India's Journey towards Viksit Bharat: 11 years of Development, Progress & Nation building

(Amb Anil Trigunayat)

As India embarked on its fast-paced human centric developmental journey to become a developed country "Viksit Bharat @2047" by the time it completes the century of the independence, the past decade has been exceptional across the national and strategic spectrum. PM Narendra Modi's call to dispense with the slavish mentality and rise and shine with the mantra of reform, perform and transform has already begun to yield remarkable dividends. Over 1550 archaic and cumbersome laws were repealed and jurisprudence updated. At 130 in 2017 in the Doing Business Index of the World Bank India rapidly moved to 63rd place resulting in significant increase in Foreign Direct Investment. Innovation eco system has produced 1.6 Mn start ups from mere 500 ten years ago with 118 unicorns. From fragile five to become the 4th largest economy in a decade is a remarkable achievement by any standards. According to Bloomberg based on IMF data , China, India and USA are projected to be the three global growth engines from 2025-2030.

India has also emerged as a key proponent of fight against climate change and a spokesman against the 'Green Apartheid" .India has committed to 'zero carbon' by 2070 but by all accounts, it seems target may be achieved much earlier . In 2015 , India along with France launched the International Solar Alliance (ISA) perhaps the most consequential initiative after the NAM movement of the 1950s. A monumental achievement is that 50% of India's installed electricity capacity now is attributable to non-fossil sources . This is integral to the quest for India's energy security which is essential for it to continue to remain as the fastest growing major economy in the world. India is converting ambition and aspiration into action. Not only India launched another global initiative 'The Global Biofuels Alliance' during the Presidency of G20 in September 2023 but also completed the ethanol mixing targets way before . Same applies to its Nationally Determined Conrtributions (NDCs) where India is the first and the fastest to comply with.

The pandemic had hit the world hard in an unprecedented manner. But India's response was unique since it was driven by its DNA dictum of 'Vasudhaiv Kutumbakam'-world is one family . When the powerful countries were hoarding vaccines and medicines for geo political ends, India, not only manufactured its own but even for others from UK and Russia, provided billions of vaccines to over a hundred countries as part of its 'Vaccine Maitri '– Vaccine Friendship outreach. More importantly, it had to cater for the one sixth of the world 's population which inhabits India. Since health care became a fundamental priority, India launched the government financed insurance scheme, Ayushman Bharat–Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (AB-PMJAY), which is reported to have increased substantially since 2014. This is a government healthcare programme operated on a massive scale. Under AB-PMJAY 345 million Ayushman cards have been issued, and 29,914 hospitals have been empanelled.

More than sixty-five million authorised hospital admissions have taken place under the scheme. This has been further extended to include senior citizens above 70.

India is essentially an agricultural country and farmers are the back bone of India and its food security. Hence, even at the Doha rounds of WTO, India has always stood for the cause and interests of large number of developing countries. PM Modi had announced doubling of farmers' income through various initiatives and reforms at the grass roots level. Some of these include a scheme for soil health cards to all the farmers, National Agriculture Market (e-NAM),Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchayee Yojana (PMKSY), and Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY) which provides very low premium for farmers." The PMKSY scheme, launched in 2015, supports the use of micro-irrigation technologies- which is a crop insurance scheme. No wonder in past decade the food grain production increased from 252 Mn tonnes to 332 Mn tonnes.

Fighting poverty has been one of the biggest tasks that the Indian Government has undertaken. Operating one of the world's largest food security programs, the Targeted Public Distribution System under the National Food Security Act covers 81.35 (Over 800 million) beneficiaries, providing food grains to rural and urban populations. Recent decisions, such as extending free food grain distribution under Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Anna Yojana for another five years, exemplify Government's commitment.

Self-Reliance (Atmanirbhar Bharat) has become the key to 'Make in India for the world' and local for global to be part of the global value and supply chains as it emerges as the smart manufacturing hub and services centre of the world. With its zero tolerance to terror policy the indigenous defence systems rained hell on the enemy during the Op-Sindoor action against Pakistan based terror hideouts.

India has excelled not only in space exploration from first ever landing on the southern moon and Chandrayaan to Gaganyaan missions but excelled through its Digital Public Infrastructure (DBI) and Unique Digital Identity Aadhar and exceptionally large number of bank accounts across India for distribution of the benefits and payments directly into accounts .By linking Aadhaar with Jan Dhan bank accounts and mobile umbers (the "JAM" Trinity), the government streamlined the By linking Aadhaar with Jan Dhan bank accounts and mobile By linking Aadhaar with Jan Dhan bank accounts and mobile numbers (the "JAM" Trinity), the government streamlined the delivery of social welfare programs, reducing fraud and ensuring that benefits reached the intended recipients directly and efficiently. This proved particularly crucial during the pandemic, enabling swift and targeted disbursement of financial aid to those most in need. numbers (the "JAM" Trinity), the government streamlined the delivery of social welfare programs, reducing fraud and ensuring that benefits reached the intended recipients directly and efficiently. This proved particularly crucial during the pandemic, enabling swift and targeted disbursement of financial aid to those most in need. All these digital tools and Apps and digital public goods have been made available to the world especially the developing countries. AI for All, One earth one health,

one grid one world are not mere slogans but policy directives of a resurgent India steeped in its civilizational ethos.

In this fractured world order, India's sane and value based foreign policy has become robust, resilient and result oriented as it seeks to comprehensively enhance its own power spectrum through strategic autonomy and multi-alignments entrenching reformed multilateralism and multi-polarity. This was evident recently when PM Modi was again invited by PM Mark Carney to G7 Summit in Canada, despite cooler ties with them, since he felt that it was important to have India at the table. It is increasingly becoming a rule shaper from G7 to G20 to BRICS and beyond. Interest of the Global South is served by example and advocacy and by being their credible voice while pursuing inclusivity and human centric approaches.

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