countries were undertaking structural reforms, and gaining competitive strengths in response to the changing world economic environment. In India, in a mixed economy scenario, dismantling of the ‘commanding heights’ with suitable changes in the Industrial Policy Resolution Act of 1956 was a need of the hour. However the most important and compelling urge came from the balance of payment front. Rangarajan (2000)³ found that “a major growth constraint stemmed from the eroding macro-economic balances in the economy towards the end of the 1980’s, caused by a high level of deficit in government budgets, rising inflation rates and a deteriorating external payments situation. Sustaining the growth momentum even of the order seen in the 1980’s seemed less likely in the environment of increasing macro-economic instability”.

Chelliah (1999)⁴ points out that sustained and rapid growth of combined public debt of the Centre and the states during the 1980s and the early 1990s was a symptom of deepening fiscal crisis. The nature and growth of public debt in absolute terms and in relation to GDP was alarming. Fiscal experts from within the country and from the International Financial Institutions like IMF raised doubts about the medium or long term sustainability of the debt and its burden and fears have been expressed about the government (and the country) falling into ‘debt trap’ external and internal.

Table 1 : The Level of Debt and its Components (1990-1)

Item	Rs. Crore	Percent of Total
Market Loans	70,560	27.1
Small Savings	49,070	18.9
Provident Funds etc	52,210	22.0
Reserve Funds and Deposits bearing interest	10,640	4.1
Treasury Bills	72,620	27.9
Total Domestic debt	2,60,100	100.0
External debt	66,020	
Total domestic debt / GDP		52.2
External debt / GDP		12.7
Total debt/GDP	5,89,617	62.90

Source : RBI Web

Table -1 gives a glimpse of the level of debt and its components. Debt/GDP ratio has reached 62.90 per cent with very dangerous implications on the future sustainable growth and development of the country. Unsustainable growth in debt/GDP ratio is dangerous as it would crowd out private investment. More importantly this high debt/GDP ratio indicates the use of debt for Revenue expenditure. In a healthy financial system revenue expenditure must be met from revenue receipts and borrowed funds be used for capital expenditure. Michael Posner(1987) makes this clear when he points out that the Domar Proposition on debt dynamics warns that the alleged Keynesian cure for steady state secular stagnation-deficit spending without limit in unproductive capital projects - may not be sustainable (P.397). It is that part of Public debt, the burden of servicing which falls entirely or largely on the revenues, which would cause concern and it is that which should be included in debt calculations. A substantial part of the debt has been used to provide 'budgetary support' to public enterprises in the form of equity investment and loans. In the case of some public enterprises, the cumulative losses have eroded even the net worth. Why should government borrow at higher interests and lend it to loss making public enterprises. Similarly, loans to state governments have been partially or fully rescheduled repeatedly, and sometimes written off. Therefore as Chelliah (1999)⁵ suggested "action must be directed towards slowing down the pace of growth of the debt/GDP ratio so as to reduce it to a reasonable level. In the second stage, attempts must be made, through necessary changes in revenue and expenditure policies, to contain most revenue expenditure within the revenues raised, so that Government's net borrowing is used only for the 'productive' purposes (P.110). Many studies around that period, such as that of Rangarajan et al (1990), Buitter and Patel (1990), Ginberg (1989) etc have demonstrated the non-sustainability of Indian public debt and the dangers hiding, if the trend is not reversed.

Every important sector of the economy was in the doldrums. Revenue mobilization was the first sector to be revised. It needed three things according to tax experts,

- a) Rationalisation of the tax system which needed simplification of tax definitions and transparency
- b) While rates are fairly high evasion and avoidance continued to be widespread and tax enforcement leaves much to be desired. Often, the tax collecting official himself becomes a substantial beneficiary; and
- c) Even if a substantial proportion of investment is taken out of the budget in the process of liberalization, given the responsibilities of the budget, there is need to rapidly increase revenues.

Financial system was another area crying for change. Because of excessive government intervention for planned development, autonomy of the financial system was hurt up to a large extent. Factors such as:

- a) The inability of the Reserve Bank of India to follow an effective monetary policy because of its ineffectiveness in controlling credit to the government.
- b) Administrated interest rate policy
- c) Commandeering of a sizeable proportion of bank credit by the Government through the provision of a rather high statutory liquidity ratio (SLR).
- d) Social obligations imposed on the banks in terms of priority sector lending at concessional rates and in some cases, without adequate security. This adversely affected the overall profitability of the banks, and
- e) Mounting up of non-performing assets. In order to retain the financial health of the economy some drastic measure was inevitable.

Public Enterprise a Drag on Exchequer

From 1956 Industrial Policy Resolution Act onwards, 18 of the major industries-"the commanding heights"-were under the Public sector. Some of them made profits, while others survived on the budgetary allocations. Padmasree awarded, late, Isher Judge Ahluwalia, in her path-breaking book 'Industrial Stagnation

in India' since the Mid 1960s (1982) identified certain fundamental problems faced by the public sector industries in India such as:

- a) Excessive protection from imports under the guise of infant industry argument,
- b) Absence of technology up-gradation and standardization of products, as these industries have readymade vast market of the second largest population of the world,
- c) Absence of competition and hence a sort of virtual monopoly and no quality testing.
- d) Lack of accountability of the employees,
- e) Lack of professional management as managerial positions are filled on political nomination, rather than on merit and
- f) Existence of redundant employees which accounted for low productivity on the one hand and more than proportionate increase in salary and perks when compared to their productivity, on the other. When one enjoys more emoluments than one deserves, that is rent seeking.

Ahluwalia's findings were discussed across the country. In a technology driven world Indian economy was limping behind during the period 1965 and 1991, when other countries advanced rapidly. Even China changed course in 1978, letting in competition, and set out a historic path of growth. In India, the feeling that public sector should be restricted to public utilities like health, education and infrastructure was gaining ground. When information and telecommunication technologies were making revolutionary growth in other countries, India was lagging behind. Rajeev Gandhi, with the assistance of Sam Pitroda, (Odisha origin achieved 30 patents in Telecommunication sector in Chicago) took steps to participate in this race. But license raj put barriers against any such attempt.

Trade barriers were other challenges to overcome under the controlled regime. Rangarajan (2000)⁶ rightly pointed out that "the prospects for improving growth through the outward trade policies acquired a great deal of importance in the context of the changing world environment highlighted by the growth of multi-liberalism, multilateralism, the reduction of protectionism and the dismantling of the stiff trade barriers. These developments enhanced the scope for promoting efficiency in domestic industry through trade competition and creating conditions for augmenting the domestic capital base through cross border flow of savings". The growing feeling was that the government, instead of focusing on running industries and trade, has a strategic role to play in key areas of human resource development, environment and agriculture and related fields. Government's share in gross national expenditure would have to grow mainly to continue its redistributive role.

With regard to public debt/GDP conundrum, what Domar dogmatized in the post Keynesian capitalist period of 1940's was not holding good in the post-independence controlled regime of India. In the Indian context, the need to reduce both fiscal and revenue deficit arises precisely because such steps are needed to contain inflation, to trigger growth rate and to undertake re-distributive justice in a heavily populated country where 52 percent of the mal-nourished children in the world abide.

Time was Ripe for a Paradigm Shift

Economists as positive scientists have to base their recommendations on observed phenomena. What has become clear after forty three years of controlled regime or state socialism was that adequate incentives to ordinary citizens is the key to successful economic growth and development. Even under controlled regime, growth will not trickle down. Chelliah⁷ notes that while an altruistic social reformer may greatly dislike the idea, that economic rewards have to be proportionate to effort and performance even if this would mean inequality in compensation. Nothing is so destructive of effort as protected rent gathering, guaranteed wage increases unrelated to effort, and denial of due rewards to merit, innovation and enterprise.

In an era of unstable central governments, deepening fiscal and balance of payment crises, domestic

demand for opening up was supported by international financial institutions like IMF and its Associates like the World Bank.

Sreenivasa-Raghavan (2012)⁸, a journalist and columnist, reports that it was on May 21, 1991 that the young and dynamic leader and visionary Rajeev Gandhi was brutally assassinated. “The resulting political uncertainty contributed to hasten the crash, and by June 1991, India became truly bankrupt. The fiscal deficit had ballooned to nearly 9 percent of GDP; the current account deficit had gone to almost 3 percent of it; there was a flight of capital from India; and confidence plummeted to depths hither to unimagined.”

It was in January 21, 1991 that P.Narasimha Rao was sworn in as the Prime Minister of an Interim Government. After the assassination of Rajeev Gandhi, when general election was held Congress Alliance got majority. Under the leadership of P.V. Narasimha Rao government was formed. On June 21, 1991 Narasimha Rao was sworn in as the Prime Minister. Economic situation was grave and the Prime minister did not believe in a mere politician to rescue the economy from the dangerous situation. He choose the reticent and soft spoken economist, Dr. Manmohan Singh as the fit person to hand over the baton of finance ministership of the country. By this time economic and political logics were out of control. Overwhelmed by the retail price inflation of 16.7% and low foreign exchange reserve of \$ 2.5 billion Manmohan Singh devalued the currency in two steps of 16% and 6%, slashed exports subsidies, and mostly abolished industrial licensing. He presented his first budget for the year 1991- 1992 on 24th July 1991. According to Reddy (2017)⁹, Manmohan Singh in his speech said that “there is no time to loose. Neither the Government nor the economy can live beyond its means year after year. The room for manoeuvre, to live on borrowed money or time does not exist anymore. Any further postponement of macro-economic adjustment, long overdue, would mean that the balance of payment situation, now exceedingly difficult, would become unmanageable and inflation, already high, would exceed limits of tolerance”.

The budget document identified that the excessive and often indiscriminate protection provided to industry has weakened the incentive to develop a vibrant export sector. It has also accentuated disparities in income and wealth. It has worked to the disadvantage of the rural economy... the centre piece of our strategy to overcome this should be a credible fiscal adjustment and macro- economic stabilisation to begin with. But there can be no adjustment without pain. The people must be prepared to make necessary sacrifices to preserve our economic independence and restore the health of our economy.” (www.nic.in-govt.of India, budget 1991-92)¹⁰. With overt honesty he pointed out that “the thrust of the reform process would be to increase the efficiency and international competitiveness of industrial production, to utilise for this purpose foreign investment and foreign technology to a much greater degree, to increase the productivity of investment, to ensure that India’s financial sector is modernized, and to improve the performance of the public sector, so that the key sector of our economy attain an adequate technological and competitive edge in a fast changing global economy. Humble and genuine, the Finance Minister asserted that “our people are our masters” and he ended his maiden budget speech with “no power on earth can stop an idea whose time has come. I suggest this august House that the emergence of India as a major economic power in the world happens to be one such idea. Let the whole worked hear it loud and clear. India is now wide awake. We shall prevail. We shall overcome”. www.nic.in.¹¹

Reddy (2017)¹² pin points that people do not matter when the economy is in a precarious crisis. It is the strategy and the right type of policies that they choose to bring back the economy to normalcy that matters. Finance Minister Manmohan Singh, together with Rangarajan, the then Governor, Reserve Bank of India, could pursue fiscal and monetary policies which could rebuild the foreign exchange reserve of India to a level that could avert any fear of a further balance of payment crisis. Reddy reiterates his strong belief that Dr.Singh could paddle the economy to safe shore, through appropriate and timely policy interventions and added that India was fortunate enough to get Dr.Singh as Finance Minister at a time when the country was passing through an unprecedented crisis after independence. (Reddy was in the finance ministry when Rao was the Prime Minister and Manmohan Sigh the Finance Minister). He underlines the fact that the Rao

Government was getting inputs from IMF, and its Associate Institutions at the time of liberalisation. Reddy took it as a positive step and their responsibility to extend a helping hand to a member country which is in need. [International Monetary Fund, founded at Brittan Woods in 1945 and located in Washington, D.C is Principally concerned with broad macro-economic policies designed to reduce the balance of payment deficits and currency difficulties of member countries]. According to Reddy these institutions, with a series of micro and macro level studies at the central and state government levels in India, as it do in the case of any member country, they know the ebb and flow of important sectors of the economy. They knew the failure of the license Raj system in India, and also the fundamental reasons behind fiscal, financial, and balance of payment crisis of that period.

When Manmohan Singh became the Prime Minister of India, Reddy was the Governor of Reserve Bank of India. Both of them shared the feeling that the sustainability of the banking and hence the monetary system depended on two things a) no debt waiver and b) no non-performing assets. Similarly, both of them joined hands to maintain price stability during their regime. Reddy also remembers that being a former RBI Governor of high excellence, Manmohan Singh adhered to policies that never infringed upon the autonomy of the RBI.

Applauses and Criticisms

The path breaking change in Indian economy took place not through upheavals but through structured and scientific policy changes. 1991 reforms are different to different people. Gurcharan Das (2017)¹³ a strong advocate of liberalization accepts it with certain telling anecdotes. On the basis of his personal interviews he observes that “traditional people see it as a threat to Indian culture. But the younger people defend themselves, saying that it is a desire for achievement. They want to “get things done”, to “produce results”. To quote one of his respondents, shard Joshi, the leader of half a million farmers in Maharashtra, “It is our second independence. In 1947 we only got our political independence; we struggled for another forty four years before we finally won our economic independence in 1991.” He quotes another of his respondent, Arun Shourie, the author and commentator, that “today we have the same sense of possibilities that existed in the early fifties”. (Early 1950’s means the period prior to the Industrial policy Resolution Act of 1956 which gave birth to the commanding height’s ie the major industries, the future growth of which was put in the public sector.) Gurcharan Das quotes yet another of his respondents Aveek Sarkar “how else do you explain the sight of 82 year old JyotiBasu, the communist Lord of Bengal standing before the audience of Wall Street investors trying to drum up investment for his state”. With the same logic and vigour one may ask the Kerala Infrastructure Investment Fund Board (KIIFB) experts of Kerala and the LDF Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan that if the 1991 reforms were not undertaken, could they be able to issue Masala Bond in the London Stock Exchange in 2017 and attract investment at a rate of 9.72 percent interest rate, ofcourse in rupee terms, from CDPQ.

Amit Bhaduri (2009)¹⁴ warns that the growth India experiences in the Post liberalization period is ‘predatory growth’. Post liberalization growth is leading to a steady worsening of the distribution of income, with some three fourths of the population having abysmally low purchasing power, and imports exceeding exports implying that the net foreign market is not expending either. This throws light on the sour reality that corporate wealth and profit rises by dispossessing the poor.” This argument is corroborated by Pew Research Centre, survey 2021 which reports that in 2020, during the first Pandemic period, people with dollar two or less income a day was 6 crore, but increased to 13.4 crore in the 2021 pandemic period. A number of studies are there to prove the growing inequality in India, including that of international agencies. Amit Bhaduri, in support of this predatory growth argument introduces Nobel Laureat Gunnar Myrdal’s ‘cumulative causation’ theory where growing inequality drives growth and growthfuels further inequality. This type of inequality in India is rendered by factors like

- a) Crorepatis occupy parliamentary / assembly seats with the financial assistance of corporate landed

gentry and other mafia groups. Once elected they support the policies beneficial to such supporters and

- b) Technological revolution in the 1990's and the resulting increase in the labour productivity which resulted in "jobless growth".

Amit Bhaduri quotes Edward Luce of the Financial Times (London), that "the Tata's Jamshadpur Steel Plant employed 85,000 workers in 1991 to produce one million tons of steel, worth USD 0.8 million. In 2005, production rose to five million tons, worth about USD 5 million, while employment fell to 44,000. In short, output increased approximately by a factor of five and employment dropped by a factor of one half, implying an increase in labour productivity by a factor of ten."

Aseem Srivastava (2007)¹⁵ reports a similar case with the Bajaj Motorcycle factory in Pune. In the mid 1990's the company employed 24,000 workers to produce one million Two-wheeler units. In 2004, aided by Japanese robotics and Indian information Technology, 10,500 workers turned out 2.4 million units that is an increase in labour productivity by a factor of nearly six with less than half the labour force more than doubling the output (Article in the Electronic Media "Why this growth can Never Trickle Down").

Bhaduri found manifold increase in labour productivity and thereby reduction in the number of labourers employed, caused an enormous increase in profits. According to him this is the result of an increase in international price competitiveness in a globalizing world (p68). He observes that growth of labour productivity in the unorganized sector is not counted properly. By lengthening working hours, without wage increase, might improve labour productivity, without corresponding increase in wages, helped the corporate who account for simply around 5 percent of the employment of India to bag super normal profits.

Growth Does not Trickle Down is the experience of India. There are reasons behind this. In the closed economy context and in the liberalised scenario, public expenditure on health and education has been meagre. When developing economics like China spends more than 3% of GDP on health, India's expenditure centred around 1% of GDP. Poor health infrastructure accounts for the horrific scenes under Corona Virus pandemic. Poverty and poor health infrastructure together contributed to dead bodies floating in the rivers. The Central Government's National Health Policy 2017 mandates that by 2020 states should set apart 8 per cent of their GDP on health (Health is a state subject). Further, the Central Government has to set apart 2 per cent of its GDP for health by 2022. But so far neither the centre nor the states acted according to the accepted policy. World Health Organization (WHO) in its latest survey recently found that the highest Out of Pocket (OOP) expenditure on health (meaning people spend on health needs from their own pocket) among the number countries is India. Similarly, the recently concluded National Family Health Survey or NFHS-5 gives worrying numbers on increase in malnutrition, infant mortality and maternal health. Similar is the case in public expenditure on education. China spends about 6% of its GDP on education and its race in technological advancement is akin to that of U.S., India spends less than 2 per cent on education, though Prime Minister wanted to make the country, an Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning Hub of the World.!

The fault lines in the liberalised Indian economic scenario is not built in the liberalisation process ushered in by the Narasimha Rao- Manmohan Singh team. A dissection of the GDP data and the economic Policies and priorities pursued by the two coalition governments (The United Progressive Alliance and the National Democratic Alliance) during the last thirty years would bear testimony to the contributions of each. During the first term of Prime Ministership of Dr. Manmohan Singh in 2005, the Job Security Act with the name The Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Programme (MGNREGP) was passed, with a view to ensure, work, basic income and livelihood security to rural poor. Second term of Manmohan Singh Govt. enacted an equally or more important Act viz. The National Food Security Act (2013). This act mandates government of India to provide food materials including food grains, atta, pulses, sugar and edible oil to 68 per cent of the lower state of population especially during times of emergencies as the one which we are passing through now.

When we examine the NDA regime, we would come across different sets of policies and priorities. It was in 2002 while the Late Vajpayee was the Prime Minister, the Amendment Act was passed to leave the pricing of petroleum products to the market. I fully agree with the economic and social reasons behind that decision. But now Indians pay a very heavy price for it through sky-rocketing energy prices and high retail price index (6.3%) and whole sale price index of around 13 per cent. NDA government headed by Narendra Modi demonetised 86.4 per cent of the currency of the country in one shot on November eight, 2016. Just like a motor vehicle meets with an abrupt halt when fuel is exhausted, Indian economy abruptly stopped functioning when its lubricating oil,-the currency- was suddenly withdrawn. Demonetisation Pulled the economy back to 73 years' severe liquidity crisis and 45 years severe unemployment and ultimately to a severe recession. When the economy was limping back to normalcy, came the other shock. On July 1, 2017 the goods and services Tax system was introduced, without taking sufficient precautions and preparing efficient working environment.

Second regime of Prime Minister Modi has so far experimented more undemocratic encroachments upon its citizens' rights than any other government in pre or post liberalization period. Citizens' Amendment Act is one case point. Even when an unprecedented catastrophe came in the form of Corona Virus, instead of providing health infrastructure sufficiently and quickly, government was busy preparing farm bills on a highly undemocratic way. These Bills are

1. The Farmers' produce Trade and Commerce (Promotion and Facilitation) Bill, 2020
2. The Farmers, (Empowerment and Protection) Agreement on Price Assurance and Farm Service Bill, 2020 and
3. The essential Commodities (Amendment Bill 2020. These were introduced in the monsoon session of parliament on September 14, passed in the Lok Sabha on September 17, and in the Rajya Sabha on September 20. The President gave his assent on September 24, and the Gazette notification was published on September 27. All these three bills which can have serious after- shocks in the farm front of the country were introduced in the parliament and got passed in a matter of 13 days without debate and ignoring the dissent of farmers and the beneficiary population of 136 crore or above of India. The year 2020 had to witness similar other bills in the parliament. The Industrial Relations code, 2020 changed the laws relating to trade unions, conditions of employment in industrial establishment and investigation and settlement of industrial disputes. Parallely, the disturbing suppression of basic rights and freedom through the use of preventive detention laws and special legislations laws are also passed. These laws are all pro-corporate and anti-labour. Parliamentarians and Cabinet should understand that growth with equity is the ethos of democracy. The new trade union legislation amendments are violating the "Decent Job" mandates of the International Labour Organization (ILO) Convention 2000, to which India also is a signatory. Stories of onslaught on democracy by the Modi government are many and varied.

Conclusion

The stellar performance of Dr. Manmohan Singh shines as morning star in the development horizon of India. A paradigm shift from 'license raj' to liberal democracy was the call of the time. That transformation was smooth, strategic and scientific. As Gurcharan (2000)¹⁶ puts it, with 1991 opening up of the economy a new way of looking at the world was ushered in. "A revolution in ideas does not of course mean that jobs are immediately sprouting or that poverty is disappearing. Heart breaking poverty is still the pervasive face of India. It is a terrible prison in which far too many Indians live in fearful anxiety. However, one day and sooner than we perhaps expect the mental revolution should lead to a physical one." All the four pillars of democracy are getting rotten in many ways. When parliamentarians are crorepatists who reach there with the helping hands of crorepatists and corporates, protected by electoral bonds, they 'scratch-each-others, back,.

Laws will be passed which are pro-rich, pro-corporate and anti-poor. There will be growth and concentration of wealth, but no development. Millions will languish without, food, shelter, health and education.

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U.S. Approach to Peace and Security in South Asia

Rajeevan R.

Terrorism is one of the major areas which attracted world wide attention and debate from the dawn of cold war period. Terrorism pose a serious threat and challenge to the sovereignty and integrity of most of the modern states. With the dawn of the 21st Century, terrorism and war on terrorism became the major concern of all nations. This concept has captured a pivotal space in the modern discourse on civil society, democracy, state security, human security, human rights, welfare, economic development, nation building etc. South Asia rose to prominence with the global rivalaries of the cold war which started in the 1950s as each of the super powers sought to check the influence of the other through the so called policies of containment and counter containment. The changing policy of United States of America towards South Asia influenced the terrorists also. The whole world is anxious about the developments in South Asia especially in the face of nuclear crisis in Pakistan and the open support extended by the Pak army and the ISI to the Jihadi elements. This paper analysis Pak sponsored terrorism, US approach to terrorism and the future of peace and stability in South Asia.

Terrorism: The Concept

The word terrorism is a confusing term, which was defined differently by various scholars. The word however did not gain wide popularity until the late 19th century, when it was adopted by a group of Russian Revolutionaries to describe their violent struggle against Tzarist rule. According to Michael Watzer “In its modern manifestations, terror is the totalitarian form of war and politics. It shatters the war convention and the political code. It breaks across moral limits beyond which no further limitations seems possible, for with in the categories of civilian and citizen, there isn’t any smaller group for which immunity might be claimed except children, but I don’t think children can be called ‘immune’ if their parents are attacked and killed. (Michael Watzer: 1978: 203).

The Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) considered it as the unlawful use of force or violence against persons or property to intimidate or coerce a government, the civilian population or any segment thereof in furtherance of political or social objectives. The US state department described it as the premeditated, politically motivated violence perpetrated against non combatant targets by subnational groups or clandestine agents. Again the US department of Defence considered terrorism as the calculated use of violence or the threat of violence to inculcate fear, intended to coerce or intimidate governments or societies as to the pursuit of goals that are generally political, religious or ideological. Paul Johnson described it as “the deliberate systematic murder, maiming and menacing of the innocent to inspire fear in order to gain political ends. Terrorism is intrinsically evil, necessarily evil and wholly evil.” It is definitely a strategy of violence intended to promote desired outcomes by installing fear in the minds of the people. In the general sense, it is an organized system of intimidation: a method where by an organized group or party seeks to achieve its avowed aims chiefly through the systematic use of violence.

Terror Tactics of USA: A Historical Perspective

The United states employed terror tactics in its relation with small powers on various occasions. For example in May 1975, when the merchant freighter ‘Mayaguez’ was seized by Cambodia, the Ford-Kissinger team responded with a dramatic show of force. “Air attacks were initiated against Cambodia, and Marines

were landed on Koh Tang Island in the Gulf of Siam, where incorrectly, it was assumed the American crew was being held. In contrast with the regular resort to diplomatic means when American fishing vessels have been seized, their crews beaten and even shot at off Ecuador, no diplomatic channels were used until after the show of force was completed. It mattered little, however, for the entire incident seemed a useful protest to demonstrate that the United States would, in Henry Kissinger's words, maintain its reputation for fierceness" (James Nathan and James Oliver: 1981: 378).

The threat of terrorism was an integral part of the military doctrine of cold war. The Deterrence Theory underlines US (and NATO) - Soviet Strategic relations based on the threat of mutual destruction. In its earliest incarnation the underlying strategy was clearly labelled. 'The Balance of Terror' and it is clear that what is threatened is the loss of life of the entire population of the societies engaged in the deterrent relationship. However, since most analysts consider the deterrent relationship to be part of the normal political strategic balance between the super powers, it is useful to limit the use of the concept of terrorism as it applies to nuclear deterrence to those situations that involve the attempted extra coercive possibilities of saber rattling.

The United States cleverly used the CIA for several special operations in different parts of the world which may be categorised as terrorist operations. In Guatemala, 1954, Indonesia 1958, the Bay of Pigs, Cuba 1961: the US trained, equipped and provided tactical assistance to groups attempting to overthrow established governments. In the 1950s the US also assisted the forces of Chiang Kaishek against the Peoples Republic of China. Similar cases of support were extended to the followers of Dalailama in Tibet. The purpose of US and CIA is disruption and to support the overthrow of established regimes through violence. US involvement was presumed and the message to other Third World Government was clear - The US would not sit idly during and perhaps even more importantly after the establishment of left governments. It is nothing but the elimination of opponents with terrorism. In 1970-73, the US worked on a number of levels to overthrow the elected governments of Salvador Allende in Chile. The CIA has been implicated in the assassination of Rene Schneider, the Commander - in - Chief of the Chilean Army, who was elected as a target because he refused to prevent Allende from taking office. So the policy of United States in cold war period was to create terror, wherever their interest is questioned. The American nations "cannot, must not and will not permit the establishment of another Communist Government in the Western Hemisphere" (Cecil Crabb: 1972: 331).

The US government and CIA also extended support to muslim fundamentalist groups to fight against communism. The US provided not only training but also major assistance in the form of military hardware, expertise and finance to various such groups to fight against communism. During the Russian intervention in Afghanistan in the 1980s the CIA through Pakistan's ISI have funded and supplied massive arms and ammunition to the Afghan Taliban terrorists against Russia. Those organizations also include groups in almost all Middle Eastern States. It was Saudi Arabia, with the full support of US, that injected the doctrine of *Jihad* in legitimising the war for the Muslim warriors (Firdaus Syed: The Hindu 5 October 2002)

In the 1980s terrorism came to be regarded in the West as part of a global conspiracy and a calculated means to destabilise governments. The phenomenon of state sponsored terrorism also has become wide spread. Terrorist activities are no longer confined to the home land of the enemy state but extended to killing of its citizens and attack on its establishments everywhere. All these resulted in the acquiring of a global character by terrorism. The new world order, and the effects of globalization have benefited the terrorists. Men and material have acquired a kind of mobility never witnessed before. National labels are becoming meaningless as terrorist groups consists of members not just of one nationality, but several united in their cause. Now terrorist groups are not based on political ideologies but claiming to represent particular religions. Technological advance with regard to weapons have increased the power of terrorists to operate particularly against state power. The acquisition of weapons of mass destruction is easier than ever, some times with support from states. Advances in information and communication technology have facilitated the terrorists for their easy operations. Pakistan is the hot spot of terrorism where the government ie the Pak army and their intelligence agency, the ISI whole heartedly supports religious based terrorism.

The Emergence of Pakistan as the Hot - Spot of Terrorism

Pakistan became an independent state based on the theory of Muslim separation. The manner of Pakistan's birth itself explains and explores the characteristics associated with their state operations - fully based on a specific religion - Islam. Through adopting theocracy, Pakistan sought to create an Islamic state that could serve as a home land for South Asian Muslims. During the initial periods of the formation of the state, South Asia was sucked in to the global rivalries of the cold war as each of super powers sought to check the influence of the other through the so called policies of containment and counter containment (Gowher Rizvi: 1993: 8). The American policy of containment of communism in South Asia made Pakistan a key ally of United States. Pakistan joined the SEATO in 1954 and CENTO (Baghdad Pact) in 1955, which resulted in the granting of substantial quantities of US arms which energised her wars with India as well as the promotion of terrorism.

The signing of the 'Treaty of Peace, Friendship and Co-operation' between India and Soviet Union in August 1971 strengthened the friendship between Pakistan and USA. The nature of cold war left the two super powers grappling for client states and allies in an effort to tip the balance of power and influence in their own favour. Pakistan's alliance with the US gave it leverage to face off against India, a rival which was militarily and economically superior (M.K. Singh: 2008: 260). The repeated failure of democracy and the strengthening of dictatorship accelerated the growth of their Islamic base and extension. The cold war alliance with USA and the support extended by China helped them to strengthen their rapport with Islamic terrorist groups all over the world.

The terrorist groups were able to operate openly, freely and fearlessly in Pakistan because of the support extended by the official Pakistan machinery. The Indian government has held an exhibition of arsenal of Pakistani supplied arms and ammunition captured from terrorists in Kashmir. The arsenal is enough to arm a whole army and includes anti-aircraft guns (Deccan Chronicle, July 20, 1998). An Indian government study found that 900 out of 2300 terrorists operating in Jammu and Kashmir were foreign mercenaries, many of them are from Pakistan and Afghanistan. The dominant outfits operating in the state were Harkat-ul-Nasar (also known as Harkat- Ul- Mujahideen), Hizbul - Mujahideen and Lashkar-e-Toiba. The study also listed 21 terrorist training camps in Afghanistan, 47 in Pakistan and 39 in Pakistan occupied Kashmir, as those being used to wage the proxy war in J & K. During the close of the 20th Century a number of Pakistani terrorists were captured by the Indian troops and they revealed that Pakistani agencies are forcing local youths in POK in to terrorist training and then sending them across the line of control in to India (Indian Express, September 12, 1998).

With the disintegration of Soviet Union, end of cold war and the strengthening of globalization, there appeared a visible change in the relationship between USA and Pakistan. The transnational capitalists realised their market possibilities in India than Pakistan. This truth reflected in the foreign policy of US and their approach to terrorists operating in South Asia especially in Pakistan. In early 1993, the state department took a step in the right direction by putting Pakistan on a watch of terrorist countries. Later that year, however the state department determined that Pakistan had.... ended official support for terrorism in India.' Whatever evidence was used to arrive at that decision should have been overridden by the State Department's 1994 report that cited credible reports of continuing official Pakistani support to terrorism in India. Bill Mc Collum reported to the US Congress in 1994 that "...Pakistan never stopped its aid to the terrorists in Kashmir." It is very crucial that Pakistani support for terrorism in India especially Kashmir has directly led to the killing of thousands of civilians, and to the ethnic cleansing of hundreds of thousands of Kashmiri Pandits. Even during the later half of the 1990s (Close of the 20th Century) the US state department continues to ignore the evidence and refuses to even put Pakistan back on the watch list of terrorist countries. The US itself bore the brunt of one arm of the Pakistan - Afghanistan terrorist machinery during the embassy bombing and has been a victim of this terrorist groups in the World Trade Centre bombing and the killing of US citizens in Pakistan.

Shift in US Approach to Pakistan

The close of the 20th century witnessed a nuclear turbulent South Asia which invited the attention and anxiety of the whole world. The Indian nuclear explosion of May 11 and 13, 1998 in Pokhran were followed by Pakistan carrying out its own test in Chagai, Baluchistan later that month. The nuclear explosion and the testing of missiles (Agni-2 by India and Ghauri and Saheen by Pakistan) presented the most serious challenge to the prevailing global nuclear order and South Asia truly has become, as Bill Clinton, the then president of USA has said, "The most dangerous zone in the world" (The Indian Express - March 26, 2000). Pakistan's approach towards terrorism faced a big set back with the terrorist attack in USA. On September 11, 2001 the terrorists attacked two most important nerve centres of American power, viz the World Trade Centre in Newyork and Pentagon in Washington. The attack against the United States established the fact that terrorism is the major threat to the 21st century. As it was stated by Fareed Zakaria, "on September 11, America woke up to one of the gravest challenges to its National Security since Pearl Harbour (Fareed Zakaria: News week vol. L XXXVII, No. 10).

The world nations strongly condemned terrorist attack in USA. Russian president Vladimir Putin said "there is no doubt that such inhuman actions cannot be left unpunished. The whole international community must rally in the fight against terrorism." (News Week - October 8, 2001). President Bush, speaking to the joint session of the Congress, and the American people said, "Great harm has been done to United States. We have suffered great loss and in our grief and anger we have found our mission." On September 12, United Nation's Security Council unanimously approved resolution 1368, which condemn "in strongest terms the recent terrorist attack on the US and calls on all member states to bring the perpetrators to justice." Following this the UN General Assembly adopted a Resolution on condemnation of terrorist acts in the United States and calls for "international cooperation to bring to justice the perpetrators, organizers and eradicate acts of terrorism" (R. Rajeevan: 2007).

When India faced several terrorists attacks, US kept a passive approach towards terrorism. But when the terrorists turned against them, they have declared that terrorism is a global problem which needs serious attention of the international community. After the attack in US, terrorism has become a prominent issue in the US foreign policy and curbing terrorism has been given top priority by the American foreign policy makers. When George Bush declared a war against terrorism and sought global support for it, India was one of the first nations to support it. India understood in depth about the menace of terrorism much before the US opened its eyes to it. And during the last fifteen years more people were killed in India than in any other nation by the terrorists. Naturally India stands with the US to wage the global war on terrorism. Both these nations consulted with one another on terrorist financing and shared intelligence on terrorist groups. This co-operation got institutionalized with the opening of a FBI Office in New Delhi. The US has shown willingness to agree with India that the war on terrorism will not be won until terrorism against India is ended once and for all (US Department of State, Washington File, January 21, 2003).

Pakistan Operated Terrorist and Indian Response

The two terrorist attacks in India - the attack against J & K Assembly on October 1, 2001 and the other attack on the Indian Parliament premises on 13th December 2001 were serious terrorist attacks against India. Alleging Pakistan's involvement in the attack, the Indian government wanted to strike against Pakistan occupied Kashmir (POK) based terrorists who master minded the attack. The militant attack was believed to have been aided and inspired by a source in Pakistan-Jeish-e-Muhammed. The government of India stepped up diplomatic offensive by recalling its High Commissioner to Pakistan, banning civilian flights from that country and issued orders for troop mobilization along the borders with Pakistan. Eight Lakh troops were mobilized along the international border with Pakistan and along the Line of Control. New Delhi was seriously considering the war options (A.G. Noorani : 2002 : 22 - 28). The Prime Minister A.B. Vajpayee said in an interview to the 'Dainik Jagron' "that the country got ready for war : the army is waiting for instructions and is prepared for nuclear war" (Proful Didvai, Rashtrereya Sahara : 2002).

The US administration wanted to avoid a nuclear war in South Asia. President Bush wanted Pakistan to ensure the LOC inviolable from conventional Pakistani military aggression as well as terrorist infiltration. The US administration stepped up un- precedented pressure on Pakistan for stopping infiltration of militants in to Kashmir, as this issue was considered an important component of the overall process in tension reduction and normalization of relation between the two states. The commitment that General Musharraf made to the inter- national community and the US to stop terrorist activities across the LOC and crack down on militants showed the effect of diplomatic pressure exerted by the US administration on Pak regime. The US insistence that any Indo-Pak dialogue on Kashmir would only follow, not precede an end to cross border terrorism, send a strong message to Gen. Musharraf. For the prevention of an armed conflict in the sub continent and continuance of war against terrorism, a series of hectic diplomatic initiatives started (Hindu, May 27, 2002).

Such a bold diplomatic gesture from the American side forced Musharaff to take more effective measures to check cross-border extremist infiltration into J & K, which in turn led India to reverse its coercive tactics. To quote the Indian Prime Minister Vajpayee “Pakistan and India were very close to the brink of a confrontation: a nuclear war was averted only because of the guarantee given by Pakistan to end cross border infiltration. It was the US that managed to obtain the guarantee” (A. Basheer : 2007, 125-135).

The semi-peace situation changed with the terrorist attack in Mumbai city on November 26, 2008. It was a multiple terror attack. Though the possibility of war was openly talked about, India did not exercise the military option. The decision to eschew the military option was based on mature consideration of all facts available at that time (M.K. Narayanan : The Hindu : September 21, 2016). The whole world including US hailed the stand of India and at the same time strongly supported India in its fight against terrorism.

Pakistan went in to a denial mode and Pak Prime minister Gilani condemned the attack and offered to cooperate in the investigation. The Mumbai terrorist attack led to the close down of all diplomatic dialogues between the two states up to 2011. New Delhi insisted that it would resume the composite dialogue only if Pakistan proved willing to bring the prepatrators of the Mumbai terrorist attack to justice. Though attempts were made to better the relationship between the two states, it failed to carry forward the confidence building measures. Prime Minister Modi decided to call off the foreign secretary level talks with Pakistan scheduled for August 25, 2014 on the ground that the Pakistan High Commissioner Abdul Basit met the Kashmiri separatist leaders, which India considered as an interference in its internal affairs (C. Rajamohan: Indian Express : August 21, 2014).

It is interesting that after the 26/11 Mumbai attacks, Pakistan had refused to accept the bodies of nine Lashkar - e - Taiba (Let) terrorists killed by the Indian security forces. The tenth terrorist, Ajmal Kasab, the only one to have been captured alive was hanged in a Pune prison in 2013 and the body was buried in the Jail premises. The year 2016 opened with another terrorist attack - the Pathankot terrorist attack on January 1. A top government official of India said on January 4, 2016 that the terrorists behind the Pathankot airbase attack appeared to have received training from a professional armed force in Pakistan (The Hindu : January 5, 2016). The suicide squad was more lethal and better trained than the Mumbai attackers. They had enough arms and ammunition including under barrel, granade launchers, for sustained operations of more than 60 hours against a professional army. Security forces inside the airbase have found bodies of five terrorists. A sixth one was blown to pieces when the building he had taken refuge was brought down with explosives (Vijata Singh : The Hindu : January 5, 2016).

On June 2016 Pak Prime minister Nawas Sharief declared that Kashmir will one day become Pakistan. Indian foreign minister Sushama Swaraj responded on the next day that the whole of India would like to tell the Prime minister of Pakistan that the dream will not be realised even till the end of eternity. India experienced another big terror strike - the pre dawn strike on an army administrative unit near its brigade head quarters in Baramulla district's Uri sector on September 18, 2016 which left 18 soldiers dead and 30 injured. Prime minister Modi tweeted that “I assure the nation that those behind this despicable attack will not go unpunished” (The Hindu : September 19, 2016). It was cent percent sure that the terrorists were from Pakistan and had

been sent across the border explicitly for this attack. In fact the entire operation has the finger prints of Pakistan's military establishments, showing yet again the country's persistent use of terrorism as state policy. The four terrorists reportedly entered the camp early in the morning and in all probability across the line of control just six kilometers away. The terrorists carried automatic rifles, four under barrel granade launchers (UBGL), 39 UBGL granades, 5 Hand granades, 2 radio sets, 2 global positioning sets, 2 map sheets and two matris sheets most of it with Pakistan markings (Dinakar Peri : The Hindu : September 20, 2016).

Unlike in the past, a number of world leaders strongly condemned the attack. Several American legislators, South Asian specialists and defence analysts condemned the tragic attack. US secretary of state John Kerry has reiterated the need for Pakistan to prevent terrorists from using the Pakistani territory as safe haven. Ted Poe, Chairman of House Foreign Affairs Sub Committee on Terrorism, Non proliferation and Trade said "it is a reminder to democracies the world over that terrorism seeks to destroy peace loving societies everywhere. This is just the latest consequence of Pakistan's long standing irresponsible policy of supporting and providing operational space for all types of Jihadi terrorist groups. Pakistan's reckless behaviour in this regard is serious security risk to its neighbours, and India unfortunately pays the price all too often. We condemn this tragic attack as well as Pakistan's support for many criminals like the ones who carried it out, and stand firm in our commitment to our friends in India. A threat to democracy in India is a threat to democracy everywhere. And that's just the way it is" (The Hindu : September 21, 2016). Even after the surgical strikes in 2016 and Balakot in 2019, Pakistan has not succeeded in controlling the terrorists. Recently the Financial Action Task Force has kept Pakistan on its gray list and warned that it can go in to the black list soon. But even at the close of 2019 Pakistan appears to have opened multiple fronts for its proxy war against India. According to the intelligence reports, the Let with the support of the ISI, has intensified its recruitment drive in the tribal areas of Swat, Peshawar, Quetta and Ilaqa-e-Ghair in Pakistan and Muzaffarbad, Bagh and Kotli in POK.

Over the last three decades or so, India has been at the receiving end of Pakistani state craft of terrorists unleashed to attain state objectives; Uri is the latest provocation. India has limited manoeuvrability as far as a military response goes. But Modi's words came true when the Indian forces had carried out "Surgical Strikes" across the Line of Control. The government of India was forced to abandon, its 'idealistic' policy and to embrace a much desired 'realistic' policy vis-a-vis Pakistan. The Indian army's surgical strike on the midnight of 28 and early morning of 29 September 2016 goes to prove this. It was a slow and laborious operation, which had troops creeping, climbing and crawling across the LOC and across two kilometers of rugged terrain, avoiding stepping on land mines or alerting village dogs and reaching largely undefended targets, catching the enemy off - guard, killing him and destroying his camp in the dark. Pakistan described it "what India has done is an LOC violation, not a surgical strike (The Week : October 16, 2016: 32-41)

The surgical strike was definitely a signal to Pakistan and their terrorist allies. It was a pay back to the endless proxy war that Pakistan has been waging since 1989. India can also shape new internal security frame work including the introduction of more advanced counter terror capabilities and doctrines that seeks to substantially minimise Indian military casualties. It has also created a measure of uncertainty in the minds of Pakistan planners and forced them to rethink their planning strategies more carefully. The surgical strike proved that India can also have the capability to carry out spectacular raids like the one by the Israel Defence Forces at Entebbe and German GSG 9 forces in Mogadishu in the 1970s or the taking out of Osama Bin Laden in Abbottabad by the US Navy SEALs in 2011. But whatever be the capabilities of India or counter terrorism mechanisms, Pakistan's strategic ambitions to occupy Indian Kashmir and to avenge the loss of East Pakistan is will deeply embedded with in the establishment psyche, and will not allow the country to abandon terrorism as a tool.

Evolving US Policy in South Asia

As observed by Napoleon 'God is with the Victorious army' is the basic principle of international relations where the most powerful nation is in a position to determine the right and wrong or which nation

is right or which one is evil. After the second world war the USA and the USSR emerged as the most powerful nations in the world. But with the disintegration of USSR, as observed by Henry Kissinger “the US is enjoying a pre-eminence unrivalled by even the greatest empires of the past. From weaponry to entrepreneurship, from science to technology, from higher education to popular culture, America exercised an unparalleled ascendancy around the globe.” (Henry Kissinger : 2001:17). Charles Krauthammer, a neo conservative thinker identified four different schools of thought in foreign policy: Isolationism, Liberal Internationalism, Realism and his own ‘democratic globalism.’ Democratic globalism seeks to use US military supremacy to support US security interests and democracy simultaneously. The axiom of it is “we will support democracy everywhere, but we will commit blood and treasure only in places where there is strategic necessity - meaning places central to the larger war against the existential enemy that poses a global moral threat to freedom” (Francis Fukuyama: 2004 : 57).

It means that the US will support even non democratic systems and will commit blood and treasure anywhere if that suits its national interest. A judicious exercise of the powerful nature of the American state needs adequate consultations with other democracies for furthering peace and development in the world, atleast to discourage terrorist elements or such vices. This unilateralism may be good for America but certainly not so for the world. Many nations like India had to face bitter experience inspite of being a prominent democracy. On the basis of this policy US extended undue help to its allies like Pakistan. It also threatened or imposed unilateral economic sanctions on other nations including India. By the close of the 20th century US imposed unilateral economic sanctions on 35 countries representing over 40% of the global population. People like Stanley Hoffmann warns against the “dangers of unilateral American foreign policy agenda” (Stanley Hoffmann : Foreign Affairs 81(4) : 104-115).

India, which is a victim of terrorism, criticise that the US policies significantly retard America’s ability to act against the terrorists. It is a blow to its claim as the ‘custodian of the international system.’ It is a fact that the differences rather than commitments marked the nature of Indo-US relations in the past. During cold war period America was suspicious of Indian foreign policy goals. It is commonly believed that though Indian foreign policy was based on non-alignment, she had better relations with USSR. The fact remains that India tried her best to keep the friendship with both US and USSR. But the Indian stand of non-alignment was misunderstood by USA. The three major characteristics that shaped the Indo-US relations were (i) Americas lack of interest in and knowledge of Indian society and politics, (ii) India’s lack of practical experience and knowledge of American political and strategic methods and (iii) the mutual distrust caused by international political development (Ashok Kapur, Y.K. Malik: 2002: 17-18). Above all the US had the fear that India had hegemonic aspirations over other states in South Asia and on the Indian ocean.

With the end of cold war and India’s nuclear tests (Pakistan’s also) of 1998 the US was forced re-examine its approach towards India and Pakistan. Pakistan was previously one of the largest recipient of American aid as their ally. During the 1980s it received \$ 600 million annually. It started to decline during the 1990s. After the nuclear tests India is seen by the US as a power with the potential to affect the nuclear balance in South Asia. In March 2000 US President Bill Clinton was forced to visit India, first by a US President in 22 years. The fact that for more than two decades no president of the most powerful democracy in the world could make a visit to the most populous democracy speaks a lot about the nature of Indo-US relations in the past. Subsequent visit of Indian Prime minister A.B. Vajpayee to US on September 2000 helped to further a closer and qualitative relationship between India and US. These developments shows that by the close of the 20th century, the US began to tilt towards India, as Washington and New Delhi turned from estranged democracies of the cold war to engaged democracies in the post cold war era. (Kanti Bajpay and Amitabh Mattoo : 2000).

Terrorism in South Asia is in a stage of unprecedented strategic transformation following the September 11, 2001 terrorist attack on USA. The Indian support extended to USA was another positive development in Indo-US relations. When America started its global war on terrorism, the country is finding it more and more

difficult to support Pakistan against India. India could successfully prove to the world that Pakistan is a training ground for terrorists. India's commitment to democracy and economic reform dictate that the US have a different relationship with India than with Pakistan, which has a military regime that supports terrorism. That is why during the meeting between the Indian Prime minister Vajpayee and the American President Bush in November 2001, the former said that India and US are 'natural allies.' The US has shown willingness to agree with India that the war on terrorism will not be won until terrorism against India is ended once and for all (US Department of state, file 2003:1). The summit also provided for the efficient functioning of the Joint Working Group (JWG) on counter terrorism. Both Clinton and Vajpayee expressed their satisfaction in the functioning of the group and decided to continue its regular meeting and to make it an effective mechanism for the two countries to share information and intensify their co-operation in combating terrorism.

Earlier, the US closed its eye towards terrorist killings in different parts of the world including Kashmir. But after the terrorist attack of September 11, 2001 US partially agreed with their omissions. It was admitted by Robert Blackwill, US ambassador to India in 2001. He stated "undoubtedly countries made mistakes including my country in the way they thought about terrorism in the past. I think many countries made such mistakes. We are not concentrating our efforts in looking backward. We want to look forward to stamp out terrorism." The incidents of the early years of the 21st century helped US agencies to identify Pakistan as the base for terrorist groups and their supporters operating in Kashmir and Afghanistan. The US analysts made it clear that domestic terrorism and religious sectarianism are the new security concerns for Pakistan.

The US and India signed a 10 year Defence Frame work Agreement in 2005 and in 2015 the agreement was renewed for another decade. New Delhi's long sought demand for a permanent membership in the UN Security Council was favourably considered by the US administration in 2010. This was another milestone in improving bettering the relationship between India and the US. President Obama told a joint session of India's parliament that he looked forward in the years ahead to a reformed UN security council that includes India as a permanent member.

Modi's first visit to the US in September 2014 opened another chapter of co-operation between the two nations. This was projected as a new challenge to terrorists. The relationship was further strengthened with Obama's second state visit to India in 2015. The joint press statement issued by Trump, the President of US and Modi, Prime minister of India in 2017 affirms this collaboration. It reads 'we are not just partners by chance. We are also partners in dealing with current and future challenges that we may be faced with. The US support to India during the Pathankot and Uri attacks and its meaningful silence in the surgical strikes shows the changing attitude of US in South Asia. The Narendra Modi government welcomed Trump's commitment to fight terrorism in all its forms. The US response to cross border terrorism in Kashmir has become more positive as is evident from the comments of US towards the new initiatives of India in Kashmir.

Both India and US should keep in mind that no nation is interested in compromising its hard earned power and position in the global political arena. As Aldred and Smith observe "those countries which have achieved the top rank in an existing international system will want to make sure that they hold on to it" (Ken Aldred and Martin A. Smith : 1999 : 20). Now both the nations are trying to come closer because that suits their purpose of promoting their national interests. India's position as a nuclear weapon state, a rising global power, a rapidly growing economy etc. are major factors that force America to maintain a better relationship with India. The US war on terrorism is an important factor which pushed both India and US to come closer.

Though Pakistan is considered to be an ally of the US, the US approach to terrorism in the new century, has increasingly become disenchanted with Pakistan's overt and covert support to terrorism. So it has started applying all sorts of pressure on Pakistans to end its support and sympathy for terrorist activities. The US has also forced Pakistan to give assurances that it will end cross border infiltration on a permanent basis, especially in the light of Pathankot and Uri incidents. The US has also banned a number of terrorist organizations and leaders based in Pakistan. For example USA listed Hizbul Mujahideen commander, Syed Salahuddin in the US terror list.

Conclusion

Terrorism is considered as a major political issue and a major challenge to modern civilization right from the latter half of the 20th century. During the cold war period the super powers used it as an instrument to check the influence of each other. With the end of the period of containment and counter containment, a new international political order came in to existence in the age of globalization. The world's sole super power, US reviewed and re-arranged its foreign policy and thereby redefined its relations with other states. It is also visible in its approach towards South Asia. Terrorism is the major political issue in South Asia. Here on the one side USA has Pakistan-a state with serious nuclear crisis and the safe zone of terrorist outfits and on the other side India, a continuous victim of terrorism and also a nuclear powered state, a rising global power and a rapidly growing economy. This new context forced the US to rethink its policy towards South Asia. From the dawn of the 21st century, there emerged a strategic partnership between India and US. Though US is fully aware of the role of Pakistan in promoting terrorist-jihadi groups, the US approach is to stabilize Pakistan and include it as a major non-NATO ally in the war on terror. But at the same time US severely criticised all the terrorist attacks and several times went to the extent of warning Pakistan. The US which claims to be the champion of democracy, should stop supporting authoritarian regimes in Pakistan. It should encourage the democratic government to free itself from the undue influence of military generals and the ISI which whole heartedly supports terrorism.

Pakistan and their terrorist allies must seriously consider the Indian surgical strike as a signal of the country's capability to successfully wage a counter terror attack. It was a pay back to the endless proxy wars that Pakistan had waged since independence. Pakistan should understand that India can also shape new internal security frame works including the introduction of more advanced counter-terror capabilities and doctrines that seek to substantially minimise Indian military casualties. Pakistan must also be concerned with evolving new alliances in the world and the central position of India in it.

The US values the South Asian partnership and is keen to have better relationship with both India and Pakistan. So ensuring the stability and security of the region is the overwhelming foreign policy concern of the US. A peaceful and prosperous South Asia can emerge only if the region is made free from the threat of terrorism.

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Evolution and Growth of Service Organisations in Kerala

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The employees' organisations in Kerala grew up as a movement among NGOs and later it spread to different categories of government servants. The NGO Union was formed in 1962 and its leaders visualised a strong organisation among the NGOs in Kerala. But after a period of ten years, the NGO Union got divided on political grounds. During the 1970s and the 1980s, several service organisations emerged in Kerala on political party basis. The service organisations in Kerala waged many strikes on several occasions. The strikes have undoubtedly proved that the government employees' organisations in Kerala are acting as pressure groups and no political party or government can close its eyes towards the demands of the employees. Prime focus of this article is on the genesis and growth of government employees organisations in Kerala. The social and political consciousness combined with the miserable living conditions of the employees in the 19th and 20th centuries gave rise to the establishment of the service organizations in Kerala.

The Trade Unions exist to promote the general demands of workers and to help them to improve their political, social and economic conditions. Trade unionism was generally prevalent among industrial and factory workers even before independence. Later, the government employees also established unions to raise their genuine demands. The government employees are known as 'the civil servants' or administrators who execute the functions of government. They are the service providers, and their function is to act as the agents who connect government and the people. The employees have several demands connected with transfer, promotion, better salary and service conditions. The government employees form the service organisations to acquire these demands. The employees have the right to work, right to make association, right to organise, right to strike and do collective bargaining. There are full time government staff, and earn their livelihood through the remunerations given in the form of government salary. In this sense, their organisations are identified as 'public employees' organisations'. Like trade unions, they have a say in policy matters especially concerning their demands like pay reform, better service conditions and benefits. However, the major distinction between the government service organisations and trade unions is that the trade unions are found in industrial sectors and factories, whereas the service organisations are visible in the administrative system. The salary of the public servants is fixed by the Pay Commissions appointed by the government. As a member of an organisation, the role of an employee is to promote a feeling of solidarity and comradeship among the workers. The membership in the Service Association is encouraged on the ground that, it is required not only to promote good employee-employer relations, but also essential for effective negotiation on pay, transfer, promotion, recruitment and other employment benefits.

Prime focus of this article is on the genesis and growth of government employees organisations in Kerala. The social and political consciousness combined with the miserable living conditions of the employees in the 19th and 20th centuries gave rise to the establishment of the service organizations in Kerala. The article also examines the historical efforts of the leaders of various employees organisations to build a strong movement of Government employees in the State.

The Roots

The white collar organisations are the government employees organisations working in service sector.

Hence they are known as 'service organisations'. To Bain, the service organisations consist of the members of the administrative, scientific, technical, clerical and professional employees (Bain, 1948). According to the government servant's conduct rules 1960, "service association" means a combination of government employees formed in to a lawfully organised body with the objects of securing and promoting conditions of service, common interest and legitimate demands of its members, inculcating the sense of cooperation, friendliness and fraternity among its members and carrying on general welfare activities for the well-being of its members. As per the service rules, the service associations include union, federation and confederation or coordination of employees (Sreemandir, 2004). They are the groups of employees working in the government service, formed for the purpose of protection of the interests of their members.

Richard B. Freeman referred public service union as the more craft like and white collar unions working in public sector (Freeman, 1986). Majority of unions are known by its name related to their craft. eg. Teacher's union, Nurse's union, Fire fighter's union, Police union etc. The craft-like structure of employees are more popular in public sector than other sectors, and the white collar membership of employees are comparatively higher in public service. Perhaps, the dominance of clerical employees has contributed to the growth of white collar membership in the public service organisations. Besides this, the employees in the public sector are a significant voting block in which the politicians are much interested. Unlike the private sector unions or industrial unions, unionism in government sector operates under several constraints and is very different from that of private service unions. A major contributor to the growth of public sector unions are the rapid spread of legislations and executive rulings which gave rise to the state and local government employees' right to organise and bargain collectively. As the employment grew in state and local government, the younger and more militant workers in the work force were mounted (Mickle, 1919). Unlike the industrial or private sector unions, the public service organisations have substantial political views and pressure, especially at local level. Lobbying and other political activities by the public service organisations are considered as important tools to increase pay and other employment benefits and in general to increase public expenditure in the areas of public service (Brien, 1962). Moreover whereas the strikes of industrial or private sector unions are economic weapons, the strikes of public service organisations are political tool to raise their demands. The relevant cause of the strike of public employees is political. Their strikes involve gathering of public support behind employees and their unions to force public officials to make concessions (Crig, 1980).

A peculiar feature of the public service organisations is that, these are constituted by government employees who are not permitted to participate in political and trade union activities. Thus while engaging in union activities; the government employees must seek permission from the government. In India, even before independence various rules were made by the British government to regulate the conducts of its employees. The East India Company Act of 1770, 1793 and 1797, the Sale of Office Act 1809, the Government of India Act 1833, the Supreme Court of Officers Act 1859, the Indian Penal Code 1860, the Police Act 1861, the Administrator General's Act 1874 etc., passed during those years were the basis of the official orders for regulating the conduct of employees (Sukomal Sen, 2006). It was for the first time, in 1890, the orders of Governor General to regulate the activities of government employees were issued in council. The orders stated that, "a government servant may not take part in any political agitation or meeting, or attend any political meeting, his presence at which is likely to be misconstrued or to impair his public usefulness. When there is room for doubt whether any action which a government proposes to take will contravene the provisions of this rule, he should refer the matter for orders to the local government or to his immediate superior officer" (Punnekkar, 1969). In 1904, the government framed a set of rules known as the Government Servant's Conduct Rule 1904, and the rules were made applicable to both central and provincial government employees. The rules were modified by giving it a reactionary character-prohibiting meeting in public place, and procession and strike by the government employees (Giri, 1974). After independence, the Central Government framed the rules and regulations connected with the recognition of the service associations in

1959 which is known as the Central Civil Service Rule for the Recognition of Service Associations, 1959. According to this rule, a service association may be recognised on the following conditions:

- No person who is not a government servant is connected with the affairs of the association.
- The executive of the association is appointed from amongst the members only.
- The association shall not espouse or support the cause of the individual government servant; and
- It shall not maintain any political funds or lend itself to propagation of the views of any political party or politician (Varma and Mukherjee, 1974). More over, part 1 and part 2 of the section 4 of the Central Civil Service Conduct Rules deal with the conditions of government employees.

Section 4 says that, “no person in government service shall be a member or otherwise be associated with political parties or any organisation which takes part in any politics, nor shall take part or to subscribe or to assist in any manner any other political movement or activity”. Section 4-a: “no government servant shall participate in any demonstration or strike in connection with the matter pertaining to the conditions of service”. Section 4-b: “no government servant shall join or continue to be a member of any service association of government servants which has not within a period of six months from its formation, obtained the recognition of the government under the rules prescribed in that behalf, recognition in respect of which has been refused or withdrawn by the government under the said rule”. These rules to a great extent have curtailed the democratic and political rights of government employees. However, with the active interference of organisations in the determination of pay and allowances many benefits accrued to the government employees in course of time.

Emergence of Employees Organisations in India

In India the government employees’ associations originated in the first decades of the 20th century. The Indian Telegraph Association (ITA) which was born in 1906, may be considered as the first association of this category. The association was able to secure a pay hike for employees from Rs.40/- to Rs.50/- per month. The success of ITA to secure monetary gains for its employees induced the postal employees to form the Bombay Postal Union in 1907(Sing, 1968). These preliminary efforts of government employees to form their organisations gave inspiration for other government employees to organise unions during the period following the World War I. The post war economic crises and the October Socialist Revolution in Russia motivated the government employees to come together for collective actions for tiding over the deteriorating economic conditions. Between the years 1918-1920, the employees of the Currency Office, the Accountant General’s Office, the Income Tax Office, etc., formed their Department-wise or Office-wise unions (Karnik, 1966). In 1925, the All India Railway Men’s Association was born. The Bank employees also formed their unions. In the states also, the employees associations emerged during this period. The Bengal Ministerial Staff Association and the Madras NGO Association emerged in 1921 and 1924 separate. Unionism was more visible among the lower level employees between 1920 and 1940. This was due to the fact that the lower level employees faced several problems at that time. They were ignored and were often maltreated is behaved by their superior officers. Further, they were not given adequate pay and employment benefits. Sukomal Sen says, “the white collar employees in India in the pre-independence period acted as the instruments of colonial government to carry out the exploitation policies. Since they are governed by the rules and regulations in the post-independence periods too, they cannot be effectively organised and hence they are not able to bring the main stream revolution of proletariat” (Sukomal Sen, 2007).

In the post-independence period, all employees working under central and state governments formed their own unions and associations with the support of political parties. The bank employees, the postal employees, the railway employees, the insurance employees etc., have formed separate unions to achieve their goals and demands. However, in 1960, the foundation was laid to form a national association to represent the central government and state government employees’ organisations and consequently, in 1966, the All

India State Government Employees Federation (AISGEF) was established with a view to achieve goals and objectives of government employees working at the centre and in the state level. It consists of the government employees associations as well as the trade unions of various industries. It focuses on the need to establish trade union rights for government employees and other industrial unions. It considered the government employees as part of working class and believed that to acquire long term benefits, a joint struggle of trade unions and employees associations are necessary (AISGEF Logo, 1967). Various organisations of central government employees such as the Bank Employees Union (BEU), the All India Insurance Employees' Union (AIIU), the Regional Bank Employees Association (RBA), the State Bank Employees Union (SBEU), the Indian Postal Union (IPEU) and the NGO organisations working in various states merged with this federation.

Growth of Service Organisations in Kerala

In Kerala, the trade unions first appeared in the industrial sector and gradually, it spread to the plantation sector. The rapid spread of leftist and socialist ideas influenced the workers in the industries to come together and form trade unions to achieve their goals and demands (Prakasham, 1979). The formation of unions in the industries encouraged the government employees to form their unions, though the government service conduct rules prohibited the formation of unions. Earlier the government employees were denied basic rights such as right to organise, right to work, right to form unions and associations and right to collective bargaining. However, these rights were secured by the employees as a result of many struggles.

Kerala Non-Gazetted Officers' (NGO) Union is the oldest and the largest employees' union in Kerala. It is affiliated to the Communist Party of India (Marxist) (CPI(M)). In the initial period of its formation, the NGO Union was the only service organisation among the non-gazetted employees. But in the later stage, there emerged many other service organisations of the non-gazetted employees. At present, there are six important NGO organisations in Kerala. They are the NGO Union, the NGO Association, the Joint Council of State Service Organisations, the NGO Sangh, the NGO Centre and the Kerala Government Employees' Union (KGEU). At present, the gazetted officers also have their own associations working on party lines.

Formation of NGO Union

Even before the formation of the state of Kerala, associations for the non-gazetted officers existed in Travancore and in Malabar. The Travancore NGO Federation that came into existence in 1938-39 and the Madras NGO association (1920) inspired the formation of public service organisations in Travancore and in Malabar. The Madras NGO association extended its activities in Malabar area because Malabar was a part of the Madras Presidency till the formation of Kerala in 1956. K.N.G. Panicker points out that the Madras NGO Association was recognised by the provincial government in 1924. The membership of the Madras NGO Association was open to all NGOs. Instead of passing a full resolution, the Association submitted its demands to the government (Panicker, 1989). However, the Travancore State Congress helped the formation of a public service union in Travancore area. The Travancore NGO Federation which came into existence in 1939 extended its activities to the Cochin area during 1940s and came to be known as Travancore-Cochin NGO Federation. At the same time, the Cochin NGO Association which came into existence 1939 acted as an independent organisation in Cochin area.

The joint action of the central government employees led to the revision of pay and dearness allowances (DA) to the central government employees in 1946. This created a wide gap in the pay of the provincial employees, which provoked the Madras NGO Association leaders to call for a strike demanding an immediate pay revision. This strike by the employees in Malabar province prompted the government employees in Travancore to organise effectively to fight for their rights. The August 10, 1947 a meeting held at Chenkal Choola, Thiruvananthapuram, resulted in the formation of the Travancore NGO Association (TNGOA). The Association grew all over Travancore and had 42 local committees and 2600 members. During this time, the government issued certain orders restricting the formation of the unions and associations by the government employees. The relevant portion of the said order is as follows. "Any government servant who is or becomes

a member of an association of government servants which is not recognised by the government shall be liable to be suspended or removed from the government service. The membership of the Association shall be confined to a distinctive class of government servants” (Sukumaran Nair, 1982). The government also instructed to dissolve the existing unions which were not complying with the above said order .

After the formation of Kerala, the activities of the North Kerala NGO Association spread all over the State. In 1956, a movement was started under the auspices of the North Kerala NGO Association to remove the ratio for promotion existing between graduates and non-graduates in State service. In the same year, the Travancore-Cochin NGO Federation became the Kerala NGO Federation. The union demanded the integration of service and equation of position with that of former Madras State and to prepare a common seniority list of employees working in these two States. A committee was formed under the State Re-Organisation Act (Art 150) to examine the demands of the Union, and the demands were accepted later (Jos Prakash, 2008). The first communist ministry of 1957 appointed a pay revision committee and it submitted its report in 1958. This has brought reforms in the pay and benefits of NGOs in Kerala. In 1958, the North Kerala NGO Association launched a movement to form a single organisation for the whole NGOs in Kerala. A resolution to this effect was passed and a sub-committee was formed to examine the feasibility of this proposal. An adhoc committee was constituted for this purpose, and the committee prepared a bye-law for the new organisation. In 1958, the new organisation called as “The Federation of Kerala Services Association” (FKSA) was formed with K. Chellappan Pillai as the President and E.J. Francis as the General Secretary. In the mean time, the Kerala NGO Federation, the Ministerial Staff Union and the Central Kerala NGO Association merged with this organisation. Following the dismissal of the communist government in Kerala by the central government in 1959, the union leaders thought of forming a strong organisation for NGO’s, and for this purpose, a convention was held at Thrissur in 1962. It was in this convention that the Kerala NGO Union was formed.

The NGO Union included all the non-gazetted officers in Kerala including the category associations up to the end of 1960s. In the initial period of its formation, the NGO Union leaders argued that, only one organization was required for all the NGOs. During 1950s and the 60s, it stood for the integration of various service associations which had existed in the former Travancore-Cochin State and Malabar. The leadership consisting of E.J. Francis, E. Padmanabhan, M.K.M. Chettiyar and T.V. Appunni Nair, were behind the formation of this organisation. Since these leaders were left-minded people, the leftist ideologies influenced the NGO Union. But the situation changed in the mid 1960s when political differences arose among the leaders of the NGO Union. There were differences among the leaders of the NGO Union with regard to the implementation of the second pay revision commission report and this led to a conflict between E.J. Francis and E. Padmanabhan in 1967.

Formation of Joint Council of State Service Organisations

The Joint Council of State Service Organisations was formed by a group of employees who split from the NGO Union in 1969. This was because of the fact that the NGO Union leaders could not take an unanimous stand on the rectification of the anomalies in the implementation of the Second Pay Commission Report. Moreover, the Departmental/Category Associations were very active among the NGOs in Kerala. The category association leaders argued that one organisation of the NGOs could not handle the issues of the different categories of NGOs efficiently and effectively. Some category associations like Kerala Land Revenue Officers’ Associations, Kerala Civil Supplies Staff Associations and the Ministerial Staff Associations in the Education Department were very strong during that time. These category associations alleged that the NGO Union was fostering the big brother attitude by imposing the Marxist Party Programme against the interests of the whole NGOs in Kerala. Thus, the NGO Union was clearly divided on the ground of political affiliations. In 1969, some of the leaders of the NGO Union and the former Kerala NGO Federation met at Thiruvananthapuram and formed an adhoc committee to form the Joint Council Of the State Employees’ Organisations (Nampoothiri, 1981). The committee stood for all the category associations of the state-level

employees with equal representation for all the member associations. The aim of the joint forum was to deal with issues having common nature and to settle disputes between category associations. The committee also submitted a memorandum to the government of Kerala for rectifying the anomalies in the pay revision of the government employees. In short, the political differences among the leaders of the NGO Union was the main reason behind the formation of the Joint Council.

The new organisation known as the “Joint Council of State Service Organisations” came into existence in May 1969. E.J. Francis, former President of the NGO Union, was elected as the President of the Council (Jos Prakash, 2008). This union got all support from the Communist Party of India (CPI).

Birth of NGO Association and Organisations

After the strike of 1973, the Joint Council split into two. One faction of the leaders of the Joint Council moved out from the parent organisation and formed the Kerala NGO Association under the leadership of K. Karunakaran Pillai in 1974. The new organisation was pro-Congress organisation. When the Congress Party split into Congress (A) and (I) led by A.K. Antony and K. Karunakaran respectively, the NGO Association also split on the same line. In 1979, the NGO Association was divided due to the factionalism in the Congress Party. Later, when the two factions of the party (Congress I) and (Congress A) were united, the two factions of the NGO Association also got united. In 1976, the Kerala Congress, the splinter group of the INC, formed the Kerala NGO Front and when the Kerala Congress split into several factions led by K.M. Mani, P.J. Joseph, T.M. Jacob and P.C. Thomas, their employees organisation also split into many like the Kerala NGO Front (M), and the Kerala NGO Front (J). The Janata Party unit in Kerala took initiative to form, the Kerala NGO Centre in 1977. Prior to this, S. Viswambharan Nair of the Lottery Department took initiative in forming the National Government Employees Forum and this resulted in the formation of NGO Janata Centre. One group of the Janata Party unit formed the Kerala NGO Sangh in 1980 and now it is supported by the Bharathiya Janatha Party (BJP) (Abubakker, 1990). Another wing of the employees who supported the Janata Party formed the KGEU in 1991.

By the end of 2000, the NGO Association again split into two factions, one led by Kampara Narayanan and the other led by Mankad Rajendran. The split occurred when Kampara Narayanan, the then President of the NGO Association, refused to resign from the Association when he was promoted to the Gazetted post. But he relinquished the promotion and continued as an NGO in order to continue in the leadership position. As per the NGO Association bye-law, when an employee is promoted from the non-gazetted rank to the gazetted rank, he should relieve himself from all the official work of the Association. But, Kampara Narayanan did not resign and this was not discussed in the State Committee. As a result, the faction which supported Mankad Rajendran came out the NGO Association and formed a separate one called “NGO Association (I)”.

Apart from these, many categorical/departmental associations of government employees are functioning in the State of Kerala. The gazetted officers in Kerala have two employees organisations, namely the Gazetted Officers’ Association and the Gazetted Officers’ Union. These gazetted service organisations are acting as allied organisations under the banner of the Federation of State Employees organisation (FESTO) and the State Employees Organisation (SETO). Kerala Gazetted Officers’ Association which was founded in 1966 is a left-oriented employees organisation. The Kerala Gazetted Officers’ Union enjoys the support of the congress party. In 1996 the Kerala Gazetted Officers Federation (KGOF) was formed. But a notable point is that the gazetted officers’ organisations are affiliated to the general union. Most of them are independent and they have their own bye-laws and norms.

Role of Strikes in the Growth of Service Organisations in Kerala

The government employees in Kerala have conducted several strikes seeking better pay and service benefits. The strikes of service organisations in 1967, 1973, 1983, 1993 and 2002 were either for increase of salary or for better service conditions. It was also aimed at resisting the government’s move to cut the

service benefits of employees. The NGO union went on a strike in January 1967 demanding implementation of central pay parity, scrapping of the confidential system from State service and revision of Kerala service rules. After the strike, the confidential system was limited to certain categories and the second pay commission was appointed. The government also agreed to provide DA to the state government employees at central rates.

During 1970s, the government employees and teachers conducted several strikes to get interim relief and pay revision. During the strikes of 1971 and the strike of 1973 the government employees united by raised their common demands forgetting their category wise differences. This action resulted in the setting up of different sister organisations such as FESTO, SETO and the FETO. Through the 1973 strike the employees succeeded in making the government accept the principle of ‘five year pay reform’ in Kerala. During 1980s, several strikes were organised by the allied employees forum and it led to the growth of new employees unions in Kerala. The strikes conducted by the college teachers to get pay on UGC scale, the teachers’ strike against setting up of Pre-degree Board and the government employees’ strike for leave surrender allowances etc., deserve special mention. The DA strike, the pay equalisation strike and the strike for time bound grade promotion system have contributed to the strength of service organisations in Kerala. At present no government employees’ association can raise demands exclusively for itself. This is because of the fact that every employees’ organisation have common demands to a great extent. Therefore, both gazetted and non-gazetted service organisations join together on political lines and put pressure strategies to realize common demands and aspirations. Until recently, the part time employees were not given equal pay and service benefits and they were not given an equal status in the state service. The NGO Union took initiative to organise the part time employees and conducted a strike in 1993 demanding honorable remuneration to the part time workers. As a result of this, the Part time contingent employees’ organisations came into existence.

The advent of globalisation and liberalisation policies has brought in discontent among government employees. The scrapping of the service benefits and abolition of posts have led the employees’ unions to organise demonstrations against the pitfalls of privatisation. Thus in 1990s, it is seen that the strikes of the employees entered a new phase unlike 70s and 80s. In the year 2002, all government employees in Kerala, irrespective of their political affiliation, launched a general strike against the move of the UDF government to cut the salary and other benefits of government employees. The unity and strong determination shown by the government employees forced the government to revoke the punitive steps it had taken against the employees. This strike reminded the government that it should take its employees into confidence before any action is contemplated against them (NGO Union, 2003).

Summing Up

This article examined the historical background and political prospects of the service organisations in Kerala. The employees’ organisations in Kerala grew up as a movement among NGOs and later it spread to different categories of government servants. The NGO Union was formed in 1962 and its leaders visualised a strong organisation among the NGOs in Kerala. But after a period of ten years, the NGO Union got divided on political grounds. During the 1970s and the 1980s, several service organisations emerged in Kerala on political party basis. The demands of service organisations in Kerala centres around the implementation of pay reform, promotion, enhancing DA, and other service benefits. For that purpose, the service organisations in Kerala conducted many strikes on several occasions. The strikes have undoubtedly proved that the government employees’ organisations in Kerala are acting as pressure groups and no political party or government can close its eyes towards the demands of the employees. Sukumol Sen, the former General Secretary of AISGEF observes, “The strikes are the political weapons to acquire the demands and aspirations of any group or individual, but the white collar employees due to the reputation and the fear of disciplinary actions may be reluctant in organising and participating in the strike. But, for obtaining democratic and trade union rights, the strikes are necessary and promptive”.

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