

# जनसत्ता

Date: 27-05-16

## रोजगार का आधार

पूंजीगत सामान की खपत को अमूमन नए निवेश का सूचक माना जाता है। राजग सरकार के दो साल में कई बार औद्योगिक उत्पादन में ठहराव के आंकड़े आए, वही हाल पूंजीगत सामान की खपत का भी रहा। अलबत्ता जीडीपी की वृद्धि दर को संभालने में सरकार कामयाब रही है, पर इसमें अधिक योगदान सरकारी खर्चों और सरकारी खपत का रहा है, न कि निजी निवेश का। इस पृष्ठभूमि में पूंजीगत सामान संबंधी जिस नई नीति को सरकार ने मंजूरी दी है उसकी अहमियत समझी जा सकती है। प्रधानमंत्री की अध्यक्षता में बुधवार को मंत्रिमंडलीय बैठक में लिए गए फैसले के मुताबिक नई नीति का उद्देश्य देश को विश्व-स्तरीय विनिर्माण केंद्र बनाना और 2025 तक 2.10 करोड़ अतिरिक्त अवसर सृजित करना है। साथ ही इसका मकसद समूची विनिर्माण गतिविधियों में पूंजीगत सामान का हिस्सा मौजूदा बारह फीसद से बढ़ा कर 2025 तक बीस फीसद करना है। नई नीति में 'मेक इन इंडिया' का भी खयाल रखा गया है। नई नीति का एक मकसद यह भी है कि भारत के पूंजीगत सामान क्षेत्र में घरेलू उत्पादन का हिस्सा 2025 तक साठ फीसद से बढ़ा कर अस्सी फीसद और साथ ही इसके निर्यात को उत्पादन के मौजूदा सत्ताईस फीसद से बढ़ा कर चालीस फीसद किया जा सके। नई नीति की घोषणा ऐसे वक्त की गई, जब सरकार ने अपने दो साल पूरे किए हैं। पिछले दो साल में सरकार की अनेक उपलब्धियां गिनाई जा सकती हैं, उसी तरह कई नाकामियां भी। सरकार की एक प्रमुख नाकामी रोजगार के मोर्चे पर रही है। भारतीय जनता पार्टी ने हर साल दो करोड़ नई नौकरियां देने का वादा किया था। पर हाल यह है कि पिछले एक साल में नई सृजित नौकरियां किए गए वादे का दसवां हिस्सा भी नहीं हैं। नए रोजगार के लिहाज से संतोषजनक आंकड़ा सड़क-निर्माण जैसे मुख्य रूप से सरकारी उद्यम और सौर ऊर्जा, दूरसंचार, फर्टिलाइजर जैसे इने-गिने क्षेत्रों तक सीमित रहा है। अर्थव्यवस्था के व्यापक क्षेत्र में रोजगार-सृजन नहीं हो रहा है। सरकार करीब सात फीसद की जीडीपी वृद्धि-

दर के लिए अपनी पीठ थपथपाने में तनिक संकोच नहीं करती, पर सवाल है कि जीडीपी की यह दर रोजगार-वृद्धि में प्रतिफलित क्यों नहीं होती? मौजूदा विकास नीति के आलोचक रोजगार-विहीन विकास कह कर भी इसकी आलोचना करते हैं। क्या वैसा ही हाल नहीं दिख रहा है? सरकार ने पूंजीगत सामान का उत्पादन बढ़ाने का लक्ष्य तो तय कर लिया, पर सवाल है कि इसकी खपत कैसे होगी, अगर नया निवेश नहीं होगा? नए निवेश को तभी टिकाऊ प्रोत्साहन मिलेगा, जब बाजार में मांग बढ़े। अंतरराष्ट्रीय बाजार में एक हद तक मंदी का आलम है, जिसके फलस्वरूप सत्रह महीनों से निर्यात का बुरा हाल है। पर निर्यात की सेहत सुधर भी जाए, तो केवल इसी के बल पर पूरी अर्थव्यवस्था की तस्वीर नहीं संवर सकती। वह तो तभी हो सकता है जब घरेलू बाजार में मांग बढ़े, और इसके लिए यह जरूरी है कि उनकी भी आमदनी में इजाफा हो जो क्रयशक्ति के लिहाज से हाशिये पर रहे हैं। इस कसौटी पर सरकार कहां खड़ी है, इसका अंदाजा सूखे के दौरान मनरेगा का पिछले साल का बकाया पैसा रोके रखने के उसके व्यवहार से लगाया जा सकता है। रोजगार-वृद्धि सरोकारों को सीमित रख कर नहीं हो सकती।

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## आरक्षण की कसौटी

आखिरकार पंजाब एवं हरियाणा उच्च न्यायालय ने हरियाणा सरकार द्वारा बनाई गई पिछड़ा वर्ग-सी श्रेणी के तहत जाटों और पांच अन्य समुदायों को दिए गए आरक्षण पर रोक लगा दी। न्यायालय का यह फैसला जहां हरियाणा सरकार के लिए झटका है, वहीं सत्तारूढ़ पार्टी समेत सभी राजनीतिक दलों के लिए सबक भी है। मगर इस फैसले पर शायद ही किसी को आश्चर्य हुआ हो। दरअसल, इसकी संभावना शुरू से थी कि राज्य सरकार का निर्णय न्यायिक समीक्षा में नहीं टिक पाएगा। पर जहां सियासी खेल साधना ही मकसद हो, वहां इसकी परवाह कौन करे! गौरतलब है कि दो महीने पहले हरियाणा सरकार ने एक विधेयक लाकर जाटों और पांच अन्य समुदायों के लिए सरकारी नौकरियों तथा सरकारी व सरकार से अनुदान-प्राप्त शिक्षण संस्थानों में आरक्षण की व्यवस्था कर दी। यह साफ तौर पर जाटों के

उग्र आंदोलन के आगे घुटने टेकना था। राज्य सरकार जानती थी कि वह जो करने जा रही है वैसा ही पिछली सरकार ने भी किया था, पर उसे सर्वोच्च न्यायालय ने खारिज कर दिया। यही नहीं, पिछले लोकसभा चुनावों से ऐन पहले, केंद्रीय सेवाओं में जाटों को आरक्षण देने का यूपीए सरकार का निर्णय भी साल भर बाद सुप्रीम कोर्ट ने असंवैधानिक ठहरा दिया था। गौरतलब है कि सर्वोच्च अदालत ने आरक्षण की अधिकतम सीमा पचास फीसद तय कर रखी है। लेकिन तब अपने फैसले में अदालत ने यह भी कहा था कि जाट शैक्षिक और सामाजिक पिछड़ेपन की शर्त पूरी नहीं करते, इसलिए वे आरक्षण के हकदार नहीं हैं। फिर भी खट्कर सरकार ने पचास फीसद की सीमा लांघ कर पिछड़े वर्ग की एक नई यानी 'सी' श्रेणी बना दी। उसे लगा होगा कि इस तरह वह जाट समुदाय को संतुष्ट कर पाएगी, जो कि हरियाणा का सबसे ताकतवर समुदाय है। यह दरअसल, दोहरा खेल था। यह नया आरक्षण अदालत के आदेश की भेंट चढ़ जाए, तो राज्य सरकार या भाजपा कह सकती है कि हमने तो दे दिया था, अदालत ने अड़ंगा लगा दिया। राजनीतिक उलटफेर कर सकने लायक किसी समुदाय की नाराजगी न मोल लेनी पड़े, इसलिए हरियाणा सरकार के विधेयक का सभी दलों ने समर्थन किया था। हरियाणा के बाद भाजपा ने यही दांव गुजरात में भी खेला। पाटीदारों के बीच अपना आधार खिसकने के डर से 'आर्थिक पिछड़ों' के लिए दस फीसद आरक्षण की घोषणा कर दी। उसका भी क्या हश्र होगा, इसका अंदाजा पंजाब एवं हरियाणा हाइकोर्ट के ताजा फैसले से लगाया जा सकता है। अलबत्ता हाइकोर्ट का यह अंतरिम फैसला है, पर सर्वोच्च न्यायालय के पूर्व में दिए निर्देशों और निर्णयों की पृष्ठभूमि में यह अनुमान किया जा सकता है कि हाइकोर्ट का अंतिम फैसला क्या होगा, और अगर उसे सुप्रीम कोर्ट में चुनौती दी गई, तो आखिरकार नतीजा क्या आएगा। इसलिए अच्छा होगा कि आरक्षण की नई-नई मांगों को हवा देने का सिलसिला बंद हो। अलबत्ता आरक्षण को अधिक तर्कसंगत बनाने की पहल जरूर की जानी चाहिए, जिसकी ओर सर्वोच्च अदालत ने भी अपने एक फैसले में संकेत किया था। उसने सवाल उठाया था कि आरक्षण की सूची में नई भर्ती तो कर दी जाती है, इस सूची से किसी को बाहर करने की जरूरत क्यों नहीं महसूस की गई; क्या किसी लाभार्थी समुदाय की हालत में कोई उल्लेखनीय सुधार नहीं आ पाया है? दूसरा तकाजा यह है कि कृषि समेत असंगठित क्षेत्र की आर्थिक सुरक्षा बढ़ाने वाली नीतियां अपनाई जाएं और उन्हें प्राथमिकता दी जाए। पर समस्या यह है कि इसके लिए जो राजनीतिक इच्छाशक्ति चाहिए, वह हमारे राजनीतिक दलों व राज्यतंत्र में कहीं नजर नहीं आती।



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## Waiting to take off

### **Government must ask why its several programmes are not yet resulting in a critical mass of economic activity.**

In its first two years, the big achievement of the NDA government led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi can be said to be the change in the narrative about India, seen earlier as an economy paralysed due to policy inaction and large-scale corruption. The new government launched a large number of programmes and schemes, many of which were the UPA's brainchild but never quite pursued with conviction by the UPA government. Cobwebs in the infrastructure sector were removed, for example, coal and telecom spectrum auctions were made transparent and the persistent backlog in environment clearances done away with. There seems to have been a new purposefulness in economic policy-making with the Reserve Bank of

India restoring confidence in the global markets about stability in India's monetary policy. In the very first year, the government took a leap forward in fiscal federalism by accepting the Finance Commission's recommendations to part with a larger (42 per cent) share of taxes with states and lend them flexibility in spending based on their priorities and unique needs. Simultaneously, the Central government embarked on a big public expenditure programme in key infrastructure sectors such as roads, highways and railways. These have an enormous multiplier effect. States

too have taken the cue and continue to chart a capital expenditure plan that can spur growth.

It has taken two full years for some green shoots to emerge, which, however, are yet to strike root. As the series of reports on the state of the economy in this newspaper (beginning May 24) show, a consumption-led demand boost may aid growth in the current financial year. Consumption accounts for 55 per cent of the economy, and will continue to be the mainstay given the country's demographics. Government expenditure — both at the Centre and in the states — can stretch only so much, constrained as they are by commitments to meet deficit targets. And the external environment is not helping either.

FDI inflows have been good, but for the recovery to be meaningful and sustainable, it is imperative that private investment, moribund now, picks up pace. It is time for the government to reflect on why all the “ease of doing business” and Make in India programmes, MUDRA, Start-Up India action plan and Stand-Up India schemes are not resulting in a critical mass of activity for the economy. What is at stake is the future of India — with millions entering the work force very year, who may be skilled under government schemes but fail to get a job given that the private sector is hardly investing.

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# Reaching the last village

## The problem begins with the way we define “urban” and “rural”

Written by Bibek Debroy

As per the 2011 Census, there are 6,40,930 villages in India, of which around 6,00,000 can be regarded as inhabited. The Census, though, treats rural or village population as a residual even as it has different categories of “urban”.

If a settlement is under a municipality, corporation, cantonment board or a notified town area committee, it becomes a statutory town and is hence urban. Another definition of urban is linked to demographic characteristics: If in a population size of 5,000, 75 per cent of the male working population is engaged in non-agricultural pursuits and the population density exceeds 400 people per sq km, this becomes a Census town, regardless of whether it is a statutory town or not.

This reclassification — a deviation from the traditional notions of urbanisation, which we link to the natural rate of growth in urban areas or rural-urban migration — also results in urbanisation. In fact, between 2001 and 2011, a large chunk of increased urbanisation was because of Census towns and not statutory ones.

There is also the matter of an urban outgrowth, when a village (or hamlet) is physically contiguous to a town and possesses urban features; it is then treated as an urban agglomeration. Therefore, anything other than a statutory town, Census town or urban agglomeration is a village.

In that sense, the village is residual, regardless of its population size. The population can be 10,000 people or it can also be 100 people.

I find it odd that the 2011 Census showed 222 villages in the (National Capital Territory), though I understand the definitional issue. There is a process for transition to the “urban”, but that hasn’t yet occurred for these 222 villages. There is a notification, land is acquired by the DDA and during the transition from a panchayat to municipality, there is understandable speculation on the land. You can thus find one side of a road that is “urban” and an opposite side still “rural”, like the area near Masoodpur village.

The major road from NH 8 to the Mehrauli-Gurgaon road is sometimes referred to as the Mahipalpur-Masoodpur Road, both Mahipalpur and Masoodpur being villages. Mahipalpur gets its name from Raja Mahipal Tomar, who established it, while Masoodpur is so named because some six centuries ago, the land was originally bought from Masood Khan. Subsequently, DDA acquired some of this land. Near Masoodpur, you will find malls, institutions and hotels, but you will also find a panchayat bhawan. Many people don’t know that JNU is built on Masoodpur land and that a land acquisition (on quantum of compensation) case is still going on, even though the acquisition was done in 1961 and 1965.

Throughout the country, we want citizens to have access to similar standards of public goods and services — the word “public good” not being used in the classic economist’s sense, but in terms of goods and services we want the government (across all three layers) to provide. We want a minimum threshold to be available everywhere: in the village with a population of 10,000, the village with a population of 100, Masoodpur-type villages, statutory towns and Census towns.

At one level, there is a governance issue. Who ensures those public goods and services — panchayats, municipalities? Or is the village stuck in the interregnum from panchayat to municipality?

I think the more serious issue is that we use the word “village” too loosely, across a very heterogeneous category. For Census purposes, we have in mind a revenue village but there may be many clusters of habitations/hamlets within the same revenue village. Inside forest areas, there may be non-surveyed villages. Just as we

have habitations as sub-categories of villages, we have gram panchayats as categories higher than villages. Therefore, we have something like 2,50,000 gram panchayats.

The 2001 Census contains a table (a comparable table is not yet available for the 2011 Census), which provides size distribution of villages according to population. As per the 2001 data, 91,000 villages had population size less than 200, with almost 13,000 of them in Odisha and around 9,000 in HP and UP. There were 1,27,000 villages with population sizes between 200 and 499, with their concentration in UP, Odisha, MP and even Maharashtra.

Delivering public goods and services in a village with a population size of 10,000, where there is a gram panchayat, is relatively easy. Delivering it in a village with a population size less than 200 is much more difficult. Delivering it in every habitation within the village is even more difficult. I forgot to mention that some villages with small population sizes are in difficult geographical terrain. How has this changed? The only decent answer we have seems to be from the ICE (income and consumption expenditure) 2014, undertaken by PRICE (People Research of India's Consumer Economy). This tells us an expected story of greater integration of larger (population sizes more than 5,000) villages with the mainstream, primarily because of better transport connectivity. The radius of development, so to speak, is getting larger, but there are still the smaller villages.

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## Reaching out to Africa

The Ministry of External Affairs, in the end, was mobilised sufficiently to persuade African envoys to call off their proposed boycott of the Africa Day event in the national capital on Thursday. But by then, by their extreme threat of rebuffing the host country's invitation, they had made their point — and for India, embarrassingly so. First, by centring their protest around something as particular to them as Africa Day, the African Heads of Mission have highlighted how India fails to appreciate the continent's changing identity and aspirations by not forging constructive people-to-people contact. And second, by making common cause around the murder of a Congolese student in Delhi, they have shown India a brutal mirror. Many attacks on African students may be isolated incidents of urban crime that could catch any individual in its grip, irrespective of identity, but there is a latent expression of discrimination in our everyday interactions that is stinging, that makes the next attack a reminder of a larger problem. Upon hearing of the boycott threat, the government went into damage control, with the Minister of State in the MEA reaching out to African envoys, and a mechanism being worked out for a meeting with Heads of Mission every three months. However, the remarkable manner in which the problem of “Afro-phobia” has been brought to public attention demands more — more diplomatic introspection and more political will to address dehumanising prejudices in Indian society.

It is not that India has not recognised the growing importance of Africa. Last year, the Modi government rendered the Africa Summit a spectacular splash to show that it is mindful of the continent's rising profile. The 54 countries of the African Union — indeed, the 54 seats in the UN General Assembly — are key to India's global ambitions. African countries too are responding to India's rise by appointing more

senior diplomats and often senior politicians to their missions to New Delhi. One consequence is that the envoys do not follow an older, sedate template for their roster of duties. As the MEA's announcement of the mechanism of minister-level interactions shows, the diplomatic outreach needs re-evaluation. More importantly perhaps, envoys today are more conscious of public opinion back home. They see it to be their remit to respond to anxiety, even anger, over the treatment of their citizens. India is scaling up its engagement with Africa — Vice President Hamid Ansari begins a visit to Morocco and Tunisia next week, Prime Minister Narendra Modi goes later this year. But this is not only about Africa. India fails itself by carrying on, business as usual, instead of politically and socially tackling the discrimination and violence faced by its citizens as well as visitors.

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## **Birth pangs of payments banks**

Barely nine months since the Reserve Bank of India announced the names of the 11 applicants who had won “in-principle” approval to start payments banks, three have backed out. Tech Mahindra this week became the latest to drop its plans, and joined Cholamandalam Investment in citing ‘competition’ and a ‘long gestation period’ as key considerations in reaching the decision. That a corporate entity, which initially evaluated the business to be attractive enough to apply and was prepared to compete with other players to win a ‘coveted’ licence, could have cited competition as a reason to withdraw is intriguing. While it is true that this experimental banking licence would allow licensees limited scope to earn attractive interest spreads since they are prohibited from lending loans, the constraints of the business model were already known. Similarly, given the banking regulator's focus on extending a remittances and payments network to unbanked and far-flung rural areas, it was understood that this new breed of niche banks would take more than a few years to establish standalone profitability. So, the argument of a long gestation period also wears thin. The logical surmise is that after the first flush of excitement at the

prospect of winning a ‘banking licence’ — albeit a watered down one — they have realised that catering to a customer base that largely comprises low-income households, farmers and the migrant workforce may not be such a rosy proposition after all.

For the RBI, the experience of having its chosen applicants develop cold feet must be disconcerting, given the time and effort invested in the process. Its disappointment is reflected in Deputy Governor S.S. Mundra’s recent comment that some kind of a processing fee could be considered as a levy on those withdrawing their applications. But central bankers too need to do some introspection. For one, the ground has shifted in the months since the RBI released draft guidelines for the payments banks in November 2014. The National Payments Corporation of India recently introduced its Unified Payments Interface that is expected to alter the way payment transactions are conducted. Also, commercial banks are now aggressively pushing their own mobile application-based offerings, eroding the potential that payments banks had for the banked and technology-savvy segment. Ultimately, though, it is in everybody’s interest to see a pared down field of banks unveiling their payments services when the licences are finally issued, especially if the goal of widening financial inclusion is to be sustainably met over the long term.

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## THE ECONOMIC TIMES

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# A bureaucrat-mukt Bharat: Steel frame of bureaucracy has rusted

By Rajendra P Gupta

Last year at the Economic Times Global Business Summit, finance minister Arun Jaitley had said that “the creeping acquisition of Rajya Sabha is on”. The thumping

victory in Assam and an increased vote share across states show that the BJP government at the Centre is marching towards its goal. Also, the party seems closer to the goal of ‘Congress-Mukt Bharat’ after the latest assembly polls.

However, these results need introspection from all political parties. While the results have led to comments from party veterans like Digvijaya Singh’s observation that Congress needs “a major surgery” and Satyavrat Chaturvedi’s similar prognosis involving “a cardiac surgery”, the Narendra Modi government needs to conduct an open heart surgery for a ‘Bureaucrat-Mukt Bharat’. In 2014, India had voted in Modi to spearhead radical change, end corruption, execute citizen-friendly policies and administration, provide development with jobs, and lower prices.

The prime minister started well by meeting the secretaries and not his ministers. But somehow, the bureaucracy, after a while, started ignoring the ministers, as they had direct access to the PMO. I know of a minister who lost his portfolio because the secretary of the department made repeated complaints against this honest man who took a tough stand on irregularities happening in the ministry. Finally, the bureaucrat succeeded in ousting the minister.

I had a meeting with an additional secretary in the presence of a Cabinet minister. We discussed a few programmes that could be implemented on a priority basis. The additional secretary had a problem for every solution we proposed. He provided reasons as to why a major programme could not be implemented. And when we provided a workable solution for each one of his ‘problems’, he finally agreed on a timeline – without ever delivering. During the meeting, he kept flaunting that he had just returned from a meeting at the PMO.

### Dragging the Nation Down

Then there was a senior technocrat in a ministry whom I met last month. He immediately told me to send him an email and promised that he would get the job done. The email was forwarded to his junior for action only after nine days! And this, despite clear instructions from the Cabinet minister a few days before. Most bureaucrats don’t seem to be bothered with the job at hand.

When people single out politicians for corruption and non-performance, I beg to differ. The bureaucracy runs the government. If the bureaucrats did their jobs well without fear or favour, we would not have straggled so far behind China. We have been terribly let down by the bureaucracy. There are always exceptions, of course. But they are far and few between.

Bureaucracy has still not got out of the officer culture that they have been used to for about 60 years of Congress rule. The role and orientation of the civil services has to change. Bureaucrats need to give up their role of ‘administrators’ and work on becoming ‘developers’.

I keep hearing that bureaucrats are afraid of taking decisions due to the fear of being hauled up by the Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG), the Central Vigilance Commission (CVC) and the Central Bureau of Investigation. But aren't these institutions also in the hands of their fellow officers? Why on earth are bureaucrats afraid of bureaucrats?

It is time for the officer to learn a few lessons from the armed forces. Soldiers join the army knowing well that while working for the country, they can lose their lives. The working conditions for soldiers are not as comfortable as that of bureaucrats and neither do most of their pay scales match those of bureaucrats. And, bureaucrats are also soldiers for development and they should not worry about action against if they discharge their duty impartially and without fear or favour.

If people don't have the passion and commitment for the country, or if they join the civil services for a job that gives them only authority as an administrator — or only for a safe job with a good retirement plan — don't join the administrative services. Modi has a grand vision and is a man of action. So, either the bureaucrats rally behind the prime minister's vision and implement his government's idea of India by focusing on development with passion. Or we get rid of them.

Goodbye to Bureaucrats

Union road transportation minister Nitin Gadkari has got rid of bureaucrats in his

ministry in key positions while having achieved a lot in a ministry considered tough to handle. Could Gadkari's prowess as a minister have anything to do with the fact that his private secretary and key members of staff are from outside the Indian Administrative Service (IAS)?

So, we need to get rid of the British Raj-era kind of bureaucracy and its officer culture. Otherwise, the bureaucracy will be the biggest bottleneck for implementing the vision of the Modi government with the country paying a price it cannot afford. Fortunately, the prime minister has three years left in his current tenure. So, the next goal for the government should be a 'Bureaucrat-Mukt Bharat'.

The writer is a public policy expert

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