

CHANGING WORLD! IS INDIA CHANGING ENOUGH?

Ashutosh Sinha^{#1}

[#]Manager- International Marketing
Tufropes Private Limited, Mumbai
Maharashtra, India

¹Email: ashunow24@gmail.com

Abstract— This article is directed towards analysis of India's preparedness against ever changing external as well as internal environment. World economy is changing thick and fast and happiness index of a country is measured by the strength of its economy itself. The change at this front has the potential to affect the happiness index of any nation. Where at one hand, economy has had a crucial role to play in world's history; at the same time it has the potential to shape future geography of the world. How prepared we are, in order to keep our geography intact? Is our preparedness good enough to stimulate internal environment and increase happiness index of the nation? This article runs through our Strengths, Weaknesses, Threats, and opportunities as a major global player.

Keywords— India, possibilities, government, policies, challenges, relationship, opportunities, business

It is good for a rich fiancée to have a beautiful bride, the statement of Russian Ambassador to New Delhi, Alexander Kadakin, prior to Putin's visit, can be viewed as the changed perception of India beyond boundaries. Currently India is looked upon as a beautiful bride at the world stage, where all the Richie rich are showcasing their worth to garland the bride.

Not long before, India was perceived as a fading force, and FDIs were hard to come by. India's indecisiveness at crucial stages and bureaucracy have cost us dearly and always termed as a hurdle by the foreign investors. From GDP at 7.9% in 2004 to 5% in 2013; is the indicative of hard times Indian economy faced in the last decade. Although Entire Global Economy went topsy-

turvy during the mentioned period, but the real problem I guess was the tentative investor. Even Indian investors started looking for greener pastures.

2014 saw a different light as far as India's global positioning is concerned. After 3 decades India had a government with full majority. This is important in many aspects. Not only it defines the longevity of the government but also entrusts investors for long term plans. Strong Indian Diaspora welcomed it and the breeze of positivity started to blow. Greater power is coupled with greater challenges. No different is the case with newly elected majority government. If they rode on the waves of so-called failed policies of their predecessors, they will have to make sure that it does not boomerang them.

The new chapter began with two policies of "Look east" and "Love thy neighbours". Premiers of SAARC nations witnessed the beginning of renewed foreign policy of India. Except for Pakistan, no other nation showed reluctance in accepting the invitation. Pakistan government had to go through brain churning before accepting the invitation and their premier accepted the invitation finally. Had they accepted it straight away, it could have invited criticism uncalled for at their own turf, but at the same time declining the invitation could have shown

them in the bad light at international level. This is the beginning of new age Indian diplomacy.

If you can't be friends with your enemies, be friends with their enemies, is a famous saying across the cultures and civilizations. Is "Look east" policy an extension to this belief? Stronger ties with Japan, renewed trade partnership with Vietnam can be looked upon as a tactics to curb our neighboring Dragons. Chinese aspirations can only be compared with 19th century Germany somewhat, the way they have displayed their hunger for power in the region. Much talked about "*String of Pearls*" adds to their attempt of superiority in the Indian Ocean region. Constructing naval bases and developing ports at Gwadar-Pakistan; Hambantota-Sri Lanka; Chittagong-Bangladesh; Sittwe Yangon-Myanmar and Coco Islands-Myanmar are the indicative of their power game. They might call it as their maritime silk route but it should be regarded as an attempt to surround India.

Disputed China-Vietnam border, and disputed Islands between China and Japan makes them natural Indian ally. Vietnam too had to face Chinese aggression in 1979. As India, Vietnam share common adversity; our goal becomes common too. Geographically Vietnam is ideally placed in South East Asia to prevent China's expansion into the South China Sea. India has been instrumental in beefing up Vietnamese muscles. India has not only been assisting them with technology and modern warfare but has also trained their pilots and armed forces.

Countering "*String of Pearls*" India has been trying to boost its relationship with countries like Vietnam, South Korea, Japan, Philippines, Indonesia, Thailand and Singapore. India has also given impetus to its interests in the Indian Ocean Rim, which includes the islands of Mauritius,

Maldives, Seychelles, Madagascar, South Africa, Tanzania and Mozambique. Chinese often term it as "*India's Iron Curtain*". Are we gearing up to take the bull by its horns? Answer lies in the womb of future, but one thing is for sure we are no more a meek country. We understand our interest and are very careful in selecting friends. Selection of friends takes it to the emotional level, be it Nepal, Bhutan or, the island mentioned above.

With the population of 1.2 billion, India is a lucrative market to cater. Open economy makes it even more alluring. When we talk of emerging economies, we talk about Russia, Brazil, South Africa, and Turkey. Russian Rouble is in deep trouble and the economies of other mentioned countries have weakened. India is the only country which shows growth at 5.8 % and doing better than most of the nations in the world. This is why India falls into the category of the most favoured nation for investors. New government understands this sentiment of the world market and had started tightening the screws of our system from the very beginning. With more responsive system and favourable business environment India is well poised as a market to invest with high potential returns.

At world stage Indian PM is selling "opportunities in India" by positioning it as a country of young enthusiasts. He says "gone are the days when we used to play with snakes, now we play with mouse, and when we move it we can move the world." This statement itself is an indicative of our confidence in our techno-commercial capabilities.

"*Make in India*" is yet another positive initiative which has the potential to bridge Indian trade deficit. Our recorded current trade deficit is USD 16860 million. The very possibility has given

much needed faith to the manufacturing sector and it has responded well by showing growth. Strong leadership makes it sure that the investors don't only use it as a selling market, but share technologies as well. India is taking steady and measured steps towards self-reliance in every walk of life, which is the sole motto of whole "Make in India" exercise.

It is only apt to mention PM Narendra Modi's ambitious plan called "Digital India". It is directed to reach out to citizens residing in every nook and corner of the country. The objective is to push mobile connectivity, broadband, public internet, e-governance, and other electronic services. If we take pride in calling India an IT super power, this is the way forward and this is the way we want to be looked at. The concept of "Smart-Cities" will be on roll with facilities just a click away. What a dream and what a potential. We are at threshold of breaking in to a big league. Let us wish, whirlwind change sweeps adversity away and the "JAGATGURU" finds its century's old foothold back. India as I see today, will lead the world tomorrow.

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