

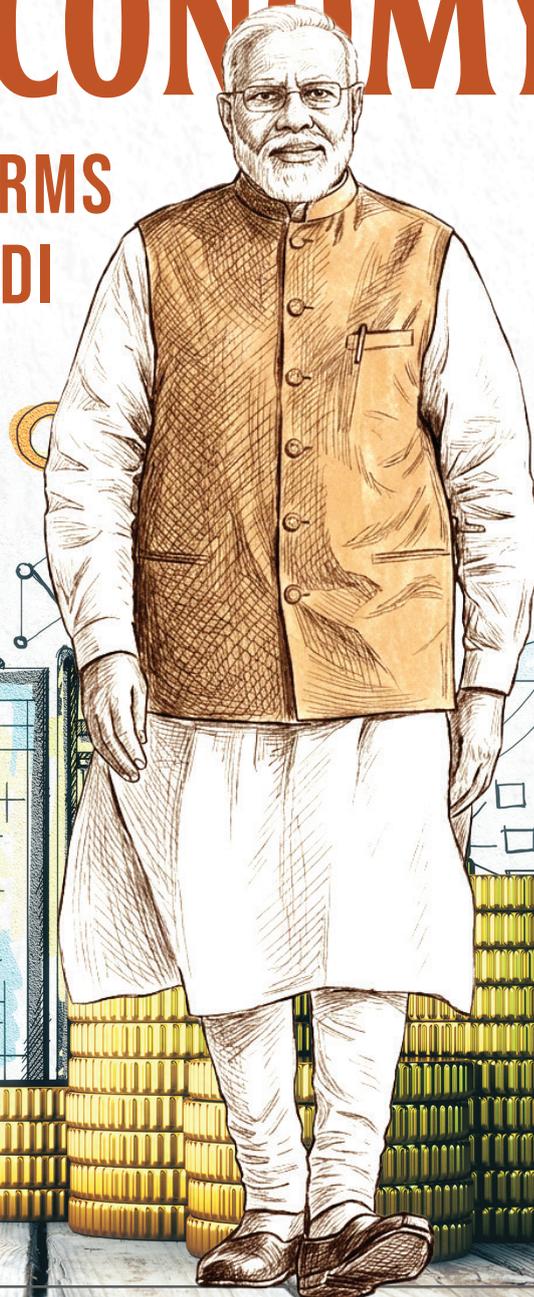
BJYM

Magazine

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NEW INDIA NEW ECONOMY

ECONOMIC REFORMS UNDER PM MODI



CONTENTS

01	Remarks of Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi at Global Business Summit	03	Remarks of the BJP President Shri Nitin Nabin	04	Message from the BJYM President Shri Tejasvi Surya	05	Editorial
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English Articles

- 07 Formalisation, Manufacturing, and
Infrastructure: The Architecture of India's
Economic Transformation
Anil Aggarwal
- 10 Empowerment over Entitlement:
Reimagining Welfare in Modi's India
Harsh Singh Dahiya
- 12 Rural Bharat Rising: Agricultural Reforms
in the Age of Atmanirbhar India
Dr. Shashi Bhushan
- 19 From Fiscal Prudence to Productive
Capital: Infrastructure and Growth
Rahul Kumar Yadav
- 26 From Informality to Innovation: MSMEs
and India's Economic Sovereignty
Puja Singh
- 30 Shaping the New Karmayogi: Labour
Reforms and Workforce Transformation
Menka Bharati
- 35 Rebuilding the Indian Economy through
Reforms and National Vision
Dr. Suyagyan Rai
- 38 From Cash to Code: Digital Bharat, Global
Standard
Sudha Thakur
- 42 Manufacturing as a Pillar of Atmanirbhar
Bharat
Amarjeet Verma & Saksham Garikapati

- 45 From Domestic Reform to Global Integration:
India's Economic Rise
Srikar Srivatsa Dahagam
- 47 GST as a Structural Reform: Formalisation,
Federalism, and Market Integration
Mohd Hamza Atik
- 50 Atmanirbhar Bharat: Integrating Economic
Reform with Social Empowerment
Shubham Rai
- 53 Transforming Rural Employment:
The VB-G RAM G Act & India's Livelihood Shift
Dr. Pooja Paswan
- 56 Reforming India's Economic Architecture
after 2014
Dr. Monika Kumari
- 59 Restoring Discipline in Indian Banking:
The Modi-Era Turnaround
Ashutosh Kashyap
- 62 Labour Reforms, Employment Growth,
and Social Security in New India
Ashish Mishra
- 65 From Tax Reform to Economic Scale:
The GST Story
Prasanna Rajesh Kalavar
- 67 From Hesitation to Discipline:
How Economic Reforms Changed India
Santhati Srinavya

हिंदी लेख

- 70 नीतिगत साहस से वैश्विक विश्वास तक:
भारत की आर्थिक परिवर्तन कथा
अमन राव
- 72 आर्थिक सुधारों का दशक:
विकसित भारत की मजबूत नींव
यश विकास उपाध्याय
- 74 मेक इन इंडिया और आत्मनिर्भर भारत:
विनिर्माण पुनर्जागरण
डॉ. अवधेश कुमार जौहरी
- 76 कृषि से उद्योग तक :
समावेशी आर्थिक सुधारों का भारत मॉडल
डॉ. मिथिलेश कुमार पाण्डेय

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***In this decade of the
21st century, India is
riding the Reform
Express”***

श्री नरेंद्र मोदी

Prime Minister
Shri Narendra Modi





Remarks of
Prime Minister
**Shri Narendra
Modi at Global
Business
Summit**

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In this decade of the 21st century, India is riding on a Reform Express. The greatest feature of this Reform Express is that we are accelerating it not out of compulsion but with conviction, and with a commitment to reform. Many distinguished experts and stalwarts of the economic world are present here. You have seen the period before 2014. Reforms were undertaken only when circumstances forced them, when crises struck, when no other option remained. The reforms of 1991 happened when the country faced the danger of bankruptcy and had to pledge its gold. That was the approach of earlier governments—they undertook reforms only out of compulsion. After the 26/11 terrorist attack, when the Congress government’s weaknesses were exposed, the NIA was formed. When the power sector collapsed and grids began to fail, only then did reforms in the power sector occur out of necessity.

I am proud that in the last eleven years, we have carried out reforms with complete conviction—reforms in policy, in process, in delivery, and even in mindset. Because if policy changes but processes remain the same, if the mindset remains unchanged, and if delivery does not improve, reforms remain merely pieces of paper. Therefore, we have made sincere efforts to transform the entire system.

Let me speak about processes. A simple yet crucial process is that of Cabinet notes. Many here would know that earlier, it would take months just to prepare a Cabinet note. How could a nation develop at that speed? So we changed this process. We made decision-making time-bound and technology-driven. We ensured that a Cabinet note would not remain on any officer's desk beyond a fixed number of hours-either reject it or take a decision. The nation is witnessing the results today. Let me also give the example of approvals for railway overbridges. Earlier, it would take several years to get a single design approved. Multiple clearances were required, and letters had to be written at various levels-and I am speaking not about the private sector, but about the government. We changed this as well. Today, see the pace at which road and railway infrastructure is being built.

Another interesting example is border infrastructure, which is directly linked to national security. There was a time when even constructing a simple road in border areas required permissions from Delhi. At the district level, there was practically no authority empowered to make decisions; there were wall upon walls, and no one could take responsibility. That is why, even decades later, border infrastructure remained in poor condition. After 2014, we reformed this process, empowered local administration, and today we are witnessing rapid development in border infrastructure.

One reform in the past decade that has created a stir worldwide is UPI, India's digital payment system. It is not merely an app; it represents an extraordinary convergence of policy, process, and delivery. Those who could never even imagine accessing banking and financial services are now being served by UPI. Digital India, the digital payment system, the Jan Dhan-Aadhaar-Mobile trinity-these reforms were not born of compulsion but of conviction. Our conviction was to ensure the inclusion of citizens whom previous governments had never reached. Those who were never cared for, Modi honors and empowers. That is why these reforms were undertaken, and our government

continues to move forward with this same spirit.

This new mindset of India is also reflected in our Budget. Earlier, when the Budget was discussed, the focus was only on outlay-how much money was allocated, what became cheaper or costlier. On television, budget discussions would revolve almost entirely around whether income tax had increased or decreased, as if nothing beyond that existed in the country. The number of new trains announced would dominate headlines, and later no one would ask what happened to those announcements. Therefore, we transformed the Budget from being merely outlay-centric to being outcome-centric.

Another significant change in the Budget discourse is this: before 2014, there was extensive discussion about off-budget borrowing. Now, there is a discussion about off-budget reforms. Beyond the Budget framework, we implemented next-generation GST reforms, replaced the Planning Commission with NITI Aayog, removed Article 370, enacted legislation against triple talaq, and passed the Nari Shakti Vandan Act.

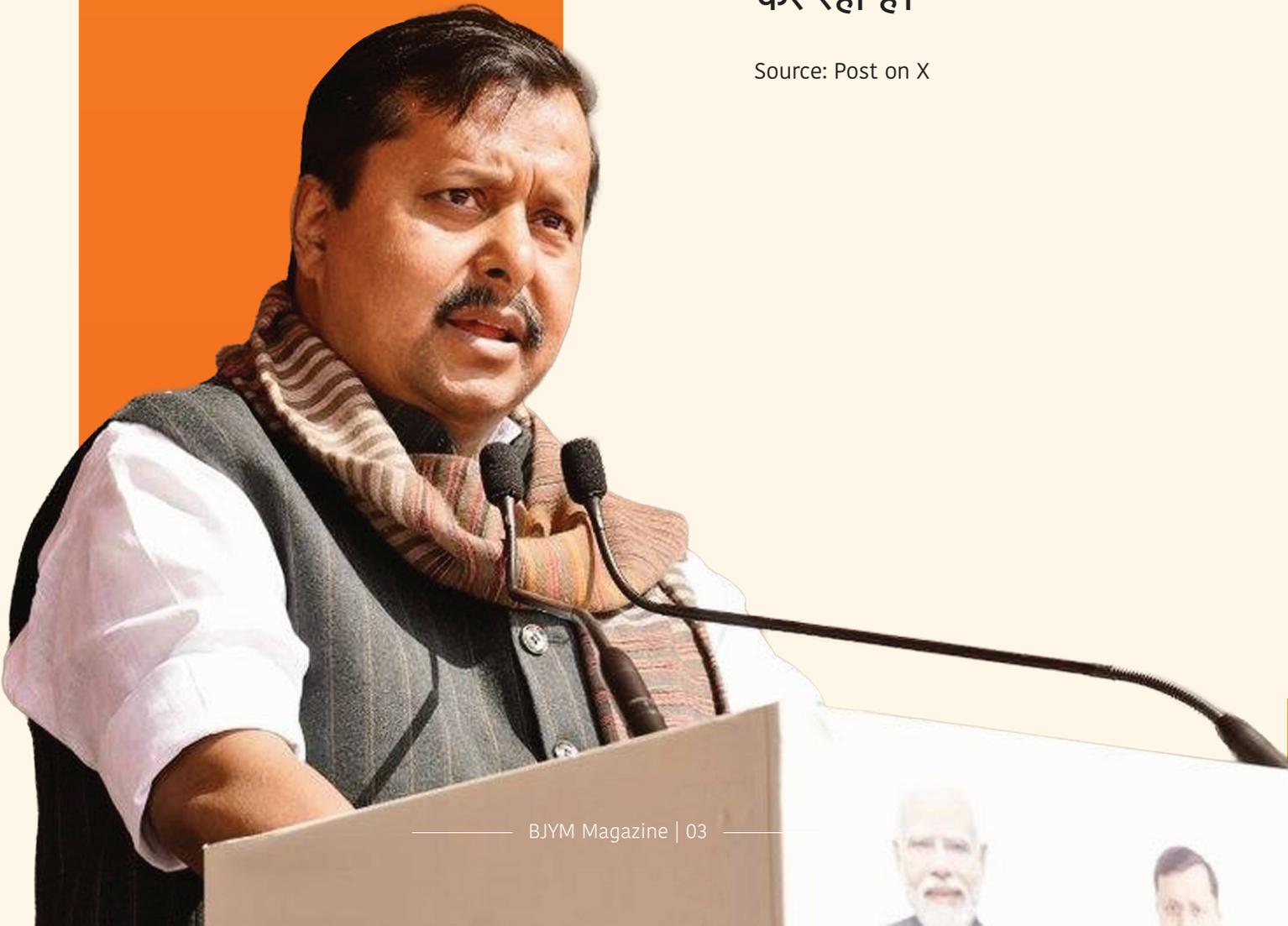
Whether announced within the Budget or beyond it, the Reform Express continues to gather speed. In just the past year, we have carried out reforms in the ports and maritime sector, taken numerous initiatives for the shipbuilding industry, advanced reforms under the Jan Vishwas Act, enacted the Shanti Act for energy security, implemented labor law reforms, introduced the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, reformed the Waqf law, and introduced a new GRAM G Act to promote rural employment. Numerous such reforms have been undertaken throughout the year.

Excerpts from the Speech of the Prime Minister on 13th February, 2026

Source: narendramodi.in

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Digital India, the digital payment system, the Jan Dhan-Aadhaar-Mobile trinity-these reforms were not born of compulsion but of conviction.

Remarks
of the BJP
President
Shri Nitin Nabin



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वैश्विक आर्थिक संकट
एवं अस्थिरता के इस दौर
में भी भारत, विश्व की
प्रमुख अर्थव्यवस्थाओं में
सबसे तेज़ी से बढ़ती
अर्थव्यवस्था के रूप में
उभरकर अपनी सशक्त
वैश्विक पहचान स्थापित
कर रहा है।

Source: Post on X

Message from the BJYM National President Shri Tejasvi Surya

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Over the past decade, India has witnessed one of the most decisive phases of economic reform since Independence. What began in 2014 was not merely a change in government, but a change in economic direction. It marked the end of policy paralysis and the beginning of structural transformation.

Economic reforms under the leadership of Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi have not been episodic announcements; they have been systemic corrections. They have addressed deep-rooted distortions in taxation, banking, infrastructure, manufacturing, welfare delivery, and the informal economy. These reforms were not always easy, nor were they always politically convenient. But they were necessary.

The introduction of the Goods and Services Tax created a unified national market, strengthening cooperative federalism while formalising vast segments of the economy. The Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code restored discipline in banking and ensured that economic accountability replaced cronyism. Digital Public Infrastructure built on Jan Dhan, Aadhaar, and UPI has democratised access to finance

and eliminated leakages in welfare delivery. Manufacturing initiatives such as Make in India and the Production Linked Incentive schemes have repositioned Bharat as a serious global production hub.

These reforms represent a philosophical shift from entitlement to empowerment, from leakage to transparency, from subsidy-driven politics to growth-driven governance. Most importantly, they align with the civilisational ethos of Antyodaya: ensuring that development reaches the last citizen while strengthening national capability.

India today ranks among the world's fastest-growing major economies. Our banking system is healthier, our infrastructure is expanding at a record pace, our startups are reshaping innovation, and our youth are no longer merely job seekers but job creators. The vision of Viksit Bharat @2047 is not a rhetorical ambition; it is anchored in structural reform and institutional strengthening.

As young karyakartas of the Bharatiya Janata Yuva Morcha, it is our responsibility to understand these reforms deeply, communicate them effectively, and contribute to their success on the ground. Economic reform is not the task of economists alone; it is the collective mission of a confident nation.

The coming decade will determine whether India merely grows or truly rises. With discipline, innovation, and national resolve, we can ensure that this century belongs to Bharat.



Vande Mataram!
Tejasvi Surya
MP Lok Sabha,
Bengaluru South



The story of India's economic reforms since 2014 is not one of sudden miracles or headline-driven announcements. It is the story of systematic repair under the leadership of the Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi. It is the story of a nation that chose to fix its foundations rather than merely decorate its facade. For decades, India's economic potential was acknowledged, but structural bottlenecks held back growth. Tax complexity discouraged compliance. Banking indiscipline weakened public confidence. Welfare leakages distorted delivery. Infrastructure deficits inflated logistics costs. Informality limited productivity and credit access. These were not superficial problems; they were institutional weaknesses.

The reform journey of the last decade has sought to address these structural distortions precisely. The Goods and Services Tax unified India into a single market, reducing cascading taxation and lowering interstate trade barriers. The Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code replaced endless legal delays with time-bound resolution, restoring accountability in corporate finance. The push toward formalisation through digitisation, tax reform, and compliance architecture expanded the tax base and strengthened state capacity.

Equally transformative has been the creation of Digital Public Infrastructure. The Jan Dhan-Aadhaar-Mobile ecosystem has ensured that welfare benefits reach beneficiaries directly, reducing leakages and empowering citizens. The rise of UPI has democratised digital payments, enabling even small vendors and rural households to participate in the formal economy. Financial inclusion is no longer a slogan; it is a measurable reality.

On the production side, India has made a conscious pivot toward manufacturing. Production-linked incentive schemes, the Make in India initiative, and a record emphasis on capital expenditure have signalled a shift from consumption-driven to capability-driven growth. Infrastructure investment in roads, railways, airports, ports, and logistics corridors has created long-term assets that enhance competitiveness.

This reform phase has also been marked by fiscal prudence combined with targeted welfare. Macroeconomic stability reflected in manageable inflation, strengthened foreign exchange reserves, and improved banking health has allowed India to remain resilient despite global disruptions, from pandemics to geopolitical tensions.

Yet reforms are not an end in themselves. They are instruments for national transformation. The deeper question before India today is how to convert structural correction into sustained prosperity. The next phase of reform must focus on three critical areas.

First, employment generation must keep pace with growth momentum. Manufacturing expansion,

MSME strengthening, and skill development must converge to create quality jobs at scale. India's demographic dividend is an opportunity only if it is productively absorbed.

Second, productivity must rise across sectors. Agriculture needs greater value addition, technology adoption, and market integration. Urbanisation must be planned with sustainability and mobility in mind. Innovation ecosystems must move from replication to original research and design.

Third, institutional credibility must continue to deepen. Transparent governance, predictable regulation, and efficient dispute resolution will determine investor confidence and long-term capital formation.

The vision of Viksit Bharat @2047 is ambitious, but ambition alone is insufficient. It requires continuity of reform, consistency in policy, and confidence in execution. It requires political will and citizen participation alike.

India today stands stronger than it did a decade ago, not because challenges have vanished, but because the architecture to address them has improved. Structural reforms have laid a durable foundation. The responsibility now lies in building upon it.

Economic transformation is not achieved in a single term or a single policy cycle. It is a generational effort. If the last decade was about repairing the system, the coming decade must be about accelerating growth with equity, innovation, and national purpose.

The reform journey continues, and its ultimate measure will not merely be GDP figures, but the confidence, dignity, and opportunity experienced by every Indian citizen.



Formalisation, Manufacturing & Infrastructure

The Architecture of India's Economic Transformation

Anil Aggarwal

Chancellor, HRIT University &
Former Member of Rajya Sabha

In furtherance of its guiding mantra Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas, Sabka Vishwas, Sabka Prayas and with the resolve to build a Viksit Bharat by 2047, the Union Government, under the dynamic and visionary leadership of Yashasvi Pradhan Mantri Shri Narendra Modi, has undertaken a series of initiatives that are bold, transformative, and historic in scale.

From the very first day of assuming office in 2014, the Modi Government has pursued far-reaching structural reforms to advance the Sankalp Yatra of a Viksit Bharat. These reforms have focused on formalising the economy, strengthening domestic manufacturing, and rapidly expanding physical as well as digital infrastructure. Together, they mark a decisive shift from a paradigm of mere poverty alleviation to one of wealth creation where robust social safety nets are sustained by a broader, more efficient, and formalised tax base.

Major Reforms and Policy Shifts: A Retrospective Overview

A review of India's reform journey over the last decade reveals a series of decisive structural and policy shifts that can be summarised as follows:

1. Major Structural and Policy Reforms

At the core of these reforms lies a clear objective: improving the ease of doing business by simplifying India's historically complex legal, regulatory, and tax framework.

Goods and Services Tax (GST), 2017

The introduction of GST replaced a fragmented system of multiple Central and State taxes with a unified "One Nation, One Tax" regime. This reform has significantly reduced logistical bottlenecks, lowered transaction costs, and enhanced tax compliance. Importantly, the GST Council where all States participate in decision-making has strengthened India's cooperative federal structure, in line with the constitutional vision of the country's founders.

Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (IBC), 2016

The IBC marked a paradigm shift in India's credit culture by introducing time-bound resolution of stressed assets. It improved creditor confidence, strengthened banking discipline, and enabled faster recycling of capital, thereby contributing to overall financial stability.

Corporate Tax Reforms

The government reduced the base corporate tax rate from 30% to 22%, and to 15% for new manufacturing units, to enhance India's global competitiveness and attract fresh investment in manufacturing.

2. Manufacturing and Atmanirbhar Bharat Production Linked Incentive (PLI) Schemes

Under the PLI framework, 14 major sectors including electronics, pharmaceuticals, and white goods have been incentivised through cash rewards linked to incremental production. The impact has been

particularly visible in electronics manufacturing: mobile phone production rose from ₹18,000 crore in 2014 to over ₹5.45 lakh crore by 2025, significantly strengthening domestic manufacturing capacity and export potential.

3. Make in India

Launched with the objective of raising manufacturing's share in GDP to 25%, the Make in India initiative has faced challenges due to global disruptions and extraneous factors. Nevertheless, it has succeeded in attracting record levels of Foreign Direct Investment, estimated at USD 642 billion by 2024. The initiative has also played a catalytic role in nurturing a vibrant startup ecosystem, placing India among the world's leading startup hubs.

4. Digital Revolution and the "India Stack"

The government adopted a Digital-First economic approach to reduce leakages in welfare delivery while simultaneously promoting innovation and entrepreneurship. The India Stack comprising digital identity, payments, and data-sharing platforms has become a global benchmark for inclusive digital public infrastructure.

5. JAM Trinity (Jan Dhan-Aadhaar-Mobile)

The JAM architecture has enabled Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) by channeling subsidies directly into beneficiaries' bank accounts. This reform has eliminated ghost beneficiaries, curtailed leakages, and saved billions of rupees previously lost to intermediaries.

6. Unified Payments Interface (UPI)

India has emerged as a global leader in digital payments. The digital economy is projected to contribute over 13% of national income by mid-2026, with UPI at the heart of this transformation.

7. Digital India

Internet penetration expanded dramatically from about 25 crore users in 2014 to an estimated 97

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This decade and those beyond belong to Bharat, as it advances with confidence toward its goal of becoming a Viksit Bharat.
.....

crore users by the end of 2025, supported by some of the world's most affordable data rates. This expansion has democratised access to information, services, and markets.

8. Infrastructure and Logistics Transformation

Recognising that high logistics costs historically 13-14% of GDP were undermining India's export competitiveness, the government launched the PM Gati Shakti National Master Plan.

- **Multimodal Connectivity:**

A digital platform integrating 16 ministries to coordinate infrastructure planning and execution, leading to more efficient project delivery.

- **Reduced Logistics Costs:**

As a result of integrated planning and execution, logistics costs have declined to approximately 8-9% of GDP.

- **Physical Infrastructure Expansion:**

National highway length increased from about 91,000 km in 2014 to over 1.46 lakh km by 2025. The number of operational airports has nearly doubled to 162, significantly improving regional connectivity.

Key Policy Shifts During 2014-2025

The period from 2014 to 2025 witnessed a series of fundamental policy realignments that transformed India's economic and governance framework. These key shifts may be summarised as follows:

1. From Physical Subsidies to Direct Cash Transfers

The welfare delivery mechanism shifted from in-kind and physical subsidies to Direct Benefit Transfers (DBT). Enabled by the Jan Dhan-Aadhaar-Mobile (JAM) architecture, this transition reduced leakages, eliminated ghost beneficiaries, and ensured targeted and transparent delivery of welfare support.

2. From Fragmented State Taxes to a Unified National Market

India moved away from a patchwork of State and Central taxes to an integrated national market through the implementation of the Goods and Services Tax (GST). This reform lowered transaction costs, improved tax compliance, and strengthened cooperative federalism.

3. From Services-Led Growth to Manufacturing-Centric Expansion

While services remained important, the growth strategy between 2014 and 2025 consciously pivoted towards manufacturing. The Make in India initiative and Production Linked Incentive (PLI) schemes emerged as key drivers, aimed at boosting domestic production, exports, and employment generation.

4. From an Informal to a Formalised Economy

A decisive push was made to formalise the economy. Measures such as demonetisation, GST, and digital payments expanded the tax base, improved transparency, and integrated millions of enterprises and workers into the formal system.

5. From Public Sector Dominance to Privatisation and Asset Monetisation

The policy emphasis shifted from exclusive public sector ownership to strategic disinvestment, privatisation, and asset monetisation. The National Monetisation Pipeline became a key instrument for unlocking value from existing public assets and mobilising resources for new infrastructure investment.

Current Status and Way Forward (2026)

Under Modi 3.0, the government's reform agenda is focused on the next stage of structural transformation. Key priorities include:

- Deepening Union-State cooperation, particularly in land and labour reforms
- Scaling up the India AI Mission to ensure Bharat's competitiveness in the global technology and innovation race
- Continuing reforms in the banking and financial sector to strengthen credit delivery, resilience, and capital efficiency

The direction is clear: reforms are no longer episodic but systemic and forward-looking. This decade and those beyond belong to Bharat, as it advances with confidence toward its goal of becoming a Viksit Bharat.

Empowerment over Entitlement

Reimagining Welfare in Modi's India

Harsh Singh Dahiya
Supreme Court Advocate
and TV Panellist

Upward mobility is the ability of an individual or a family to move ahead in life through better income, improved living conditions, stronger social security, and wider opportunities. It is about breaking free from generational stagnation and gaining the means to shape one's own future with dignity. True upward mobility is achieved when effort is rewarded, aspirations are realistic, and the system enables growth rather than dependency.

For India, upward mobility is the real test of nation-building. A young country with deep social diversity cannot progress if large sections of its population remain trapped at the bottom of the economic pyramid. Sustainable growth requires citizens who can earn more, live better, educate their children, and participate confidently in the economy. When upward mobility expands, poverty reduces permanently, inequality narrows organically, and social harmony strengthens.

This is precisely the lens through which Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi has approached governance. From the very start, his emphasis has been on replacing a culture of entitlement with a culture of empowerment. Modi ji has consistently argued that the role of the state is not to keep citizens dependent on doles, but to give them the tools to stand on their own feet. His policies reflect a clear sequence: dignity first, security next, and opportunity thereafter.

The damage caused by years of drift under the Indian National Congress cannot be ignored in this context. Policy paralysis, corruption scandals, and indecisive leadership choked economic momentum and eroded public trust. Welfare schemes were reduced to slogans, with benefits leaking through middlemen and little effort made to create long-term capability. Instead of



opening doors, governance often became a roadblock, freezing ambition and discouraging enterprise.

The Modi government decisively altered this trajectory. It recognised that no citizen can aspire or grow while living without basic dignity. That is why the first wave of reforms focused on fundamentals: housing, sanitation, electricity, cooking fuel, healthcare, and bank accounts. A family that has a pucca house, a toilet, clean cooking fuel, electricity, and health security is no longer living in constant vulnerability. Such a household can plan, save, invest in education, and take economic risks. Dignity, in this sense, became the foundation of mobility.

Simultaneously, the government expanded avenues of earning. Financial inclusion connected the poor to formal banking. Credit schemes unlocked entrepreneurship. Skill programmes raised employability. Income support stabilised rural households. These were not isolated initiatives, but parts of a larger architecture designed to move Indians from survival to stability, and from stability to prosperity. The visible outcomes have been a higher standard of living, broader participation in the formal economy, and renewed confidence among citizens that growth is within reach.

The scale of this transformation is unprecedented. Crores of Indians have entered the formal banking system, enabling savings, insurance, and access to credit. Crores of toilets have improved public health and productivity. Over ten crore clean cooking connections have freed women from hazardous conditions and time poverty. Lakhs of homes have created durable assets for families that never owned property before. Health insurance coverage has shielded vulnerable households from catastrophic medical expenses. Tens of crores of Mudra loans have empowered small entrepreneurs, while skill programmes and the startup ecosystem have opened pathways to better jobs and enterprise. These are not abstract numbers; they represent millions of individual journeys upward, powered by policy rather than patronage.

Key Schemes Enabling Upward Mobility

- **Pradhan Mantri Jan-Dhan Yojana**
Integrated the poor into the formal financial system, enabling savings, credit, and direct benefit transfers.
- **Pradhan Mantri Mudra Yojana:** Enabled micro and small entrepreneurs to start and expand businesses through collateral-free loans.
- **Startup India:** Created a supportive ecosystem for innovation, encouraging youth to become job creators.
- **Stand-Up India :** Expanded institutional credit access for SC, ST, and women entrepreneurs.
- **Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana and Skill India Mission :** Improved employability and wage potential through market-relevant skills.
- **Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana :** Provided asset ownership and housing security, strengthening financial and social stability.
- **Swachh Bharat Mission:** Improved health, dignity, and productivity through universal sanitation.
- **Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana:** Reduced health risks and empowered women by providing clean cooking fuel.
- **Saubhagya Yojana:** Ensured household electrification, enabling education, enterprise, and productivity.
- **Ayushman Bharat PM-JAY:** Protected families from medical poverty traps through health insurance.
- **PM-KISAN:** Stabilised farm incomes, enabling investment and reducing rural distress.
- **MGNREGA:** Provided a safety net during economic distress, preventing downward mobility.

PM Modi's legacy will be defined by this fundamental shift in governance philosophy. He has reimagined welfare as a ladder, not a crutch. By restoring dignity, expanding opportunity, and unleashing aspiration, he has given millions of Indians the confidence to dream bigger and aim higher. In doing so, he has emerged as a transformational reformer and a true Yug Purush, steering India decisively from a developing mindset toward the reality of a developed nation.

Rural Bharat Rising

Agricultural Reforms in the Age of Atmanirbhar India

Dr. Shashi Bhushan

Meteorologist & Scientist at
The Institute of Environmental
Research and Rural
Development, Patna

Introduction

Agriculture and the rural economy remain structurally central to India's development. Despite economic diversification, agriculture still supports over two-fifths of the workforce, contributes about one-sixth of gross value added, and anchors demand in a rural India that houses nearly two-thirds of the population. Rural performance therefore shapes employment stability, inflation, income distribution, and social cohesion, making it integral to macroeconomic resilience and national integration.



Before 2014, this centrality coexisted with persistent structural weaknesses. Farm incomes stagnated despite periods of high aggregate growth; productivity gains were uneven; and agricultural output remained vulnerable to monsoon variability due to limited irrigation, weak risk mitigation, and slow technology diffusion. Fragmented state-level markets, mandi dominance, high intermediation costs, and underinvestment in storage, cold chains, roads, and logistics suppressed price realisation and amplified post-harvest losses. Welfare-led responses—subsidies, price support, and loan waivers offered short-term relief but failed to resolve low productivity, weak market access, and limited value addition, as repeatedly noted in official assessments.

The post-2014 reform trajectory under the Modi Government marks a decisive shift. Agriculture was repositioned from a welfare domain to a productive growth sector through market integration, infrastructure creation, income security, and institutional reform. Public investment, marketing reforms, FPO promotion, digital platforms, and predictable income and insurance support sought to align welfare with efficiency. This approach links rural prosperity to national growth by strengthening demand, stabilising inflation, reducing spatial inequalities, and advancing a vision of self-reliant, village-centred development.

Theoretical and Conceptual Framework

Agricultural and rural reforms under the Modi Government are best understood through a composite framework combining development theory, structural transformation, market integration, and indigenous Indian ideas of village-centric growth. This approach links state-led reform to rural income expansion and national economic performance.

Classical development economics assigns agriculture a foundational role in structural transformation. The Lewis and Kuznets frameworks underscore that sustainable growth requires productivity gains within agriculture to support food security, rising incomes, and labour mobility. In India, where over 40 per cent of the workforce

remains farm-dependent, neglecting agriculture risks income stagnation, rural distress, and weak domestic demand. Contemporary theory therefore treats agriculture as a productivity-enhancing pillar of inclusive growth, with public investment in irrigation, infrastructure, markets, and technology as key enablers.

Market integration further strengthens this process. Fragmented markets and high transaction costs depress farm-gate prices and deter investment, while integrated markets improve price discovery, reduce volatility, and incentivise productivity. Reforms in marketing, farmer collectives, logistics, and digital platforms thus function as growth-enhancing interventions with economy-wide effects.

Rising rural incomes also generate strong agriculture–non-farm and rural–urban linkages, stimulating manufacturing, services, and MSMEs through demand multipliers. Indian Knowledge Systems reinforce this logic through a Gram-centric vision emphasising self-reliance, decentralised production, and national integration, articulated today through Swadeshi and Atmanirbhar Bharat. Together, these perspectives frame post-2014 reforms as a coherent strategy to transform agriculture into a dynamic driver of national growth.

Agriculture and Rural Economy: Pre-2014 Structural Constraints

On the eve of the 2014 reforms, Indian agriculture was marked by entrenched structural weaknesses that constrained productivity, incomes, and integration with the wider economy. Although the sector employed over 45 per cent of the workforce, its GDP share had fallen to about 15–16 per cent, reflecting low productivity, disguised unemployment, stagnant farm incomes, and weak rural demand.

Agricultural markets were highly fragmented. State-regulated APMC mandis limited competition, inter-state trade, and effective price discovery. Official assessments highlighted wide spatial price dispersion for identical commodities, signaling high transaction costs and poor market integration.

Small and marginal farmers, comprising over 85 per cent of landholdings, remained dependent on local intermediaries and lacked bargaining power.

Agri-logistics and post-harvest infrastructure were inadequate. Storage and cold-chain capacity lagged output growth, food processing remained below 10 per cent of production, and post-harvest losses were estimated at 6-15 per cent. Poor rural connectivity further weakened links between farms, markets, and processors.

Income volatility was reinforced by monsoon dependence and weak risk coverage. Less than one-fourth of cultivated area was insured, while uneven credit access and repeated droughts between 2009 and 2014 intensified agrarian distress. As a result, rural livelihoods remained weakly linked to national growth, underscoring the need for the post-2014 structural reorientation pursued under the Modi Government.

Market Access and Agricultural Marketing Reforms

Agricultural marketing reform has been a core pillar of the Modi Government's strategy to raise farm incomes by expanding choice, competition, and national integration. Recognising the limits of production-centric policies, post-2014 reforms focused on dismantling market rigidities that confined farmers to local, intermediary-dominated mandis and replacing them with a transparent, competitive ecosystem.

States were encouraged to liberalise APMC frameworks by permitting direct sales, inter-state trade, and procurement outside regulated yards, using model laws and reform-linked incentives within a cooperative federal structure. This marked a shift from controlled marketing to farmer-centric choice and price discovery.

The launch of e-NAM in 2016 institutionalised digital market integration. By the early 2020s, over 1,300 mandis across more than 20 states were

linked to the platform, covering hundreds of commodities. Official assessments indicate reduced price dispersion, improved transparency, quality-based trading, and electronic settlements, moving markets from quantity- to quality-linked transactions.

Smallholder constraints were addressed through the creation of 10,000 FPOs, enabling aggregation, lower transaction costs, and stronger value-chain linkages. Contract farming frameworks and direct buyer linkages further reduced intermediation, stabilised incomes, and supported diversification. Collectively, these reforms integrated Indian agriculture with national and global value chains, supported export growth, and repositioned markets as drivers of rural incomes and national growth.

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Official data show a large share of MUDRA beneficiaries in rural and semi-urban areas, with strong participation by women and first-time entrepreneurs, supporting employment and local value addition.
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Agri-Infrastructure as Growth-Enabling Capital

A defining feature of post-2014 agricultural reform has been the shift from subsidy-heavy spending to long-term capital formation in agri-infrastructure. The Modi Government recognised that low farm incomes stemmed not only from price volatility but from chronic deficits in storage, processing, logistics, and connectivity.

Infrastructure was therefore repositioned as productive capital to reduce losses, improve value realisation, and integrate agriculture with the wider economy.

Earlier policies prioritised input subsidies, while post-harvest infrastructure remained inadequate, causing losses of 5-10 per cent in cereals and far higher in perishables. Post-2014 budgets redirected expenditure toward durable assets aligned with an investment-led growth strategy.

The Agriculture Infrastructure Fund, launched in 2020 with a ₹1 lakh crore financing window, addressed critical credit gaps by supporting warehouses, cold storage, grading, and primary processing. Thousands of projects, led by FPOs, cooperatives, and agri-entrepreneurs, have enabled

storage, reduced distress sales, and strengthened value-chain participation.

Parallel investments in cold chains, food processing, and PMGSY rural roads lowered logistics costs, encouraged diversification, and generated non-farm employment. Integration with PM Gati Shakti further improved multimodal logistics and export connectivity.

These investments produced strong income and employment multipliers, reinforcing rural demand. Overall, agri-infrastructure reform reflects a structural transition from short-term relief to long-term capacity building, linking rural prosperity with national growth.

Income Support, Risk Mitigation, and Farmer Welfare

A core element of agricultural reform under the Modi Government has been the shift from distortionary, price-centric subsidies to transparent, targeted, and income-stabilising welfare mechanisms. This approach recognises that

market-oriented agriculture requires credible risk management and income security to enable investment, innovation, and productivity growth.

Post-2014 policy progressively rebalanced support away from indirect input subsidies toward direct benefit transfers, enabled by the JAM architecture. This improved targeting, reduced leakages, and enhanced farmers' autonomy in resource use. The launch of PM-KISAN in 2019 marked a structural reform in farm income security, providing ₹6,000 annually to eligible households through direct transfers. By 2024-25, the scheme covered over 110 million beneficiaries, with cumulative transfers of several lakh crore rupees, contributing to income smoothing and improved liquidity during critical agricultural cycles.

Risk mitigation was strengthened through PMFBY, which rationalised premiums, expanded coverage, and adopted technology-driven assessment. Since 2016, the scheme has insured hundreds of millions of farmer applications and disbursed claims worth several lakh crore rupees, reducing vulnerability to



climatic shocks. Parallel expansion of institutional credit and KCC coverage further improved access to formal finance.

Together, these measures integrate welfare with productivity and market reforms, embedding social protection within a growth-oriented, fiscally sustainable rural strategy.

Rural Non-Farm Economy and Livelihood Diversification

A key dimension of rural reform under the Modi Government has been the systematic expansion of the rural non-farm economy as a complement to agriculture. Acknowledging agriculture's limited capacity to absorb surplus labour, post-2014 policy prioritised livelihood diversification through micro-enterprises, agro-processing, self-employment, and rural services, in line with development theory linking non-farm growth to poverty reduction and rural resilience.

Rural MSMEs were strengthened through formalisation and credit access via Udyam registration, MUDRA loans, and credit-guarantee schemes. Official data show a large share of MUDRA beneficiaries in rural and semi-urban areas, with strong participation by women and first-time entrepreneurs, supporting employment and local value addition. Parallely, the National Rural Livelihoods Mission expanded women-led SHGs to over eight crore members, mobilising bank credit worth several lakh crore rupees and enabling income generation across processing, retail, services, and crafts. SHG networks also proved critical during the pandemic by sustaining local production and welfare delivery.

Growth in food processing and agri-allied sectors further expanded off-farm employment, while digital inclusion through the JAM framework lowered transaction costs and widened market access. Together, these reforms moderated distress migration, strengthened rural demand, and repositioned rural India as a dynamic contributor to national growth and macroeconomic stability.

Linking Rural Prosperity with National Economic Growth

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core premise of post-2014 reforms has been the reintegration of rural India into the engines of national growth. Rather than treating agriculture and rural livelihoods as residual or redistributive domains, the Modi government's approach positions rural prosperity as a source of demand expansion, productivity gains, and macroeconomic stability, consistent with development theory and empirical evidence.

Strengthened agriculture–industry–services linkages have amplified this effect. Investments in agri-infrastructure, food processing, rural roads, and logistics have expanded demand for manufacturing inputs, transport, warehousing, and retail, while agri-allied sectors such as dairy, fisheries, and horticulture have deepened value-chain integration. Rising rural incomes—supported by market reforms, non-farm employment, and income support—have reinforced consumption demand, particularly for manufactured goods, housing materials, and basic services, acting as an internal growth anchor during external or urban slowdowns.

Rural reforms have also contributed to macroeconomic stability. Improved storage, logistics, and market integration have reduced supply bottlenecks and moderated food inflation, strengthening real incomes and monetary policy transmission. Their importance was evident during the post-pandemic recovery, when agriculture and rural demand stabilised output and supported GDP growth.

Overall, Modi-era rural reforms embed village-level prosperity within India's macroeconomic strategy, reducing structural dualism and enabling inclusive, resilient, and broad-based growth.

Federalism, Institutions, and Governance Reforms

Agricultural and rural reforms under the Modi government have been reinforced by significant institutional and governance restructuring. Recognising agriculture as a State subject, the reform strategy has emphasised cooperative and competitive federalism, incentive-based coordination, and digital governance rather than centralised control, enabling policy intent to translate into outcomes.



Post-2014 reforms aligned national priorities with state-specific contexts through flexible, outcome-oriented frameworks. Competitive federalism was advanced via performance benchmarking and best-practice diffusion, allowing reform-oriented states to leverage greater institutional and financial support. The replacement of the Planning Commission with NITI Aayog marked a shift from centralised allocation to evidence-based policy support, model frameworks, and Centre-State coordination in areas such as marketing, land leasing, and value chains.

Centrally Sponsored Schemes in agriculture and rural development were rationalised to enhance state flexibility, convergence, and efficiency, improving ownership and reducing duplication. Digital governance became a defining pillar: DBT, the JAM trinity, e-NAM, digital land records, and GIS-based planning improved targeting, transparency, and market integration, while reducing leakages and delays. Real-time

dashboards, geotagging, and third-party evaluations strengthened monitoring and accountability.

Together, these reforms embed agricultural transformation within India's federal architecture, treating federalism as an enabler of durable, accountable, and productivity-oriented rural reform.

Critiques, Constraints, and Policy Challenges

Despite their structural significance, agricultural and rural reforms under the Modi government have faced constraints rooted in India's political economy, agrarian structure, ecology, and institutional capacity. Market liberalisation efforts encountered resistance from entrenched intermediaries and regional interests, resulting in uneven reform outcomes across states depending on political will and administrative readiness. This reflects the inherent difficulty of transitioning from protected, intermediary-driven systems to competitive markets in a federal democracy.

Structural constraints persist due to land fragmentation: over 85 per cent of farmers remain small and marginal, limiting economies of scale, mechanisation, and technology adoption. Institutional responses—such as FPOs, custom hiring centres, and collective marketing—mitigate but cannot fully offset these demographic realities. Climate change and ecological stress further complicate reform outcomes, with groundwater depletion, soil degradation, and rising climate volatility increasing production risk, especially in rain-fed regions.

Regional disparities in infrastructure, digital capacity, and governance have produced differentiated results, underscoring the need for tailored policy instruments and capacity-building. Reform sequencing has also involved transitional adjustment costs, requiring income support and insurance to cushion short-term disruptions. Overall, these challenges highlight that Modi-era reforms represent an adaptive, long-term transformation strategy—combining markets, welfare, and institutions—rather than abrupt liberalisation, with continuous course correction essential for sustainability.

Ideological Context: Developmental Nationalism and Rural Bharat

Agricultural and rural reforms under the Modi government are anchored in developmental nationalism, an ideological framework that places rural India at the core of national strength, social cohesion, and economic sovereignty. Rooted in the RSS-BJP intellectual tradition, this approach emphasises Gram-centric development, cultural rootedness, decentralisation, and self-reliant production.

Post-2014 reforms reflect this vision through sustained investment in rural infrastructure, strengthening of local institutions such as FPOs, SHGs, and Panchayati Raj bodies, and the integration of welfare delivery with productive capacity. Agriculture is no longer treated as a residual sector but as an active driver of growth, entrepreneurship, and resilience.

The Atmanirbhar Bharat framework extends

Swadeshi thought into contemporary policy by viewing food security and farmer viability as strategic national assets. Expansion of domestic agri-value chains, support for indigenous inputs and technologies, and calibrated engagement with global markets have enhanced national resilience without retreating into autarky.

Recognising agriculture's cultural, economic, and strategic roles, the policy framework blends market reforms with income support, procurement, and risk mitigation—reflecting samajik santulan rather than ideological inconsistency. Rural empowerment, enabled by infrastructure, digital platforms, and financial inclusion, is also framed as national integration.

Overall, ideology functions as a stabilising force, sustaining policy continuity and legitimising long-term structural reform beyond short-term political cycles.

Conclusion: Agriculture as a Pillar of Modi-Era Economic Reforms

Agricultural and rural reforms under the Modi government represent a structural shift within India's post-2014 economic transformation. Agriculture has been repositioned from ad hoc relief and price controls toward market integration, infrastructure creation, income security, and institutional strengthening. Initiatives such as e-NAM, PM-KISAN, PMFBY, agri-infrastructure expansion, and digital governance have improved market connectivity, reduced transaction costs, stabilised incomes, and strengthened rural demand, despite regional variation. By linking agriculture with the rural non-farm economy, MSMEs, and services, reforms have supported employment and macroeconomic resilience. Anchored in developmental nationalism, Gram-centric growth, and Atmanirbhar Bharat, this approach marks a decisive move from populist agrarianism toward asset-based, long-term rural transformation

From Fiscal Prudence to Productive Capital

Infrastructure and Growth

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Infrastructure as the Backbone of Economic Reforms

Infrastructure is a decisive driver of growth, productivity, and national integration in a large federal economy like India. The post-2014 reform trajectory under Prime Minister Narendra Modi marks a clear break from earlier phases by placing public capital expenditure at the centre of economic strategy. Development theory and global evidence affirm that coordinated infrastructure investment delivers high growth multipliers and crowds in private capital. Entering the 2010s, India faced stalled projects, weak investment, and high logistics costs that constrained competitiveness. Against this backdrop, the Modi Government reframed infrastructure as an active engine of development—raising a central question: how has capex-led expansion reshaped growth and employment, and in what ways does this strategy differ from earlier regimes in priorities, institutions, and outcomes?



Capital Expenditure as a Strategic Economic Reform
A defining feature of India's post-2014 reform trajectory has been the elevation of public capital expenditure from a residual fiscal item to a central instrument of growth policy. Departing from earlier stabilization- or consumption-led approaches, the Modi Government repositioned infrastructure investment as a strategic lever to expand productive capacity, crowd in private capital, and generate durable employment.

This marked a clear break from India's historically revenue-heavy fiscal structure, where subsidies and administrative spending dominated and asset creation remained limited. Prior to 2014, central capital expenditure typically accounted for less than 12 per cent of total spending. Post-2014, capex was explicitly reframed as productive investment, supported by successive Economic Surveys highlighting medium-term growth multipliers of 2.0–2.5—well above those of transfer-based expenditure.

Reflecting this shift, central capital expenditure more than tripled in nominal terms between FY 2014–15 and the early 2020s, even as fiscal consolidation remained an objective. Importantly, capex was sustained during macroeconomic stress, including the COVID-19 shock, underscoring its counter-cyclical and growth-preserving role.

Union Budget trends reveal a decisive compositional shift toward asset creation, with capital outlays growing faster than revenue expenditure and increased allocations to infrastructure-intensive ministries such as roads, railways, urban development, and power. RBI and NITI Aayog assessments suggest this public investment impulse reduced costs and uncertainty, contributing to the revival of private investment after 2016. Institutional reforms—including abolition of the Plan–Non-Plan distinction, outcome-based budgeting, and the PM Gati Shakti National Master Plan transformed capital expenditure into a coherent, execution-oriented reform instrument.

Roads

and Highways: Expanding Economic Corridors

Roads and highways have been central to India's post-2014 capital expenditure strategy, given that road transport accounts for over 60 per cent of freight and nearly 85 per cent of passenger movement. Recognizing connectivity as a prerequisite for market integration, productivity, and employment, the Modi Government sharply expanded the scale, speed, and strategic focus of highway development.

A key outcome has been the rapid expansion of the National Highway (NH) network. Prior to 2014, construction was constrained by slow execution, financing gaps, and land acquisition delays, resulting in modest build rates and uneven quality. Post-2014, capital allocations to the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways rose substantially, and highways were reframed as growth-critical assets. The Bharatmala Pariyojana (2017) institutionalized a corridor-based approach, prioritizing economic corridors, inter-corridors, border and coastal roads, and port-logistics connectivity. Average construction accelerated from about 12 km per day in 2013–14 to over 30 km per day by the late 2010s, alongside a significant expansion of the NH network. Corridor-centric planning reduced travel time, improved freight reliability, and strengthened inter-state spatial integration.

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Operational upgrades at ports such as JNPT, Mundra, Paradip, and Visakhapatnam enabled larger vessel handling and faster cargo evacuation.
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Rural connectivity formed a complementary pillar through renewed emphasis on the Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana, extending all-weather access to unconnected habitations, particularly in aspirational districts. Improved last-mile connectivity lowered transport costs, strengthened agricultural value chains, and supported rural MSMEs.

Economically, road investment generated large employment, strong industrial linkages, lower logistics costs, and higher productivity, contributing to manufacturing growth, private investment, and reduced regional disparities.

Railways: Modernization, Freight Efficiency, and Industrial Linkages

Indian Railways remains a core component of India's infrastructure system as both a mass passenger carrier and the backbone of long-distance freight transport. Despite this role, the sector prior to 2014 suffered from chronic underinvestment, capacity saturation, and declining freight competitiveness. The post-2014 period marks a systematic effort to reverse these constraints through sustained capital expenditure, network modernization, and operational reform, integrating railways into the broader infrastructure-led growth strategy.

Capital investment increased sharply after 2014, shifting focus from routine maintenance to long-term asset creation. The most consequential intervention was the Dedicated Freight Corridors (DFCs). The Eastern and Western DFCs segregate freight from passenger traffic on high-density routes linking coal belts, industrial centres, and ports. After prolonged pre-2014 delays, execution accelerated, with large sections becoming operational. Economic Survey assessments indicate substantial gains in freight speeds, reduced transit variability, and improved asset utilization.

Railway electrification represents another structural reform. Near-universal electrification of the broad-gauge network lowered operating costs, improved energy efficiency, and reduced fuel imports, aligning rail modernization with energy security and climate goals. Station redevelopment and network upgrades further strengthened multimodal integration.

Freight efficiency remains central. Longer, heavier, and faster freight trains reduced logistics costs, enhanced port connectivity, and improved rail's competitiveness for long-haul cargo, supporting export-oriented manufacturing. Railway modernization also generated employment and industrial spillovers, with rolling stock production and strong linkages to steel, cement, electrical, and engineering industries amplifying the growth impact of rail investment.

Ports, Shipping, and Coastal Infrastructure

Maritime infrastructure forms the critical interface between India's production system and global trade. With about 95 per cent of merchandise trade by volume and nearly 70 per cent by value transported by sea, port efficiency directly affects trade competitiveness and logistics costs. Prior to 2014, the port sector was constrained by capacity bottlenecks, long turnaround times, weak hinterland connectivity, and limited integration with industrial clusters. Post-2014 reforms sought to transform ports from passive transit points into active drivers of economic development.

The Sagarmala Programme, launched in 2015, marked a structural shift toward port-led development, anchored in four pillars: port modernization, enhanced connectivity, port-linked industrialization, and coastal community development. Investments expanded berth capacity, mechanization, and digital systems at major ports, while PPP-based terminal development increased private participation. Operational upgrades at ports such as JNPT, Mundra, Paradip, and Visakhapatnam enabled larger vessel handling and faster cargo evacuation.

A distinctive feature of Sagarmala has been the promotion of Coastal Economic Zones and port-linked industrial clusters. By exploiting proximity to ports, these zones reduced logistics costs for sectors such as petrochemicals, steel, cement, textiles, and food processing, aligning with global export-oriented models.

Efficiency gains are evident in reduced average turnaround time at major ports—from over four days in the early 2010s to under two days by the early 2020s. Digitization initiatives, including port community systems and paperless customs, lowered dwell time and improved coordination. Port and coastal investments generated employment across construction, shipping, logistics, and trade services, strengthening export competitiveness, regional spillovers in coastal states, and external sector resilience.

Integrated Logistics and the PM Gati Shakti Framework

A major constraint on India's growth prior to 2014

was not only infrastructure scarcity but weak cross-sector coordination. Roads, railways, ports, airports, power, and industrial corridors were planned in institutional silos, producing cost overruns, execution delays, and inefficient asset use. Misalignment between core infrastructure and last-mile connectivity—such as ports without rail evacuation or industrial parks lacking logistics and power—raised logistics costs to about 13–14 per cent of GDP in the early 2010s, far above global benchmarks of 8–10 per cent. The Economic Survey repeatedly identified these coordination failures as a drag on manufacturing competitiveness and exports, while fragmented planning diffused accountability across ministries.

Launched in 2021, the PM Gati Shakti National Master Plan introduced a decisive institutional correction through a GIS-based digital platform integrating planning across more than 16 central ministries. Its central innovation is concurrent, spatially integrated planning: projects are evaluated within a unified framework rather than sectoral isolation. The platform maps thousands of infrastructure layers—highways, railways, ports, airports, transmission networks, pipelines, and industrial parks—enabling early bottleneck identification, avoidance of duplication, and alignment with economic corridors. The framework

also extends to states, reinforcing cooperative federalism.

Economically, Gati Shakti targets logistics cost reduction through modal integration and improved last-mile connectivity. By resolving land-use and connectivity conflicts at the design stage, it accelerates execution, raises the growth multiplier of capital expenditure, and lowers coordination risks for private investors. In doing so, Gati Shakti converts infrastructure expansion into an integrated logistics-led growth strategy.

Energy Infrastructure and Growth Sustainability

Energy infrastructure is a core input for economic growth, influencing industrial productivity, investment decisions, and household welfare. In India, chronic shortages, transmission bottlenecks, financially stressed distribution companies, and uneven electrification historically constrained manufacturing and regional development. Since 2014, the Modi Government has pursued an integrated reform strategy combining capacity expansion, grid modernisation, universal access, and rapid renewable deployment, repositioning energy infrastructure as a long-term growth enabler.



Installed electricity generation capacity expanded substantially after 2014, exceeding 440 GW by the early 2020s across thermal, hydro, nuclear, and renewable sources. This expansion was complemented by major investments in transmission, enabling the One Nation–One Grid framework. Increased transmission line length and inter-regional transfer capacity reduced regional imbalances, improved grid stability, and enhanced supply reliability, lowering industry’s reliance on captive generation.

Universal household electrification under the Saubhagya scheme addressed a longstanding developmental deficit within a compressed timeframe. Beyond welfare gains, electrification expanded markets for appliances, rural enterprises, and service delivery, generating indirect growth and employment effects.

A defining feature of the reform period has been the rapid scaling of renewable energy. Solar and wind capacity increased several-fold, raising the non-fossil share of installed capacity by the early 2020s. This shift strengthened energy security, reduced import dependence, and aligned infrastructure expansion with climate commitments. Reforms in procurement, evacuation infrastructure, and domestic manufacturing incentives reinforced industrial linkages and employment.

Reliable and affordable power supported manufacturing competitiveness under Make in India, PLI schemes, and industrial corridors, while energy infrastructure investment generated strong growth, employment, and regional multipliers.

Multiplier Effects on Growth and Employment

The core economic justification for prioritizing public capital expenditure lies in its high multipliers on output, employment, and private investment. Unlike revenue expenditure, which primarily supports short-term consumption, infrastructure investment expands productive capacity, lowers

transaction costs, and generates durable spillovers across sectors. Under the Modi Government, sustained infrastructure spending has therefore functioned as a medium- to long-term growth strategy rather than a purely counter-cyclical tool. Economic theory assigns high output elasticity to infrastructure. Keynesian approaches emphasize demand creation through construction activity, while endogenous growth models highlight productivity gains from improved logistics, energy reliability, and market integration. Growth effects operate through direct project demand, upstream industrial linkages, induced consumption, and persistent efficiency gains. Empirical studies consistently find infrastructure multipliers to exceed those of revenue spending, particularly in infrastructure-constrained economies.

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Prime Ministerial oversight anchors this architecture, institutionalised through PRAGATI, which directly monitors major infrastructure projects across ministries and states.
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Indian evidence corroborates this pattern. RBI and Economic Survey estimates place public capital expenditure multipliers between 2.0 and 2.5 over the medium term, implying more than two rupees of GDP for every rupee invested. Post-2014 capex expansions coincided with stronger growth recoveries, while construction, steel, cement, transport, and engineering sectors showed strong co-movement with public investment. Improved infrastructure also crowded in private investment by reducing costs and uncertainty.

Employment effects are substantial. Infrastructure projects generate large volumes of semi-skilled and unskilled jobs while supporting skilled employment in engineering and manufacturing. Connectivity investments further produced regional spillovers by integrating lagging districts, strengthening MSMEs, and reducing spatial disparities.

Hence, Infrastructure-led capital expenditure under the Modi Government has delivered superior growth and employment multipliers, establishing infrastructure as a high-yield, long-term development investment.

Political Economy of Infrastructure under the Modi Government

Infrastructure expansion since 2014 reflects a reconfiguration of India's political economy of public investment, marked by strong executive coordination, institutional streamlining, and outcome-oriented governance. Unlike earlier periods characterised by fragmented authority and prolonged decision cycles, infrastructure delivery has been elevated to a central instrument of economic statecraft.

Prime Ministerial oversight anchors this architecture, institutionalised through PRAGATI, which directly monitors major infrastructure projects across ministries and states. Official disclosures indicate that hundreds of projects worth several lakh crore rupees have been reviewed and unblocked, addressing land, environmental, and coordination constraints. This leadership-driven model has reduced execution risk, strengthened bureaucratic accountability, and signaled credible commitment, reshaping investor expectations.

Infrastructure policy has also been embedded within cooperative federalism. Central capital expenditure rose from about ₹1.8 lakh crore in 2014-15 to over ₹11 lakh crore by 2024-25, crowding

in higher state-level capex across political affiliations. Institutions such as NITI Aayog replaced command-style planning with performance-based coordination through competitive rankings and outcome metrics.

Beyond economics, infrastructure has acquired an ideological dimension consistent with developmental nationalism. Large projects symbolise state capacity and national integration, linking border regions, aspirational districts, and hinterlands to national markets. Investments in border roads, coastal infrastructure, and energy corridors reflect the convergence of growth, security, and Atmanirbhar Bharat objectives.

Compared with the pre-2014 period of stalled projects and regulatory uncertainty, the Modi Government emphasises front-loaded capex, standardised contracting, digital monitoring, and integrated planning through PM Gati Shakti. Improved execution metrics across transport, power, and logistics underscore this shift.

Thus, the Modi-era political economy positions infrastructure as a structural reform, transforming public investment from a constraint into a sustained driver of growth and state capacity.



Addressing Constraints: Reform, Resilience, and Policy Maturity

Large-scale structural transformation inevitably attracts scrutiny, and India's infrastructure-led growth strategy under the Modi Government is no exception. Debates on fiscal sustainability, land acquisition, environmental safeguards, execution capacity, and private participation reflect the ambition and scale of the reform. The post-2014 distinction lies not in the absence of constraints, but in systematic institutional responses.

Fiscal concerns arising from the more than six-fold rise in capital expenditure between 2014-15 and 2024-25 are tempered by RBI and Economic Survey evidence showing that infrastructure spending yields substantially higher growth multipliers than revenue expenditure, often in the 2.5-3.0 range. These multipliers strengthen medium-term revenues and support fiscal sustainability. India's post-pandemic debt remains largely domestically financed and guided by a stated consolidation path, indicating growth-oriented fiscal strategy rather than excess.

Land acquisition constraints persist due to fragmented ownership and legal complexity. Policy responses emphasise corridor-based planning, greater use of public land, improved compensation, early stakeholder engagement, and land-record digitisation. GIS-enabled coordination under PM Gati Shakti has further reduced disputes and misalignment.

Environmental regulation has evolved toward digital, time-bound, and rules-based clearances, alongside integration of renewables, rail electrification, waterways, and logistics efficiency to align growth with climate objectives.

State-level execution gaps are addressed through performance-linked incentives, competitive rankings, NITI Aayog support, and real-time monitoring. While PPP participation remains uneven, public investment has de-risked projects and revived private interest in airports, renewables, logistics, and transmission.

Overall, these challenges reflect transitional

trade-offs. Institutional reform, digital governance, and strategic sequencing position infrastructure as a durable instrument of long-term national transformation rather than short-term stimulus.

Summing up: Infrastructure as the Core of Modi-Era Economic Reforms

This study shows that infrastructure-led growth under the Modi Government marks a structural shift in India's development strategy, elevating capital expenditure from a residual budget item to a central driver of growth, employment, and integration. Post-2014 reforms prioritised capital formation across transport, logistics, and energy, contrasting with earlier consumption-oriented spending. Budgetary and sectoral evidence confirms high output and employment multipliers, reduced logistics and energy bottlenecks, and crowding-in of private investment. These gains were reinforced by institutional reforms outcome-based budgeting, digital monitoring, and PM Gati Shakti that improved coordination and execution. Despite persistent constraints, infrastructure functions as a core structural reform, anchoring long-term growth, regional balance, and strategic autonomy.

From Informality to Innovation

MSMEs and India's Economic Sovereignty

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Every generation inherits an economy shaped by decisions it did not make. For much of independent India's history, enterprise learned to adjust to constraint. Scarcity was normal. Risk was personal. Failure carried permanent cost. Innovation existed, but it travelled slowly, often outward. This past reality matters, not as a point of criticism, but as context. Because what is unfolding today can only be understood against it.



Over the last decade, India has not merely attempted to grow faster. It has attempted something more difficult: to grow with direction. To build the foundations of an economy that is capable, confident, and resilient enough to stand on its own, while engaging the world on equal terms. This shift is most visible not in headline announcements but on the ground, where MSMEs, start-ups, and innovators are beginning to operate with a longer-term perspective.

India's MSMEs have long sustained the economy. Employing over 110 million people and contributing nearly 30 per cent of GDP (as per the Ministry of MSMEs), they were never small in impact, only in support. For decades, informality has acted as both a shield and a shackle. It protected enterprises from overregulation, but kept them away from scale, capital, and global markets.

The first task of reform, therefore, was not expansion, but repair. Financial inclusion, digital identity, and direct benefit transfers were not enterprise schemes in name, yet they fundamentally changed enterprise behaviour. As documented by the World Bank Global Findex, India moved from limited to near-universal bank account ownership within a decade. For millions of entrepreneurs, this was not a statistic. It was an entry into the system.

Credit schemes, particularly collateral-free lending and priority sector support, as tracked by the RBI and SIDBI, created a cushion where none had existed before. Enterprise did not become risk-free, but it became survivable. Failure no longer meant exclusion for life. That alone changed who was willing to try.

What distinguishes the current phase of reform is institutional far-sightedness. Multiple government bodies began working on the assumption that India's future growth would depend on capability creation rather than cost advantage alone. The Atal Innovation Mission, operating through schools, universities, and incubators, signalled early that innovation was no longer a privilege of elite institutions. It was being seeded systematically.

According to NITI Aayog, Atal Tinkering Labs and incubation centres have reached thousands of districts and institutions, quietly shaping a generation that learns to build before it learns to complain.

Simultaneously, intellectual property frameworks were strengthened. Faster patent processing and awareness programs, noted by the Office of the Controller General of Patents, sent a subtle but powerful message: ideas deserve protection, not just applause. These are not headline reforms. They are future-facing ones.

From making to designing

Make in India was never intended to end at the assembly stage. That transition is now becoming visible. Recent policy emphasis on Design in India, particularly in semiconductors, electronics, robotics, and advanced manufacturing, marks a strategic turn. The India Semiconductor Mission and related incentive structures recognise a hard truth: sovereignty in the modern world is technological before it is territorial.

Manufacturing capacity without design capability creates dependence. Design capability without manufacturing creates leakage. The attempt now is to build both. This is not easy work. It requires patient capital, skilled talent, and long gestation periods. Yet the intent itself reflects maturity. India is no longer asking only where production can shift. It is asking where value creation can originate.

MSMEs as anchors of a sovereign economy

Large projects attract attention. MSMEs provide stability. Economic Surveys published by the Ministry of Finance have repeatedly highlighted the role of small enterprises in absorbing shocks during global disruptions. Their geographic spread, adaptability, and employment intensity make them anchors of domestic resilience.

Digital public infrastructure amplified this strength. With UPI processing over 10 billion transactions monthly (RBI, NPCI), even the smallest enterprises now operate with transparency and speed once reserved for formal corporations. Compliance costs remain, but discretion has reduced. Trust has scaled.

Women-led enterprises, particularly through self-help groups under the National Rural Livelihoods Mission, illustrate another dimension of sovereignty: participation. An economy that leaves half its population on the margins is structurally weak. One that brings them into the enterprise builds depth.

The Possibility Ahead

The idea of a Viksit Bharat will not be realised through aspiration alone. It will emerge from steady capability-building and institutional consistency. What makes the current moment significant is not the scale of ambition, but the realism with which it is being pursued.

The contours of the emerging economy are already visible. MSMEs are beginning to scale while retaining their adaptive strength. Innovation ecosystems are allowing entrepreneurs to experiment, fail, recalibrate, and return with stronger models. Manufacturing is being complemented by a growing emphasis on design, deep technology, and advanced research, ensuring that value creation remains within the country. Equally important is the long-term perspective guiding policy and institutions, recognising that sustainable economic leadership grows from cumulative investments in infrastructure, innovation, and skills.

India's leadership today is shaped by vision, decisiveness, and the ability to translate long-term goals into tangible results. Under the current leadership, India has demonstrated a clear strategic direction, aligning policy, institutional reforms, and economic initiatives to strengthen resilience and capability. The past decade reflects a consistent effort to turn ambition into action, positioning India as a nation whose growth model inspires confidence and sets an example on the global stage. The journey is still unfolding, and challenges remain. Yet the direction is clear and grounded. An economy that learns not only to grow, but to prepare for the future, builds sovereignty as a natural consequence of its choices. In that preparedness lies the foundation of long-term leadership.



Shaping the New Karmayogi Labour Reforms and Workforce Transformation

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Introduction: Labour at the Core of India's Economic Transformation

No nation can rise beyond the strength, skill, and dignity of its workforce. For India a civilisation that has historically revered Shram (labour) as sacred the challenge of economic development has always been inseparable from the question of how its workers are organised, protected, and empowered. In the 21st century, as India aspires to reclaim its rightful place as a leading global power, labour reforms occupy a central position in the national reform agenda.

India possesses one of the world's largest and youngest workforces. This demographic advantage, often described as a "demographic dividend," is not automatic. Without productivity, skills, and security, a large workforce can just as easily become a demographic liability. Prior to 2014, India faced precisely this paradox: millions of workers, yet low productivity; abundant labour, yet chronic informality; protective laws on paper, yet little real protection in practice.



Since 2014, under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, labour has been reimagined not as a problem to be controlled, but as a productive national asset *Rashtra ki Shram Shakti*. Labour reforms have been positioned as enablers of growth, dignity, and competitiveness, aligned with the broader vision of *Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas, Sabka Vishwas*. This article examines how labour reforms under the Modi Government seek to transform India's workforce balancing flexibility with social security, modernising regulation, and preparing Indian workers for the future economy.

Pre-2014 Labour Regime: Structural Rigidities and Informality

For decades after Independence, India's labour regulation framework remained trapped in a colonial and command-control mindset. Over 40 central labour laws and more than 100 state-level laws governed wages, industrial relations, safety, and social security. While well-intentioned, this fragmented framework produced outcomes that were deeply counterproductive.

The compliance burden on enterprises, especially MSMEs was enormous. Multiple registrations, inspections, and returns created an environment of uncertainty and rent-seeking, popularly described as the "inspector raj." Rigid hire-and-fire norms, particularly under the Industrial Disputes Act, discouraged firms from expanding their workforce beyond arbitrary thresholds. As a result, enterprises chose to remain small, informal, and inefficient.

Ironically, despite "pro-labour" laws, over 85–90 per cent of India's workforce remained informal. Most workers had no written contracts, no social security, and no institutional protection. Labour laws protected a small minority in the organised sector, while the vast majority were excluded from their benefits. Adversarial labour-industry relations, rooted in ideological suspicion of private enterprise, further constrained job creation.

By the early 2010s, it was clear that India's labour regime was out of sync with modern production systems, global supply chains, and technological change. Reform was no longer optional; it was inevitable.

Reform Rationale: Why Labour Reform Was Inevitable

The labour reforms undertaken by the Modi Government were not abrupt policy experiments, but the outcome of a deep and realistic assessment of India's long-term developmental requirements. As the Indian economy began transitioning from a low-productivity, informality-driven structure to one aspiring for global manufacturing leadership, it became evident that legacy labour regulations were ill-suited to the ambitions of a rising nation. Flagship initiatives such as Make in India, Atmanirbhar Bharat, Startup India, and India's integration into global value chains demanded a labour ecosystem that could simultaneously ensure economic flexibility and worker fairness.

For decades, excessive rigidity and fragmented regulation had discouraged enterprises from formal expansion, inadvertently pushing employment into informality and vulnerability. Labour reform therefore became essential to reverse this distortion by incentivising formal job creation, improving productivity and competitiveness, restoring investor confidence, and enabling micro, small, and medium enterprises to scale without regulatory fear. Equally important was the need to align labour laws with the realities of technological transformation, including the emergence of platform-based and gig work, which traditional regulatory frameworks failed to recognise or protect.

At the heart of the Modi Government's reform vision lay a decisive rejection of the false and outdated binary that framed efficiency and welfare as opposing goals. Instead, the reforms embraced Santulan—a balanced approach that harmonises economic dynamism with social justice. The

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Operational upgrades at ports such as JNPT, Mundra, Paradip, and Visakhapatnam enabled larger vessel handling and faster cargo evacuation.
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objective was not to dilute labour protections, but to redefine them for a modern economy: shifting the focus from rigid job protection to comprehensive worker protection. In doing so, labour reform was recast as an instrument of empowerment, dignity, and national productivity, aligned with the broader vision of inclusive and sustainable growth.

The Four Labour Codes: Architecture of Simplification

The consolidation of 29 central labour laws into four comprehensive labour codes stands as one of the most significant structural reforms of the Modi era. **Code on Wages:** The Code on Wages universalises wage protection by covering all workers, irrespective of sector or employment type. It introduces a statutory national floor wage, reduces gender-based wage discrimination, and simplifies the definition of wages to minimise disputes. By ensuring “equal pay for equal work,” the code strengthens both equity and transparency.

Industrial Relations Code: This code modernises industrial dispute resolution and rationalises thresholds for hiring and retrenchment. It promotes dialogue, grievance redressal, and collective bargaining, while providing firms with the confidence to expand. The emphasis shifts from confrontation to cooperation—reflecting a mature industrial relations philosophy.

Code on Social Security: For the first time in India’s history, gig workers, platform workers, and unorganised labour receive statutory recognition.

The code enables the creation of national databases, benefit portability, and contributory welfare schemes, marking a historic expansion of the social security net.

Occupational Safety, Health and Working Conditions Code: By consolidating safety and welfare laws, this code focuses on dignity, humane working conditions, and occupational health. It aligns India’s workplace standards with global best practices while reducing regulatory overlap.

Labour Flexibility with Social Security: The Modi Model

The labour reforms of the Modi Government articulate a distinctly Indian model that combines workplace flexibility with the steady expansion of social security. Moving away from an older regulatory approach that prioritised job protection at the cost of job creation, the new framework focuses on protecting workers across employment, sectors, and geographies. By recognising labour mobility as a reality of a modern economy, the reforms seek to ensure continuity of security even as jobs change.

This model is anchored in benefit portability through digital platforms, formalisation driven by incentives rather than coercion, and the widening of both contributory and state-supported social security mechanisms. It also acknowledges evolving employment patterns, including contractual,



platform-based, and gig work, which were earlier left outside the protective net. Ideologically, this approach reflects the RSS conception of Shram ki Garima the dignity of labour and emphasises cooperation between labour and capital as joint stakeholders in the nation's developmental journey. Formalisation of the Workforce: From Vulnerability to Visibility

One of the most transformative outcomes of Modi-era labour reforms has been the large-scale formalisation of India's workforce. Measures such as the Universal Account Number (UAN), the expansion of EPFO and ESIC coverage, and the creation of the e-Shram portal have brought millions of workers into institutional recognition for the first time. The e-Shram portal alone has registered over 280 million unorganised workers, creating the world's largest labour database and making invisible labour visible to policy.

Formalisation has strengthened worker empowerment by enabling access to insurance, pensions, and welfare schemes, reducing dependence on exploitative intermediaries, and improving mobility and bargaining power across sectors and regions. Rather than bureaucratisation, this process represents inclusion, dignity, and security—marking a decisive shift from vulnerability to empowerment in India's labour landscape.

Workforce Preparedness for the Future Economy

The nature of work is changing globally due to automation, artificial intelligence, and digital platforms. The Modi Government has proactively addressed this through large-scale skilling and education reforms.

The Skill India Mission and Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana (PMKVY) have trained millions of youth in industry-relevant skills. The National Education Policy (NEP) integrates vocational education into mainstream schooling, breaking the artificial divide between “academic” and “vocational” tracks. Together, these initiatives prepare India's workforce for manufacturing, services, and the digital economy—ensuring employability in a rapidly evolving labour market.

Labour

Reforms and Ease of Doing Business

Labour reforms under the Modi Government have played a decisive role in improving India's ease of doing business by simplifying compliance and reducing regulatory friction. Digitisation, self-certification mechanisms, and a rationalised inspection regime have lowered transaction costs, enhanced transparency, and replaced discretion with rule-based governance.

These changes have particularly benefited MSMEs by easing compliance anxiety, enabled startups to adopt flexible hiring models, and improved the viability of scale in manufacturing. Together, these reforms have strengthened investor confidence and reinforced India's growing global perception as a credible, competitive, and reliable production destination.

Federalism and Labour Reforms

Recognising labour as a Concurrent Subject, the Modi Government has advanced labour reforms through the principles of cooperative and competitive federalism. Rather than imposing uniformity, states have been empowered to adapt labour codes to local economic structures and workforce realities, encouraging innovation, ownership, and responsiveness.

Reform-oriented states have thus emerged as laboratories of change, demonstrating how flexible implementation can attract investment and generate employment. Digital governance platforms further enable seamless coordination, real-time monitoring, and the sharing of best practices between the Centre and the states, ensuring that labour reforms remain dynamic, adaptive, and outcome-oriented.

Critiques, Concerns, and Transitional Challenges

No reform of this scale is without resistance. Trade union apprehensions, fears of job insecurity, and uneven state-level implementation remain challenges. The government has responded through consultations, phased implementation, and capacity building. Importantly, the reform process remains open and adaptive reflecting confidence, not dogmatism.

Ideological Context: Labour Reforms and Bharatiya Development Thought

The ideological foundations of labour reforms under the Modi Government are deeply rooted in Bharatiya development thought. The RSS-BJP worldview consciously departs from adversarial class-based narratives and instead upholds social harmony, mutual responsibility, and national purpose. Drawing inspiration from Gandhian principles of trusteeship, it views capital and labour not as opposing forces, but as co-participants in the collective task of nation-building.

Within this framework, worker welfare and economic competitiveness are not contradictory but complementary. A strong nation rests on empowered, skilled, and secure workers, just as Atmanirbhar Bharat depends on a confident workforce capable of sustaining productivity, innovation, and self-reliance. Labour reforms, therefore, transcend regulatory adjustment and assume a larger civilisational role reaffirming the dignity of labour while aligning economic transformation with India's cultural and ethical ethos.



Labour Reforms, Employment, and Inclusive Growth
Labour reforms under the Modi Government create the conditions for sustainable and inclusive employment by advancing formalisation, productivity enhancement, and continuous skill development. By reducing structural rigidities and expanding social protection, these reforms support manufacturing growth, strengthen MSMEs, encourage greater participation of women in the workforce, and promote more balanced regional development.

Within this framework, social security is no longer viewed as a fiscal liability but as an economic stabiliser that enhances workforce resilience, supports consumption, and reinforces inclusive growth. Employment generation thus becomes not merely a numerical outcome, but a process anchored in dignity, security, and long-term national development.

Conclusion: Towards a Confident, Capable, and Secure Workforce

Labour reforms under the Modi Government represent a historic shift from control-based regulation to trust-based governance; from informality to inclusion; from stagnation to dynamism. They recognise Indian workers as Karmayogis contributors to national destiny.

As India prepares for global competition, technological change, and demographic opportunity, a confident, capable, and secure workforce will be its greatest strength. Labour reforms, grounded in both economic realism and civilisational values, stand as a pillar of Modi-era economic nationalism and India's journey towards Viksit Bharat.

Rebuilding the Indian Economy through Reforms and National Vision

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The Indian economy has undergone significant transformations in recent years, marked not only by structural and policy reforms but also by a renewed focus on social development. This period represents a new phase in India's journey toward economic revival, where social reforms, inclusive growth, and equitable opportunities are emphasised alongside traditional economic objectives. By integrating social policies with economic strategies, India aims to foster sustainable development, strengthen human capital, and realise a long-term national vision of prosperity and self-reliance.



In the latest phase of economic recovery, India's economy has shown strong signs of resilience. According to the first advance estimates for fiscal year 2025-26, India's real GDP is projected to grow by 7.4%, significantly higher than the 6.5% growth recorded in the previous year. This acceleration reflects stronger performance in key sectors, including services, manufacturing, and construction, as well as rising private consumption and investment. Inflation has remained relatively stable, with retail inflation falling below 5% in recent periods, helping protect consumer purchasing power and supporting economic confidence.

Employment trends have also improved, with a slight decrease in the unemployment rate and an increase in labour market participation, especially among women and young people. Social reforms focused on expanding access to education, healthcare, and skill development are key components of this economic vision, aiming to ensure that growth benefits reach all sections of society. By aligning macroeconomic stability with social inclusion, India's economic strategy in this phase seeks not only quantitative expansion but also qualitative improvements in living standards nationwide.

Since 2014, India has undertaken a series of transformative reforms aimed at reviving the economy while promoting social inclusion. These initiatives have combined financial, social, technological, and structural policies to create a new phase of development focused on growth, equity, and sustainability

Financial Inclusion and Banking Reforms

The Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana (PMJDY) has connected over 56 crore citizens to the banking system, providing access to savings accounts, RuPay cards, and insurance. This initiative has strengthened financial literacy and enabled the direct transfer of subsidies, thereby laying the foundation for a digitally empowered economy.

Taxation and Revenue Reforms

Implemented in 2017, the Goods and Services Tax (GST) has unified India's indirect tax system and doubled government revenue. Stable GST collections support public expenditure and create a predictable business environment, enhancing investor confidence.

Social Welfare and Health Reforms

Ayushman Bharat/PM-JAY provides health insurance to over 42 crore people, ensuring access to quality healthcare for vulnerable populations. Simultaneously, Direct Benefit Transfers (DBT) have reduced corruption by transferring trillions of rupees directly to beneficiaries.

Digital Transformation

Digital payment systems like UPI and health IDs under ABHA have revolutionized transactions and healthcare services. UPI handled over 18,500 crore transactions in 2024-25, reflecting the shift toward a cashless, technology-driven economy.

Economic and Structural Reforms

Aatmanirbhar Bharat promotes self-reliance, domestic manufacturing, and employment generation. Krishi reforms improve farmers' access to markets and subsidies. Labour and hydrocarbon policy reforms have enhanced productivity and investment, boosting India's global competitiveness.

The redevelopment of Hindu temples in India is more than a matter of preserving religious and cultural heritage—it represents a strategic national vision to accelerate India's economic growth.

Temple Redevelopment as a National Vision for Economic Growth.

The leadership has recognised that temples, when properly modernised and integrated with infrastructure development, can act as powerful engines of economic activity. India's economic strength has historically been rooted not only in trade, agriculture, and industry but also in its

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The redevelopment of Hindu temples shows how India's cultural heritage can support economic growth. Temples create jobs, attract millions of visitors, and boost local businesses.

civilizational institutions. Among these, Hindu temples have played a crucial yet often under-recognised role in shaping economic life. Beyond serving as sites of worship, Hindu temples have functioned as centres of economic activity, employment generation, social welfare, and cultural continuity. In contemporary India, the economic significance of temples is re-emerging as an important dimension of India's rising economic power.

In modern India, the economic footprint of Hindu temples has expanded significantly through pilgrimage and religious tourism. Major temples such as Tirupati Balaji, Vaishno Devi, Kashi Vishwanath, Somnath, and Shirdi attract millions of devotees annually. The temple economy thus contributes indirectly but substantially to India's GDP through growth in the service sector. Hindu temples also play a significant role in social welfare, which has economic implications. Through annadan (free food distribution), educational trusts, hospitals, dharmashalas, and disaster relief, temples reduce the burden on the state by addressing the basic needs of vulnerable populations. These welfare activities strengthen human capital by supporting nutrition, health, and education, which are foundational to long-term economic growth.

Temple Economy and GDP Contribution

Estimates from surveys and analysts suggest that the broader Hindu temple economy, encompassing pilgrim spending, donations, and local commerce (souvenirs, puja items, transport, food), is worth approximately ₹3.02 lakh crore (\$40+ billion), accounting for approximately 2.3% of India's GDP.

Ministry of Tourism-linked figures (2022 data) show that religious & spiritual tourism accounts for more than 60% of tourism in India, and revenue from temple-linked tourism grew from around ₹65,070 crore in 2021 to about ₹1.3 lakh crore in 2022 nearly doubling in a year.

Ayodhya (Ram Mandir): Before and After

Ayodhya functioned largely as a small religious town with limited infrastructure and modest tourism inflow. Annual tourist visits were estimated

at 20–25 lakh, mostly during Ram Navami and Kartik Purnima. After Ram Mandir Construction & Inauguration (Post-2020 / 2024). The Ram Mandir transformed Ayodhya into a national spiritual and economic hub. Tourist footfall surged dramatically, crossing 5–6 crore visitors in 2024 alone.

Varanasi (Kashi Vishwanath): Before and After

One of the oldest living cities in the world, access to the Kashi Vishwanath Temple was congested and fragmented. Daily footfall averaged 20,000–30,000 devotees. The inauguration of the Kashi Vishwanath Corridor marked a turning point. Daily footfall increased to 80,000–1,00,000, with festival days witnessing 5–8 lakh visitors. Since 2021, over 25 crore devotees have visited the temple complex. Tourism-driven economic activity generated an estimated ₹1.25 lakh crore for Uttar Pradesh through hotels, transport, food services, cruise tourism, handloom markets, and cultural industries.

The redevelopment of Hindu temples shows how India's cultural heritage can support economic growth. Temples create jobs, attract millions of visitors, and boost local businesses. They also provide social welfare through food, healthcare, and education. Projects such as the Ram Mandir in Ayodhya and the Kashi Vishwanath Corridor in Varanasi are not merely religious initiatives—they are national strategies that strengthen the economy, improve livelihoods, and promote social development. By combining tradition with modern planning, India is building a prosperous and inclusive future.

From Cash to Code

Digital Bharat, Global Standard

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Introduction

Few economic transformations in post-Independence India have been as rapid, deep, and society-wide as the digital revolution witnessed since 2014. Under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, digital technology has not merely been adopted as an efficiency tool, but consciously deployed as a core instrument of economic reform, social inclusion, and national empowerment. The Digital India vision reimagined technology as *Rashtra Nirman ka Madhyam* a vehicle for nation-building rather than an elite convenience.

India's transition from a cash-heavy, fragmented, and opaque financial system to a unified, interoperable, and largely digital economy represents a structural break from the past. Digital payments, digital identity, and digital connectivity have together reshaped how citizens transact, how the state delivers welfare, and how markets function. Today, India stands not just as a large digital economy, but as a global leader in digital public infrastructure and real-time payments.

This transformation is neither accidental nor incremental. It reflects a deliberate reform strategy that combines technology-led governance, financial inclusion, and developmental nationalism placing India firmly on the path toward becoming a confident digital *Vishwa Guru*.

Pre-2014 Context: Financial Exclusion and Cash-Driven



Inefficiencies

Before 2014, India's financial and payments landscape was marked by deep structural limitations. Cash dominated everyday transactions, from retail purchases to wage payments. A large segment of the population—particularly women, rural households, migrant workers, and informal sector participants remained outside the formal banking system. Financial access was uneven, documentation-heavy, and often dependent on intermediaries.

Payment systems were fragmented, slow, and largely inaccessible to small users. Interbank transfers were costly and time-consuming, while digital payment penetration was limited to urban elites. Government welfare delivery suffered from leakage, duplication, and opacity, as subsidies passed through multiple administrative layers before reaching beneficiaries. The absence of reliable digital identity and bank account linkage enabled corruption and exclusion.

Equally significant was the digital divide. Internet access was limited, mobile data was expensive, and rural connectivity remained weak. Despite India's demographic scale and technological talent, the absence of a unified digital architecture meant that the economy could not leverage technology for inclusion or scale. This represented a historic missed opportunity one that the Modi Government decisively moved to correct.

Reform Rationale: Why Digital Financial Transformation Was Necessary

The push for digital financial transformation emerged from a clear understanding of India's structural realities. A nation of over 1.4 billion people cannot rely on high-cost, paper-based, and intermediary-driven systems. Scale demanded low-cost, high-volume, and interoperable digital solutions capable of reaching the last citizen.

Formalisation of the economy was another imperative. A predominantly cash economy limited tax compliance, distorted incentives, and weakened state capacity. Digital transactions offered transparent trails that could expand the tax base without coercion, improve compliance, and strengthen fiscal sustainability.

Digitalisation was also essential for supporting entrepreneurship, MSMEs, and startups. Access to digital payments, credit, and platforms lowers entry barriers and enables small enterprises to integrate into national markets. At a global level, India needed to align with emerging fintech trends while retaining strategic autonomy. Technology, therefore, was treated not merely as convenience or consumption, but as sovereign economic capability—an enabler of both growth and governance.

JAM Trinity: Foundation of India's Digital Public Infrastructure

At the heart of India's digital transformation lies the JAM Trinity Jan Dhan, Aadhaar, and Mobile which together form the backbone of India's Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI).

Jan Dhan: Universal Financial Access: The Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana (PMJDY) launched the world's largest financial inclusion drive. Within a few years, hundreds of millions of bank accounts were opened, many for first-time users. Women, rural households, and the urban poor were brought into the formal banking fold. These accounts were not symbolic. They became gateways for Direct Benefit Transfers (DBT), savings, insurance, pensions, and credit. Jan Dhan transformed banking from an urban privilege into a universal public utility, restoring financial dignity to millions.

Aadhaar: Digital Identity as a Public Good: Aadhaar provided India with a unique, verifiable digital identity system at national scale. By enabling paperless authentication and simplified Know-Your-Customer (KYC) processes, Aadhaar drastically reduced onboarding costs across banking, telecom, and welfare delivery. Crucially, Aadhaar was designed as a public good interoperable, consent-based, and indigenous. It enabled precision targeting of subsidies, elimination of ghost beneficiaries, and real-time service delivery while operating within India's constitutional and democratic framework.

Mobile-Digital Connectivity and Last-Mile Reach: Affordable data and widespread smartphone adoption completed the JAM framework. India's data revolution dramatically reduced connectivity

costs, enabling digital access even in remote areas. Smartphones became tools of empowerment used for payments, governance services, education, and entrepreneurship integrating rural India into the national digital economy.

UPI Revolution: Transforming Payments, Empowering Citizens

The Unified Payments Interface (UPI) stands as the most visible and transformative outcome of India's digital reforms. Designed as a real-time, interoperable, bank-to-bank payment system, UPI eliminated the complexity, cost, and exclusivity associated with digital transactions. UPI's growth has been exponentially processing billions of transactions monthly across peer-to-peer, merchant, and institutional payments. Its simplicity allows street vendors, farmers, small retailers, and large corporations to operate on the same digital platform. QR codes replaced cash registers; mobile phones replaced point-of-sale terminals. What distinguishes UPI globally is its public architecture. Built by Indian institutions and offered as open infrastructure, UPI encourages private innovation without monopolisation. It demonstrates how the state can act as platform provider rather than market controller, enabling competition, innovation, and inclusion simultaneously. Global recognition of UPI has positioned India as a benchmark for real-time digital payments.

Fintech Ecosystem: Innovation in Public Infrastructure

India's Digital Public Infrastructure catalysed one of the world's most dynamic fintech ecosystems. Startups leveraged UPI, Aadhaar, and digital KYC to innovate across payments, lending, insurance, wealth management, and credit analytics. Digital lending platforms expanded credit access for MSMEs and small borrowers traditionally excluded from formal finance. Alternative data and cash-flow-based assessment reduced dependence on collateral, supporting entrepreneurship and job creation. Fintech also improved insurance

penetration and retail investment participation.

Importantly, the government's role remained enabling rather than monopolistic. Regulation balanced innovation with stability, while DPI ensured a level playing field. India emerged as one of the world's largest fintech markets an outcome of public infrastructure powering private creativity. Digital Payments and Financial Inclusion Digital payments have deepened financial inclusion beyond account ownership. Integration of UPI with DBT ensured that subsidies, pensions, and welfare payments reached beneficiaries directly, instantly, and transparently. Leakages declined, and beneficiaries gained direct control over their finances.

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From a cash-dependent economy to a global digital payments leader, India's journey reflects strategic vision, institutional courage, and ideological clarity.
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Women, farmers, migrant workers, and informal sector participants experienced unprecedented financial agency. Digital finance reduced dependence on cash-based intermediaries and enabled savings, credit, and insurance access. Financial inclusion evolved from passive entitlement to active empowerment, making digital finance a powerful social equaliser.

Formalisation of the Economy and Tax Compliance

The expansion of digital payments accelerated economic formalisation. Transaction trails enabled better GST compliance, improved reporting, and expanded the tax base without intrusive enforcement. Formalisation strengthened state revenues while improving fairness and accountability. This shift marked a transition from trust-deficit governance to trust-based systems where technology reduces discretion and increases transparency. Reduced corruption, improved compliance, and efficient service delivery reinforced confidence in institutions and markets alike.

Global Leadership: India as a Digital Payments Power

India today accounts for a dominant share of global real-time digital payment transactions. UPI's internationalization through cross-border payment

linkages and foreign adoption signals India's emergence as a digital rule-setter rather than rule-taker.

India has actively promoted DPI as a development model for the Global South, offering digital public goods to other nations. This positions India as a leader in inclusive digital governance, enhancing both economic influence and soft power.

Digital Sovereignty and Strategic Autonomy

Indigenous digital infrastructure has become a strategic national asset. By avoiding dependence on foreign proprietary systems, India safeguarded data sovereignty and policy autonomy. Control over digital rails ensures alignment with democratic governance, national interest, and security considerations. Digital Atmanirbharta thus extends beyond economics into strategic autonomy reinforcing India's ability to shape its digital destiny on its own terms.

Federalism, Governance, and Institutional Architecture

Digital reforms under Modi strengthened cooperative federalism. States adopted national platforms while innovating at the local level. Integration of central and state services improved efficiency and citizen experience. Public-private collaboration and agile institutions ensured continuous reform and adaptation. DPI enabled uniform standards while preserving flexibility an essential feature of India's federal structure.

Challenges, Risks, and Policy Safeguards

The digital transition has not been without challenges. Inclusion gaps persist among the elderly, digitally illiterate, and remote communities. Cybersecurity, data protection, and fraud prevention require constant vigilance. The government has responded through regulatory frameworks, financial literacy initiatives, and capacity building. Balancing innovation with stability remains a continuous policy task rather than a one-time reform.

Ideological Context: Digital Nationalism and Bharatiya Thought

Digital reforms resonate deeply with Bharatiya development philosophy. Technology is viewed as

Seva and Sashaktikaran service and empowerment rather than domination. Digital infrastructure functions as the modern equivalent of national highways, enabling economic integration and social unity. The Swadeshi ethos finds contemporary expression in indigenous digital platforms that engage globally without surrendering sovereignty. Digital India reflects civilisational confidence embracing modernity while remaining rooted in national values.

Digital Economy and Future Growth

The digital economy is now a core driver of India's future growth. Digital payments stimulate consumption, investment, and entrepreneurship. Linkages with startups, MSMEs, and employment generation are deepening. Emerging domains AI, data economy, next generation fintech will further amplify India's demographic dividend. Digital capability has become a multiplier of national potential, positioning India for sustained, inclusive growth.

Conclusion: From Digital Inclusion to Digital Leadership

The Modi Government's digital reforms represent one of the most consequential economic transformations in independent India. UPI and Digital Public Infrastructure stand as symbols of India's reform capacity combining scale, inclusion, and innovation. From a cash-dependent economy to a global digital payments leader, India's journey reflects strategic vision, institutional courage, and ideological clarity. Digital Bharat today forms the foundation of economic nationalism and Viksit Bharat, reaffirming India's place as a confident, capable, and sovereign digital power.



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The resolve of Atmanirbhar Bharat is not just about self-sufficiency; it is about building a strong, confident India that contributes to global prosperity.”

*-Prime Minister
Shri Narendra Modi*

Manufacturing as a Pillar of Atmanirbhar Bharat

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A Decade of Make in India

As India celebrates 79 years of Independence, the manufacturing sector stands as a powerful reflection of the nation's journey towards self-reliance, resilience, and global relevance. Under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the vision of Make in India and Atmanirbhar Bharat has reshaped the country's industrial landscape. India today manufactures and exports a wide range of products, including fighter aircraft components, mobile phones, electronic goods, engineering equipment, defence platforms, and industrial machinery, marking a decisive shift from import dependence to domestic capability and global competitiveness.

Supported by wide-ranging policy reforms, advances in technology, and a renewed focus on entrepreneurship, manufacturing has assumed a central role in India's long-term economic strategy. Institutional initiatives such as the National Manufacturing Mission (NMM), announced in the Union Budget 2025-26 with an outlay of ₹100 crore, signal a shift toward strengthening innovation ecosystems, expanding industrial capacity, and enhancing competitiveness across priority sectors. Collectively, these measures underscore India's determination to reduce strategic import dependence, create sustainable employment opportunities, and deepen its integration with global value chains.

India's Manufacturing Footprint

India's manufacturing sector remains a vital pillar of its economic growth. Over the last decade, this sector has expanded both in scale and value, supported by rising investments and productivity improvements. Its contribution to Gross Value Added (GVA) has remained stable, while the sector's absolute value has increased significantly.

Between 2013-14 and 2023-24, manufacturing GVA at constant prices rose from ₹15.60 lakh crore to ₹28.25 lakh crore, reflecting the impact of infrastructure development, policy support and capacity creation. This growth has led to steady job creation and stronger linkages with allied sectors such as logistics, services, and technology.

Defence Manufacturing

India's defence manufacturing sector has undergone one of the most consequential transformations of the past decade under the Make in India and Atmanirbhar Bharat frameworks. In the past, we were reliant on imports for critical platforms and systems, but now India has systematically reoriented its defence industrial base towards indigenous design, development, and production. This shift has been driven by policy clarity, long-term procurement commitments, and the increasing participation of private industry alongside public-sector undertakings.

A key catalyst in this has been the government's emphasis on indigenisation through structured reforms, including the Defence Acquisition Procedure (DAP), the introduction of multiple Positive Indigenisation Lists, and the reservation of defence capital procurement budgets for domestic manufacturers. These measures have created assured demand for Indian producers and encouraged investment in advanced manufacturing, research, and system integration capabilities.

As a result, the value of indigenous defence production reached a record ₹1,50,590 crore in Financial Year 2024-25, representing an 18% increase over the previous year and more than a threefold rise compared to 2014-15. This growth reflects the expansion of domestic capacity across land, naval, and aerospace platforms, including fighter aircraft, helicopters, artillery systems, armoured vehicles, warships, radars, and missile subsystems.

India's defence exports have also recorded unprecedented growth, rising from ₹686 crore in 2013-14 to ₹23,622 crore in 2024-25. Indian-made defence products are now exported to over 100 countries, with key markets in Africa, West Asia, and Southeast Asia. Exported items range from advanced platforms such as aircraft and naval vessels to high-demand equipment, including radars, electronic warfare systems, ammunition, and protective gear.

The issuance of five Positive Indigenisation Lists covering more than 5,500 defence items has further

accelerated domestic capability development. By early 2025, approx. 3,000 of these items had already been indigenised, significantly reducing import dependence. Flagship indigenous systems like the Light Combat Aircraft (Tejas), Arjun Main Battle Tank, transport aircraft, artillery guns, light combat helicopters, and naval corvettes demonstrate the maturing depth of India's defence manufacturing ecosystem.

Beyond production figures, defence manufacturing has become a strategic enabler of technological spillovers, skilled employment, and export credibility. Operational deployments have also reinforced confidence in indigenously developed systems. During Operation Sindoor, Indian armed forces relied extensively on domestically manufactured platforms, surveillance systems, protective equipment, and logistics support, underscoring the growing operational readiness of Make-in-India defence products. The successful performance of indigenous equipment in real operational conditions strengthened institutional trust in domestic manufacturers and validated years of investment in indigenisation. This sector now plays a critical role in strengthening national security while simultaneously positioning India as a reliable supplier in the global defence market. This evolution marks a decisive move from import substitution towards sustained industrial capability and strategic export leadership.

Electronics and Mobile Manufacturing

Electronics manufacturing has emerged as a flagship success of the Make in India initiative. Over the last decade, India has rapidly scaled up production capacity, particularly in mobile phones and consumer electronics. Electronics production increased nearly sixfold, rising from ₹1.9 lakh crore in 2014-15 to ₹11.3 lakh crore in 2024-25. Exports surged eight times to ₹3.27 lakh crore. Mobile phone manufacturing witnessed an even sharper rise, with production value jumping from ₹18,000 crore to ₹5.45 lakh crore, while exports expanded more than a hundredfold.

With over 300 mobile manufacturing units now operational, India has established itself as one of the world's largest mobile phone producers, significantly reducing import dependence and strengthening its export competitiveness.

Towards an Even More Atmanirbhar Bharat

India's manufacturing journey over the last decade reflects a clear political and policy commitment led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi to place industry at the centre of national development. Through initiatives like Make in India, Atmanirbhar Bharat, and targeted interventions such as the Production Linked Incentive schemes, manufacturing has evolved from a secondary contributor to a strategic driver of economic growth, national security, and exports.

At the same time, a few challenges merit candid acknowledgement for shaping the next phase of India's manufacturing journey. High logistics and energy costs, skill mismatches in advanced manufacturing, uneven technology adoption among MSMEs, and the need for deeper domestic supply chains continue to constrain

productivity and competitiveness. Addressing these issues will require sustained reforms to infrastructure, targeted skilling initiatives, easier access to finance for small and medium-sized firms, and stronger industry-academia collaboration to move up the value chain.

A realistic appraisal of these challenges does not dilute the achievements of the past decade; rather, it strengthens the case for a calibrated and forward-looking approach. By combining policy continuity with course correction where necessary, India can consolidate recent gains and ensure that manufacturing growth remains inclusive, innovation-driven, and globally competitive in the years ahead.

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India's defence exports have also recorded unprecedented growth, rising from ₹686 crore in 2013-14 to ₹23,622 crore in 2024-25
.....

From Domestic Reform to Global Integration

India's Economic Rise

Srikar Srivatsa Dahagam

Student of MA, International Economics at The Graduate Institute, Geneva

The year 2026 is set to be historic for India's economic growth in many respects. The year has started on a high note, with the IMF increasing India's growth projection to 7.3% for the current fiscal year. This year has also started on a strong note, as India has concluded the massive FTA with the European Union, which is set to be the mother of all trade deals, according to EU President Ursula von der Leyen. India has already concluded FTAs with countries such as Oman & New Zealand in the past 2 months. The defining hallmark of the Modi Era has undoubtedly been the rise in international economic cooperation, which has significantly fuelled India's growth story today.

International economic cooperation has increased substantially during PM Narendra Modi's tenure over the past few years. India's role in economic organisations such as the WTO has increased significantly over the past decade. India is now seen as a major enabler of global supply chains & as a country whose opinion matters significantly in global trade affairs. India played a key role in implementing the JSI on digital trade in the early 2020s, which has benefited the LDCs and Small Island Developing States.

Alongside the WTO, India's influence in organisations such as the World Bank has also increased over the last 12 years of the Modi government, which is why India is consistently among the top 2 largest borrowers of scheme-specific funding from the IBRD today. Furthermore, under India's active leadership, the G20 issued a joint statement in 2023, and India has overseen the successful expansion of BRICS, which now includes powerhouses such as the UAE, Saudi Arabia & Egypt.

Furthermore, over the past decade, India has expanded UPI services to 12+ countries, and the RBI, under the strong leadership of PM Narendra Modi, is also working to internationalise the rupee as a consistent policy measure. These 2 reforms were unthinkable a decade ago, when India struggled to replace foreign-owned card payment systems with domestic ones, a process that has accelerated with the increased adoption of RuPay.



India's international economic cooperation has also strengthened due to the ambitious Make in India scheme launched in 2015 by the Modi government. This scheme is solely responsible for India attracting FDIs totalling US\$ 748.78 billion over the past decade. This is also fuelled by multiple reforms undertaken by the Modi government. Sectors such as nuclear energy, civil aviation, drones, automobiles & semiconductors have contributed to the country doubling its manufacturing Gross Value Added in the past decade alone.

With additional schemes & brilliant policies such as the National Manufacturing Mission, PLI scheme, and the Atmanirbhar Bharat scheme of 2020, these initiatives will play a significant role in enhancing the scale of international cooperation in India. This push across sectors, in a calm & controlled manner, by the Modi government is why India's share in global exports has now reached almost 2%, even as the country remains heavily dependent on imports.

This rise in FDI and the concurrent reform path India has embarked on under Narendra Modi's tenure as prime minister are why states are now approaching the 1 trillion-dollar mark in GSDP. The beeline of chief ministers of different governed states like – Assam, Maharashtra, Gujarat, Uttar Pradesh, Jharkhand, Telangana and Andhra Pradesh, at the World Economic Forum (Zurich) to attract FDIs via big projects like Pen Raigad 3.0 project, Amravati capital city project and GIFT city expansion are perhaps the biggest hallmarks of competitive & cooperative federalism, that was envisioned by PM Modi during the formation of NITI Aayog in 2015.

Indian FPI growth during the Modi government's first 12 years has been among the highest in the world. The FPI share has increased from developed countries such as Singapore, the EU, and the USA, replacing the traditional hubs of financial centres, which is a welcome sign of increased transparency in global capital flows in India.

In addition to its influence in international organisations, under PM Narendra Modi's tenure,

India has also seen its influence rise in global supply & logistics chains. Today, India has obtained rights to access & also develop ports in several strategic countries – Some of them being the Haifa port of Israel, Sittwe Port in Myanmar, Chabahar Port of Iran, Colombo West International Terminal of Sri Lanka, North Queensland Export Terminal of Australia & Dar Es Salam Terminal of Tanzania. These strategic acquisitions, fuelled by reforms in the shipping & ports sector via schemes like Sagarmala project, Shipbuilding Financial Assistance Scheme at a cost of Rs. 44700 crore, Maritime Development Fund & the Indian Ports Bill of 2025, is the reason, why India is confident of executing ambitious logistics & trade routes like – the INSTC & IMEEC which was proposed by the entire G20 in 2023.

Today, our country's once-slow-growing shipping & ports industry contributes almost 5% to GDP, a share projected to rise as related infrastructure reforms take effect. There are many sectors, such as tourism, automobiles, cartography, clean energy, pharmaceuticals, dairy farming, and banking, whose GDP share has increased significantly over the past 11 years of the Modi government's governance.

Today, due to such schemes & focus on economic growth, keeping India as the focal point of policymaking is also one reason countries are keen to invest heavily in the Indian growth story. Whenever, a foreign head of government, sees that India has uplifted 230 million people out from poverty in past 1 decade, along with seeing that India has health insurance cover funded by the government via PMJAY scheme to almost 80 million citizens and has been able to improve governance delivery in almost 90 out of country's 112 aspirational districts, it not only showcases the power of a common Indian, but also reminds the world of what all can be achieved when good policymaking is made by keeping national interests in mind.

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Indian FPI growth during the Modi government's first 12 years has been among the highest in the world.
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The introduction of the Goods and Services Tax (GST) in July 2017 represents the most far-reaching indirect tax reform in independent India. Often compared in scale to the 1991 liberalisation, GST was not merely a tax reform but a deep structural intervention aimed at unifying India's fragmented internal market, improving allocative efficiency, and accelerating formalisation. Under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, GST became the economic embodiment of the idea of One Nation, One Market, One Tax.

GST as a Structural Reform

Formalisation,
Federalism, and
Market
Integration

Mohd Hamza Atik

Writer, Editor
Researcher



Prior to GST, India's indirect tax system was characterised by cascading taxes, origin-based levies, inter-state barriers, and compliance complexity. Multiple taxes—excise, service tax, VAT, CST, entry tax—created tax-on-tax distortions, raising transaction costs and undermining competitiveness. GST replaced this regime with a destination-based, value-added tax, enabling seamless input tax credit across goods and services. This structural shift improved price neutrality, enhanced supply-chain efficiency, and reduced the incentive for tax arbitrage. As economists such as Kelkar have argued, GST internalised India's "invisible customs borders", effectively converting 29 states into a single economic space.

Formalisation, Compliance and Revenue Buoyancy

GST has been a powerful engine of economic formalisation. The integration of GSTN, e-way bills, and invoice matching has reduced scope for evasion and expanded the tax base. This aligns with New Institutional Economics, which emphasises how transparent rules reduce information asymmetry and transaction costs.

Empirically, this is reflected in:

- Sustained growth in GST registrations,
- Rising average monthly GST collections crossing ₹1.7 lakh crore in recent years,
- Improved tax buoyancy without raising headline rates.

As Musgrave's theory of public finance suggests, efficient taxation enhances both allocative efficiency and revenue adequacy; the GST advances both objectives.

Tax Compliance: from evasion to voluntary

GST has fundamentally altered India's tax compliance culture by shifting incentives from evasion to voluntary compliance. The invoice-based input tax credit mechanism creates a natural compliance chain in which each firm's tax credit depends on the tax paid by its supplier, thereby embedding self-enforcement within the system. The integration of GST with digital tools such as e-way

bills, real-time return filing, and analytics-driven scrutiny through the GST Network (GSTN) has reduced information asymmetry and widened the tax base. As a result, the number of registered taxpayers has expanded significantly, return filing discipline has improved, and tax buoyancy has risen without proportionate increases in tax rates. In Musgrave's public finance framework, GST enhances both administrative efficiency and equity, while from a New Institutional Economics perspective, it lowers compliance costs and increases the credibility of the tax system, making formal participation economically rational rather than coercive.

Federalism Reimagined: Cooperative and Competitive

A distinctive feature of GST has been its institutional architecture. The GST Council represents a novel experiment in cooperative federalism, where the Union and States jointly negotiate tax rates, exemptions, and procedural rules. While consensus-building has sometimes slowed decision-making, the Council has largely secured political buy-in and policy stability, even amid economic shocks such as COVID-19. Compensation

mechanisms, though contentious, helped mitigate states' revenue anxieties during the transition, preserving fiscal trust—an essential prerequisite for durable reform in a quasi-federal polity.

Driver of Ease of Doing Business

GST has reduced the cost of doing business by eliminating cascading taxation and improving price efficiency. It has encouraged supply chain reconfiguration, as firms no longer need to locate warehouses for tax reasons. By creating a single national market, GST has improved market access, allowed firms to achieve economies of scale, and enhanced export competitiveness through zero-rating of exports. The reform has also promoted digital compliance and transparency, thereby increasing the formalisation of the economy through invoice matching and IT-based systems.

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By creating a single national market, GST has improved market access, allowed firms to achieve economies of scale, and enhanced export competitiveness through zero-rating of exports.

However, the impact has varied across sectors and firm sizes. MSMEs have experienced mixed outcomes. While they benefit from input tax credit and wider market access, they also face higher compliance needs. The service sector has seen changes in tax incidence and place-of-supply rules, while manufacturing has generally benefited from logistics efficiency and tax rationalisation. At the same time, businesses have faced transition costs, complex rate structures, and working capital pressures, particularly due to delays in refunds and input tax credits. Overall, GST represents a structural shift with long-term efficiency gains, despite short-term adjustment challenges.

Challenges and the Course Ahead

The GST journey has not been frictionless. Initial challenges included:

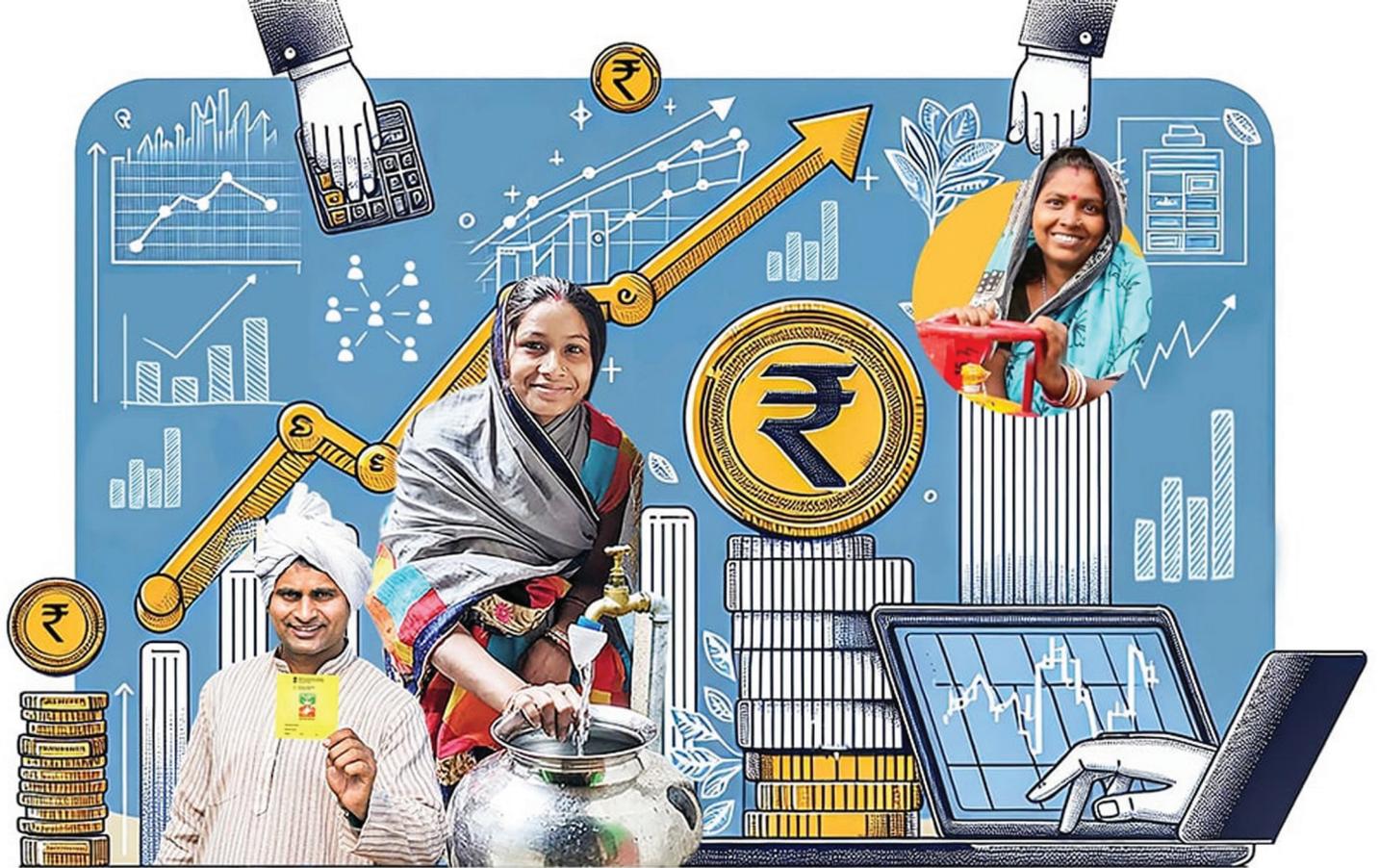
- Rate multiplicity,
- Compliance burden for small firms,
- Working capital constraints due to delayed refunds.

However, the reform process has been iterative rather than rigid rate rationalisation, simplified returns, composition schemes, and digitisation have progressively addressed these concerns. This adaptive governance underscores a shift from

reform “announcement” to reform management.

In the long run, GST’s true contribution lies not merely in revenue mobilisation but in restructuring India’s political economy, rewarding honest firms, discouraging informality, and strengthening state capacity. As Dani Rodrik notes, successful economies rely on institutions that align incentives with productivity. GST does precisely that. GST stands as the fiscal backbone of India’s contemporary reform architecture. By unifying markets, strengthening federal cooperation, and accelerating formalisation, it has laid the foundation for a more efficient, competitive, and transparent economy. While refinement continues, GST’s Structural logic remains sound, making it a cornerstone of India’s journey towards Viksit Bharat.





Atmanirbhar Bharat

Integrating Economic Reform with Social Empowerment

Shubham Rai

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The idea of an independent Bharat is more than just an economic slogan. It reflects a wider vision of how the nation should grow and develop. Under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Atmanirbhar Bharat has become an important approach guiding India's development in the twenty-first century. While it draws inspiration from India's history and traditional values, it also responds to present-day global challenges. Today, self-reliance does not mean cutting off from the world; instead, it stands for confidence, capability, and competitiveness. It highlights India's effort to strengthen its own capacities while continuing to engage actively with the global economy.

Philosophical Foundations of Self-Reliance

The idea of self-reliance has long been part of India's thinking and politics. From the early emphasis on Swadeshi to Mahatma Gandhi's focus on local production and ethical economic practices, India has always valued inner strength and self-sufficiency. The current understanding of self-reliance under Narendra Modi looks ahead rather than backward. It does not reject globalization but seeks to reshape India's role within it. Through the idea of "Make in India for the world," this approach connects national development with global responsibility, aiming to position India as a strong and dependable participant in global value chains.

Manufacturing and Industrial Revitalization

One of the main pillars of India's self-reliance strategy is manufacturing. The goal of programs like Make in India and the Production-Linked Incentive (PLI) schemes is to encourage domestic manufacturing in a variety of industries, including textiles, electronics, pharmaceuticals, cars, and defense. India has made significant strides toward becoming a manufacturing hub after previously being largely dependent on imports in a number of these industries.

The focus on domestic defense manufacturing is especially important. It is both a strategic necessity

and an economic goal to develop and produce defense equipment domestically. This change improves national security, lessens reliance on imports, and advances technology and creates jobs.

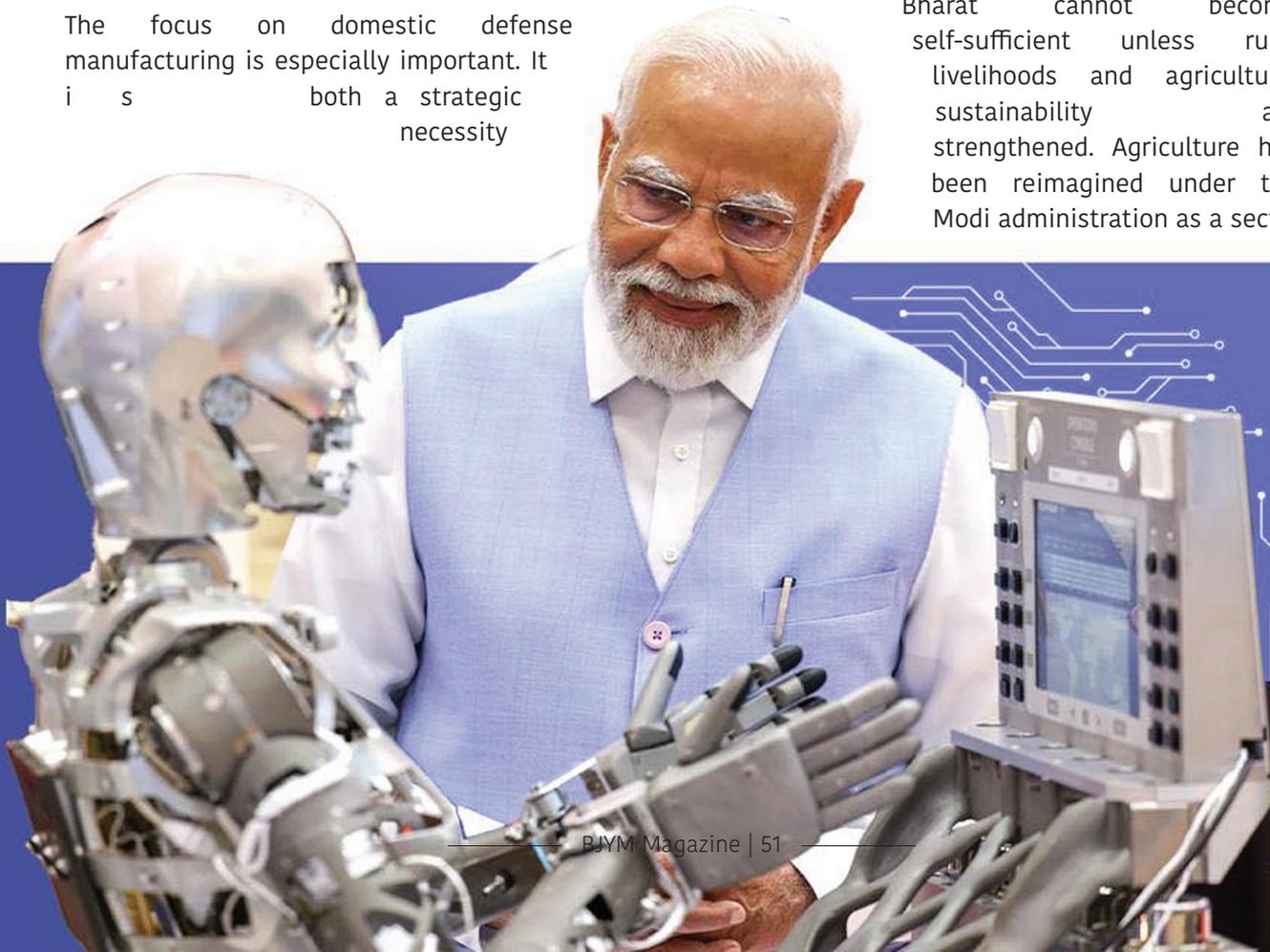
Strengthening MSMEs and the Startup Ecosystem

Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) form the backbone of the Bharatiya economy and provide employment to a large section of the population. Recognizing their importance, the Modi government has introduced several measures to improve access to credit, simplify regulatory procedures, and enhance the ease of doing business. Initiatives such as digital platforms, collateral-free loans, and improved market access have strengthened local industries, artisans, and small entrepreneurs.

Alongside this, India's startup ecosystem has expanded rapidly due to supportive policies and a growing culture of innovation. Startups in areas such as financial technology, health technology, and renewable energy are developing local solutions to address domestic needs. This growing entrepreneurial activity supports the idea of self-reliance by encouraging individuals to become job creators rather than job seekers.

Agriculture and Rural Self-Reliance

Bharat cannot become self-sufficient unless rural livelihoods and agricultural sustainability are strengthened. Agriculture has been reimagined under the Modi administration as a sector



that is driven by resilience and innovation rather than just subsistence. Enhancing farmers' security and productivity has been the goal of initiatives to improve irrigation, soil health, crop insurance, and direct income support.

A move toward value addition and market integration is evident in initiatives to support food processing, storage facilities, and agricultural exports. Additionally, programs that support local jobs, women's self-help organizations, and rural entrepreneurship have strengthened rural self-reliance, connecting economic development with social empowerment.

Digital India and Technological Sovereignty

India's agenda for self-reliance now includes digital transformation as a key component. Initiatives under Digital India have increased e-governance, digital payments, and internet connectivity while lowering reliance on middlemen and improving efficiency and transparency. India's commitment to technological sovereignty is demonstrated by its efforts to develop technological capabilities in fields like artificial intelligence, renewable energy, and space technology. These programs represent a change from being a passive consumer of international technologies to an active producer and innovator.

Social Self-Reliance and Inclusive Development

Modi's vision of self-reliance encompasses human development and social empowerment in addition to economic metrics. Millions of people now have access to savings, credit, and insurance thanks to financial inclusion programs that have integrated them into the official banking system. Housing, sanitation, healthcare, and clean energy initiatives have aimed to raise living standards and preserve human dignity.

One essential component of social self-reliance is women's empowerment. Women are being positioned as agents of social and economic change through programs that support education, entrepreneurship, and decision-making. A society that is genuinely self-sufficient is one in which every individual has the chance to contribute fairly and productively.

Global Engagement with National Confidence

Self-reliance does not mean disengagement from the international system; rather, under Modi's leadership, India has pursued a more assertive and self-assured foreign policy. Strengthened domestic capacities have improved India's ability to negotiate, collaborate, and lead in international forums. India's growing role in global supply chains, climate action, and humanitarian initiatives reflects its growing international stature. By consolidating internal strengths, India has increased its credibility and influence on the global stage.

Challenges and the Way Forward

Self-reliance is not an end state but rather a dynamic process requiring sustained effort and institutional commitment. However, the development trajectory under Narendra Modi has brought greater coherence and confidence to India's economic and social policies. The emphasis on reform, innovation, and national self-belief has mobilized both state institutions and citizens. The pursuit of self-reliance is an ongoing and complex process; structural inequalities, skill deficiencies, and regional disparities continue to pose challenges.

Conclusion

In an increasingly uncertain global environment, self-reliance emerges not only as a strategic choice but also as a developmental necessity, reflecting both India's aspirations and its evolving capacities. Atmanirbhar Bharat is a comprehensive socio-economic strategy aimed at building an economically robust, socially empowered, technologically capable, and culturally confident India. The vision of a self-reliant India under the leadership of Narendra Modi represents an attempt to combine tradition with modernity, national interest with international engagement, and economic growth with social inclusion.

Transforming Rural Employment

The VB-G RAM G Act and India's Livelihood Shift

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The Viksit Bharat-Guarantee for Rozgar and Ajeevika Mission (VB-G RAM G) Act, 2025 marks a significant evolution in India's rural employment and livelihood architecture. It was introduced at a time of changing rural aspirations, structural economic transformation, and post-pandemic recalibration. The Act reflects the Union Government's continued emphasis on reform-oriented, future-ready governance. The Modi government, by consciously moving beyond a relief-centric approach to rural employment, has advanced a development-oriented livelihood guarantee that prioritises productivity, skill formation, and economic self-reliance. It is embedded within the broader vision of Viksit Bharat, the reform underscores the government's commitment to inclusive growth, long-term capacity building, and sustainable rural transformation.



Transition from MGNREGA to a New Livelihood Framework

While MGNREGA played a historic role in providing wage employment and social protection, its design was primarily focused on short-term manual work and consumption smoothing. In practical terms, this shift is reflected in the nature of works and interventions envisaged under the VB-G RAM G framework. For instance, instead of repetitive earth-moving activities, employment is increasingly linked to skill-based tasks such as watershed management, rural infrastructure maintenance, agro-processing units, solar pump installation, and community-level storage and value-addition facilities. A rural worker engaged in water conservation may simultaneously receive training in soil and water management, while self-help group members may transition from wage labour to managing micro-enterprises in dairy, food processing, or crafts. Such interventions not only generate immediate employment but also create durable assets and income streams, illustrating the shift from temporary income support toward sustainable livelihood creation.

Expanded Guarantee of Workdays

One of the central features of the VB-G RAM G Act is the expansion of guaranteed workdays beyond the earlier annual ceiling. The Act responds to changing rural realities such as climate uncertainty, agrarian distress, and informalisation of work by offering greater employment assurance to rural households. This expansion is particularly significant for landless labourers, marginal farmers, and women workers who face seasonal and structural unemployment.

Integration of Rozgar (Employment) and Ajeevika (Livelihoods)

Unlike earlier schemes that treated wage employment and livelihood promotion as separate policy domains, the VB-G RAM G Act explicitly integrates rozgar and ajeevika. The employment under the Act is designed not merely as daily wage labour but as a stepping stone toward stable income sources, including self-employment, micro-enterprises, and cooperative economic

activities. This integration reflects a more holistic understanding of rural poverty and development.

Focus on Skill Development and Asset Creation

The Act places strong emphasis on skill-linked employment and durable asset creation. The work undertaken under the mission aligns with local economic needs, including water conservation, agro-processing, rural infrastructure, renewable energy, and climate-resilient agriculture. Therefore, by linking employment to skill acquisition, the Act aims to enhance long-term employability rather than perpetuate low-productivity manual work.

Strengthening Women's Economic Participation

A key objective of the VB-G RAM G Act is to deepen women's participation in the rural economy. The framework prioritises women-friendly work environments, flexible schedules, proximity to housing, and leadership roles in planning and monitoring. Thus, by integrating self-help groups, producer collectives, and care-economy activities, the Act seeks to move women from casual labour to income-generating and decision-making roles.

Decentralised Planning and Local Governance

The Act reinforces the role of local institutions in planning, implementation, and social accountability. The Gram Panchayats and community institutions are empowered to identify locally relevant livelihood projects, ensuring that employment creation aligns with regional ecological and economic conditions. This decentralised approach strengthens grassroots democracy while improving program effectiveness and ownership.

Use of Technology and Outcome-Based Monitoring

The VB-G RAM G Act leverages digital platforms for beneficiary registration, work allocation, payments, and monitoring. Unlike earlier systems focused primarily on inputs and person-days, the new framework emphasises outcome-based indicators such as income enhancement, asset durability, skill

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The Viksit Bharat-Guarantee for Rozgar and Ajeevika Mission Act, 2025, reflects a maturing phase in India's rural governance and development trajectory.
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certification, and livelihood sustainability. This shift reflects a broader move toward results-oriented governance.

Fiscal and Administrative Reorientation

The Act signifies a strategic reorientation of rural expenditure rather than a mere increase in budgetary outlays. Public resources are increasingly directed toward productive investments that generate durable assets, enhance human capital, and deliver sustained economic and social returns. This approach strengthens fiscal efficiency by linking spending to measurable outcomes, such as income growth and skill development. Administratively, the convergence of employment, skill formation, and livelihood promotion under a unified framework reduces policy silos and inter-ministerial fragmentation. Such integration improves coordination, streamlines implementation, and enhances accountability at the grassroots level, thereby reinforcing overall policy coherence and effectiveness.

Significance for Rural Development and Social Justice

Overall, the VB-G RAM G Act, 2025, marks a paradigmatic shift in India's rural development strategy, reflecting a deliberate move toward long-term structural transformation rather than short-term welfare support. Thus, by replacing a narrowly defined wage-employment model with a comprehensive livelihood mission, the Act seeks to address the deeper roots of rural poverty, including underemployment, skill deficits, and income insecurity. The emphasis on productivity, asset creation, and livelihood diversification enables rural households to move beyond subsistence toward greater economic stability and upward mobility.

The Act strengthens inclusion by prioritising vulnerable groups, including women, landless labourers, and marginal farmers, while creating pathways to dignified work and economic self-reliance. More importantly, the reform aligns rural employment policy with broader national development goals, signalling a shift from entitlement-based delivery toward empowerment-oriented governance. In doing so, it reflects the Union Government's continued focus on

outcome-driven reforms that combine fiscal responsibility with social equity. The Act, anchored in the vision of Viksit Bharat, demonstrates a governance approach that balances growth with inclusion, and welfare with capacity-building, thereby reinforcing the idea that rural development is central not peripheral to India's journey toward becoming a resilient, self-reliant, and inclusive economy.

The Viksit Bharat-Guarantee for Rozgar and Aajeevika Mission (VB-G RAM G) Act, 2025, reflects a maturing phase in India's rural governance and development trajectory. India, by consciously moving beyond a narrow focus on short-term wage employment, the reform demonstrates an intent to address structural challenges such as low productivity, informalisation of work, and limited livelihood diversification in rural India. The emphasis on skill-linked employment, durable asset creation, and convergence with self-help groups and local enterprises illustrates a shift toward sustainable, community-driven economic growth.

The government's efforts, such as integrating watershed projects with skill training, promoting women-led dairy and agro-processing units, and supporting renewable energy and climate-resilient livelihoods, underscore the Act's development-oriented design. These interventions not only generate immediate employment but also strengthen rural economic ecosystems over time. Most importantly, the reform aligns with the Union Government's broader governance approach that prioritises outcomes, efficiency, and institutional convergence. Anchored in the vision of Viksit Bharat, the Act signals a commitment to empowering rural citizens as economic agents rather than passive beneficiaries. Taken together, the VB-G RAM G Act represents a thoughtful evolution in rural policy one that balances welfare with empowerment, fiscal prudence with social justice, and short-term support with long-term nation-building.

Reforming India's Economic Architecture after 2014

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The decade since 2014 has been among the most transformative in India's economic history. At a time when the Indian economy was grappling with policy paralysis, twin balance-sheet problems, rising non-performing assets, and declining investor confidence, the Modi government initiated a series of bold, structural economic reforms. These reforms were not merely short-term policy adjustments; rather, they aimed to reshape the architecture of India's economic governance. The outcomes of these reforms are visible in improved tax compliance, rapid digitalisation, expanded financial inclusion, infrastructure expansion, and renewed global confidence—together laying the foundation for a resilient, inclusive, competitive, and self-reliant India aligned with the vision of Viksit Bharat.

From Policy Paralysis to Policy Clarity

Prior to 2014, India's economic policymaking was often criticised for indecision, delayed implementation, and fragmented execution. The Modi government introduced a decisive shift in governance philosophy—marked by clear intent, time-bound execution, and structural reforms. Policy certainty, transparency, and rule-based decision-making became central to governance. This change in approach itself constituted a major reform, restoring credibility in India's economic management both domestically and globally and enabling long-term planning by investors and institutions.



GST and the Creation of One Nation, One Market

The introduction of the Goods and Services Tax (GST) in 2017 stands as a landmark reform in India's indirect taxation system. By subsuming multiple central and state taxes into a unified framework, GST laid the foundation of "One Nation, One Market." It simplified tax compliance, reduced cascading effects, lowered logistics costs, and enhanced supply chain efficiency.

Beyond economic efficiency, GST strengthened cooperative federalism through the GST Council, which jointly determines tax policy. Its success is reflected in improved revenue performance. Monthly GST collections have consistently crossed ₹1.6 lakh crore, reaching approximately ₹1.75 lakh crore in December 2025 with over 6 per cent year-on-year growth. This indicates improved compliance, an expanded tax base, and deeper formalisation of the economy—making GST a cornerstone of India's modern fiscal architecture.

Formalisation through JAM and Digital Governance

One of the most transformative outcomes of the Modi government's reforms has been the large-scale formalisation of the Indian economy. The Jan Dhan–Aadhaar–Mobile (JAM) trinity enabled financial inclusion at an unprecedented scale. More than 54 crore Jan Dhan accounts have been opened nationwide, with deposits exceeding ₹2.3 lakh crore. Millions of previously unbanked citizens have been integrated into the formal financial system, gaining access to banking services, insurance, pensions, and credit.

Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) further strengthened transparency by eliminating intermediaries and reducing leakages in welfare delivery. This not only ensured efficient utilisation of public funds but also restored dignity, trust, and accountability in the relationship between the state and citizens.

Make in India, Atmanirbhar Bharat and the Manufacturing Push

The Make in India initiative and the Atmanirbhar Bharat vision reoriented India's growth strategy towards strengthening domestic manufacturing without isolating the economy. The Production

Linked Incentive (PLI) schemes emerged as a key instrument in boosting manufacturing capacities in strategic sectors such as electronics, pharmaceuticals, defence, semiconductors, and renewable energy.

Rather than inward-looking protectionism, the approach focused on integrating India into global value chains while enhancing domestic competitiveness. As a result, India is increasingly seen as a reliable manufacturing destination and a viable alternative in global supply chains, particularly in the post-pandemic geopolitical environment.

MSMEs, Start-ups and the Entrepreneurial Revolution

Economic reforms under the Modi government placed strong emphasis on entrepreneurship and small enterprises. Schemes such as Start-up India, Stand-up India, and the Pradhan Mantri Mudra Yojana expanded access to institutional credit and reduced entry barriers for first-generation entrepreneurs.

The formalisation of enterprises gained momentum, with more than 4.7 crore MSMEs registering on the Udyam portal. This has enabled easier access to finance, government schemes, and digital compliance mechanisms. Simultaneously, India has emerged as one of the world's largest startup ecosystems, reflecting a broader shift toward innovation-led, entrepreneurship-driven growth.

Banking, Financial Sector and Insolvency Reforms

The introduction of the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (IBC) in 2016 marked a decisive reform in addressing the chronic problem of non-performing assets (NPAs). By shifting from a "debtor in possession" to a "creditor in control" framework, IBC improved credit discipline and enabled time-bound resolution of stressed assets.

Alongside bank recapitalisation, governance reforms, and enhanced regulatory oversight, these measures strengthened bank balance sheets and restored stability in the financial sector, thereby allowing banks to resume their role as engines of economic growth.

Digital Economy and Financial Innovation

India's rise as a global leader in digital payments is one of the most visible outcomes of recent economic reforms. The Unified Payments Interface (UPI) revolutionised financial transactions by making them instant, secure, and low-cost. In FY 2023-24 alone, UPI transactions crossed ₹200 lakh crore in value, placing India among the world's largest real-time digital payment ecosystems.

Combined with India's Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI), these innovations enhanced financial inclusion, reduced transaction costs, improved ease of doing business, and positioned India as a global model of technology-driven governance.

Infrastructure-Led Growth and Capital Expenditure Push

A sustained emphasis on infrastructure development—covering roads, railways, ports, airports, logistics, housing, and energy—became a central pillar of economic reforms. Increased public capital expenditure generated strong multiplier effects by crowding in private investment, improving logistics efficiency, and creating large-scale employment opportunities.

Infrastructure-led growth has significantly enhanced India's productive capacity and long-term competitiveness, supporting both manufacturing and services sectors.

Inclusive Growth and Welfare Reforms

Economic reforms under the Modi government were not limited to markets and industries; they were equally focused on inclusive growth. Targeted welfare schemes delivered through DBT ensured

that economic growth translated into social development. Housing, sanitation, healthcare, nutrition, and income-support programmes reached beneficiaries more efficiently due to digital governance.

Special emphasis on women-led development through Self-Help Groups (SHGs), financial inclusion, and entrepreneurship has strengthened women's participation in economic activities and reinforced social equity.

Vision 2047: Towards a Developed India

As India moves towards the centenary of independence, the reforms of the past decade provide a strong foundation for achieving a \$10+ trillion economy. Fiscal discipline, macroeconomic stability, labour reforms, skill development, technological innovation, and deeper global integration will be crucial in the next phase of growth. The Modi government's reform agenda has decisively shifted India from incremental change to transformational governance. Reform Outcomes and Vision 2047

The economic reforms under the Modi government represent a paradigm shift in India's development trajectory. By combining structural reforms with digital innovation, infrastructure expansion, financial inclusion, and targeted welfare delivery, these policies have strengthened India's economic foundations. While challenges remain, the direction is clear: India is steadily progressing towards becoming a resilient, self-reliant, and globally influential economic power. The journey towards Viksit Bharat is firmly underway.

Dimension	Reform Outcome	Contribution to Viksit Bharat
Governance	Policy clarity & execution	Investor confidence
Economy	Formalisation & digitisation	Transparency & growth
Society	Targeted welfare via DBT	Inclusive development
Future Vision	Vision 2047	\$10+ trillion economy

Restoring Discipline in Indian Banking

The Modi-Era Turnaround

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Karnataka Chapter

India's progress is often measured by new roads and expressways, expanded industrial capacity, modern infrastructure, a stronger defence system, and a digital ecosystem. However, behind this visible transformation lies a stable, credible and capable financial system.

Banks are the foundations of India's financial system. When banks are healthy, credit flows, entrepreneurship expands, and growth becomes sustainable. When banks are weak, lending slows, and the economy suffers. The last decade under Prime Minister Narendra Modi's leadership has therefore been a defining period for Indian banking. A system burdened by stress and uncertainty was steadily cleaned up, strengthened and modernised. Today, India's banks operate with greater discipline, resilience and confidence.



A difficult inheritance: legacy stress in the system

By the middle of the last decade, Indian banking was facing one of its most challenging periods. Lending in earlier years had expanded sharply, especially in sectors such as infrastructure, power, steel, and construction, which require long gestation periods and steady project execution. Many projects encountered delays due to land issues, fuel supply constraints, policy bottlenecks, and weak cash flows. As repayments slowed, non-performing assets (NPAs) rose across the system.

By FY2018, the stress had become hard to ignore. The gross NPA ratio of scheduled commercial banks rose to nearly double digits, placing heavy pressure on profitability and capital. Public sector banks, the backbone of India’s credit delivery, were particularly exposed due to their larger share of legacy lending to stressed sectors.

What aggravated the situation was that stress had not been fully acknowledged for years. Restructuring, refinancing and forbearance were often used to postpone recognition. This kept the numbers looking manageable for a while, but internally, bank balance sheets weakened, and lending appetite declined. A banking system under such stress naturally strains the whole economy.

Transparency before recovery

A banking system can only be repaired after the problem is recognised honestly. One of the most important shifts of the Modi era was the push for transparent recognition of stressed assets. Banks were encouraged to classify NPAs more accurately and improve provisioning discipline. In the short run, reported numbers appeared unfavourable, but in banking recognition is not a setback; rather, it marks the start of recovery.

Once stressed assets are clearly identified, the system gains clarity. Decision-making improves, recoveries become structured, and banks regain confidence to lend again. This approach was also a decisive break from the earlier habit of postponing

stress, which only makes resolution costlier later.

Recapitalisation: clean-up without choking credit

Balance sheet cleanup entails a real cost. When banks provide for stressed loans, profits get squeezed, and capital buffers weaken. Without adequate capital, banks cannot lend, even if demand exists in the economy.

The Modi Government made sure that this did not become a growth bottleneck. Instead of allowing the clean-up to slow credit growth, it undertook a systematic recapitalisation of public sector banks. A significant step was the 2017 recapitalisation programme of INR 2.11 lakh crore, which strengthened the banks’ capital.

This recapitalisation served two critical purposes. First, it protected depositor confidence, including that of middle-class families, senior citizens, and small savers. Second, it ensured that banks had the capacity to continue lending to national priorities, such as infrastructure, MSMEs, agriculture, and retail borrowers. In effect, the clean-up strengthened the system without starving the economy of credit.

IBC: restoring discipline in the credit ecosystem

While capital support strengthened banks, India also needed stronger recovery tools. This is where the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (IBC) became a transformational reform.

Before IBC, recovery mechanisms were slow and fragmented. Legal processes were uncertain, and wilful defaulters had ample scope to delay repayments. This weakened credit discipline and created moral hazard. IBC changed this by introducing a structured, time-bound insolvency framework.

Since its implementation, thousands of corporate insolvency cases have been admitted. Beyond case numbers, the real impact has been behavioural; borrowers began taking repayment more seriously, and many accounts moved towards settlement earlier because the cost of delay became real. For banks, this shift restored the sanctity of credit, a

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A significant step was the 2017 recapitalisation programme of INR 2.11 lakh crore, which strengthened the banks' capital.
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foundation of any strong financial system.

Accountability: rebuilding trust and fairness

Banking ultimately runs on trust. Depositors trust banks with their life savings, and banks trust borrowers with credit. That trust collapses when defaulters believe they can escape consequences. The Modi Government's strong focus on enforcement signalled a clear change; financial indiscipline would no longer be treated casually.

By strengthening legal and enforcement frameworks, a clear message was sent that wilful default and economic offences will not be tolerated. This improved confidence in the recovery ecosystem and strengthened the credibility of financial discipline. A fair system must protect honest borrowers and depositors, and accountability is central to that fairness.

Building stronger institutions: consolidation of public sector banks

India's development priorities, especially in agriculture, MSME financing, infrastructure, and priority-sector lending, continue to keep public-sector banks at the nucleus of the development financing ecosystem. Modern banking, however, is also about efficiency and scale. Fragmentation leads to duplication and stifles investments in sophisticated risk systems, cybersecurity and governance.

During the Modi era, public-sector banks were consolidated to transform the ecosystem by creating fewer, operationally stronger institutions with enhanced risk management and governance frameworks. Such institutions should be able to access financing for large-scale projects and sustain themselves in an increasingly competitive and sophisticated financial ecosystem.

Digital banking: modernising finance at the citizen level

The banking revival is not only about resolving NPAs, but also about creating modern access for citizens. Financial inclusion and digitisation moved from slogans to measurable outcomes.

By FY25, more than 56 crore bank accounts had been opened under the Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana,

bringing millions into formal banking for the first time. At the same time, India created one of the world's most efficient payment systems. UPI now processes billions of transactions every month, lowering transaction costs, improving transparency and supporting ease of doing business. This digital architecture has widened the deposit base, strengthened compliance, and improved credit assessment through stronger data trails.

Conclusion

A strong banking sector is not built through shortcuts. It is built through transparency, discipline, and long-term institutional building. The Modi era stands out for addressing legacy stress without deferral, strengthening bank capital, modernising recovery systems through the IBC, enforcing accountability, consolidating institutions, and expanding digital finance at scale.

Indian banking did not merely recover. It emerged stronger, cleaner and more resilient; ready to finance the ambitions of a confident Viksit Bharat.

India stands at a critical point in its economic journey. As the country approaches its centenary of Independence, employment generation and social protection have emerged as two key pillars for achieving the vision of Viksit Bharat. Over the past 11 years, despite global turbulences, including the COVID-19 pandemic, geopolitical tensions, and tariff wars, India has remained the fastest-growing major economy. Having been the 10th-largest economy in 2014, India has already become the 4th-largest economy in the world and is rapidly approaching third place under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

This progress has been driven by a series of structural reforms and flagship initiatives such as Make in India, Skill India, Digital India, and a sustained push for infrastructure development. Together, these efforts have generated a significant momentum in employment creation. According to RBI KLEMS data, only 2.9 crore jobs were created between 2004 and 2014, whereas over 17 crore jobs were generated between 2014 and 2024. PLFS data shows that the employment rate increased from 46.8 per cent in 2017-18 to 58.2 per cent in 2023-24, while the unemployment rate

Labour Reforms, Employment Growth, and Social Security in New India

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declined from 6 per cent to 3.2 per cent, much below the global average of 4.8%. EPFO data further indicate that more than 8 crore formal-sector jobs have been created over the last eight years.

Equally important has been the expansion of social protection. According to the ILO database, social protection coverage in India has increased from 19% in 2015 to 64.3% in 2025, covering over 94 crore people under at least one welfare scheme, placing India second globally in terms of the number of beneficiaries.

This progress is the result of sustained policy focus on improving the ease of doing business and ease of living. Financial inclusion expanded rapidly through the JAM trinity (Jan Dhan–Aadhaar–Mobile), with account ownership rising from 35 per cent in 2011 to 89 per cent in 2024. The Direct Benefit Transfer system has led to savings of nearly ₹3.48 lakh crore by removing leakages and ensuring benefits reach beneficiaries directly.

Together, these reforms have laid the foundation for stronger, more inclusive growth. Despite India’s rapid progress, certain structural constraints continue to limit the country’s ability to realise its full potential. Among the most significant of these was the labour sector, which remained governed by age-old laws and regulations.

Breaking the Colonial Mindset

As part of the Panch Pran announced in 2022, PM Modi articulated a resolve to shed the colonial mindset that has shaped many of India’s institutions. India’s labour laws were a clear example of this colonial legacy. Several of the labour laws date back to the 1920s and 1950s and were designed for an industrial economy that no longer reflects contemporary realities.

Over time, the nature of work changed with the expansion of the IT sector, platform-based employment, and the digital economy. However, India continued to operate under 29 fragmented Central labour laws. This resulted in regulatory

complexity, uncertainty for workers and employers, difficult compliance, and limited social protection.

To address these challenges, the Central Government consolidated the existing laws into four progressive Labour Codes: the Code on Wages, the Code on Industrial Relations, the Code on Social Security, and the Occupational Safety, Health and Working Conditions Code. Together, these Codes provide a simplified and coherent labour framework aligned with current economic conditions. The notification of the Labour Codes on 21 November 2025 marked a decisive move away from colonial-era labour regulations.

Pro-Worker Reforms

The Labour Codes, in letter and spirit, prioritise the interests of workers while balancing the expectations of industry. For instance, the Code establishes a statutory right to minimum wages for all workers, linked to a national floor wage notified by the Central Government. This is intended to reduce inter-State wage disparities and improve living standards.

It also ensures full wages for part-time workers, overtime payments at twice the regular wage rate, and timely wage payment. These provisions protect workers from delayed payments and underpayment.

The introduction of Fixed Term Employment offers an alternative to excessive contractualization. Fixed-term employees are entitled to the same service conditions as permanent employees, most notably gratuity after one year of service, thereby enhancing their job security and dignity in time-bound employment.

The codes expand social security coverage to all workers. Pan-India ESIC coverage has been extended, with mandatory coverage for units engaged in hazardous activities even with a single employee, and voluntary coverage for establishments with fewer than ten workers. Mandatory health check-ups for workers aged 40 and above have been provided for. The codes also mandate that employers issue appointment letters

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The Labour Codes mark a shift from outdated labour laws to a framework suited for today's economy.
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and pay slips, and provide paid leave, to further strengthen employment security for workers.

Gig and Platform Workers

The growth of the digital economy has created new forms of work that fall outside traditional definitions of employment. Delivery workers, cab drivers, freelancers, and creative professionals operate through digital platforms but often lack formal protection.

According to the Economic Survey 2025-26, gig workers account for 2% of India's workforce and are projected to reach 6.7% by 2029-30. The number of gig workers increased from 77 lakh in FY21 to 120 lakh in FY25, driven by smartphone usage among over 80 crore users and nearly 15 billion UPI transactions per month.

The Code on Social Security, 2020, provides legal recognition to gig workers, platform workers, and aggregators, in line with ILO recommendations. It extends social security coverage to these workers, positioning India among the leading countries to do so.

The code laid the groundwork for a dedicated social security fund, financed through contributions from aggregators (1-2% of annual turnover, capped at 5% of the amount payable to gig and platform workers), and intended to support this segment of workers. In addition, accidents occurring while travelling between home and workplace will be treated as employment-related, making workers eligible for compensation.

Improving Women's Workforce Participation

Women's participation is a key focus of the Labour Codes. Under the new Labour Codes, women are permitted to work across all sectors, including those previously restricted, subject to consent and safety provisions. This reform aims to increase workforce participation and economic inclusion.

Women employees are entitled to equal pay for equal work; mandatory representation of women in leadership positions and on Grievance Redressal Committees; guaranteed maternity benefits; flexibility to work from home; and a medical bonus of up to ₹3,500 if pre- and post-natal care is not

provided by the employer. Overall, the codes aim at strengthening maternity support and health security.

Pro-Growth Reforms

For employers, the Codes simplify compliance through single registration, licensing, and return filing, reducing regulatory burden, limiting discretion, and encouraging investment and job creation.

An SBI report estimates that the full implementation of the Labour Codes will increase formalisation of the workforce by at least 15 per cent, expand social security coverage to 85 per cent, generate 77 lakh additional jobs, while boosting consumption by ₹75,000 crore over the medium term.

The Labour Codes mark a shift from outdated labour laws to a framework suited for today's economy. They address gig and platform work, expand social security, improve women's participation, and balance worker protections with employer flexibility. As India moves towards becoming a Viksit Bharat by 2047, the new labour codes will serve as a critical catalyst for expanding India's economic infrastructure.

GST is one of those moments in our nation's history that catalyses economic growth and helps us reach the milestone of a 10 trillion-dollar economy by 2047.

Goods and Services Tax (GST) was introduced on 1st July 2017, replacing a range of pre-existing taxes such as VAT, service tax, central excise duty, entertainment tax, and octroi. GST unified the country's tax structure, simplifying the taxation of goods and services and eliminating the need for multiple taxes previously levied by both central and state governments. GST is a comprehensive, multistage, and destination-based tax.

The tax is multi-staged: it is levied at each stage of the production process and refunded to all parties involved, except the final consumer. Its destination-based nature means the tax is collected at the point of consumption rather than at the point of origin, marking a significant departure from prior tax systems.

From Tax Reform to Economic Scale

The GST Story

Prasanna Rajesh Kalavar

CA Aspirant and
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Syncing Indian GST to global standards

India has been a member of the World Customs Organisation (WCO) since 1971. From the outset, India originally used 6-digit HSN codes to classify commodities for Customs and Central Excise. The Customs and Central Excise eventually added two more digits to make the codes more precise, resulting in an 8-digit classification. The purpose of HSN codes is to make GST systematic and globally accepted.

The Harmonised System of Nomenclature (HSN) code is used for classifying goods under the Goods and Services Tax (GST) in India. The HSN code is a six-digit code that uniquely identifies a product. The first two digits of the code identify the chapter, the next two digits identify the heading, and the last two digits identify the subheading.

HSN codes eliminate the need to upload detailed descriptions of goods, thereby saving time and simplifying the filing process, especially as GST returns are increasingly automated

If a company has a turnover of up to ₹1.5 crore in the preceding financial year, it need not mention the HSN code on invoices for goods supplied. If a company has a turnover between ₹1.5 crore and ₹5 crore, it must mention the first two digits of the HSN code when supplying goods. On invoices, the HSN code must include the first 4 digits.

Formalisation due to GST is twofold: as things have become more tech-oriented, it helps businesses complete due diligence sooner. Also, the timeliness of tax due dates is easy to track, as they are set for specific dates each month. The benefits of this type of tax system for the economy and the states are that it promotes consumption and provides a reliable, high-yield monthly revenue stream.

Tax compliance under GST is stricter and more punitive if not met on time, so delaying GST payments results in fines and penalties, creating accountability and a fear of non-compliance. Timely compliance enables valid claims and deductions of Input tax credit (ITC), saving the business significant money and supporting production.

GST is beneficial for supporting exports as well. As India is a current account deficit economy and a developing nation, higher exports benefit the economy; hence, with GST, this is becoming a reality. In the last financial year alone, India's total exports amounted to \$824.9 billion, making a significant contribution to GDP.

As GST on exports is 0%, it provides a double benefit to the producer: a lighter tax burden and the option to claim the amount spent on raw materials as a deduction, thereby realising the benefits of ITC. In India, the total GST collection for the 2024–2025 financial year was rupees 20.18 lakh crore, with an average monthly figure consistently above rupees 1.5 lakh crore.

The recent GST rate amendments on September 22nd, 2025, make GST more beneficial to the end consumer by making essential daily goods more affordable and adding more value within the same budget. This, along with the recent changes to income tax slabs, gives the average household more money to save and spend, supporting the nation's development and growth by boosting and liberalising consumer spending.

As we look toward the remainder of 2026, the government is pushing for the "Final Frontier" of GST:

1. **Inclusion of Petroleum:** Bringing petrol, diesel, and aviation turbine fuel under GST to allow for a full flow of input tax credits across the economy.
2. **GST Appellate Tribunal (GSTAT):** Fully operationalising the GSTAT to speed up the resolution of thousands of pending tax disputes.
3. **Artificial Intelligence:** Using AI and Machine Learning within the GSTN to predict tax defaults and identify "circular trading" fraud in real-time.

For many years, India's economic story was one of missed chances. Potential was visible, but decisions were delayed. Problems were acknowledged, but hard choices were avoided. A culture of "chalta hai" quietly settled into policymaking, and the cost of that hesitation was paid by the youth in the form of fewer opportunities, weaker institutions, and constant uncertainty.

The year 2014 marked a clear break from that past. It was not just a change in government; it was a change in approach. Under Prime Minister Narendra Modi, economic decision-making shifted from managing problems to confronting them. The focus moved from postponement to reform. The message was simple but firm: if India wants to grow with confidence, it must fix its foundations, even when the process is uncomfortable.

This decade of economic reforms was not about headlines. It was about discipline.

From Hesitation to Discipline

How Economic Reforms Changed India

Santhati Srinavya

SEC, BJYM Andhra Pradesh



Formalisation: From Informality to Economic Citizenship

Before 2014, India's economy was active, but much of it operated in the shadows. Cash transactions were common. Records were avoided. Informality often felt easier than compliance. This created an unfair system in which honest businesses were punished and shortcuts rewarded.

Formalisation did not arrive as a single order. It came through technology and systems. Digital payments expanded rapidly. Tax registration increased. Reforms such as GST brought businesses into a shared, transparent framework, while UPI turned mobile phones into tools for economic participation.

The impact is visible:

- UPI transactions grew from near-zero in 2016 to over 100 billion transactions annually
- Income tax return filers increased from about 3.8 crore in 2013-14 to more than 7 crore
- GST registrations crossed 1.4 crore businesses

This is not just about compliance. It is about economic citizenship, where every Indian contributes honestly to national growth.

Banking Discipline & IBC: A Moral Reset

A decade ago, India faced a crisis that went beyond numbers. Big borrowers defaulted freely. Banks absorbed losses. The common citizen paid the price. This was not only an economic failure; it was a failure of fairness.

The Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (IBC) 2016 changed this culture. For the first time, default had consequences. Promoters lost control. Resolution replaced endless delay.

The results are clear:

- ₹3 lakh crore+ recovered through insolvency processes
- Gross NPAs reduced from around 11% in 2018 to nearly 3-4%

This reform restored trust. It told young Indians something important that the law is taller than influence, and responsibility applies equally.

MSMEs: From Survival to Scale

Small businesses are the backbone of India's economy. Yet for years, many were left to struggle in an informal, underfunded, and invisible way.

The reform approach changed the narrative. Through improved access to credit and formal financial systems, MSMEs were brought closer to the mainstream. Initiatives such as MUDRA helped first-time borrowers access formal finance.

The outcomes speak for themselves:

- ₹20 lakh crore+ credit sanctioned to MSMEs
- Millions of small businesses accessing formal loans



- Better cash flow and payment discipline

The message was clear: you don't have to be a giant to contribute. India's big dreams rest on the strength of its small enterprises.

Startups: From Job Seekers to Job Creators

A decade ago, risk was discouraged. Failure carried stigma. Today, that mindset has shifted. Entrepreneurship is no longer seen as reckless; it is seen as necessary.

With initiatives like Startup India, innovation found space to grow. The result has been a startup movement that extends far beyond metro cities.

- Recognised startups grew from a few hundred in 2014 to over 1 lakh
- India became the third-largest startup ecosystem globally
- Tier-2 and Tier-3 cities emerged as centres of innovation

Indian youth are no longer waiting for opportunities. They started creating them.

A Karyakarta's View from the Ground

A BJYM karyakarta from Vizianagaram, A.P recently shared a simple observation:

"In 2011, my father spent weeks running around just to get a basic trade licence. Today, my younger brother started a digital services firm from our home with an Aadhaar card and a phone. The system now works with us, not against us."

This is what reform looks like on the ground quiet, practical, and transformative.

India's Global Confidence

Economic reforms also reshaped how the world sees India. Stability improved. Institutions strengthened. Confidence replaced caution.

- Foreign exchange reserves grew from about \$300 billion in 2014 to over \$600 billion at peak
- India remained among the fastest-growing major economies even after global disruptions

Self-reliance was redefined—not as isolation, but as strength built at home and confidence in engagement abroad.

Our Kartavya Kaal

The last decade was about correcting what India had tolerated for too long. Economic hesitation gave way to economic discipline. Systems were strengthened, accountability returned, and confidence replaced caution. These reforms did not merely change policies; they changed behaviour.

India today stands on a far stronger economic foundation than it did a decade ago. Formalisation has expanded participation, banking discipline has restored trust, entrepreneurship has found space to grow, and India's global standing has risen with credibility. These are not temporary gains; they are structural shifts that will shape the country's future for decades.

But reforms alone do not build a nation. They only create the ground on which a nation can rise. This phase, Kartavya Kaal, demands more than appreciation. It demands participation. For India's youth, especially those entering public life, enterprise, and leadership, the responsibility is clear: use these systems with integrity, drive them with ambition, and carry them forward with discipline.

The era of hesitation is over. The era of responsibility has begun.

नीतिगत साहस से वैश्विक विश्वास तक भारत की आर्थिक परिवर्तन कथा

अमन राव
अधिवक्ता

मई 2014 से पहले, वैश्विक मंचों पर भारत की छवि 'पॉलिटी पैरालिसिस' और घोटालों से घिरे देश की थी, दुनिया का भरोसा भारत से उठ चुका था। लेकिन पिछले एक दशक में प्रधानमंत्री नरेंद्र मोदी के नेतृत्व में भारत ने न केवल अपनी अर्थव्यवस्था को संभाला, बल्कि उसे विश्व की पाँचवीं सबसे बड़ी आर्थिक शक्ति बना दिया। यह यात्रा महज आंकड़ों की नहीं, बल्कि एक वैचारिक परिवर्तन की है—जहाँ 'शॉर्टकट की राजनीति' को त्यागकर 'दीर्घकालिक सुधारों' का मार्ग चुना गया।

एक दशक के प्रमुख संरचनात्मक सुधार पिछले एक दशक में भारतीय अर्थव्यवस्था ने नीतिगत बदलावों और व्यापक संरचनात्मक सुधारों के माध्यम से एक महत्वपूर्ण यात्रा तय की है। इन सुधारों का मुख्य केंद्र अर्थव्यवस्था को संगठित करना,

व्यापारिक प्रक्रियाओं को सरल बनाना और भारत को वैश्विक विनिर्माण केंद्र के रूप में स्थापित करना रहा है। इन दूरगामी परिवर्तनों ने न केवल घरेलू बाजार की कार्यक्षमता को बढ़ाया है, बल्कि अंतरराष्ट्रीय स्तर पर भारत की आर्थिक साख को भी मजबूत किया है। आर्थिक सुधारों की इस कड़ी में वस्तु एवं सेवा कर (GST) का क्रियान्वयन सबसे प्रभावशाली कदम माना जाता है। 2017 में लागू हुए इस सुधार ने भारत के जटिल और बहुस्तरीय कर ढांचे को समाप्त कर एक एकीकृत बाजार की नींव रखी। "एक राष्ट्र, एक कर" के सिद्धांत पर आधारित इस प्रणाली ने राज्यों के बीच व्यापारिक बाधाओं को दूर किया और रसद की दक्षता में सुधार किया। हालांकि इसके शुरुआती चरण में कुछ तकनीकी चुनौतियां आईं, लेकिन समय के साथ इसने कर आधार को व्यापक बनाने और अर्थव्यवस्था में पारदर्शिता लाने में सफलता प्राप्त की है।

बैंकिंग और वित्तीय क्षेत्र में दिवाला और दिवालियापन संहिता ने एक ऐतिहासिक परिवर्तन किया। इससे पहले, भारत में संकटग्रस्त संपत्तियों के समाधान की प्रक्रिया अत्यधिक लंबी और जटिल थी। 2016 में पेश किए गए इस कानून ने कंपनियों के निकास के लिए एक समयबद्ध ढांचा प्रदान किया, जिससे बैंकों को अपने फंड से हुए कर्ज को वसूलने में मदद मिली। इसके साथ ही, सार्वजनिक क्षेत्र के बैंकों का एकीकरण और पुनर्पूँजीकरण करने से वित्तीय प्रणाली अधिक लचीली और मजबूत हुई है, जो सतत आर्थिक विकास के लिए अनिवार्य योजनाएं शुरू की गई हैं। पीएलआई योजना के तहत 14 महत्वपूर्ण क्षेत्रों को लक्षित किया गया है।

डिजिटल बुनियादी ढांचे के विकास ने भारतीय अर्थव्यवस्था के निचले स्तर तक पहुँचने के तरीके को पूरी तरह बदल दिया है।

विनिर्माण का नया युग: मेक इन इंडिया प्रधानमंत्री मोदी ने 'मेक इन इंडिया' का जो आह्वान किया था, वह आज जमीन पर उतर रहा है। पीएलआई स्कीम के माध्यम से भारत अब केवल असेंबली लाइन नहीं, बल्कि एक मैन्युफैक्चरिंग हब बन रहा है। मोबाइल निर्माण में हम दुनिया में दूसरे स्थान पर हैं। स्टार्टअप और मुद्रा योजना भी युवाओं के लिए गर्व का विषय है कि आज भारत दुनिया का तीसरा सबसे बड़ा स्टार्टअप इकोसिस्टम है। स्टार्टअप इंडिया और मुद्रा योजना ने भारत के युवाओं को 'जाँब सीकर' से 'जाँब



क्रिएटर' बना दिया है। मुद्रा योजना के तहत दिए गए करोड़ों ऋणों में से 70% से अधिक महिलाएं हैं, जो यह दर्शाता है कि यह आर्थिक सुधार 'महिला-नीत विकास' को भी नई ऊर्जा दे रहे हैं।

जीएसटी और बैंकिंग सुधार: 'एक राष्ट्र, एक बाजार' और विकसित भारत की नई आर्थिक नींव प्रस्तावना: खंडित बाजार से एकीकृत शक्ति तक 1 जुलाई, 2017 की उस आधी रात को जब संसद के केंद्रीय कक्ष में घंटा बजा, तो वह केवल एक नए कर कानून की शुरुआत नहीं थी, बल्कि आधुनिक भारत के आर्थिक एकीकरण का शंखनाद था। मोदी सरकार के सबसे साहसी आर्थिक सुधारों में से एक, 'वस्तु एवं सेवा कर' (GST) ने सदियों पुरानी उस जटिल व्यवस्था को ध्वस्त कर दिया जहाँ भारत अपनी ही सीमाओं के भीतर 'चुंगी' और 'नाकों' में बंटा हुआ था। आज जीएसटी के सात वर्षों के सफल सफर के बाद, भारत न केवल 'एक राष्ट्र, एक कर' बल्कि 'एक बाजार' के रूप में विश्व पटल पर अपनी धमक दिखा रहा है।

आर्थिक सुधार और मोदी सरकार का विजन प्रधानमंत्री नरेंद्र मोदी के नेतृत्व में जीएसटी केवल राजस्व संग्रहण का साधन नहीं, बल्कि भारत की संघीय संरचना को सशक्त करने वाला एक 'सहकारी संघवाद' का उत्कृष्ट उदाहरण बन गया है। पहले की व्यवस्था में केंद्र और राज्यों के बीच करों का जो टकराव होता था, उसे 'जीएसटी परिषद' ने एक साझा मंच प्रदान कर समाप्त कर दिया। यह दुनिया का संभवतः पहला ऐसा प्रयोग है जहाँ केंद्र और सभी राज्य मिलकर सर्वसम्मति से आर्थिक निर्णय लेते हैं। हाल ही में चर्चा में आया 'जीएसटी 2.0' और कर स्लैब को सरल बनाने (जैसे 5% और 18% की दो-स्तरीय संरचना की ओर बढ़ना) का प्रयास इसी सुधार प्रक्रिया की अगली कड़ी है।

कर अनुपालन में क्रांतिकारी बदलाव जीएसटी के आने से पहले भारत की अर्थव्यवस्था का एक बड़ा हिस्सा 'असंगठित' था। कच्चा बिल और कर चोरी एक सामान्य प्रक्रिया बन चुकी थी। मोदी सरकार ने 'टेक्नोलॉजी-ड्रिवन' सिस्टम के माध्यम से इस पर प्रहार किया।

- पंजीकरण में वृद्धि: जीएसटी लागू होने के समय करदाताओं की संख्या लगभग 65 लाख थी, जो अब बढ़कर 1.5 करोड़ के पार पहुँच गई है।
- पारदर्शिता और ई-इनवॉइसिंग: ई-वे बिल और अनिवार्य ई-इनवॉइसिंग ने 'इंस्पेक्टर राज' को खत्म किया है। अब डेटा ही कर अनुपालन का आधार है, जिससे राजस्व में रिकॉर्ड बढ़ोतरी हुई है (औसत मासिक संग्रह ₹1.70 लाख करोड़ से ऊपर बना हुआ है)।
- 'ईज ऑफ़ डूइंग बिजनेस' का असली इंजन व्यापार करने की सुगमता के मामले में जीएसटी ने भारत की वैश्विक रैंकिंग सुधारने में महत्वपूर्ण भूमिका निभाई है।
- कैस्केडिंग प्रभाव का अंत: पहले 'कर पर कर' लगता था, जिससे वस्तुओं की लागत कृत्रिम रूप से बढ़ जाती थी। जीएसटी ने 'इनपुट टैक्स क्रेडिट' के माध्यम से इस बोझ को कम किया, जिससे भारतीय उत्पाद वैश्विक बाजार में प्रतिस्पर्धी बने।
- लॉजिस्टिक्स में सुधार: पहले ट्रक औसतन 20% से 30% समय अंतर्राज्यीय सीमाओं पर कागजी कार्रवाई और जांच में बिताते

- थे। जीएसटी और ई-वे बिल ने इन बाधाओं को हटाया, जिससे माल की आवाजाही तेज हुई और लॉजिस्टिक्स लागत में कमी आई।
- MSMEs के लिए वरदान: संरचना योजना और तिमाही रिटर्न जैसे प्रावधानों ने छोटे व्यापारियों के लिए अनुपालन के बोझ को कम किया है, जिससे वे अपने मुख्य व्यवसाय पर अधिक ध्यान दे पा रहे हैं।

सहकारी संघवाद का नया चेहरा जीएसटी ने केंद्र-राज्य संबंधों को एक नई दिशा दी है। राजनीतिक मतभेदों के बावजूद, जीएसटी परिषद में लिए गए निर्णय इस बात का प्रमाण हैं कि जब राष्ट्रहित की बात आती है, तो भारत की संघीय इकाइयां एक साथ खड़ी होती हैं। राज्यों को मिलने वाली क्षतिपूर्ति और राजस्व में स्थिरता ने उन्हें विकास कार्यों के लिए अधिक वित्तीय स्वायत्तता प्रदान की है।

विकसित भारत 2047 : प्रधानमंत्री नरेंद्र मोदी द्वारा किए गए ये सुधार समावेशी हैं। भारतीय अर्थव्यवस्था को \$30 ट्रिलियन (30 लाख करोड़ डॉलर) तक ले जाने का लक्ष्य कोई सामान्य आंकड़ा नहीं है, बल्कि यह 2047 तक 'विकसित भारत' बनने का एक विस्तृत रोडमैप है। इसे वर्तमान स्थिति से भविष्य की ओर एक लंबी छलांग के रूप में देखा जा रहा है, \$30 ट्रिलियन की अर्थव्यवस्था का अर्थ केवल पैसा नहीं है, बल्कि इसका अर्थ है—हर भारतीय के जीवन स्तर में सुधार, गरीबी का पूर्ण उन्मूलन और वैश्विक मंच पर भारत की निर्णायक भूमिका। यह 'आत्मनिर्भर भारत' के संकल्प की पराकाष्ठा है।

वहीं दूसरी ओर 'विश्वकर्मा' और 'लखपति दीदी' जैसी योजनाओं से यह सुनिश्चित करते हैं कि विकास की किरण समाज के अंतिम व्यक्ति तक पहुँचे। यह गौरवगाथा 140 करोड़ भारतीयों के परिश्रम और विश्वास की है। युवा पीढ़ी के कंधों पर अब इन सुधारों को गति देने की जिम्मेदारी है, ताकि हम 2047 तक 'विकसित भारत' के संकल्प को सिद्ध कर सकें।

आर्थिक सुधारों का दशक विकसित भारत की मजबूत नींव

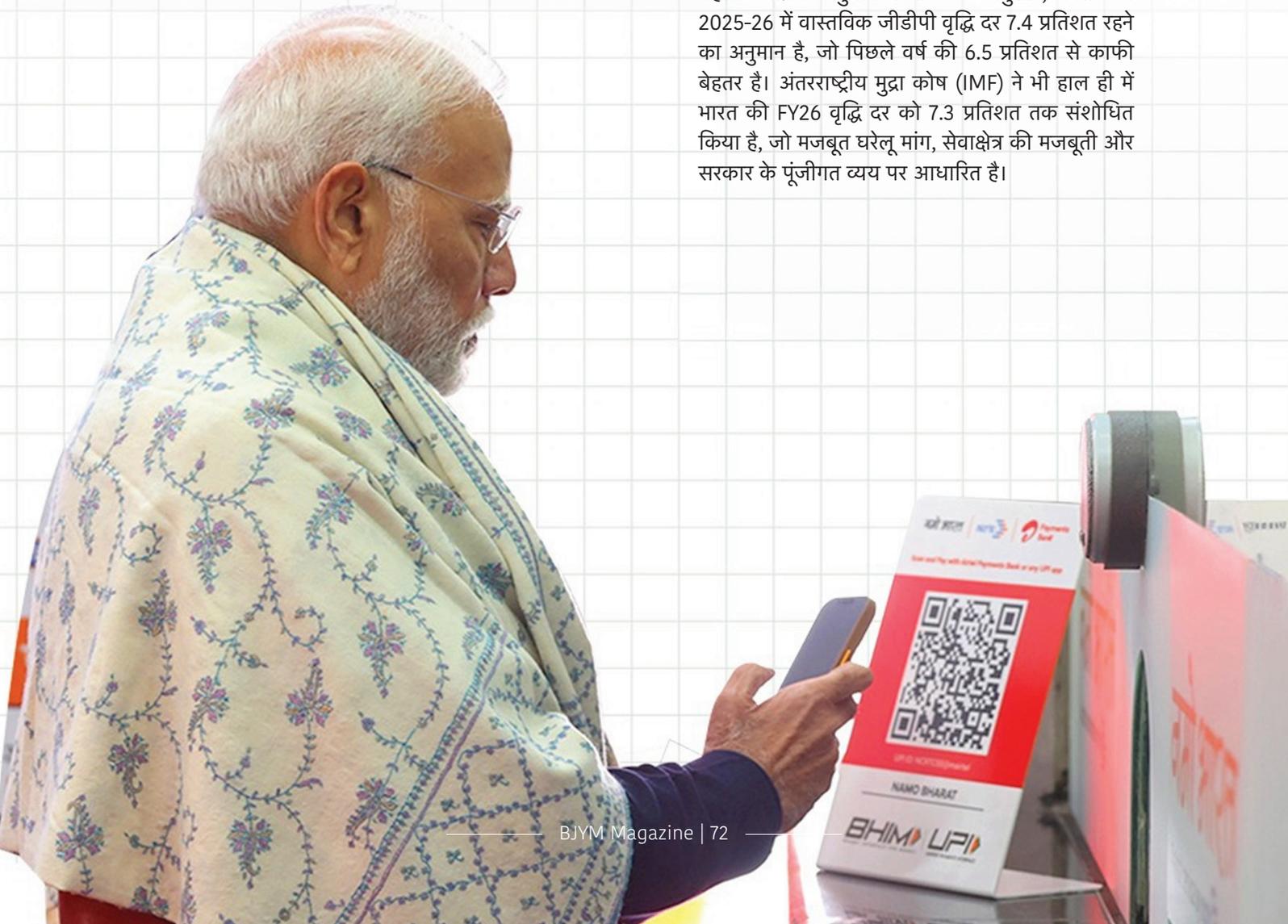
यश विकास उपाध्याय

इतिहास और पत्रकारिता की
पृष्ठभूमि वाले मीडिया प्रोफेशनल

वर्ष 2014 से भारत की अर्थव्यवस्था में एक अभूतपूर्व क्रांति देखने को मिलती है। अब वह दौर है जब राष्ट्र ने अपनी आर्थिक संप्रभुता को मजबूत करने का संकल्प लिया। पहले की दशकों की नीतिगत सुस्ती, बैंकिंग क्षेत्र का एनपीए संकट, अपर्याप्त इंफ्रास्ट्रक्चर और निवेशकों का घटता विश्वास—ये सब चुनौतियाँ थीं जो भारत को विकास की मुख्यधारा से दूर रख रही थीं। लेकिन आदरणीय प्रधानमंत्री नरेंद्र मोदी जी के दृढ़ संकल्पित नेतृत्व में भाजपा सरकार ने इन चुनौतियों को अवसर में बदल दिया। राष्ट्रवादी दृष्टिकोण से लिए गए निर्णयों ने अर्थव्यवस्था को न केवल स्थिर किया, बल्कि इसे वैश्विक पटल पर तेजी से उभरती शक्ति बनाया। इन सुधारों का मूल मंत्र था—आत्मनिर्भर भारत, जहां विकास समावेशी हो, पारदर्शी हो और दीर्घकालिक हो। यही नींव है विकसित भारत@2047 की, जब भारत 10 ट्रिलियन डॉलर से अधिक की अर्थव्यवस्था बनकर विश्व गुरु की भूमिका निभाएगा।

मजबूत होती आर्थिक वृद्धि और मैक्रो-स्थिरता

वैश्विक अनिश्चितताओं, युद्धों, महंगाई और व्यापारिक बाधाओं के बावजूद भारत की आर्थिक गति अडिग है। सांख्यिकी एवं कार्यक्रम कार्यान्वयन मंत्रालय (MoSPI) की पहली अग्रिम अनुमान रिपोर्ट के अनुसार, वित्त वर्ष 2025-26 में वास्तविक जीडीपी वृद्धि दर 7.4 प्रतिशत रहने का अनुमान है, जो पिछले वर्ष की 6.5 प्रतिशत से काफी बेहतर है। अंतरराष्ट्रीय मुद्रा कोष (IMF) ने भी हाल ही में भारत की FY26 वृद्धि दर को 7.3 प्रतिशत तक संशोधित किया है, जो मजबूत घरेलू मांग, सेवाक्षेत्र की मजबूती और सरकार के पूंजीगत व्यय पर आधारित है।



रिजर्व बैंक ऑफ इंडिया (RBI) ने भी FY26 के लिए 7.3 प्रतिशत का अनुमान जताया है। महंगाई पर काबू, राजकोषीय अनुशासन और रिकॉर्ड विदेशी मुद्रा भंडार (जो वैश्विक झटकों से सुरक्षा प्रदान करते हैं) ने भारत को आर्थिक संप्रभुता का प्रतीक बना दिया है। यह राष्ट्र की ताकत है कि हम वैश्विक मंदी में भी विकास की गति बनाए रखे हुए हैं।

जीएसटी: 'वन नेशन, वन मार्केट' की मजबूत नींव

वस्तु एवं सेवा कर (GST) स्वतंत्र भारत का सबसे बड़ा कर क्रांति है, जिसने देश को एक साझा बाजार में बदल दिया। यह सुधार संघीय ढांचे को मजबूत करते हुए व्यापार को सरल, तेज और पारदर्शी बनाता है। प्रेस इंफॉर्मेशन ब्यूरो (PIB) के अनुसार, वित्त वर्ष 2024-25 में सकल GST संग्रह रिकॉर्ड ₹22.08 लाख करोड़ रहा, जो 9.4 प्रतिशत की वार्षिक वृद्धि दर्शाता है। दिसंबर 2025 तक FY25-26 में संग्रह की गति और तेज हुई है, जहां दिसंबर में ही ₹1.74 लाख करोड़ से अधिक का संग्रह हुआ। ई-इनवॉयसिंग, डिजिटल रिटर्न और बेहतर अनुपालन ने भ्रष्टाचार को कम किया और कर आधार को विस्तार दिया। GST ने 'वन नेशन, वन टैक्स' के सपने को साकार कर राष्ट्र की आर्थिक एकता को मजबूत किया है।

औपचारिक अर्थव्यवस्था और डिजिटल पब्लिक इंफ्रास्ट्रक्चर

मोदी सरकार की सबसे बड़ी उपलब्धि है डिजिटल पब्लिक इंफ्रास्ट्रक्चर, जो जन-धन, आधार और मोबाइल (JAM) त्रयी पर टिका है। इसने करोड़ों गरीबों को बैंकिंग से जोड़ा और वित्तीय समावेशन को नई ऊंचाई दी। NPCI के नवीनतम आंकड़ों के अनुसार, दिसंबर 2025 में UPI ने रिकॉर्ड 21.63 बिलियन लेन-देन किए, जिनकी कुल मूल्य ₹27.97 ट्रिलियन रही। पूरे वर्ष 2025 में UPI ने 228 बिलियन लेन-देन किए, जिनकी मूल्य ₹300 ट्रिलियन के करीब पहुंची। इससे छोटे दुकानदार, स्ट्रीट वेंडर, किसान और ग्रामीण अर्थव्यवस्था डिजिटल मुख्यधारा में शामिल हुई। डायरेक्ट बेनिफिट ट्रांसफर (DBT) ने योजनाओं में लीकेज को लगभग समाप्त कर दिया, जिससे लाभ सीधे गरीबों तक पहुंचा। यह डिजिटल क्रांति राष्ट्र की एकता और समृद्धि का प्रतीक है।

मेक इन इंडिया, आत्मनिर्भर भारत और PLI योजना

मेक इन इंडिया और आत्मनिर्भर भारत ने आयात निर्भरता को चुनौती दी और स्वदेशी उत्पादन को बढ़ावा दिया। प्रोडक्शन लिंकड इंसेंटिव (PLI) योजनाओं ने इलेक्ट्रॉनिक्स, फार्मा, ऑटोमोबाइल, सेमीकंडक्टर, नवीकरणीय ऊर्जा जैसे 14 रणनीतिक क्षेत्रों में निवेश को प्रोत्साहन दिया। PIB के अनुसार, PLI के तहत अब तक ₹1.76 लाख करोड़ का निवेश हुआ है, 12 लाख से अधिक रोजगार सृजित हुए और उत्पादन ₹16.5 लाख करोड़ से अधिक पहुंचा। इलेक्ट्रॉनिक्स में भारत अब मोबाइल फोन का बड़ा निर्यातक बन गया है, जबकि फार्मा में API उत्पादन में आत्मनिर्भरता बढ़ी है। यह योजना राष्ट्र की औद्योगिक स्वतंत्रता और वैश्विक मूल्य श्रृंखला में मजबूत स्थिति का प्रमाण है।

MSME, स्टार्ट-अप और उद्यमिता का विस्तार

भाजपा सरकार ने MSME को अर्थव्यवस्था का इंजन माना। मुद्रा

योजना के तहत करोड़ों छोटे उद्यमियों को आसान ऋण मिला, स्टार्ट-अप इंडिया ने नवाचार को बढ़ावा दिया। आज भारत दुनिया का तीसरा सबसे बड़ा स्टार्ट-अप इकोसिस्टम है। MSME क्षेत्र रोजगार सृजन, निर्यात और ग्रामीण विकास में अहम भूमिका निभा रहा है। यह युवा भारत की उद्यमशीलता और स्वावलंबन की जयकार है। बैंकिंग और दिवालियापन सुधार

दिवाला और शोधन अक्षमता संहिता (IBC) ने बैंकिंग में अनुशासन बहाल किया। एनपीए स्तर में भारी गिरावट आई, बैंकों की बैलेंस शीट मजबूत हुई। पुनर्पूजीकरण और सुधारों ने ऋण देने की क्षमता बढ़ाई, जिससे अर्थव्यवस्था में क्रेडिट प्रवाह सुचारु हुआ। यह सुधार आर्थिक स्थिरता की राष्ट्रवादी नीति का हिस्सा है।

इंफ्रास्ट्रक्चर आधारित विकास

पिछले दशक में सरकार ने इंफ्रास्ट्रक्चर को विकास की धुरी बनाया। सड़क, रेल, बंदरगाह, हवाई अड्डे, ऊर्जा और लॉजिस्टिक्स में भारी निवेश से रोजगार सृजन हुआ और उद्योगों की लागत घटी। बॉर्डर रोड्स ऑर्गनाइजेशन (BRO) ने सीमावर्ती क्षेत्रों को जोड़कर राष्ट्रीय सुरक्षा और विकास को मजबूत किया। इंफ्रास्ट्रक्चर पर खर्च का बहुगुणक प्रभाव अर्थव्यवस्था को दीर्घकालिक मजबूती देता है।

कल्याण और समावेशी विकास

आर्थिक सुधारों के साथ लक्षित कल्याण योजनाओं पर जोर दिया गया। PM-KISAN, आयुष्मान भारत, उज्ज्वला, जन धन—ये सभी DBT से जुड़ी योजनाएँ गरीब, किसान, महिलाओं और कमजोर वर्गों तक सीधे लाभ पहुंचाती हैं। विकास और सामाजिक न्याय का संतुलन भाजपा सरकार की पहचान है, जो 'सबका साथ, सबका विकास, सबका विश्वास' के मंत्र को साकार करता है।

आगे की राह: विकसित भारत 2047

पिछले दस वर्षों के सुधारों ने भारत को विश्व की सबसे तेजी से बढ़ती अर्थव्यवस्था बनाया। अब लक्ष्य 2047 तक विकसित भारत है—एक ऐसा भारत जो 10 ट्रिलियन डॉलर से अधिक की अर्थव्यवस्था हो, जहां हर नागरिक समृद्ध हो। इसके लिए सुधारों की निरंतरता, कौशल विकास, तकनीकी नवाचार, हरित ऊर्जा और वैश्विक एकीकरण जरूरी है। हम 'अमृत काल' में प्रवेश कर चुके हैं, जहां सपने साकार हो रहे हैं।

मेक इन इंडिया और आत्मनिर्भर भारत विनिर्माण पुनर्जागरण

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भारत आज विश्व की सबसे तेजी से उभरती अर्थव्यवस्थाओं में से एक है। स्वतंत्रता के बाद लंबे समय तक भारत मुख्यतः सेवा क्षेत्र और कृषि आधारित अर्थव्यवस्था के रूप में विकसित होता रहा, जबकि औद्योगिक एवं विनिर्माण क्षेत्र अपेक्षित गति प्राप्त नहीं कर सका। इसी ऐतिहासिक पृष्ठभूमि में वर्ष 2014 में “मेक इन इंडिया” और वर्ष 2020 में “आत्मनिर्भर भारत” जैसे दूरदर्शी अभियानों की शुरुआत की गई, जिनका उद्देश्य भारत को एक वैश्विक विनिर्माण केंद्र के रूप में स्थापित करना है।

मेक इन इंडिया: औद्योगिक पुनर्जागरण की आधारशिला

“मेक इन इंडिया” पहल का मूल उद्देश्य देश में विनिर्माण गतिविधियों को बढ़ावा देना, विदेशी निवेश को आकर्षित करना, रोजगार सृजन करना तथा आयात पर निर्भरता को कम करना है। यह अभियान भारत को केवल एक उपभोक्ता बाजार से आगे बढ़ाकर उत्पादन और नवाचार के केंद्र के रूप में विकसित करने की दिशा में एक निर्णायक कदम सिद्ध हो रहा है। रक्षा, इलेक्ट्रॉनिक्स, ऑटोमोबाइल, फार्मास्यूटिकल्स और टेक्सटाइल जैसे क्षेत्रों में इस पहल ने नई ऊर्जा का संचार किया है।

आत्मनिर्भर भारत: आत्मकेंद्रित नहीं, आत्मविश्वासी भारत

“आत्मनिर्भर भारत” का अर्थ आत्मकेंद्रित होना नहीं, बल्कि वैश्विक अर्थव्यवस्था में सशक्त और प्रभावी भागीदारी सुनिश्चित करना है। इसका उद्देश्य घरेलू क्षमताओं को सशक्त कर भारत को वैश्विक प्रतिस्पर्धा के लिए सक्षम बनाना है। कोविड-19 महामारी के दौरान वैश्विक आपूर्ति श्रृंखलाओं में आई बाधाओं ने आत्मनिर्भरता के महत्व को और अधिक स्पष्ट कर दिया। इस पहल के माध्यम से स्थानीय उत्पादन, नवाचार और स्टार्टअप संस्कृति को व्यापक प्रोत्साहन मिला है।

PLI योजना: घरेलू विनिर्माण को नई गति

उत्पादन से जुड़ी प्रोत्साहन (PLI) योजना आत्मनिर्भर भारत अभियान के सबसे महत्वपूर्ण स्तंभों में से एक है। इस योजना के अंतर्गत सरकार चयनित क्षेत्रों में उत्पादन बढ़ाने पर वित्तीय प्रोत्साहन प्रदान करती है। मोबाइल फोन, सेमीकंडक्टर, सौर ऊर्जा, फार्मा, इलेक्ट्रॉनिक्स और ऑटो कंपोनेंट्स जैसे क्षेत्रों में PLI योजना ने उल्लेखनीय सफलता प्राप्त की है।

इस योजना के परिणामस्वरूप भारत में अनेक बहुराष्ट्रीय कंपनियों ने अपने उत्पादन केंद्र स्थापित किए हैं, जिससे न केवल घरेलू विनिर्माण को बल मिला है, अपितु रोजगार सृजन, तकनीक हस्तांतरण और निर्यात वृद्धि भी संभव हुई है। PLI योजना ने भारत को ‘इम्पोर्ट डिपेंडेंट’ अर्थव्यवस्था से ‘एक्सपोर्ट ओरिएंटेड’ अर्थव्यवस्था की ओर अग्रसर किया है।

घरेलू विनिर्माण का पुनरुत्थान

PLI योजना और अन्य संरचनात्मक सुधारों के परिणामस्वरूप भारतीय विनिर्माण क्षेत्र में नई ऊर्जा आई है। जहाँ पहले भारत कच्चे माल का निर्यातक और तैयार माल का आयातक था, वहीं अब मूल्य संवर्धन (Value Addition) पर विशेष जोर दिया जा रहा है। सूक्ष्म, लघु एवं मध्यम उद्यमों (MSMEs) को विशेष सहायता प्रदान कर उन्हें राष्ट्रीय और वैश्विक बाजारों से जोड़ा जा रहा है।

वैश्विक मूल्य श्रृंखलाओं से एकीकरण

आत्मनिर्भर भारत का लक्ष्य भारत को वैश्विक अर्थव्यवस्था से अलग करना नहीं, बल्कि वैश्विक मूल्य श्रृंखलाओं (Global Value Chains) में सुदृढ़ रूप से एकीकृत करना है। भारत अब केवल उत्पादन का केंद्र नहीं, अपितु डिजाइन, अनुसंधान, नवाचार और लॉजिस्टिक्स का भी महत्वपूर्ण केंद्र बनता जा रहा है। मुक्त व्यापार

समझौतों, बुनियादी ढांचे के विकास और ‘ईज ऑफ डूइंग बिजनेस’ से जुड़े सुधारों ने इस एकीकरण को और गति प्रदान की है।

भारत की विशाल श्रम शक्ति, लोकतांत्रिक व्यवस्था, मजबूत डिजिटल अवसंरचना और विशाल घरेलू बाजार उसे वैश्विक कंपनियों के लिए एक आकर्षक गंतव्य बनाते हैं। आज भारत ‘चीन प्लस वन’ रणनीति का एक महत्वपूर्ण घटक बनकर उभरा है।

चुनौतियाँ और आगे का मार्ग

यद्यपि विनिर्माण क्षेत्र में उल्लेखनीय प्रगति हुई है, फिर भी कौशल विकास, लॉजिस्टिक्स लागत, अनुसंधान एवं विकास में निवेश तथा पर्यावरणीय स्थिरता जैसी चुनौतियाँ अभी भी बनी हुई हैं। इन चुनौतियों का समाधान दीर्घकालिक नीति समर्थन, निजी क्षेत्र की सक्रिय भागीदारी और तकनीकी नवाचार के माध्यम से किया जा सकता है, इस दिशा में केंद्र सरकार के प्रयास भी निरंतर जारी हैं।

देश के माननीय प्रधानमंत्री नरेंद्र मोदी जी का स्पष्ट विज़न है कि “मेक इन इंडिया”, “आत्मनिर्भर भारत” और PLI योजनाएँ मिलकर भारत के विनिर्माण क्षेत्र को एक नई दिशा प्रदान कर रही हैं। ये पहलें भारत को न केवल आर्थिक रूप से सशक्त बनाएँगी, बल्कि वैश्विक आपूर्ति श्रृंखला में एक भरोसेमंद और प्रभावशाली भागीदार के रूप में भी स्थापित करेंगी। यदि यह यात्रा इसी गति, निरंतरता और समावेशिता के साथ आगे बढ़ती रही, तो भारत निस्संदेह 21वीं सदी का एक प्रमुख औद्योगिक शक्ति केंद्र बनकर उभरेगा।



कृषि से उद्योग तक समावेशी आर्थिक सुधारों का भारत मॉडल

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भारत की अर्थव्यवस्था का विकास केवल संख्याओं या योजनाओं का विषय नहीं है; यह एक ऐसी सांस्कृतिक यात्रा है जिसमें परंपरा, नीति और नैतिकता का गहन समन्वय दिखाई देता है। स्वतंत्रता के बाद से अब तक भारत की आर्थिक दिशा अनेक पड़ावों से गुजरी है : आत्मनिर्भरता, उदारीकरण और अब आत्मनिष्ठ वैश्वीकरण की दिशा में। परंतु इस संपूर्ण यात्रा का मूल तत्व वही है जो हमारी सभ्यता की आत्मा में निहित है - समावेशी विकास। आज जब भारत विश्व की पाँचवीं सबसे बड़ी अर्थव्यवस्था के रूप में उभर रहा है, तो उसकी सफलता केवल औद्योगिक विस्तार की नहीं, बल्कि कृषि, श्रम, उद्यमिता और डिजिटल नवाचार के सामूहिक संगम की कथा है।

भारतीय आर्थिक चिंतन का इतिहास अत्यंत प्राचीन है। कौटिल्य के अर्थशास्त्र में राज्य की शक्ति का मूल धन को माना गया, पर उसी के साथ यह भी स्पष्ट किया गया कि वह धन तभी शुभ है जब उससे प्रजा का कल्याण हो। कौटिल्य लिखते हैं “कोशस्य मूलं अर्थः”, किन्तु उसका उद्देश्य केवल राजकोष की पूर्ति नहीं, बल्कि लोकसंग्रह है। यही सिद्धांत आज के भारत की नीति का भी आधार है, जहाँ सुधार का अर्थ केवल बाजार का उदारीकरण नहीं, बल्कि सामाजिक सहभागिता का विस्तार है। इस दृष्टि से देखा जाए तो भारत का सुधार-मॉडल पश्चिमी पूँजीवादी प्रतिमान से अलग है; यह एक ऐसा मार्ग है जिसमें आर्थिक दक्षता और नैतिक दायित्व दोनों समान रूप से प्रतिष्ठित हैं।

भारतीय वैदिक परंपरा में अर्थ को धर्म के अधीन रखा गया है। गायत्री मंत्र के “भूर भुवः स्वः तत्सवितुर्वरेण्यं भर्गो देवस्य धीमहि धियो यो नः प्रचोदयात्” के माध्यम से जो संदेश मिलता है, वह है : विचारों की शुद्धि और कर्म की निष्ठा। यह त्रयी (भूर-भुवः-स्वः) जीवन के भौतिक, मानसिक और दैवी आयामों का प्रतीक है। यही समन्वय आज के भारत की नीति-दृष्टि में भी परिलक्षित है, जहाँ अर्थनीति का लक्ष्य केवल संसाधनों का दोहन नहीं, बल्कि जीवन के सभी स्तरों पर संतुलन और स्थायित्व है। भगवद्गीता (२.५०) में कहा गया है - “योगः कर्मसु कौशलम्”, अर्थात् कर्म में कुशलता ही योग है। आगे श्रीकृष्ण (३.२०-२१) में स्पष्ट करते हैं कि जो लोग लोकहित के लिए कर्म करते हैं, वे समाज के लिए आदर्श बनते हैं। यही दर्शन भारत की आर्थिक नीतियों की आत्मा है, जहाँ विकास को लोककल्याण से जोड़ा गया है।

भारत की आर्थिक संरचना में कृषि आज भी सबसे बड़ा आधार-स्तंभ है। आर्थिक सर्वेक्षण २०२३-२४ के अनुसार लगभग ४५ प्रतिशत कार्यबल कृषि क्षेत्र से जुड़ा है, जबकि इसका सकल घरेलू उत्पाद में योगदान लगभग १७ से १८ प्रतिशत है। यह अनुपात बताता है कि भारत को संरचनात्मक रूपांतरण की दिशा में गति देनी है, परन्तु ऐसी गति जो ग्रामीण जीवन को अस्थिर किए बिना उसे समृद्ध बनाए। इसी सोच से प्रधानमंत्री किसान सम्मान निधि (PM-KISAN) के अंतर्गत ११ करोड़ से अधिक किसानों को प्रत्यक्ष आय-सहायता दी जा चुकी है। साथ ही १०,००० किसान उत्पादक संगठन (FPOs) की स्थापना का लक्ष्य रखा गया है ताकि छोटे कृषकों को सामूहिक सौदेबाजी और बेहतर बाजार-संपर्क प्राप्त हो सके। ई-नाम (e-NAM) जैसे डिजिटल कृषि मंचों से किसान अब देशव्यापी व्यापार-श्रृंखला में शामिल हो रहे हैं। यह आधुनिक तकनीक का वही रूप है जिसका संकेत मनुस्मृति में मिलता है - कृषि और व्यापार दोनों समाज के जीवन का आधार हैं।

भारत के औद्योगिक विकास की दिशा भी इसी समन्वय की परंपरा को आगे बढ़ाती है। “आत्मनिर्भर भारत” और “मेक इन इंडिया” जैसे कार्यक्रमों ने उद्योग और स्वदेशी नवाचार को नई ऊर्जा दी है। उत्पादन-संबद्ध प्रोत्साहन योजना (PLI) के माध्यम से इलेक्ट्रॉनिक्स, औषधि, वस्त्र और ऑटो-पार्ट्स जैसे १४ क्षेत्रों में अब तक ₹१.९७ लाख करोड़ से अधिक निवेश प्राप्त हुआ है और लगभग ६ लाख प्रत्यक्ष रोजगार सृजित हुए हैं (वाणिज्य मंत्रालय, २०२४)। इसी के साथ गति-शक्ति राष्ट्रीय मास्टर प्लान ने १६ मंत्रालयों को एकीकृत कर देश के लॉजिस्टिक नेटवर्क को सुव्यवस्थित किया है। भारतमाला और सागरमाला योजनाओं के माध्यम से सड़कों और बंदरगाहों की कनेक्टिविटी सुधरी है, जिससे औद्योगिक उत्पादन और निर्यात क्षमता दोनों में वृद्धि हुई है। इन सुधारों के पीछे वही विचार है जो कौटिल्य ने दिया था - राज्य की समृद्धि “सुगम व्यापार और न्यायसंगत नीति” पर निर्भर करती है।

भारत की डिजिटल क्रांति ने इन आर्थिक सुधारों को और गहराई दी है। आधार, जन-धन और यूपीआई की त्रयी ने एक ऐसी डिजिटल पब्लिक इंफ्रास्ट्रक्चर (DPI) तैयार की है जिसने वित्तीय समावेशन का विश्व-स्तरीय मॉडल प्रस्तुत किया है। यूपीआई पर प्रति माह १२ अरब

से अधिक लेनदेन होते हैं, जो ग्रामीण और शहरी अर्थव्यवस्था को एक सूत्र में जोड़ते हैं। ओएनडीसी (ONDC) प्लेटफॉर्म छोटे व्यापारियों और किसानों को ई-कॉमर्स में समान अवसर प्रदान कर रहा है, जबकि स्किल इंडिया डिजिटल और ई-श्रम पोर्टल असंगठित श्रम को औद्योगिक अर्थव्यवस्था से जोड़ रहे हैं। यह सब गांधीजी के ग्राम-स्वराज्य के आधुनिक स्वरूप की तरह है। स्थानीय स्वावलंबन को डिजिटल तकनीक से सशक्त बनाना।

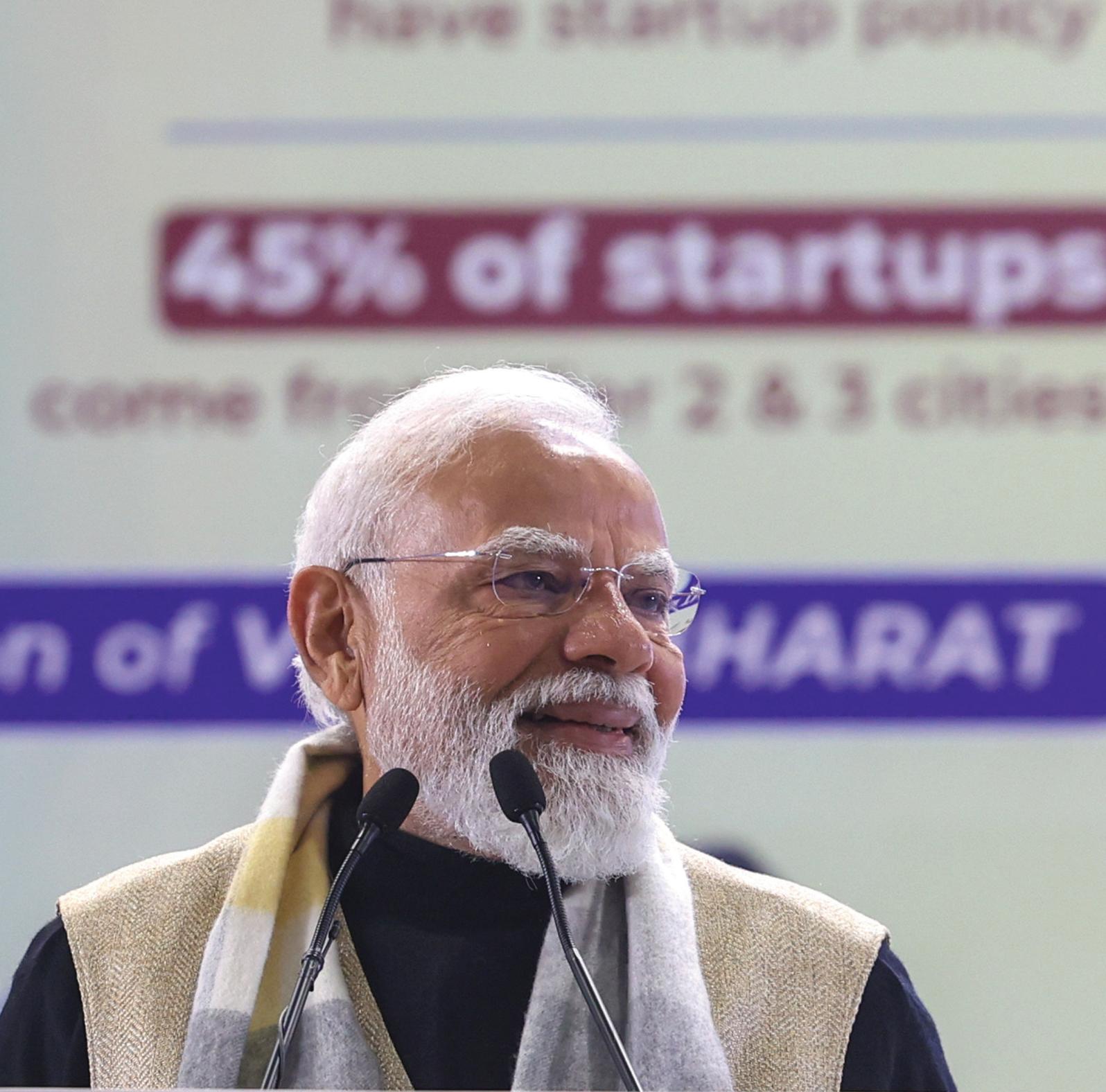
भारत का सुधार-मॉडल इस मायने में विशिष्ट है कि यह बाजार-केंद्रित होते हुए भी कल्याण-केंद्रित है। आयुष्मान भारत, प्रधानमंत्री आवास योजना, उज्ज्वला और गरीब कल्याण अन्न योजना जैसी पहलें इस बात का प्रमाण हैं कि आर्थिक उदारीकरण और सामाजिक न्याय साथ-साथ चल सकते हैं। भारतीय जीवन-दर्शन के पुरुषार्थ चतुष्टय - धर्म, अर्थ, काम और मोक्ष में अर्थ को धर्म के अधीन बताया गया है। यही कारण है कि भारत के आर्थिक सुधारों में विकास को नैतिक संतुलन के साथ देखा जाता है। यहाँ नीति का उद्देश्य केवल “बढ़ती अर्थव्यवस्था” नहीं, बल्कि “न्यायपूर्ण अर्थव्यवस्था” है।

निश्चित रूप से चुनौतियाँ भी हैं। गुणवत्तापूर्ण रोजगार का सृजन, कृषि-आधारित उद्योगों का विस्तार, और पर्यावरणीय संतुलन को बनाए रखना। लेकिन भारत की नीतिगत संरचना इन सभी आयामों पर समान रूप से सक्रिय है। संघीय ढाँचे में सहकारी संघवाद (Cooperative Federalism) की भावना ने यह सुनिश्चित किया है कि राज्य और केंद्र मिलकर नीतियों को कार्यान्वित करें। वैश्विक अस्थिरता के बावजूद भारत की अर्थव्यवस्था २०२४ में लगभग ६.५ प्रतिशत की दर से बढ़ी है, और यह विश्व की पाँचवीं सबसे बड़ी अर्थव्यवस्था के रूप में स्थापित है (IMF, 2024)। यह आँकड़ा केवल आर्थिक उपलब्धि नहीं, बल्कि नीतिगत लचीलापन और प्रशासनिक पारदर्शिता का प्रमाण है।

भारत की यह यात्रा “कृषि से उद्योग तक” केवल उत्पादन-संरचना का नहीं, बल्कि मूल्य-संरचना का रूपांतरण है। यह बताती है कि विकास तभी सार्थक है जब वह सबको साथ लेकर चले। अथर्ववेद में कहा गया है - “माता भूमिः पुत्रोऽहं पृथिव्याः” “पृथ्वी मेरी माता है और मैं उसका पुत्र हूँ।” यह पंक्ति हमारे वर्तमान विकास-मॉडल की नैतिक रीढ़ है। भूमि, श्रम, पूँजी और ज्ञान, ये चारों तत्व तभी फलदायी हैं जब उनके बीच संतुलन और सह-अस्तित्व बना रहे। आज का भारत इसी संतुलन की ओर अग्रसर है - जहाँ खेत और कारखाना, हल और यंत्र, किसान और उद्यमी, सब एक ही राष्ट्र-नीति के अंग हैं।

अंततः कहा जा सकता है कि भारत का समावेशी आर्थिक सुधार-मॉडल परंपरा और आधुनिकता का उत्कृष्ट संगम है। यह केवल वृद्धि का नहीं, बल्कि संवेदना का मॉडल है, जहाँ नीति के केंद्र में नागरिक हैं, और नागरिक के केंद्र में राष्ट्र। जब कौशल, नैतिकता और नवाचार तीनों साथ चलते हैं, तभी योगः कर्मसु कौशलम् का सच्चा अर्थ साकार होता है। यही वह पथ है जो भारत को “विकसित भारत @2047” की दिशा में ले जा रहा है, ऐसा भारत जो समृद्ध भी है, आत्मनिर्भर भी और सबसे बढ़कर, न्यायपूर्ण भी।





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