

Unprecedented J&K Development

Jammu and Kashmir has faced the brunt of terrorism for almost three decades, factually since 1980's when world had not tasted the bitter pill of terrorism. The bloodshed for three decades was unprecedented with no one safe. Leave alone development even daily survival was next to impossible as no one knew who will be caught next in cross firing or stone pelting, business virtually at standstill with daily hartal calendar so much so that even mosques were not spared. It was a mayhem and chaos never witnessed anywhere in India. The catastrophe under dynasts rule got overturned on 5 August 2019 as Article 370 got abrogated, midas touch of Gol wielded a magic wand as things fell in line like never before. Schools, business establishments are open without any fear of hartals or stone pelting calendars. 890 Central laws implemented, 250 vague state laws removed and 130 state laws stand modified. Despite COVID, the development push of Jammu and Kashmir has been unparalleled. Infra projects got a major push with new industrial development policy in place, valid till 2037 with the result investors like Lulu Group, EMAAR, Jindal Group, Apollo, Al Maya Group, Century Financial to name a few are all onboard to invest in J&K. Under Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana thousands of kilometers of roads constructed, more than 25 NH projects with hundreds of bridges, tunnels are under construction right now. J&K is now proud UT of 2 AIIMS, 2 State Cancer Institutes, IIT, IIM, 7 new GMCs, 15 nursing colleges, a big push for Health and Education Infra. Major push to Power Infra with transmission capacity augmented on war footing, 21 hydro-electric projects with installed capacity of around 5200 MW are under construction. While projects for beautification of Srinagar like laser shows, musical fountains, floating theatre already done, Jammu is also having war footing work on Tawi River Front, Artificial Lake, Heritage City, Zoo, Lord Balaji Temple replica and many more. Gone are the days of discrimination. On social front marginalised SCs, WPRs and STs are getting their due share now. No more Valmiki kids are not eligible for Government jobs, they are very much now part of mainstream, equal opportunities for everyone on all platforms. With Article 35 A also gone, daughters married outside the UT are getting their due rights back, all getting Domicile certificates issued. ST status for Pahari people and reserved constituencies now for ST and SC to empower them politically. Successful elections of Panchayat, followed by BDC and subsequently DDC elections also conducted successfully to ensure grass root level democracy. No more MLAs are sole fate decider of projects without ground level knowledge of requirements. On tourism front, highest ever tourist footfall in Jammu and Kashmir with never seen before tourists projects of ropeways, Lakes development, Smart Cities of Jammu and Srinagar being developed on war footing now. E-rickshaws, E-autos and E-buses are operating for securing even environment. Digitisation of Revenue records, introduction of single window web services, 100% Aadhar seeding, e-Shram cards are major initiatives taken under E-Governance, much to relief of general public. Dynast politics is the story of the past now as transparency, accountability, zero terrorism tolerance policy and accountability has ushered new development mantra for UT of Jammu and Kashmir.

The Gol and LG administration are working in tandem and have set right the things till now, stabilisation of changed security scenario is a must along with political stability to achieve set economic growth and development targets.

Journalists facing threats from terrorists

There is no place for terrorism in any society and Gol has done exceptionally well to put pressure from all sides, so much so that terrorism seems to be in its last leg now. Almost two crore tourists visiting Jammu and Kashmir this year is a testimony of normalcy returning to valley. Successful, incident free, again all time high, Shri Amarnath Ji Yatra this year is another milestone achievement of administration. Celebrations of 75th Independence day in the Kashmir Division and open participation of Jubilant Public after decades in Kashmir are good enough indicators of normalcy in the valley. Cross border enemies tried to create panic by selected target killings of outsiders but couldn't challenge the spirits of locals who vehemently condemned these killings. All local as well as National Newspapers have covered extensively all these things throughout the year which resulted in bumper season of tourism this year and the first snowfall of the year again brought the influx of excited tourists from all over India and this has also been covered by Media Houses prominently. However, all this has not gone well with terrorist masters and 'Kill the Messenger' itself is the latest strategy adopted as a dozen of Kashmir based journalists have been named and threatened by terrorists through social media and blog. The cascading effect being five of them resigned, a few shared their resignation letters on social media to publically disassociate from media houses. Social Media is abuzz with total support to these journalists, openly condemning the threat to journalists on vague grounds. Whole media fraternity of Jammu and Kashmir is also standing firmly with these Kashmir based journalists but shockingly there is total silence from all political parties, who otherwise always want the front page coverage, at this juncture on this issue. It is serious matter and politicians should lead from front, come in support of media to defeat the nefarious designs of enemy on this front also. Media has always done unbiased reporting, faced the brunt, paid the price, but any such kind of tactics will not work, neither in the past it worked despite ghastly killings, nor in future.

'J&K to be paradise of peace and prosperity soon'

Union Minister Dr Jitendra Singh says cross-border infiltration is major challenge before the UT

More than three years after the Centre read down the provisions of Article 370 giving special status to Jammu and Kashmir, the only real challenge for the Government is infiltration from across the border, and not normalisation of peace in the Kashmir Valley, which the Government believes has already set in with a push now being given to investment and development of the state. That's what Dr Jitendra Singh, who belongs to the UT and holds various important portfolios as a senior minister in the Modi cabinet, believes. Dr Singh heads departments such as Science and Technology (independent charge), Earth Science, PMO, Department of Space and Atomic Science and Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions. In an interview to Rajesh Kumar Thakur, the Minister says the objective of the government is to make J&K 'samridhi aur shanti ka swarg' (a paradise of prosperity and peace).

EXCERPTS:

How do you see J&K now moving ahead?
For the first time, Valley is smiling with sprouts of hope all around. The people have begun seeing a wider horizon of prosperity coming closer to them after the removal of Article 370 by the Modi Government. The administration has much better coordination with the public and opportunities have opened up for the youth.

The start-up initiative has got a wider momentum across the Valley which is on its way to becoming the hub of agricultural start-ups. J&K is well within the timeframe of becoming the 'samridhi aur shanti ka swarg' (paradise of peace and prosperity) under the Modi model of governance.

What are the key challenges being faced in J&K? Will the UT acquire the status of statehood?

The only challenge is infiltration being pushed from across the border. It has to be firmly checked to bring normalcy and peace. The common people

in J&K want to be a part of Modi's growth journey. The Kashmiri youth have high aspirations. They have lived enough behind walls of fear. Cross-border infiltration is substantially checked. As for statehood or elections, the ECI will decide the schedule taking into account factors such as the delimitation of constituencies and security.



How do you view the outcome of recently organized 'Special Swachhata Campaign 2.0' (from Oct 2 to Oct 30)? It was monitored by the Science & Technology Ministry across the country.

The campaign has set an example as to how we can generate revenue and have positive behavioral changes in offices. Similar campaigns should be

initiated every year to inculcate a sense of cleanliness. The campaign was a brainchild of PM Modi and has helped us not only in clearing spaces and disposing of files, but also made us innovative. This campaign has generated revenue of more than ₹350 crore. It helped us to create more than 88 lakh sq ft across all departments and ministries.



What is your prediction about Himachal Pradesh and Gujarat elections?

The opposition in Himachal Pradesh has almost vanished because it has lost the people's trust. In both states, the Congress is not seen in a position where it can match the BJP in terms of people's trust, especially under the overall leadership of PM Modi. Many senior office-bearers of the Congress

have joined the BJP. **Will Modi magic work again in Gujarat?**
The Modi magic prevails across the country. He is an asset not only for the BJP but also for the entire nation. That is why opposition parties are hesitant in speaking against him because people do not appreciate and tolerate it.

Has the entry of AAP in Gujarat made the polls tougher for BJP?

AAP is trying to fill some 'leftover space' of the Congress in state politics. The BJP is a well-tested and trusted party. AAP has failed to gauge the political sentiment of Gujarat voters. Besides, the party has exposed itself in Delhi.

Do you see the Opposition getting polarized for the 2024 LS elections to take on PM Modi?

The Opposition has not been able to understand the wider impact of 'Modi Model of Governance and Politics (MMGP)'. The popularity of Modi and his performance are getting global recognition. This model has dented the 'family-oriented' and 'person-oriented' politics in the country. These parties are clashing with one another in the dark for survival.

The Government says it has a shortage of IAS officers...

The Government has increased the intake of IAS officers to 180 per year through UPSC recruitment following the recommendation of a parliamentary standing committee. The sanctioned strength is 6,746 IAS officers of which 4,682 posts are included for officers who are promoted through state civil services. At present, India has a working strength of 5,231 IAS officers.

What is the status of the Gaganyaan project?

It is almost ready. The Gaganyaan mission will be a major milestone in India's space mission in 2024. The unmanned Gaganyaan project is set for a mid-2024 launch. Science in India has turned yesterday's fairy tales into today's reality.

(Courtesy : Express News Service)

Self-regulation for the press

Prof Rakesh Kumar Goswami

On National Press Day (Nov. 16), it is time to examine if the model of self-regulation can work for the Press like it is envisaged for the broadcast and the digital media in the new rules.

In June last year, the Central government notified the Cable Television Networks (Amendment) Rules, 2021, which provides a statutory mechanism for redressal of grievances and complaints of viewers relating to television programmes. According to these amended rules, there is a three-level complaint redressal structure, the first level of which is self-regulation by broadcasters. The second level involves self-regulation by the self-regulating bodies of broadcasters; and third is the oversight mechanism by the Central Government. This self-regulatory mechanism is similar to the one for the over-the-top (OTT) players and digital news publishers as envisaged in the Information Technology (Intermediary Guidelines and Digital Media Ethics Code) Rules, 2021, issued only a few months before the cable television network rules.

According to the new rules, every broadcaster shall establish a grievance or complaint redressal mechanism and appoint an officer to deal with the complaints. The grievance officer shall take a decision on every grievance or complaint within fifteen days and inform the complainant of its decision. If the decision of the broadcaster is not communicated to the complainant within the stipulated period of fifteen days, or if the complainant is not satisfied with the decision of the broadcaster, he or she may prefer an appeal to the self-regulating body of which such broadcaster is a member, within fifteen days therefrom. The self-regulating body shall dispose of the appeal within sixty days of receipt of appeal and convey its decision in the form of a guidance or advisory to the broadcaster, and inform the complainant of such decision within a period of fifteen days. If the complainant is still dissatisfied, he may with-

in fifteen days of such decision, prefer an appeal to the Central Government for its consideration under the oversight mechanism. It is only at this stage that the government comes into the picture. Under the oversight mechanism, the Central government shall set up an inter-departmental committee chaired by the additional secretary in the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, and consisting of representatives from the Ministry of Women and Child Development, Ministry of

modify content or take the channel or a programme off-air for a specified time period where it is satisfied that such action is warranted, for reasons to be recorded in writing.

The Central Government may, after taking into consideration the recommendations of the Committee, issue appropriate orders and directions to the broadcaster. A similar oversight mechanism is in place for the internet intermediaries and the digital platforms.

The Cable Television Network Rules made under the Cable Television Network Act, 1995, were aimed at regulating content and operation of cable networks in the early 1990s when there was a haphazard mushrooming of cable television networks in the country. The rules had programming code for the content and advertising codes for the advertisements to be followed by the broadcasters but there was no mechanism for complaint against either the content or the advertisements shown on television.

Until the amendment in the cable television network rules, two self-regulating bodies of the broadcasting sector - the Broadcasting Content Complaints Council (BCCC) under the Indian Broadcasting Foundation (for non-new content) and the News Broadcasting Standards Authority (NBSA) set up by the News Broadcasters Association - looked after the complaints related to the content broadcast on television. Even though both these bodies are headed by an eminent jurist, mostly former Supreme Court judges, they did not have any statutory status. The amended rules give legal recognition to both the NBSA and the BCCC.

These two self-regulating bodies respectively framed the code of ethics for non-news and news content. The IBF formed the self-regulatory content guidelines for non-news and current affairs channels to ensure that broadcasters conformed to the 'Programme Code' prescribed

under the Cable Television Networks (Regulation) Act, 1995 and the Rules framed thereunder. And, the News Broadcasters Association, which has been rechristened as the News Broadcasters and Digital Association (NBDA), has framed the Code of Ethics and Broadcasting Standards. For the digital platforms, such a code has been notified under the Information Technology (Intermediary Guidelines and Digital Media Ethics Code) Rules, 2021.

The remarkable feature of all these guidelines is the model of self-governance, self-regulation and self-monitoring.

If this model can work for the broadcast and digital media, why can it not for the print media? This question assumes importance on the National Press Day (November 16), which commemorates the setting up of the Press Council of India, a statutory quasi-judicial autonomous authority. There is no self-regulating body of the press like the BCCC and the NBSA. The Indian Newspaper Society (INS) is a central organisation of the Press of India and is focussed on promoting and safeguarding the business interests of its members incidental to the production of their publications.

Some former Press Council of India chairmen have called for setting up a media council of India as the statutory body for complaints related to media but the government has preferred self-regulation by the broadcasters and digital platform. At a time when the Supreme Court has expressed concern over rising hate speech in the country, especially from the studios of news channels, it may be worthwhile to study if the BCCC and NBSA can do anything to curtail this phenomenon. It is equally important to study if the Press Council of India has been able to curb the menace of paid news and other ills related to the print media.

But the model of self-monitoring may still be the answer to the ills that plague the Indian media today.

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Home Affairs, Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology, Ministry of External Affairs, Ministry of Defence, and representatives of such other ministries and organisations, including experts, as the Central Government may decide. The inter-departmental committee can make the following recommendations to the Central Government:

- (i) advising, warning, censuring, admonishing or reprimanding such broadcaster; or
- (ii) requiring an apology of such broadcaster; or
- (iii) requiring such broadcaster to include a warning card or a disclaimer; or
- (iv) requiring such broadcaster to delete or

Why India needs Modi in 2024

Arvind Gupta

Change is pretty common in our everyday lives. We change the channel on our TVs to find out our favourite shows. We change our clothes to suit the weather and occasion. We may even change our minds about what we want to eat for dinner tonight. These type of changes are small and somewhat common, however, there are other types of changes, that are much bigger and do not happen frequently. We vote to change if not satisfied. We also vote to continue to give another chance to perform better. Come 2024, and India gears to vote and perhaps 2024 General Elections are going to be more important for India. Infact they are going to be the most crucial elections since independence. They will decide whether India wants to continue with reforms on national level with an eye on the continuation of the most powerful diplomatic relations on world platform.

Why India needs Modi in 2024, is not a million dollar question, it's not even the rocket science. India on the path of once again becoming the Vishwa Guru can't afford to lose its leader who has first all made every Indian citizen to believe in the idea and secondly the leadership showed its commitment for the cause especially during COVID. India needs its commitment to vote for Modi in 2024 to ensure the delivery of much bolder reforms in his third term in order to allow India to reach its potential turning its rising working age population into a demographic dividend.

In the last eight years as Prime Minister Modi showed a mix record in fulfilling his promises on economic reforms. He has made substantial progress in attracting capital and reforming the banking sector, but, much of the work is left unfinished as India still does not attract enough FDI in manufacturing to absorb its labour force. Moreover, India needs to also increase its savings rate to boost infrastructure investment. Both require Modi to deliver much bolder reforms in his third term that is certainly a strong leap from where it is today. That said, India is the only country comparable to that of China and any significant progress

in India will be globally consequential.

Narendra Modi led incumbent coalition government are all set to retain power as suggested by a few exit polls. The projections indicate that the BJP-led National Democratic Alliance (NDA) will secure simple majority in 2024 Lok Sabha elections. Meanwhile, some exit polls are also divided as to whether the BJP can win a parliamentary majority on its own, with several predicting that it can loose some seats compared with its 2019 landslide victory.

While exit polls have a record of being inaccurate in past elections, the huge difference between the NDA's projected seats versus the divided opposition with a number of self-ambitious regional leaders, means that each of the exit polls should be extremely unreliable for the case of an NDA loss. As the election will be widely seen as a referendum on Modi's leadership over the past ten years, his victory would indicate that the public is generally willing to give him a another term to complete unfinished tasks, such as reducing the high unemployment rate.

That said, even with the recent economic slowdown, India still boasts Asia's fastest-growing economy. But beneath the veneer of impressive GDP expansion, unease about India's economic model clearly tempers enthusiasm. There is no doubt that the COVID effects low downed the Indian economy, which cast a shadow over Modi's second term but still the efforts introduced since 2014 made the things different and comfortable to achieve the most ambitious India as 5-Trillion Dollar economy.

In 2024 India needs Modi to continue to finally push through key economic promises to provide India with much-needed investment and jobs. Growth is particularly important to India not only because of its need to converge on account of its low GDP per capita but also to pressure on employment creation on the back of its rapidly growing population. In fact, India struggles to generate enough formal jobs and lacks capital to invest in infrastructure to absorb its existing excess labour supply.

To assess what is at stake for Modi's third term, one has to analyse India from two perspectives, first, the progress the Modi Government has so far made on key pillars of his pledges since coming to power in 2014; and second the scale of reforms that are needed for India to reach its potential. For the latter, we use China as a comparison based on similar population size and, possibly, even in many ways global ambition.

Only a leader of the stature of Modi can address the much needed reforms required in all the aspects of the growth model to escape from its current low middle-income trap. India does not have a challenge as regards the supply of labour, in contrast to countries in East Asia, since its working-age population is expected to expand rapidly, so much so that it needs to create millions of jobs per year in the next decade to absorb all its incoming labour.

These challenges are well understood within India's academic and political circles and have been sources of how to address the ills of India's under-performance despite its great demographic potential. Modi and his team have made pledges on the country's key economic challenges. Since 2014, the positive progress Modi has made, mainly pertains to capital, where as the expectations on his labour and productivity promises, require a little more of his leadership and vision. Capital is obviously important as the infrastructure deficit is a clear bottleneck to create more jobs. Regarding capital, there are two obvious ways to increase it, foreign capital and public investment. As for the former, Modi has tried to liberalise both FDI and portfolio with mixed results. Within his 'Make in India' campaign, measures to open up some sectors to foreign competition have been taken, which have helped increase FDI into India.

That said, it is still significantly less than what is really needed to increase demand for workers, particularly in the manufacturing sector, which only comprises a small percentage of GDP even compared to China's in the early 2000s. The only country comparable to India is China due to its massive sub-continental population and geographical size. For India, the road forward is clear, it

needs to raise its capital stock per worker, but the debate is how to do so. China's experience in the early 2000s may prove to be an important lesson for India. It's not an overnight transformation, and to ensure the addressable, Modi's continuation in the highest office is a must.

On the political front we the people of India have to see that with whom Modi & his BJP is going to contest in elections of 2024, Rahul Gandhi, Akhilesh Yadav, Mayawati, Assiudad Owaisi, Mamata Banerjee, Aravind Kejriwal, Kanhaiya Kumar. On the contrary there is a section of people who see the agendas like, CAA, NRC and NPR, Ram Mandir, Hindutva, Triple Talaq, Pakistan and Imran Khan but Modi will not have to do anything to win 2024 election, because people already know what he had done for country.

CAA and NRC, RERA Act, 3 Cr Homes, 9 Cr Toilets, Scrapping Article 370, Terrorism drop, 15 new AIIMS, 35 new Airports, Transgender Act, 1.8 Lakh KM roads, Motor Vehicle Act, Weaponry for forces, 33 percent drop in India's arm import, New Education Policy, 7 new IITs, IIMs, Reduced Corporate Tax, PM Kisan for all Farmers, 2nd Largest Solar Power, 2nd Largest steel Producer, 2nd Largest mobile manufacturer, 4th Largest Automotive market, World's Largest healthcare - Ayushman Bharat, Privatization of PSU and PSB, Modernization of Railways, Improved ties with all countries, 4th rank in Foreign exchange reserves and beside these, proposed 100s of Development projects near borders in North East India and Ladakh.

Having witnessed the 2014 and 2019 election campaigns and the mood and sentiments of the people, it was clear that people were tolerating Congress only because they never had a serious political figure opposing them. Since the emergence of Modi in 2014, the hopes of people changed. It is not known as BJP ki sarkar, it is known as Modi ki sarkar. He is the face of the party and the key decision maker too.

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(The views expressed by the authors are their personal)

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