

Sanatana Bharat : TIMELESS INDIA
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Swadeshi is the Key to Indian Revival



CENTRE FOR POLICY STUDIES CHENNAI

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Current State of Indian Economy

Since Independence, people in different parts of India have made great efforts to rebuild Indian economy, using the natural resources of India and the civilisational capital manifest in our families and communities to the best extent possible. The scientists and technologists of India have put in their best efforts: With their help India has become one of the few countries in the world to learn and work with frontline technologies in fields like nuclear and space sciences. Indian State has invested large sums in putting together the infrastructure necessary for building a buoyant modern economy. Indian corporate sector has set up several successful enterprises requiring large investments, sophisticated technologies and high financial and management skills.

Yet, in spite of all these efforts, Indian economy has not reached a level commensurate with the dimensions, natural endowments and civilisational heritage of India. By most indicators of economic prosperity, India remains far behind other comparable nations of the world. Our per capita production and consumption of food, iron and steel, cement, electricity, coal, and other basic products, remains low in comparison with other major nations of the world.

The constraints of bureaucratic meddling, of elite hostility, and of naiveté in the game of globalisation are, to some extent, responsible for Indian economy remaining behind others. We, as the inheritors of a civilisation that for millennia surpassed the world in all fields of human endeavour, must sit down and think hard about how to regain the glory that rightfully belongs to our land and our people.



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Comparative State of Indian Economy

	India	China	USA	Year
Population (millions)	1014	1285	278	2000
Percentage of World	16.7	21.2	4.6	2000
Foodgrains (mn tons)	197	397	348	1998
Foodgrains (kg/capita)	201	314	1272	1998
Foodgrains (kg/hectare)	1600	4100	5600	1998
Steel Crude (mn tons)	18	80	84	1992
Coal (mn tons)	267	1141	856	1993
Electricity (bn. kwh)	300	740	3075	1992
Cement (mn. tons)	50	245	65	1991
Crude Oil (mn tons)	30	140	420	1993
Looms Installed (1000's)	61	866	107	1990
TV Sets (million)	57	300	204	1995
Foreign Direct Inv. (bn.US\$)	2	46	193	1998
Exports (bn.US\$)	38	158	796	1995
Imports (bn.US\$)	40	139	818	1995
GDP per capita (US\$)	340	620	26980	1995





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Recollecting Ourselves

Nature has endowed India with the most fertile lands in the world, and this land of plenty has been enclosed within the most secure natural borders. In the vastness of her fertile plains, the greatness and ubiquity of her rivers, and in the abundance of her rains and sunshine, there is just no other region of the world that can be compared with India. It is indeed to express their gratitude for bringing such abundance to our lands that Indians have been paying perpetual obeisance to the Himalayas; to Ganga, Yamuna, Godavari, Saraswati, Narmada, Sindhu and Kaveri; and to the gods of sun and rain.

Having been blessed with such plenty and natural security, Indians have created a civilisation that is unparalleled in its spiritual as well as material affluence and sophistication. They have learnt and taught others to live in harmony with, and to solicitously care for, all sentient and insentient beings. They have evolved a social system that, with its anchorage in the family and the community, is self-disciplined and self-regulating. And they have acquired extraordinary skills in agriculture and industry to convert their natural endowments into such material wealth that foreign observers, from the time of Alexander up to the beginning of nineteenth century, have marvelled at their riches.

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India entered a phase of eclipse with the coming of the British; the darkness had probably begun to set in earlier, since about 1000AD. However, this period of subjugation to alien rulers constitutes a minuscule part of the long civilisational history of India. With Independence, India has begun to come into her own. India has achieved much in the frontier technologies of today. We have established a strong infrastructure and knowledge base for a great industrial revival. The families and communities of India have begun to participate in this revival using their long established civilisational strengths and skills.

The revival however is constrained by the failure of modern metropolitan elite of India to recognise the strengths of India, and of the people of India. The elite India so far has failed to enter into a proper partnership with the ordinary India that is organised around self-disciplined and self-regenerating families, communities and localities and is anchored in the Indian civilisational genius.

The swadeshi effort is aimed at facilitating this partnership between metropolitan elite and the families, communities and localities of the people of India. Once the partnership is restored, there would be nothing to stop India from achieving the glory that is rightfully hers.

