

PR  *SENSE*

SPEAKS

Cover Stories 2021

**Compiled by
Ramesh Sundaram
(Consulting Editor, PreSense)**

**Prime Point Foundation
Chennai**

Contents

INTRODUCTION-----	5
Foreword From Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam For The First Edition PreSense100 -----	6
Journey of Ezine PreSense - Milestones -----	7
Editorial Team – October 2022-----	9
Prime Point Foundation and its Initiatives -----	10
Publisher’s Note -----	13
COVER STORIES 2021-----	15
Know About the Union Budget -----	17
Satellite Navigation -----	23
12 Years’ Journey of Sansad Ratna Awards -----	29
Synopses of Speeches of Dignitaries – Sansad Ratna Awards 2021 -----	34
Regulations for Social Media and OTT Platforms: A Review-----	42
India Faces Covid-19: Version 2 -----	51
Print Media Will Fade Away in Future Due to Emergence of Social Media – Maxim Behar -----	55

Vedic Vibrations Stimulate the Brain – Experts -----63

**Taliban Seizes Kabul After American Troops Withdraw -
India & US Worry About the Uncertainty of Billions in
Investments -----70**

**Chronology of Afghanistan History of Govts, Russia,
American Presence and Tribal Rising - Background of
Why Tribal War Lords rule Afghanistan -----76**

The Milestone Journey of 'PreSense', over 16 Years -79

**Managing Mobile Addiction – Patience, Perseverance
and Perfection Needed-----87**

Top Ten Countries Emit 68% of Greenhouse Gases --92

**Natural Disasters That Caused Havoc in India in the last
Ten years -----99**

Why Brilliant Brains Leave India? – An Analysis --- 105

SOME OF OUR PUBLICATIONS ----- 113

INDEX----- 115

Introduction

Foreword From Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam For The First Edition PreSense100

Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam
Former President of India



10, Rajaji Marg
New Delhi-110011

FOREWORD

I am very happy to know that the PreSense monthly ezine published by Prime Point Foundation is bringing out a book based on some of the unique articles, interviews and events published in its editions so far since from March 2006. The 100 issues of the publication have gone through an eventful journey, focusing on knowledge capture and important knowledge dissemination. I recollect my direct association with PreSense in July 2008, when I launched the cartoon character, 'Prince', created exclusively for PreSense.

I see PreSense continuing in its journey under the mentorship of Prime Point Srinivasan, maintaining its status as a must-read ezine, in the fast moving and evolving world of communication, knowledge and connectivity.

I congratulate the Editorial Team of PreSense for bringing out the 100th Edition as a Collector's Digest.

28th May 2015


(A.P.J. Abdul Kalam)

Journey of Ezine PreSense - Milestones

- Dec 1999 Launch of Prime Point Foundation, Publisher of the ezine.
- Feb 2006 Launch of ezine, PreSense online by Dr Y S Rajan.
- Aug 2006 Integration of Podcast with the ezine contents.
- Aug 2007 Introduction of Guest Editors.
- Feb 2008 Second Anniversary Edition with Dr Abdul Kalam's exclusive interview. Masthead changed.
- Apr 2008 First ezine to become 'Media Partner' for a global event held at London.
- July 2008 Introduction of cartoons – Cartoon Character 'Prince' launched by Dr Abdul Kalam.
- Sep 2008 Change in layout, introducing photographs on the cover.
- Jan 2010 Ezine's new initiative 'Education Loan Task Force' (ELTF) launched to create awareness among students and parents.
- May 2010 Ezine's second initiative to honour top performing Parliamentarians, with the *Sansad Ratna* Award launched. Golden Jubilee (50th) Edition launched.
- Feb 2011 Diamond Jubilee (60th) Edition.

A hiatus after 5 years of uninterrupted journey

- Apr 2012 Ezine resumed in a new format of contents. The tag line changed from 'Communicate the Communication' to 'Spreading Positive Vibrations.'
- Apr 2013 Tamil Nadu Governor launched a special edition on the Indian Parliament, coinciding with the *Sansad Ratna* Awards.

PreSense Speaks | Cover Stories 2021

- Jun 2013 Platinum Jubilee (75th) Edition launched by the youth at three places simultaneously, across the nation.
- Jun 2015 100th Edition - PreSense 100 released in print format.
- Mar 2016 Ezine's third initiative 'Digital Journalists Association of India' (DiJAI) launched.
- Jun 2016 Second edition of PreSense 100+ released in print format
- Dec 2017 Ezine's fourth initiative 'Digital Security Association of India' (DiSAI) launched.
- Mar 2018 Third edition of Digest PreSense130 released in print format.
- Aug 2019 Fourth edition of Digest PreSense150 launched in pdf format.
- May 2021 PreSense Speaks Series - First volume released on Communication (compilation of articles published earlier)
- Sep 2021 Fifth edition of Digest PreSense175 in 6 volumes released.
- Jul 2022 PreSense Speaks Series - Second volume released compiling the Editorials published between 2020 and 2022
- Aug 2022 PreSense Speaks Series - Third volume launched - Compilation of articles on Indian freedom fighters

The Journey Continues.....

Editorial Team – October 2022

Publisher and Managing Editor	K. Srinivasan (Prime Point Srinivasan)
Editor	Priyadharshni Rahul, Advocate, Supreme Court of India, New Delhi
Consulting Editors	T N Ashok, Former Editor, Press Trust of India and freelance Journalist at Delhi C Badri, Former General Manager, Canara Bank and CVO, IOB, Chennai Ramesh Sundaram, Senior Journalist, Ex The Hindu
Cartoon Editor	Triambak Sharma, Editor, Cartoon Watch, Raipur
Editorial Advisors	Dr R Jagannathan, Provost, Saint Teresa University, West Indies and Former Vice Chancellor, Middle East University, UAE Dr R Nurullah, Senior Journalist Dr. P Sudarshan. Associate Professor, IIT Madras Dr Ashok Pandey, Educationist at Delhi and Columnist
Technology Advisor	Srinivas Gopal, Technology expert



**PRIME POINT
Foundation**

Prime Point Foundation and its Initiatives

Prime Point Foundation, a Non-Profit Trust and NGO was founded in December 1999 by Shri K Srinivasan (popularly known as Prime Point Srinivasan), a former Senior Banker and a Digital Journalist and Communication Professional, to promote leadership and communication skills among the youth. Very eminent persons are associated with the Foundation.

In the past 22 years, the Foundation has organised several seminars, workshops, training and interactive sessions, both offline and online, on various subjects of national interest. The Foundation manages various online discussion groups and podcasts on communication, and digital journalism.

The Foundation has formed 5 initiatives to create awareness in various domains. All these initiatives are managed independently by passionate experts. These initiatives are non-commercial and focussed on youth.

PreSense: The eMagazine PreSense was started in March 2006 on the suggestion of Dr APJ Abdul Kalam to promote positive journalism. Till Sep 2022, the Foundation has published 187 editions. This is a digital-only magazine. Digests, containing select articles up to 150 editions of the



eMagazine, have so far been published. Dr Abdul Kalam has written the foreword for the Digest of articles up to 100 editions. PreSense publishes the cartoon character Prince, which was launched by Dr Abdul Kalam in 2008. PreSense has published a Digest of select articles published up to 175 editions in 8 volumes.

India Book of Records has recognised PreSense for publishing maximum number of digital only eMagazine since 2006 through voluntary efforts. .

Sansad Ratna Awards: This is a flagship initiative started in 2010 to honour top performing Parliamentarians every year, based on various performance parameters, and selected by a Jury Committee of eminent Parliamentarians. Dr Abdul Kalam himself inaugurated the first edition of the Awards event in May 2010. Till 2022, the Foundation has conducted 12 editions and presented 86 Awards. IIT Madras was the supporting Partner up to the 9th Edition. 10th Edition was held at Raj Bhavan, Tamil Nadu. 11th and 12th Editions were held at New Delhi.



India Book of Records (IBR) has recognised Sansad Ratna Awards for maximum number of Parliamentary Awards (86) given and maximum number of award events (12) by the civil society based on the performance in consecutive years.

Next Gen Political Leaders (NGPL) is an off-shoot of Sansad Ratna Awards. This is a registered NGO operating since 2018. NGPL has organised several workshops online and offline, for young political leaders and aspirants. Ministers, parliamentarians, legislators and retired constitutional authorities have participated and shared their views. NGPL will shortly be instituting Awards for young promising politicians.



Education Loan Task Force (ELTF) was started in 2010 to create awareness about education loans, among students and parents. More than 30,000 queries have been responded to, through email, and more than 5000 serious complaints have been taken up with the top



management of the banks concerned, for redressal. Many policy issues have been taken up by Sansad Ratna Awardee MPs, in the Parliament for solution. ELTF does not facilitate loans.

Digital Journalists Association of India (DiJAI): DiJAI is an independent NGO founded in 2017 to create awareness about digital journalism and its implications, among the public and particularly among the journalists. DiJAI conducts several online and offline workshops and seminars, with panels of domain experts.



Publisher's Note

On behalf of the Editorial Team of PreSense, we present the fourth edition of 'PreSense Speaks' Series. The eMagazine PreSense was started in March 2006 on the suggestion of Dr APJ Abdul Kalam, former President of India, for positive journalism. In March 2022, PreSense completed 16 years. We have published 187 editions till Sep 2022.

As readers are aware, we have published digests of select articles up to 100, 110, 130, 150 and 175 editions. We had the unique privilege of carrying Foreword from Dr Abdul Kalam himself for the 100th edition.

The first edition of PreSense was the compilation of articles on communication. This second edition of PreSense Speaks Series contains the Editorials published by us in 2020, 2021 and 2022. This third edition is the compilation of articles on Indian Freedom Fighters published by us in the past. The fourth and fifth editions are the compilation of Cover Stories published in 2020 and 2021 respectively.

I thank Priyadharshni Rahul and Ramesh Sundaram for taking efforts in compiling the articles.

I am confident that this edition will be useful for all our readers.

K. Srinivasan
(Prime Point Srinivasan)
Publisher and Managing Editor,
PreSense
5th October 2022



Cover Stories 2021

Know About the Union Budget

**By Prime Point Srinivasan, Publisher & Managing Editor,
with Susan Koshy, Editor-in-Chief (Jan 2021)**

The Annual Financial Statement, which is more commonly known as the Union Budget is the Estimate of the Income and Expenditure of the Central Government for a definite duration, which is usually one year. Much planning and exercise goes into the preparation of the Union Budget and there is more to it after its presentation in the Parliament by the Union Finance Minister.

Your eMagazine PreSense had the privilege of interviewing Mr M R Sivaraman, Former Revenue Secretary, Government of India, with many years of experience in the preparation of the Union Budget and State Budgets. We bring you a synopsis of the interview about the Union Budget – Preparation, Presentation, Implementation and Audit.



Q1. We are familiar with the Hon'ble Finance Minister walking into the Parliament with the red cloth bag of documents, for presentation of the Union Budget. What goes into preparing the Union Budget, before it is ready for presentation?

There are six Articles in the Indian Constitution dealing with the Union Budget, and corresponding six Articles dealing with the State Budget. Article 112 deals with the presentation of the Annual Financial Statement, which is the analogue of the company (Government in this case).



The Government has certain commitments to fulfil, irrespective of whether it has enough money to fulfil them or not, such as the expenditure relating to the Judiciary, the Parliament, the President's Office, Interest payments to the public and other countries,

Repayment of Loans. These are 'charged on the budget'. They are discussed in the parliament but not voted. The administration of the country which includes the expenditure on defence, police and similar forces, and those of other administrative departments of the government are committed expenditure even though economy cuts can sometimes be imposed on them.

Preparatory Exercise

In the month of October each year, the Government calls for the Budget estimates from all its departments and ministries. To arrive at this estimate, the actual expenditure for the completed period is first ascertained, and then the projected expenditure for the remaining months of the financial year. For example, in the current year 2020-21, the defence expenditure has unexpectedly escalated with the need for more equipment, high altitude clothing for the soldiers, arms and ammunition, warm tents and food, due to the emergency situation at the national border. These are added in what we call the Supplementary Budget, which will be part of the revised Estimate. Then, the Budget for the following financial year is estimated.

Every ministry has its normal schemes and projects. In normal, healthy practice, projects are classified under different categories – projects that can be completed in the current

year, those that can be completed in the ensuing year, and so on. The budget for those projects that are already underway and require additional allocation for completion, is given priority over new projects so that they are completed and utilised.

The Financial Advisor in consultation with the Joint Secretary and other officials, prepares the Budget for the ministry. When these proposals reach the Finance Ministry, they are examined and fine-tuned in consultation with the respective departments. The resources are divided into tax and non-tax sources. The Revenue Department consisting of the Central Boards of Direct and Indirect Taxes are involved in elaborate exercises, based on past performance and projections. For example, the services sector which accounts for 58% of the GDP has suffered due to the COVID situation this year. This factor has to be taken into consideration while planning for the next year. This is done by consulting with the various sectors of the economy. This exercise takes place in November-December. Extensive and detailed discussions are held with all the stakeholders, and notes are taken, prior to the preparation of the Budget. Experts and professionals in the respective fields are consulted while preparing the tax proposals.

The Finance Secretary then sits with his team and finalises the Expenditure Budget while the Resources Budget, including changes in taxes if any, is finalised by the Revenue Secretary. The tax proposals go under the signature of the Revenue Secretary. The consolidation of the budget and the finalisation of the budget speech is done by the Finance Secretary, who is the most senior secretary in the ministry in terms of service in the ministry.

Q2. How is the Budget dealt with, in the Parliament for its approval?

The finalised Budget is discussed in detail with the Prime Minister, by the team. Thereafter, the Budget is printed. One hour before the presentation, the Cabinet meets in the Parliament House and a summary is presented for their comprehension. The Presentation of the Union Budget is then made in the Parliament. The Bills, such as the Finance Bill, and Appropriation Bills, are introduced. The approval of the President of India is necessary before the presentation of the Union Budget, with the Appropriation Bill (which includes Demand for Grants) and the Finance Bill.

The Appropriation Bill consists of the expenditure and receipts from the various ministries. The expenditure is prepared as a 'Demand for Grant'. Demand for Grant is the request for approval of the expenditure incurred/to be incurred by the respective ministries. A Cut Motion is a special power vested in the Members of the Lok Sabha, to oppose a demand being discussed for specific allocation by the ministry, in the Government Bill, as part of the Demand for Grants. The cut/reduction can be a token amount of Rupee one. These Demands are then voted by the Parliament for approval. Similarly, the Appropriation Bill is discussed. The Finance Bill deals with changes in Customs and Excise Duty, Income and Corporate Taxes. Changes in GST (Goods & Services Tax) have to be approved by the GST Council of India.

Q3. Once the Budget is approved in the Parliament, what does the Government do with the approved Budget?

Once the Budget is approved, the grants are communicated to the various ministries. It is the responsibility of the Financial Advisor and the Joint Secretary to take care of the periodical

disbursement of the funds to the ministries or State Governments.

Q4. As the funds are utilised by the ministries in the course of the year, there is an element of auditing of the utilisation of funds. How is this carried out?

The Comptroller and Auditor General of India (CAG), an independent Constitutional Authority, audits the accounts of the Central and State Governments, and submits the audit reports to the President of India. This report is examined by the Public Accounts Committee (PAC) of the Parliament, headed by an Opposition Leader. In case of surplus of expenditure over the budgeted estimate, the ministry concerned has to explain to a Parliamentary Committee, to justify the surplus expenditure without seeking a Supplementary Budget. In case of an emergency as had occurred recently for the Defence Ministry because of the development in the borders, a Supplemental Budget can be proposed and approved, or reasons justified if expenditure has exceeded the allocation. PAC can raise observations based on the reports, and the ministry concerned would be required to respond to the queries. These responses will be submitted to the Action Taken Committee of the Parliament. India's Union Budget is considered as one of the most transparent budgets in the world.

Q5. In your opinion, what should the focus of the forthcoming Budget for FY 2021-2022 be?

It should focus primarily on the creation of demand for capital goods and consumer goods. This is a complicated exercise since it involves the GST factor, which does not come directly under the Union Budget. Some of the industries that critically need revival are tourism, construction, and automobile. The extent of taxes in the price of an automobile is 45% - almost the highest in the world.

The India's Union Budget is considered as one of the most transparent budgets in the world.

There is at least 25% tax evasion in the country. We need to address this, and increase the tax revenue to the GDP of the country. Otherwise, it is challenging to depend mainly on borrowings.

Therefore, the focus should be:

- 1) Reviving the demand quickly,
- 2) Streamlining tax rates and raising the tax revenue of the country,
- 3) Encouraging employment generation,
- 4) Enabling Unemployment Security to migrant workers through a calibrated unemployment relief scheme.

It is advisable that the Finance Minister associate experienced former government officials for their expertise and advice, which would be valuable, while planning and drawing up the country's Budget.

The complete interview can be watched on:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5t8Py3iCZ48>

Satellite Navigation

*By Susan Koshy, Editor-in-Chief, with V. Rajendran, Editor
(Feb 2021)*



Man is a social animal, and navigation as well as communication is an inherent urge in any human being. Being primitively nomadic, human beings, like most other species in the animal kingdom, were compelled to move from place to place in search of food and sometimes away from threats and enemies. With time and experience, human beings learnt to rely on familiar landmarks, and the direction of the celestial bodies, to earmark their position, in the course of their journey.

History

Indian history is full of stories on how emperors navigated and moved from one territory to another, in their quest to conquer

kingdoms. Around 1000 years ago, King Rajendra Chola of the Chola Dynasty in Tamil Nadu (now the delta region of the state) travelled to South East Asian kingdoms and regions (now called Sumatra, Burma and Cambodia). Chinese travellers have travelled to India, and many Indians have travelled across the seas on specific missions like trade, conquest, expeditions, religion and so on. The Indian sage, Adi Sankara travelled from South Kerala to the northernmost part of India, *viz.* the highlands in Kashmir and set up a temple there.

When men began to use the seas to explore new lands, they used to sail alongside the shoreline and look for landmarks that told them of the progress in their journey. When they began to sail far out into the seas and out of sight of the land, they relied on the direction of the sun during the day, and the North Star and other constellations during the night. Interestingly, some even followed the direction of birds' flights, or of the fish that swam. Then came the invention of the compass which is based on the magnetic fields of the earth, to show the directions.

By the 19th century, electronic navigation tools such as calculators and computers made reading directions easier, and travel more convenient. Navigation has come a long way over the centuries. Today, we have satellite-controlled and -monitored aids to facilitate navigation as well as communication across the lands and seas, and even across the universe within the solar system. Almost all navigations and communications are enabled by navigation satellite systems that relay from Earth's orbit to terrestrial stations, for use by the people.

Global Navigation Satellite System (GNSS)

GNSS refers to a constellation of navigation satellite systems providing signals from space, to transmit positioning and

timing data to GNSS receivers. The receivers then use this data to determine the location. GNSS is the generic term for satellite navigation systems for global coverage. RNSS stands for Regional Navigation Satellite System for regional navigational coverage. The advantage of having access to multiple satellites is accuracy and accessibility at all times. Even though satellite systems do not generally fail, in case of such an eventuality, or if the line of sight from any one satellite is obstructed, the GNSS receivers can pick up the signals from the other satellites on standby.

The primary operation of the GNSS is to transmit carrier waves which bear information, from the satellites to the receivers on Earth. A GNSS receiver has two elements comprising an antenna and a processor. The antenna catches the signals while the processor decodes and makes sense of the information received. To know the accurate location, the receiver needs to process the signals transmitted from a minimum of three satellites.

GPS or Global Positioning System

To the common man, the word GPS or Google Maps is a familiar term, used to locate directions or routes. GPS is one of the four Global Navigation Satellite Systems (GNSS), available today. The motorist, who is looking for the direction and the route to reach his destination using the Google Map, is familiar with GPS. It is also used by a person to indicate where he is, by giving his address, that is deciphered and recognised by GPS to pinpoint his location.

GPS was developed by the US government, initially for their military navigation. It is maintained by the US Air Force, and is the oldest GNSS. The US government initiated its operations in 1978 and it was later on, that it was made available for civilian use. GPS can be used by anyone with a GPS device, which receives the signals from the satellites.

How does GPS work?

GPS is a network of about **31 satellites** orbiting Earth at an altitude of around **20,000 kilometres**. Each satellite of the GPS constellation circles Earth twice a day. **Twenty-four satellites** currently function to provide the accurate location, while the remaining five satellites are spare ones.

Wherever you are on Planet Earth, at least four GPS satellites are 'visible' at any time. It requires only three satellites to provide the location. The other satellites add to the accuracy of the reading of the location. Each satellite transmits information about its position and the current time, at regular intervals. Travelling at the speed of light, these signals are intercepted by a GPS receiver, to calculate the distance from each satellite.

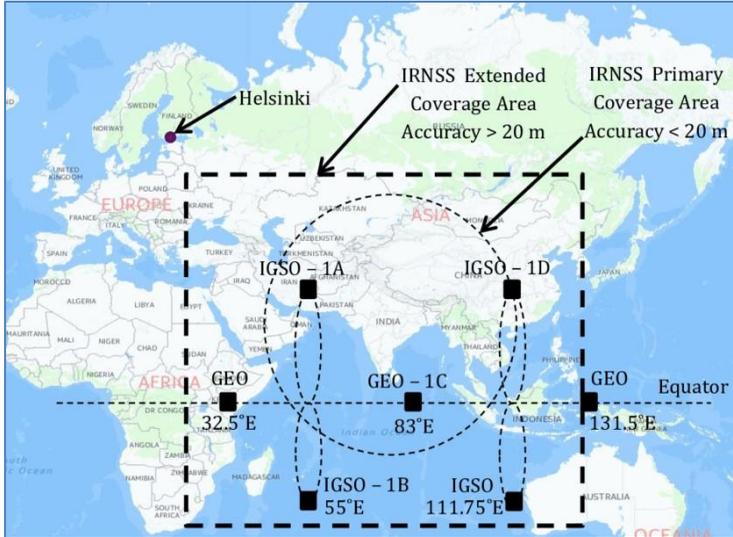
Soon, more countries developed and sent their own GNSS constellations into the orbit round Earth, for navigation and location purposes. Currently, there are four global GNSS systems *viz.* GPS (US), GLONASS (Russia), Galileo (EU), and BeiDou (China), and two regional systems *viz.* QZSS (Japan) and IRNSS or NavIC (India).

Indian Regional Navigation Satellite System (*IRNSS*)

IRNSS or NavIC (acronym for Navigation with Indian Constellation), is an indigenously developed regional satellite navigation system that provides accurate real-time positioning and timing services. Incidentally, the Sanskrit word *nāvika* means 'sailor' or 'navigator'. IRNSS was designed by the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO). While GPS has 24 functional satellites to service the entire globe, IRNSS has 7 satellites, modelled to provide regional location information service, covering India and its neighbouring nations in an area

extending upto a radius of 1,500 kilometres from the Indian boundary, at all times and in all weather conditions.

Location of IRNSS



IRNSS – An Indian Initiative

IRNSS is an Indian initiative. There was a felt need for an indigenous version for quite some time, but it was especially felt during the Kargil War against Pakistan in 1999. Pakistani troops had taken positions in the high mountains of the Himalayan range, and the Indian military force desperately needed the **GPS** data of the region in order to combat against the enemy. But USA, that owned GPS, denied its access to India. This experience at Kargil made the nation realise the importance of an indigenous navigation system. This was the beginning of the development of IRNSS by the Indian scientists in ISRO. IRNSS-A, the first of the series of satellites, was launched on 1st July 2013, and there were several other

launches that followed in the subsequent years, so that currently, there are 7 satellites in orbit for India.

International Recognition of IRNSS

IRNSS gained international recognition when the International Maritime Organisation (IMO) recognised it as a component of the World-Wide Radio Navigation System (WWRNS). This happened in the 102nd meeting of the Maritime Safety Committee in November 2020, where it stated that NavIC met the operational requirements to assist in navigation of ships in ocean waters. NavIC can be utilised in such areas as maritime navigation and survey. Undoubtedly, this development is in line with India's *Atmanirbhar* (Self Reliant) initiative.

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12 Years' Journey of Sansad Ratna Awards

By Prime Point Srinivasan, Publisher & Mg. Editor (March 2021)



Sansad Ratna Awardees 2021 with Shri Sunil Arora, Chief Election Commissioner of India (third from left) and Justice Shri A K Patnaik, Former Judge, Supreme Court of India (fourth from left)

The Background

Members of Parliament (MPs) of Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha are representatives of the people of India, elected/nominated to work towards efficient governance of the country. This is an especially challenging task in a country like India, which is the largest democracy in the world. These MPs come from different walks of life, with their individual spheres of expertise, to learn and understand the political system, in order to run the government. Many among them work quietly but relentlessly, with dedication and efficiency. They often go unnoticed.

The functioning of the Lok Sabha came under severe criticism especially towards the end of the 14th Lok Sabha in 2009 because of the frequent disruptions and pandemonium in the Parliament. The then Speaker, Shri Somnath Chatterjee, in his valedictory address for the 14th Lok Sabha, was expressly critical, and registered his unhappiness over the frequent disruptions in the Parliament. The public too, criticised the conduct of the Parliamentarians, through social media. In mock Parliament sessions held in colleges and schools, students ridiculed by throwing chairs and creating pandemonium. In the meantime, elections for the 15th Lok Sabha were announced.

Suggestion by Dr APJ Abdul Kalam

It was around this time that, on the suggestion of former President of India (late) Dr APJ Abdul Kalam, Prime Point Foundation decided to highlight the positive aspect of Indian democracy by recognising its top performing parliamentarians, who quietly discharged their constitutional duties with exemplary commitment and performance. Prime Point Foundation instituted the Sansad Ratna Awards to recognise and honour these Parliamentarians.

In the March 2009 issue of your eMagazine PreSense, interviews with top performing Parliamentarians of the 14th Lok Sabha, including Shri Kharventhan (Tamil Nadu) and Shri Anandrao Adsul (Maharashtra), based on the data provided by PRS India, were carried. Dr APJ Abdul Kalam too gave his exclusive interview, on the role of Parliamentarians. This was the humble beginning of the recognition of performing Parliamentarians, on behalf of the civil society.

The First Awards Function

The first Awards function was held at Chennai in May 2010, coinciding with the 50th Edition of your eMagazine PreSense. Two top-performing Parliamentarians, Shri Hansraj G Ahir (Maharashtra) and Shri S S Ramasubbu (Tamil Nadu) were honoured, in the presence of Chennai citizens. Dr Abdul Kalam himself inaugurated the Awards event through tele-conference from Delhi.

From then on, every year, Prime Point Foundation and eMagazine PreSense presented Awards to top-performing Parliamentarians, based on the data provided by PRS India and Lok Sabha Secretariat. Till the 9th edition (2019), the Awards functions were held jointly with IIT Madras. The 10th edition was held at Raj Bhavan, Chennai in January 2019, at the end of 16th Lok Sabha. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Awards function could not be held in 2020. The 11th edition was held on 20th March 2021 at Constitution Club of India, New Delhi.

The Awardees are selected by a Jury Committee headed by Shri Arjun Ram Meghwal (Hon'ble MoS, Parliamentary Affairs) with Shri N K Premachandran (Member of Parliament from Kerala) and Shri Shrirang Appa Barne (Member of Parliament from Maharashtra). All the three Jury Committee Members themselves are Sansad Ratna Awardees of earlier Lok Sabha. Dr Abdul Kalam used to discuss about the Sansad Ratna



Awards with the Founder of the Awards, Prime Point Srinivasan and also with the Jury Committee Members. He had given

several suggestions to improve the parameters for selection of awardees.

11th Edition of Sansad Ratna Awards 2021

The 11th edition was held on 20th March 2021 at the prestigious Constitution Club of India, New Delhi. Shri Sunil Arora (Hon'ble Chief Election Commissioner of India) and Justice Shri A K Patnaik (Former Judge, Supreme Court of India) presented the Awards during the Awards function. Shri Arjun Ram Meghwal (Hon'ble MoS, Parliamentary Affairs, and Chairman of Jury Committee) was also present. Ten Parliamentarians received Awards. The event was telecast live by Doordarshan News and other private channels.

Shri Bhartruhari Mahtab (BJD, Odisha) and Shri Shrirang Appa Barne (Shiv Sena, Maharashtra) received the Sansad Maha Ratna Awards for the 16th Lok Sabha. Smt Supriya Sule (NCP, Maharashtra), though nominated for Sansad Maha Awards, could not participate due to some urgent official work. Sansad Maha Ratna Awards are given once in five years.

This is the first time that the Sansad Ratna Awards function was held outside Chennai, and in the national capital of the country. The gist of the speeches of the Chief Guests and the new list of Sansad Ratna Committee Members are included in this edition.

For the first time in the 12 years of the Sansad Ratna Awards functions, school students participated as volunteers at the function in New Delhi. The Management of Ahlcon Public School supported the event with the participation of 10 senior student volunteers. The students were given the opportunity to interact with India's top performing Parliamentarians.

Synopses of the speeches of the main dignitaries, with YouTube links, are given separately in this edition.

Videos of the 11th Sansad Ratna Awards function:

www.tinyurl.com/sansadratna2021

Photographs of the event:

<https://photos.app.goo.gl/fUIdDS3SjSmNvqdZ7>

Parliamentarians Who Received Sansad Ratna Awards

No.	Name	Party State
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SANSAD MAHA RATNA FOR 16th LOK SABHA

1	Shri Bhartruhari Mahtab	BJD (Odisha)
2	Shri Shrirang Appa Barne	Shiv Sena (Maharashtra)

SANSAD RATNA FOR 17th LOK SABHA (based on performance in 2019-20)

3	Dr Subash Ramrao Bhamre	BJP (Maharashtra)
4	Dr Heena Vijaykumar Gavit	BJP (Maharashtra)
5	Dr Amol Ramsing Kolhe	NCP (Maharashtra)
6	Shri Ram Mohan Naidu	TDP (Andhra Pradesh}
7	Shri Ajay Kumar Misra	BJP (Uttar Pradesh)

SANSAD RATNA FOR RAJYA SABHA (based on performance in 2019-20)

8	Shri Vishambhar Prasad Nishad	SP (Uttar Pradesh}
9	Smt. Chhaya Verma	INC (Chhattisgarh)

DEPARTMENTALLY RELATED STANDING COMMITTEE

10	Shri P C Gaddi Goudar	Chairman, Agriculture Committee
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Synopses of Speeches of Dignitaries – Sansad Ratna Awards 2021

Shri Arjun Ram Meghwal, Hon'ble MOS for Heavy Industries, Public Enterprises & Parliamentary Affairs, & Chairman of the Jury Committee of Sansad Ratna Awards



"Today is an auspicious day because today is the International Day of Happiness. The appreciation and recognition conferred on the award-winning Members of Parliament will surely increase the happiness index of these awardees.

Why is Sansad Ratna Awards important?

It was in 2012 when I received a telephone call from Shri Srinivasan, Chairman of Sansad Ratna Awards Committee. He said I was selected to receive the Sansad Ratna Award as the best debater of the Parliament for the 15th Lok Sabha. When I asked him the basis for my selection, he referred to data provided by PRS India, which regularly compiles data pertaining to the performance of all the Members of Parliament in both the Houses. He also said that Dr APJ Abdul Kalam was his mentor for this purpose.

Therefore, I met Dr Kalam and asked him the reasons for initiating the Sansad Ratna Awards. In response, Dr Kalam explained that India follows the multi-party system of

governance. In this context, he also quoted a Hindi slogan: "विविधता में एकता, भारत की विशेषता (vividhatha mein ekta, bharat ki visheshatha", meaning, 'the uniqueness of India is its unity in diversity').

Dr Kalam shared his experience during his visit to IIT, Madras where the young students criticised the performance of the politicians, labelling them all 'bad'. When he asked them, who would clean up the corrupt system, the students did not have an answer. It was then that he felt that a civil society organisation should come forward to recognise and appreciate the good performers in the Parliament. He felt responsible about doing something as he was then the Former President of India and therefore part of the Parliamentary system.

It was then that he suggested to Prime Point Srinivasan, whom he knew personally, to implement the idea under his guidance and mentorship. He suggested that PRS India which maintained unbiased data on the MPs' performance, could be selected as the basis for the selection process. He also suggested a Jury Committee to facilitate the selection system.

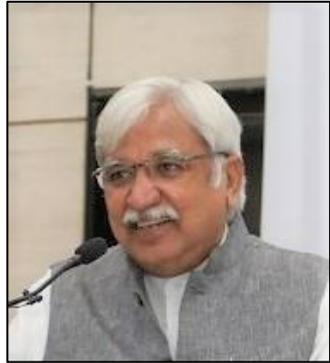
The Sansad Ratna Awards Committee is transparent in its functioning and there is no hidden agenda behind these Awards. As Chairman of the Jury Committee, and with my association with Srinivasan since 2012, I can vouch for the genuineness of the Awards.

The Awards is the implementation of Dr Kalam's dream."

The complete address can be watched in the following link:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ixOQZLivrXA>

Chief Guest Shri Sunil Arora, Hon'ble Chief Election Commissioner of India

"When Mr Srinivasan and his team interacted with me and my colleagues in the context of today's event, he mentioned that Dr APJ Abdul Kalam Saheb, whom he knew on a personal level, had once articulated his thoughts about the critical role of the Hon'ble Members of Parliament and the expectations of the nation from them. This seminal conversation, in fact, became the fountain head of instituting the prestigious Sansad Ratna and Sansad Maha Ratna Awards.



This brings us to the pertinent question, 'What is the role of Parliament in a democratic country like ours, with multiple layers of identity, manifold challenges and opportunities?' In order to understand that, we need to go back to where it all began – the Constituent Assembly.

The Constitution of a country is the embodiment of the collective aspirations and vision of its people. About the nature of our Constitution, Dr Ambedkar said: 'However good a constitution may be, if those who are implementing it are not good, it will prove to be bad. However bad a constitution may be, if those implementing it are good, it will prove to be good.'

It is the spirit of 'We the People' that lies at the very core, the very foundation of this grand edifice called the Constitution of India. This is from where we, as a nation, draw our strength, our inspiration and legitimacy.

The sanctity and legitimacy of the institution of the parliament derives itself from the conduct of elections that are truly free, fair and participative – which represent the sovereign will of the people. The history of Indian elections bears testimony to the fact that Indian elections, despite their unprecedented scale and complexity, have always expressed the democratic right of the people.

While speaking about the role of Election Commission of India, the great statesman, Shri Pranab Mukherjee had said, 'The role of the Election Commission in the practical play of democracy in India, has been simply outstanding. The challenges it has had to face have been daunting. The management of an electorate of over 900 million in 2019, that is nearly the combined population of the third, fourth and fifth largest nations in the world, and ensuring fair polling over eight lakh thirty thousand polling stations, is not an easy job. I compliment the Election Commission for this laudable achievement.'

This brings to us the issue of electoral reforms, which is a rather continuous process. For the Commission, transparency and confidentiality of voting has always been a guiding consideration in ensuring free, fair and credible elections.

Each day in the present of our nation is significant, each challenge a tryst with destiny. It is, therefore, incumbent upon all of us to ensure that the glorious traditions set forth by the great leaders and freedom fighters continue to prevail and the nation makes great strides in every sphere of life."

The complete address can be watched in the following link:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tOw0Odkj8hc>

Justice Shri A K Patnaik, Former Judge, Supreme Court of India



"Under our Constitution, the Parliament is the most important institution. Parliament makes laws for the entire country in matters listed in the Union List and also debates the national issues. Members of Parliament are representatives of their respective constituencies and their respective States, to Lok

Sabha and Rajya Sabha respectively. They have a commitment to the people whom they represent and they are able to appreciate their problems.

I have been listening to the debates in the Lok Sabha and the Rajya Sabha, and have been reading the parliamentary debates published in the newspapers, and I appreciate the quality of debates on the national issues and some of the criticisms that the opposition members make in Parliament. For such debates and criticisms, Parliamentarians need to be rewarded. Sansad Ratna Awards are in recognition of Parliamentarians, who have performed well in Parliament. I congratulate all those who have been awarded Sansad Ratna Awards 2021, for their outstanding performance in Parliament during 2019-20, despite adverse pandemic circumstances.

Considering the role that Parliamentarians play in our representative democracy, the best available in our country, in merit and integrity, must get elected to the Lok Sabha and the Rajya Sabha. I am of the view that our political parties do not send their best talents, with merit and integrity, to Parliament for various reasons, some of which I would like to narrate.

The first reason is that there is no internal democracy in our political parties. In democracy, a political party should give an opportunity to its members to participate in the debates on the formulation of the programmes of the party. This is now recognised in the laws of various other countries.

The second reason is that persons, with merit and integrity, who want to contest election to seats in Parliament do not have the funds for campaigning for their election. Considering the huge resources required by a candidate in an election for parliamentary seat, a prospective candidate has to either depend on a political party for such funds for election, or has to organise his own funds as an independent candidate. This has discouraged many capable and meritorious persons from contesting elections for seats in Parliament.

The idea of Prime Point Foundation to confer Sansad Ratna Awards, which has been appreciated by late Dr APJ Abdul Kalam, as I understand, is to promote high ethical standards amongst our parliamentarians. In my considered opinion, ethics cannot be expected from a Parliamentarian, who has to go through the struggles of politics to become a Member of Parliament. Max Weber in his lecture on 'Politics as a Vocation' has said that a political career provides a sense of power, but the three qualities required of a good politician are: passion for a cause, sense of responsibility, and sense of proportion.

For ensuring these qualities in our next generation political leaders, India needs a new law to be made by Parliament to regulate political parties, political funding and conduct of politicians, as have been made in some other democracies in the world."

The complete address can be watched in the following link:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XN5TsYBQoR8>

**Shri Bhartruhari Mahtab, Sansad Maha Ratna Awardee,
on Behalf of the Awardees**

"I have been conferred the Sansad Maha Ratna, probably not to compete anymore with the other Parliamentarians, when I fight for my space and time to take up issues of my constituency, or certain issues during zero hour, or when I burn the midnight oil to prepare for at least five questions every day to present in the Parliament, probably in the starred and the unstarred category of question, or to prepare for the debate based on the agenda for the following day, or to go after the party leader for time to speak in the Parliament for my party.



I remember the efforts taken by the various parties to find space and time for allotment to take up issues of relevance. The Chair of the House has the challenging task of allotting sufficient time to all requests for speaking. The challenge for the Parliamentarian who stands to speak is to restrict to the allotted time, failing which the Chair of the House informs and reminds you to stop as the allotted time has been exceeded. This is the most devastating moment.

There was a time during Jawaharlal Nehru's time when Parliamentarians were allowed to take their time to speak and the Parliament was prepared to work long hours to permit all the speakers to complete their speeches in Parliament, during the debate on the proposed First Amendment of the Constitution. It is a different scenario today. Even then, it is advisable that we speak intelligently for the allotted time instead of prolonged sessions.

One area of satisfaction is when you receive appreciation for a gesture or help you render to a stranger in your constituency, with no expectations in return.

I am reminded of what I saw displayed on the wall behind a school headmaster's seat. It was the famous letter written by a father to the headmaster on what his son should be taught, the father being Abraham Lincoln. The positive points written by him were studied by me in my schooldays. Similarly, though there are bad elements in society today, it is commendable that the Sansad Ratna Awards Committee on behalf of the civil society, is recognising good work.

It is coincidental that today is Spring Equinox, when the sun will be on the celestial equator before moving from south to north. Sansad Ratna Awards too has moved from the south to the north.

On behalf of fellow Parliamentarians from Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha, I thank the Sansad Ratna Awards Committee for recognising and appreciating on behalf of the civil society. It is also commendable that this is the only Award presented by Civil Society."

The complete address can be watched in the following link:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-k5qqAiYsUk>

Regulations for Social Media and OTT Platforms: A Review

By Prime Point

**Srinivasan, Publisher & Managing Editor & V Rajendran, Editor
(April 2021)**



Background

The Digital India Programme has now become a movement which has empowered many Indians to use the technology platforms for communication, ecommerce, banking, etc. in a significant manner. According to the Government of India Press Release, the Indian user base of social media platforms like WhatsApp (53 Crore users), YouTube (44.8 crores), Facebook (41 crores), Instagram (21 crores) and Twitter (1.75 crores), is on the increase daily. These social media platforms have enabled common Indians to showcase their creativity, ask questions, be informed and freely share their views, including criticism of the Government and its functionaries.

India is the world's largest open Internet society and the Indian Government has allowed all international social media and Internet companies to operate here, subject to the condition that they have to be accountable to the Indian Constitution and Indian laws. While social media has empowered Indians in many ways, it has also thrown up various challenges like fake news, frequent abuse by sharing morphed images of women and children, misuse to settle corporate rivalry, use of abusive language, defamatory and obscene contents and blatant disrespect to religious sentiments, etc. Criminals and anti-national elements have started misusing the social media extensively, to generate unwanted emotions and create disturbance in the society.

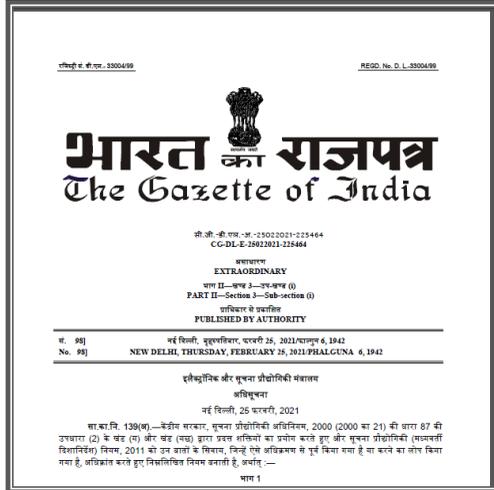
It was found that currently there is no robust complaint mechanism wherein the ordinary users of social media and OTT platforms can register their complaint and get it redressed within a defined timeline. Lack of transparency and absence of robust grievance redress mechanism have left the users totally dependent on the whims and fancies of social media platforms. Often, it has been seen that a user who has spent his time, energy and money in developing a social media profile, is left with no remedies in case that profile is restricted or removed by the platform without giving any opportunity to be heard. Serious concerns have been expressed in various platforms like Civil Society, Judicial Orders, Parliament, Parliament Committees, etc.

In order to address these issues, the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology, after various public discussions, on 25th February 2021 issued guidelines known as Information Technology (Intermediary Guidelines and Digital Media Ethics Code) Rules, 2021 under Sec 87 of IT act 2000.

The New Guidelines

Diligence to be Followed by Intermediaries: All

intermediaries, be they network providers, telecom providers or OTT platforms, or social networking sites, have to comply with the concept of due diligence. Although the concept of due diligence has already been discussed in the original IT Act, it was not clear and was subject to interpretations to be read with other sections of the IT Act. Now, these rules throw more clarity on this.



Grievance Redress Mechanism is an altogether new feature now. All intermediaries are now mandated to have grievance redress mechanism in place, and resolve user complaints. Right now, there are thousands of users of social networking sites like Facebook, WhatsApp, and Twitter, who have faced some form of victimisation in such platforms, like their account getting hacked and misused, with the victims not knowing the procedure to lodge a complaint. These rules address this issue.

Ensuring Online Safety and Dignity of Users, especially Women Users: Intermediaries shall remove or disable access within 24 hours of receipt of complaints of contents that expose the private areas of individuals, show such individuals

in full or partial nudity or in sexual act or is in the nature of impersonation including morphed images etc. Such a complaint can be filed either by the individual or by any other person on his/her behalf.

Categories of Social Media

Social media intermediaries are now categorised into two types viz. (1) social media intermediaries and (2) significant social media intermediaries. Depending upon the volume of usage, the Government will fix a threshold and classify what is to be brought under 'significant social media'. Presumably, giant intermediaries such as Facebook, Twitter and WhatsApp will come under this. The significant social media intermediaries will have to comply with some additional rules like having a Chief Compliance Officer responsible for ensuring compliance with the Act and Rules, a Nodal Contact Person for 24x7 coordination and a Resident Grievance Officer. All these three should be residents of India with their contact details clearly publicised. The Government has now mandated this by these rules.

In the case of OTT platforms, there is a self-classification system of categorising the OTT content (films, short films, feature films or any story) as suitable for those under 7, or 13, or 13 plus age, or 17, and finally the adult content. There are three levels of regulatory mechanisms: (i) a self-regulatory mechanism (ii) self-regulation by a body of publishers (something like the Press Council of India for the print media) and (iii) oversight mechanism, to be formulated by the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting.

The Legal Battle

Some online media news portals have filed a case in the Supreme Court. They argue, inter alia, that the IT Rules, 2021 go far beyond the remit of the parent Act and seek to

regulate digital news media by imposing a 'Code of Ethics', with all manner of stipulations as 'half-truths', 'good taste', 'decency' etc., and vest the power of interference ultimately with the Central Government as the chief regulator,

Those who oppose these rules should also keep in mind that in the name of 'freedom of speech and expression', they should not get protection for the wrong persons, leaving the genuine helpless citizens to suffer.

at the highest of three tiers. They contend that the Central Government has framed these rules under section 87 of the IT Act (*ie.* the rule-making powers of the Government, to carry out the provisions of the Act) and since these portals are not intermediaries, nor are these the provisions or objective of the Act, these rules cannot be framed under this Act in this manner. They add that these rules travel beyond the terms of the IT Act, which is limited to 'intermediaries' or 'agency of the Government', and that too on grounds relating to security interests of the State.

The rules now provide for tracking the originator of the message or newsfeed with the objective that any legally objectionable news can be traced and be blocked by the OTT platform and the creator may be punished, as may be required as per law. During the course of the legal proceedings, an affidavit was filed by Dr V Kamakoti, a senior professor from IIT-Madras and a member of the Prime Minister's Scientific Advisory Committee, on the question of traceability of messages to the originator. It was stated in the affidavit that such traceability is possible by adding an originator information with each message, which will be displayed during the decryption. Services like WhatsApp, which vociferously claim 'end-to-end

encryption', raise objection to such a technology and scenario. Now, WhatsApp, Signal, Telegram and others assert that they may have to cope with the issue of breaking the privacy of end-to-end encryption and tracking the originator. The Supreme Court is currently adjudicating on the issue of how the intermediaries can trace the originators of a message shared on their respective platforms.

In the entire discussion on this subject, a distinction is being sought between original content and curated content, justifiably, to fix the responsibility of the stake holders. Curating a content means finding such a content that will suit your audience catering to their likes and tastes, and which is not created by you. Netflix, Amazon Prime, etc come in this category, where they air feature films, short films and such videos, like distributors or theatre owners of feature films. From the guidelines or control perspective, such firms only air the films, not owning the responsibility for the content in such films. If it were a feature film to be released in theatres, there is the Film Censor Board which certifies it before release in cinema houses. In this case, there is no such certification. On the other hand, media news houses or WhatsApp groups and any social networking groups create the content and air the news. Thus, they are the 'owners' or 'creators' of the posts and hence are undeniably responsible. Information security professionals argue that controls should naturally be applicable for both these categories *viz.* the curative contents and the normal contents like WhatsApp posts and newsfeeds.

Atul Kumar Tiwari, Additional Secretary, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting (MIB) reportedly said, "*OTT (Over-The-Top video streaming industry) is a strange animal but our self-regulation model will only apply to curated content on streaming platforms (like Netflix, Amazon, Hotstar and others) while user-generated content*

and social media would be the reserve of the IT Ministry”.



Subsequently on 9th November 2020, the President of India issued a notification under Article 77(3) of the Constitution, amending the Government of India (Allocation of

Business) Rules, 1961 which granted MIB the power to regulate online news platforms and OTT platforms.

Clarification by Government

The Government has clarified that it respected freedom of expression and is committed to it. It only wants accountability for the social networking media and the firms which have a huge user-base running into crores in India, like Facebook, WhatsApp, Twitter etc. The Central Government has made it clear that if they want to do business here, they will have to abide by the laws of the land.

It has been repeatedly asserted, including in many Supreme Court judgments, that freedom of expression is not an unfettered one and is always subject to reasonable restrictions. Viewed in that context, these rules are a significant step in that direction.

We are not sure how effective the implementation is going to be, and how much legal hurdles these rules would face in the days to come, besides the technological issues. As expected, there are protests that these rules are draconian and are an onslaught into the freedom of expression. Besides the technological difficulties envisaged in tracing the originator, there are also objections on the legal technicalities of these rules, that the IT Act was mainly passed with the objective of

recognising electronic records, and passing such kind of rules does not come under the purview of the IT Act. All these points are to be debated in the apex court. Perhaps in the arguments that come up during the trial, much more clarity may emerge and the Supreme Court in all its wisdom, may interpret and pass the verdict with the larger interests of the nation, in its avowed commitment to protect the sovereignty, and try to bring in some control in the otherwise uncontrolled beast called the 'Internet'.

Observation by Supreme Court

On 25th February 2021, while passing orders in a different case, Hon'ble Supreme Court had mentioned about these Rules, as follows:

Quote

A perusal of the Rules indicate that the Rules are more and more in the form of guidelines and have no effective mechanism for either screening or taking appropriate action for those who violate the guidelines.

Unquote

For this remark, Mr. Tushar Mehta, the learned Solicitor General submitted that the Government shall consider and take appropriate steps for regulation or legislation as may be found fit by the Government, and the same shall be placed before the Court.

**“Freedom of speech
is the most abused
right at present” -
Shri Bobde, Chief
Justice of India**

Conclusion

After all, every industry, society, entity or set-up needs some kind of monitoring or control and the government cannot be expected to be a mute spectator if any arm of governance and

administration including of course, the media, is misused to destabilise the sovereignty, cultural fabric or the social harmony in the nation. Inefficiency in administration is not a virtue, and a government has to be capable even if it is not 'good' to everyone!

Those who oppose these rules should also keep in mind that in the name of 'freedom of speech and expression', they should not get protection for the wrong persons, leaving the genuine helpless citizens to suffer.

A day before his retirement, Chief Justice of India, Sharad Bobde in an exclusive interview, observed, "*Freedom of speech is the most abused right at present.*"

India Faces Covid-19: Version 2

by T N Ashok, Consulting Editor (May 2021)



“Be Positive” has been the buzzword in our eMagazine PreSense, and spreading positive vibes, its mission. Here is one story, wherein we pray that we should not be ‘positive’ – the Covid-19 test, of course!

The 2nd surge of Covid-19 has literally crashed the healthcare system in the country, with the press reporting about lack of hospital beds, inadequacy of oxygen, dearth of medications, and all such negative news. Let us accept the reports that are factual, and set aside the alarmingly false ones.

The impact of the Covid wave in India, is severely felt in many foreign countries too, some of them putting a ban on the entry of Indians into their countries for a specified period, and thus restricting global movement of passengers. The popular cricket tournament, IPL (Indian Premier League) was suspended indefinitely as some of the players were infected, compelling some of the overseas players to take the first flight out, back to their countries before their entry was barred.

The World Health Organisation (WHO) has indicated that after a considerable plateau had been reached in the pandemic, which sent a false sense of complacency that the virus had been contained, new variants have attacked the world. The Indian medical authorities, amid daily reports of rise in infections and deaths, assured that the vaccines, such as Covaxin and Covishield, offered protection to the inoculated populace. Most of the vaccinated survived, and the unvaccinated suffered severe damage to the lungs. But due to other adverse factors like poor maintenance of the oxygen supply in hospitals, patients literally suffocated to death. With the post-Covid condition of low immunity level in the body, other patients suffered from secondary infections such as the deadly fungal one, "Mucormycosis", commonly known as Black Fungus, a rare fungal infection.

International Support

Many countries flew in oxygen cylinders and oxygen concentrators in gratitude for the vaccines India had rushed to them last year, during the first flush of Covid-19. Unaware of the second wave strike after a plateau, India had increased its oxygen exports to other countries by a whopping 734 percent in January 2021. It also exported around 193 million doses of vaccines. But the picture changed drastically when India began recording a dramatic increase in new cases from 15th April onwards, with more than 200,000 cases daily. Countries across the globe have since exhibited exemplary sense of compassion in sharing their resources with the other less privileged nations.

Comparing India with Others

India recently broke the world record for the maximum number of fresh corona virus cases recorded in a single day, previously held by the USA. But then, can we compare ourselves with the USA, whose population is just 25% of

India's, and its geographic area almost 2.5 times that of India? Or for that matter, with any other nation (except China) in the globe?

India has so far tested people equal to the entire population of the USA. India has treated and cured people equivalent to the entire population of Australia, and our daily vaccination figure is itself half the population of New Zealand.

Country	Population millions	Total Cases millions	Total Death millions	Deaths per 1 Million Population
USA	332.75	33.99	0.60	1,826
India	1392.23	27.55	0.31	229
Brazil	213.92	16.34	0.45	2,135
Russia	145.99	5.03	0.12	822
UK	68.21	4.47	0.13	1,873
Italy	60.38	4.20	0.13	2,083

Source (accessed at noon, 28th May 2021):

<https://www.worldometers.info/coronavirus/#countries>

It is quite clear that given the population of India, Covid-19 death rate is not alarming (as the media cries, day in and day out).

Brickbats and Bouquets

There are reports that warnings of the second wave were ignored, despite the fact that new variants were identified in January itself. As expected, the blame game started with the Judiciary charging the Election Commission for permitting the electoral rallies, unmindful of the risks involved, and the press blaming the *Kumbh Mela* gatherings of lakhs and millions, for the Covid spread. But these allegations could

not explain how or why the virus spread in non-election states and non-*Kumbh Mela* states too.

There have been some avoidable misunderstandings between the Centre and some of the states too, which, in a politically driven federal atmosphere, is understandable. After many initial complaints of uneven distribution of oxygen by the Centre to various states, uneven distribution of testing kits, inadequate resources, etc, the nation is now bouncing back to fight the virus, in full steam. In fact, there are still reports that some states (Jharkhand and Uttaranchal) wasted more than 30% of the precious vaccines supplies while some others (Tamil Nadu, Jammu and Kashmir) wasted around 15%, which instances are all being addressed.

Amid reports of judicial overreach, with instances of normal administrative instructions being given by the Judiciary to the Government, there are also occasions when the Judiciary praised the Administration too. The Supreme Court lauded the efforts of Mumbai Municipal authorities for having shown commendable oxygen supply management. However, reports continue to pour in, even from sensitive and critical areas like New Delhi that acute shortage of oxygen is being felt.

With alarms and forecasts that there will be a third surge around September, when children below 15 years of age, are going to be the most vulnerable, India is now witnessing a positive decline in the cases, and the nation as a whole, seems to be fighting the virus, with signs of recovery approaching fast. Let us hope for the best.

Print Media Will Fade Away in Future Due to Emergence of Social Media – Maxim Behar

By Priyadarshni Rahul, Deputy Editor (June 2021)



In a freewheeling conversation through Zoom with Priyadarshni Rahul, Deputy Editor, PreSense, Maxim Behar, President of the World Communication Forum Association, Davos, Switzerland, discussed broadly on Public Relations, Advertisements, Social Media, Print Media, Education, Skills of women, Public Affairs, etc. He also outlined the importance of social media in the era of modern communication. He predicted advertisers in future would prefer social media than print media, which may lead to the fading away of print media. Maxim Behar has authored many books, including the most popular titles, 'The global PR Revolution' and 'The morning After'. Excerpts:

Priya: Is Global Communication just a philosophy or a reality, given the multilingual and multicultural scenario of our world?

Maxim: First of all communication is business, nothing else. To my understanding communication is very dynamic that is developing and changing very fast. Global communication exists because of social media. Even the talks and conversation in a small community becomes global communication in a couple of minutes. There are four billion users in the social media. This means there are four billion people expressing their views. This means that there are four billion Editors in Chief all over the world. Lots of local information is exchanged globally.

Priya: You have a unique combination of expertise in peace study and public affairs. India being the largest democracy of the world, still public affairs is not defined in the way it is defined in Western countries. Can you give an insight about public affairs for developing countries like India?

Maxim: I simply love India. I always appreciate how India conducts its Democracy, people, culture. I also feel sorry for the corona attack in India. I know Indians are strong and they will come out of this challenge with more strength.

Public Affairs should be absolutely transparent, ethical and a good functioning entity between the society and its Government. I am very cautious about using the word 'lobbying' because it's perceived with suspicion. Public affairs pushes ones Government to act in favour of the people, transparently, ethically and efficiently. We have seen many Ministries acting transparently and ethically doing nothing and public don't wish to come on streets to talk about it. Through Social Media people force the Governments to act efficiently. If the Governments are not doing anything, they can be sent home. If they are doing well, they can be given further opportunity. At the end of the day, people all over the world want to live in peace and a better life.

2021 has provided lot of opportunities to get knowledge through internet and social media. Even Nobel Prize winners are available through social media and zoom. We can communicate with anyone globally who has the knowledge which was not thought of ten years ago. Internet connects knowledge. If we have the knowledge, then the combination of ethics, transparency and hard work can take any nation to great success.

Priya: You are the founding member and the present President of World communication Forum Association; can you say something about your work?

Maxim: World communication Forum Association is based at Davos, Switzerland. We are doing events for nearly a decade. When global Presidents and Prime Ministers meet at World Economic Forum, we have separate meetings with them as a follow up with World Communication Forum. It is a great community of high level professionals and friends across the world. We have members all over the world. We discuss serious business issues. The Last World Communication Summit held at Davos was attended by more than 450 professionals globally. We plan to launch Davos Communication Academy shortly. India has 3 Members in the Global Executive Board. India is the only country that has three members in the Global Executive Board.

Priya: You have been talking about political communication, with more focus to youngsters. We also have an initiative called Next Gen Political Leaders (NGPL) to groom young political leaders in India. How important is communication in political arena?

Maxim: This is the most important thing. It is very important for Politicians and Political advisors to be very good in communication and should take sensible advices to action.

Earlier, when a politician gives an interview to a print media, it becomes one-way communication. Now with social media growing, every political statement appears online, hundred thousand persons give their opinions in minutes. It is two way communication, only in this way you can understand your people and get feedbacks. Politicians and their Advisors should be more careful when they reply and react on social media, especially in a country like India that has a huge population.

Priya: You are from Print Media. With the growth of internet and digital media, will print media survive?

Maxim: I spent around 20 years in print media. I was the Editor in chief for a big news paper. When I left the job and started my business, it was the beginning of internet. In 1990's, when internet appeared, even before the social media, it was absolutely clear that print media would fade away. People used to disagree with me. I used to tell them that it was a reality. Especially after social media, print media would disappear, not because of bad journalism, but because of financial problems. Advertisers would like to advertise in social media, since they have targeted audience. Advertisers can also chose the target like gender, age group, location, etc. In the Print media, advertisers cannot get the exact number of readers who saw the advertisement. The Editors can give only the circulation information. First time in the history, media is measurable. In the social media, advertisers get the exact details of every reader and the impact is measurable exactly. Though Print media may have good journalism, Advertisers won't go there.

Priya: What is the responsibility of media in handling the emotions of the people during Covid situation. In the social media, many create panic and it is chaotic. How to bring social media in main stream?

Maxim: People trust social media. Fake news is read by more people than the genuine messages. People listen to a Taxi driver who writes in an interesting manner, than the Minister or any intelligent person who writes officially in a language most often not understood by people. There are millions of advantages and certain disadvantages with social media. The major challenge is the 'Fake news'. The Governments should have clear vision to handle the fake news. We should fight the 'fake news pandemic'. Another biggest disadvantage is the anonymous postings that social media platforms permit. If the users are transparent and ethical, social media can bring more benefit. Nowadays, platforms like face book, Twitter and LinkedIn are also fighting against fake news and that's a good development to curb fake news.

A century ago, when Henry Ford introduced Gasoline car, people commented that it would not survive for a long time. People then were using horse cart. With the gasoline car, they had to replace the cart with tyre, engine, gasoline, etc. They scared the engine may blast. Hence they all felt that it would not survive. Today we don't ride horse carts, we drive automobile cars.

I compare this with social media. Lot of people criticize social media as dangerous that it generates fake news, destroy brands, spread lies, etc. Still it will survive. It has to be tamed.

Priya: We have seen you receiving the global awards with your women colleagues behind you. Was that a purposeful message? Your views on women in communication?

Maxim: My Company has 98% women employees. I do not look at the gender, education, nativity of the candidates for employment. When I interview the candidates, I only watch the 'Spark in the eyes'. That means his/her ambition to develop career, knowledge, work in a new company, etc. In

Public Relations business, women make much better team than men. In my experience, I found women more ambitious, knowledgeable and consistent to show achievement. Women have more efficient communication skills.

Priya: What are your expectations from youngsters?

Maxim: It is difficult to define who is a youngster. These days, a teenager is much more capable than a 50 year old person. Speed of taking decision is crucial than to find whether someone is young or old. I have given three principles to my office, called 'Three S' viz. (1) Speed of taking decision (2) Simplicity and (3) Self confidence.

I always say, 'worst decision' is better than a 'no decision'. Every minute you need to take decision. You can correct your decision later. Speed of communication, speed of answering your emails and social media and speed of everything.

Simplicity means prioritise your tasks. Make it simple, like when you post something in social media, it should be short and clear. Readers should understand. All capable people should have self confidence. They should know what they should achieve and how to achieve.

Priya: Can you say something about International Communication Consultancy organization (ICCO) which you founded?

Maxim: It is the largest Public Relations Community in the world. I am in the Board for 13 years. I was the President. I am the Chair for International Growth now to bring more countries on board. This is a community of high level experts of more than 70 countries. The current President of ICCO is an Indian. We impose professional standards to all the members. There is a debate as to what will rule in future, whether Public Relations or Advertising or Digital. I say Public Relations will

be the future as we are the masters of content creators and the best story tellers.

Priya: Is Accreditation important for communication professionals?

Maxim: It is being discussed for a long time, whether PR professionals need to be accredited like doctors and lawyers. I feel it is better to leave it to the market. Communication expert need not be accredited. Our clients have to accredit us. If the person or company does not possess sufficient knowledge or capability, they will be out of market. We should leave it to open market and to clients.

Priya: Will there be any accreditation board in future?

Maxim: I can expect. It has a huge market. We should see how it works and how our clients look at that. Clients can prefer non accredited persons and companies as well. Our business should be done carefully, as we can influence the society and media, we can't afford to do anything the wrong way.

Priya: You have started a college for communication studies. Tell us about this.

Maxim: Education is the base of our business. Same way, business is also the base for the education. It is a win win situation. Business is moving 100 miles per hour speed, whereas education is moving only 30 miles per hour. Problem is a big gap between the practice and education. More practitioners should come to Universities and share their knowledge. Students also should come to business and get knowledge. Knowledge is found in the companies and not merely in the Universities.

Priya: During ABCI Award function, you promised to focus on India. Has there been any advancement?

Maxim: India is deeply in my heart. I got the Communicator of the decade award from ABCI. India can be useful for global community with her rich culture and expertise. I have visited India 2 or 3 times after receiving the award. I have spoken in some Universities. I have also invited Indian experts to our country. Our first meeting with Prime Point Foundation can bring us together. You can contact me through social media.

Priya: Your advice to Indian Professionals.

Maxim: Don't waste your time in unnecessary and stupid conversations. Be pragmatic. Communicate with proper people; learn proper lessons; be successful in proper way; be ethical and transparent. Everything will fall in place.

The full interview can be watched at
<https://youtu.be/t6e2Nk6hbww>

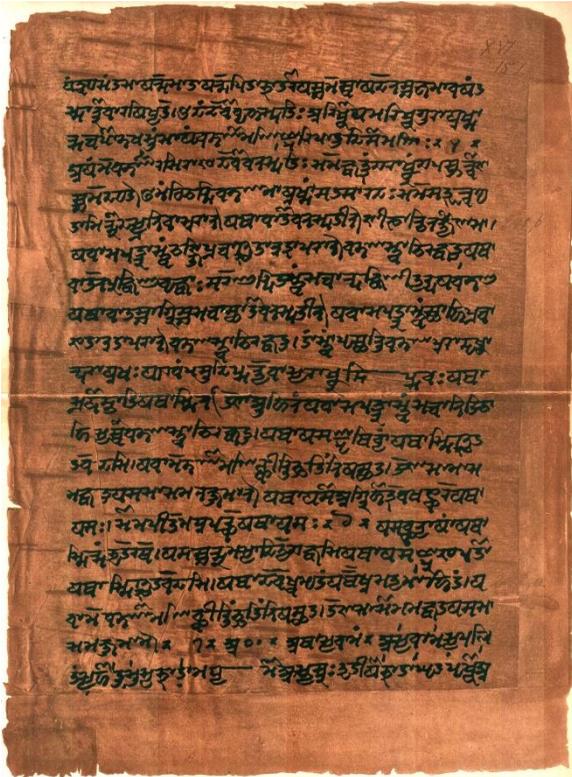
He can be reached through
<https://www.facebook.com/maxbehar>

Vedic Vibrations Stimulate the Brain – Experts

By Prime Point Srinivasan, Managing Editor (July 2021)

Origin of Vedas

Vedas in Sanskrit, meaning 'Knowledge' are the distilled wisdom of ancient India. The origin of Vedas is not clearly known yet. Even historians estimate the period as 1500 BCE based on available data. But still nobody can estimate the origin of the Vedas. Even in Ramayana (7500 years old) and Mahabharata



(4000 years old), Vedas are referred to. We have four Vedas given to us by the scholars. For thousands of years, Vedas were passed on to the next generation orally by the masters to the students. It is said, Sage Vyasa compiled the available scriptures and classified them properly. Hence he is known as Veda Vyas.

Vedas originated even before the religious structures came into existence in the world. In those times, it was called 'Sanadhana Dharma', meaning 'way of life'. Vedas contain lot of scientific facts on astronomy, astrology, civil engineering, medicine, management, biology, Mathematics, etc. Once Dr Abdul Kalam said that scientists should learn Sanskrit and explore the hidden treasures in ancient scriptures. Unfortunately, Indian scientists have not given the importance to our own ancient wisdom that it deserves. Even our education system has been designed in such a way to glorify the history and legacy of our only the invaders but not our ancestors. In the course of a discussion with PreSense through Zoom last year, one of the renowned Rocket Scientists concluded that India should regain the glory of 2000 years back.

Indian Culture is based on Science

Though Indian Universities have not given much importance to research to our own ancient scriptures like Vedas, many developed countries, including the US, UK and Germany have been doing extensive research on our scriptures. That is how, Yoga became globally known and acceptable. Not only do we ignore our ancient wisdom belittling and defaming it sometimes, but also give more credence to our invaders. We simply cannot ignore the fact that every part of our Indian culture is based on scientific thinking, reasoning and facts, which may need proper citation and validation.

Many developed countries, including US, UK and Germany have been doing extensive research on our ancient scriptures

Vedic Vibrations

The Vedic Mantras, when recited, produce vibrations and sound. These vibrations impact the body and in particular the brain.

To get an expert perspective on this subject, PreSense invited Dr N Ramamurthy, a Sanskrit scholar with a doctorate on the subject, to speak on 'Vedas, Vibrations and brain' through a Zoom platform amidst a distinguished audience interested in the theme. Dr A V Srinivasan, a globally renowned neurologist explained how the vibrations stimulate the brain. The YouTube links are given at the end of this article.

Five methods of recitation

Presently only 5 types of recitation are in practice. They generate different types of sounds and vibrations.

According to Dr N Ramamurthy, though there were various methods of recitation of Vedas, presently only 5 types of recitation are in practice. They generate different types of sounds and vibrations. The sentences comprise words, known as 'PADAS'. While

reciting, the Padas (words) are regrouped or rolled back and forth, depending on the type of recitation.

These five types are:

Samhita Pata: If the sentence comprises 1,2,3,4 and 5 as Padas, then they are recited as it is 12345 in a bunched form.

Krama Pata: The same sentence is recited combining two words at a time.

E.g.: 1-2, 2-3, 3-4, 4-5, 5-6 and so on.

Jata Pata: The same sentence is recited taking two words in combination of six. Eg:

**1-2-2-1-1-2 | 2-3-3-2-2-3 | 3-4-4-3-3-4 | 4-5-5-4-4-5
| 5-6-6-5-5-6**

Ghana Pata: 3 words are taken in combination of 13. The recitation is very tough and complicated.

E.g:

1	2	2	1	1	2	3	3	2	1	1	2	3
2	3	3	2	2	3	4	4	3	2	2	3	4
3	4	4	3	3	4	5	5	4	3	3	4	5
4	5	5	4	4	5	6	6	5	4	4	5	3

While reciting, the Pundits follow a musical pattern called 'swara', the notations of which are indicated both on the upper and lower side of the Mantra. Let us see the sequence of Gana Pata now and how the text is marked with notations.

1	2	2	1	1	2	3	3	2	1	1	2	3
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---

1. ग॒णाना॑म् । त्वा । ग॒णप॑तिम् ।
 ग॒णाना॑म् त्वा त्वा ग॒णाना॑म् ग॒णाना॑म् त्वा ग॒णप॑तिम् ग॒णप॑तिम् त्वा
 ग॒णाना॑म् ग॒णाना॑म् त्वा ग॒णप॑तिम् ।

Vedic Scholars
 undergo more than
 10 to 12 years of
 rigorous Gurukul

training to learn Vedas. The Vedas are taught in the traditional pattern orally.

They memorize the Mantras with the sequence. *Sama Veda* is chanted in a musical form and hence it is called 'Sama Gana'. When they recite these Mantras, they generate a specific vibration that impacts the body and the brain at the same time.

Please watch the demonstration of the various types of recitation through this link to understand the concept better and to feel the vibration.

(We request readers to kindly watch this YouTube video to understand the concept better and feel the vibrations. This will help the readers to understand the next part)

https://youtu.be/bd8d_tmQoW0

Albert Einstein said "Everything in life is Vibration". Dr A V Srinivasan explained in detail how these vibrations stimulate the brain. Both Dr Ramamurthy and Dr A V Srinivasan agree that these vibrations can only be felt and cannot be measured. However, Dr A V Srinivasan, a noted neurologist, says that experiments are going on in research labs across the world to measure the impact of vibrations to a certain extent.

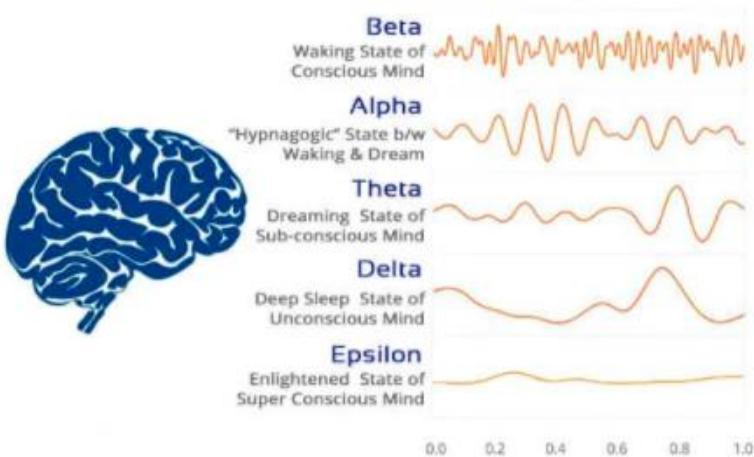
Research in US

According to Karthik Raghavendran, an Entrepreneur and Researcher on Neuro technology at IIT Madras Incubation Cell, latest research at a University at the USA using Electroencephalography (EEG), has shown some significant changes in Brain activity when a person was hearing Vedic Mantras and Vedic chants. EEG record showed a significantly higher coherence in specific frequency bands (Theta and Alpha) which was generally seen only in deeper meditative states.

How vibrations stimulate brain

Says Dr A V Srinivasan, Noted Neurologist: The universe comprises vibrations. The oscillating sun vibrates and produces a sound, planets orbiting the sun and rotating on their axis produce a sound through vibrations, which some Indian scientists say resemble the sound AUM (OM). But there is no scientific study. But NASA has produced evidence that the Sun produces vibrations and sound. This has been recorded.

Scholars believe OM is the basis of vibrations and sound in the origin of the universe and they affect us.



Dr Srinivasan says that these vibrations have an effect on the human body and the brain. These are classified by researchers as temporal and spatial. Temporal no one knows the origin – within or outside. But spatial is from the environment surrounding us.

All the sounds and vibrations emanating from nature effect or affect our body, brain and mind. That is why meditation can be used to control the effects of vibrations on the mind and body. The first stage is relaxation, the second is drowsiness and the third is sleep. The next stage is called Epsilon the state of extended relaxation, where you experience complete joy, enjoyment and bliss. We call it Nirvana and scientists call it the stage of enlightenment. It is our awareness that is at the top of the mind that merges with the universe and its all-pervading consciousness. Tibetan Llamas reach this stage and it is said that if you threw an ice blanket on them, it would dry up in no time

because of the energy they exude. They can control the onset of fever or bring fever to bodies. Indian sages have gone into samadhi, another higher form, considered as hibernation by scientists.

Videos to watch

Part one containing the presentation of Dr Ramamurthy can be watched from this link.

<https://youtu.be/A6pKmkUpWyw>



Part Two containing the speech of Dr A V Srinivasan can be watched from the following link.

https://youtu.be/Zq_sSgOhmp4



Taliban Seizes Kabul After American Troops Withdraw - India & US Worry About the Uncertainty of Billions in Investments

By T N Ashok, Consulting Editor (Aug 2021)

USA & Allies Rudely Awakened



The dreaded Taliban, which had been fighting US presence in Afghanistan for the last 20 years, seized the crown jewel Kabul on August 15 in a lightning offensive hours after taking the prized Mazar E Sharif city soon after US marines began their disengagement in the land locked country in pursuant of Doha talks for total withdrawal of troops after a 20-year presence between 1991 to 2021.

The US and its NATO allies and other countries were rudely awakened by the shocking news Kabul had fallen, thousands were fleeing the country and the Afghan President Ashraf Ghani fled through Tajikistan to take asylum in UAE. Even as US President declared recognition of the Taliban regime was

dependent upon guarantees that it will not grant sanctuary or encourage terrorism on the soils of Afghanistan, an ISIS-K sponsored suicide bomber blew up the Hamid Karzai international airport killing 13 US marines and wounding seriously 18 other soldiers. Some 169 people were killed in the blast. The Doha peace agreement for American withdrawal had extracted a Taliban assurance that it would respect human rights and disallow terrorism from the soil of Afghanistan.

A shocked US President Joe Biden had faced a double whammy, first the fall of Kabul hours after American troops withdrew, Trump withdrew 7,500 and Biden an equal number, in a single stroke. Some more remained to be withdrawn when ISIS-K, more barbaric and fundamental islamists than Taliban, struck at the airport.

Choked, wiping tears from his eyes for the loss of US marines, Biden told a shocked nation that America will not forgive or forget those who carried out this gruesome attack at Kabul airport, anyone who wishes America harm, we will hunt you down ", he warned saying he would defend US interests with every measure at his command. The soldiers who died are heroes. The ISIS-K attacks come in utter violation of assurances by Taliban at Doha that it will not allow terrorism to operate from its soil.

US Military Drone Strike Blows Up Bomb Laden IS -K Car Near Kabul

On August 29, the US military took a punitive drone strike on a IS bomb laden car headed for Kabul and blew it up in keeping with Bidens remark "We will hunt you down", for the barbaric ISIS-K suicide bomber attack at the Hamid Karzai international airport that killed 13 US marines, seriously wounded 18 others and left dead 169 civilians. Pentagon said the drone strike was in self defence even as Taliban regime claimed the US has no right to attack After August 31.

India & USA Worried About Uncertainty of Investments

India and USA, which have invested totally over 50 billion US dollars in building infrastructure in terms of roads, highways and hospitals, are worried about their investments as Taliban has begun destroying every symbol or edifice, they think represent the Afghan government that was under the influence of the US. Taliban leaders have demanded that India continue to complete all the projects it has undertaken in the strife torn country. India has not replied and is adopting a "wait & watch" policy as the foreign office feels it has to take stock of first what sort of government will be formed in Kabul and if the previous Afghan government ministers will form part of it for continuity. Moreover, India as part of the Quad led by US will take decisions in sync with the new entity.

India and US security services had jointly strategized the evacuation of all Indian diplomats, Afghans of Indian origin including Sikhs, and Afghan ministers and Afghan people wanting to leave the country. Both India and USA and the United Nations have clearly said all fleeing Afghans would be granted visas without any procedural delays. Thousands have fled the country and Taliban has said it will not allow any further outflow by stationing its soldiers at the airport. They have already blocked all road crossings to other countries.

Taliban to Taliban – 1991 to 2021 – Badly Scripted History

Four presidents – George Bush, Barack Obama, Donald Trump and Joe Biden – 20 years of US presence, trillions of dollars invested, it was Taliban to Taliban, a badly scripted history. China is the first country to recognize the Taliban regime, probably because of its business interests of having invested billions. Pakistan is an enigma. It has supported Taliban because of its nexus to Al Qaeda providing sanctuary to the

worlds most wanted terrorist Osama Bin Laden from the caves of Afghanistan to Peshawar and ultimately to the outskirts of Islamabad until President Barack Obama in a highly secret offensive through Navy Seals killed an ailing Osama in his den. Bin Laden was the mastermind of the 9/11 twin tower attacks of the WTC that happened 20 years ago in which thousands died when two planes crashed into the twin towers causing shock, horror and sorrow across the globe.

When 18-year-olds were drafted for military service in Iraq and Afghanistan, grieving families that lost their sons and daughters questioned the US government: why engage militarily in an alien soil where it had no interests. The then US President Donald Trump after the Doha peace talks negotiated a withdrawal from Kabul, as part of his election pledge, by May one subject to certain terms of respecting human rights. President Joe Biden vowed to bring back American troops ASAP and set a deadline by September One, but pulled them back in mid-august itself.

Afghan Govt Collapses, Prez Flees, Chaos on Streets of Kabul

As the government in Afghanistan collapsed, the president fled, chaos prevailed on the streets and Kabul airport, world opinion turned against the US President Joe Biden of literally abandoning a country that had been protected for 20 years. But Biden stood his ground saying he honoured a legacy of Trump Even intelligence agencies did not foresee Kabul's fall so fast. When the Afghan forces did not put up even a semblance of a fight surrendering meekly, why should American soldiers fight alone for Afghanistan, Biden asked.

The bigger picture here now is: what happens to the hundreds of billions of US dollars invested by the USA (38 billion) India (about 6 to 8 billion), on infrastructure in terms of hospitals,

educational institutions, health care facilities, roads and highways, airports built there.

Pakistan, an Enigma, with nexus to Taliban and Al Qaeda

How to do deal with Pakistan in the new scenario is a big question? Renowned for home grown terrorism, aiding and abetting with the Taliban and Al Qaeda, Pakistan is deemed a terrorist nation having its own problems in Sind and Baluchistan. What stand will the European Union take is a million-dollar question, even as Turkey, one of its members, has said it would recognize and work with the Taliban regime.

Panic Rules Kabul



At present fear and panic rule Kabul and other principal cities in Afghanistan as Taliban commanders have taken full control of all border crossings from which you can neither enter

nor exit. To show a semblance of modicum to the world, Taliban's supreme commander Haibatullah Akhundzada has said the rule of Sharia law would now apply. An appeal to all government servants and military and police to return to work without fear of persecution has been made.

"We will not discuss what type of political system we should apply in Afghanistan because it is clear, it is sharia law and that is it ", says Waheedullah Hashimi, with access to council's decision making. He is the face of Taliban to the world now. The future of Kabul is tense unpredictable, and its relations with progressive nations across the world is on the precipice

as uncertainty haunts the future of their foreign policy and investments is being called into question after a 20-year security blanket by USA has been lifted.

Chronology of Afghanistan History of Govts, Russia, American Presence and Tribal Rising - Background of Why Tribal War Lords rule Afghanistan

By TN Ashok, Consulting Editor (Aug 2021)

1919 - Afghanistan went through turbulent history. A "Great Game" of ping pong was played by Britain, which occupied India, and Russia in the northwest frontier of Afghanistan attempting to gain control of Kabul. Home rule returned to Kabul after the Anglo - Indian war when King Amanullah became the monarch only to be replaced a half a century later by King Zahir Shah, who was also overthrown and a republic was established.

1978 - Afghanistan witnessed the infamous Saur Revolution where a socialist government was established passing controversial land reforms legislations dis-agreeable to the feudal class or the power structures. The socialist govt was oppressive and jailed many critics and opponents to the land reforms. The Saur Revolution was the brainchild of the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan, which overthrew Afghan President Mohammed Daoud Khan on 27–28 April 1978. Daoud Khan had himself seized power through a coup de tat in 1973.



1979 - The Saur Revolution sparked the Soviet–Afghan War of the 1980s. Mujahideen rebels, tribal groups grouped together to topple the socialist government through a guerrilla war that lasted nine long years. As the Mujahedeen became stronger by the day, President Amin sought the help of the

Soviet Union to suppress the uprising and Russian Troops walked in destabilizing the region. Despite international protest and pressures to withdraw, led by the USA and its European allies, the troops stayed under the order of President Karmal. He was considered a soviet puppet.

Russian Presence and Withdrawal

1980 – 1989: Afghanistan was rocked by unprecedented violence and bloodshed as the Islamic fundamentalist group Taliban took the baton from the Mujahedeen supported by USA, China, UK and some other European nations, which wanted the Russian troops out.

American Presence and Withdrawal

1991 – 2021: Taliban in its five-year reign, between 1989 to 1994, came to represent a regime that was totalitarian, terrorist, and the country slipped into poverty and economic regression. US forces invaded Taliban territories with drone attacks and missiles as CIA found that the Taliban was in nexus with the dreaded terrorist outfit Al Qaeda, led by the excommunicated Saudi citizen Osama Bin Laden, son of a Yemeni billionaire construction magnate, who owned the renowned Bin Ladin construction company in Saudi Arabia. Banished from Saudi Arabia for founding the Al Qaeda, which funnelled funds and arms to the Mujahedeen in Afghanistan, Osama was given sanctuary in the North West Frontier caves and moved to Peshawar and ISI of Pakistan shifted him to a secluded farm house in the outskirts of Islamabad at Abbottabad, where he was shot dead by US Navy seals.

2001: The US drone attacks on the Afghan caves nearly ousted the Taliban hold in Kabul followed in by the US infantry into Kabul and surroundings. But Taliban managed to control large portions of the country still.

2020: Sept 12, 2020 saw an agreement following the Doha peace talks in which President Donald Trump agreed to withdraw half the force by May 01 2021. Biden withdrew almost the entire force by mid- August against his own deadline of September one. Some 3,000 soldiers remain to be evacuated at the Bagram base.

US Troops Withdraw pursuant to trilateral meet at Doha – Afghan govt, USA and Taliban leaders

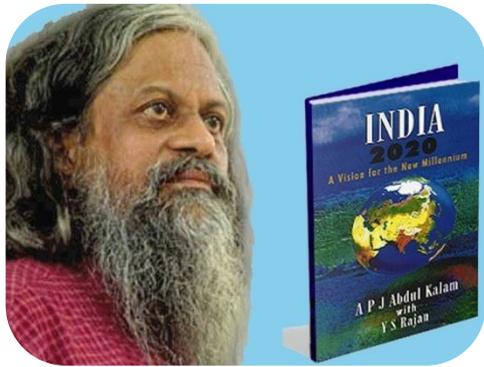
2021: August 16 saw the twenty-year-long war between the US backed Afghan government of Presidents Hamid Karzai and later by Ashraf Ghani saw the fall of Kabul in a lightning offensive hours after the US withdrew over 15,500 troops in two phases under the then US President Donald Trump in 2020 and President Joe Biden in August 2021 ahead of the deadline of September 01,2021. The withdrawal followed the commitment made at Doha in the middle east.

The Milestone Journey of 'PreSense', over 16 Years

By Priyadharshni Rahul, Editor (Sep 2021)

When many of the newsletters and eMagazines started around 2005/2006 vanished after two or three issues, PreSense started in March 2006 as Digital-only eMagazine withstood its challenges, surviving for 15 years and counting. PreSense proudly launches its 175th edition with its sustained rich contents and perseverance of the Editorial team.

On the suggestion of Dr APJ Abdul Kalam, former President of India, to start a magazine for positive journalism, Prime Point Srinivasan convened a meeting of some of the young communication students and professionals during Feb 2006. Within one hour, they conceptualised the theme. The team



Dr Y S Rajan flagged off the journey

decided to focus on the various aspects of communication and to create communication awareness amongst the people, corporates and business segment. It was decided to publish the eMagazine once in a month and to release through various Yahoo discussions groups managed by Prime Point Srinivasan. Those discussion groups had members across the globe belonging to public relations, journalism and communication related profession. Mr. Satish, an enthusiastic communication student of Anna University, suggested the name "PR-e-Sense", focussing on Public Relations and other communication related areas. Within few minutes, he designed

the Logo and presented to the group. That was an interesting beginning of a concept to reality.

People hesitant to give interviews

Though the Yahoo groups managed by Prime Point Srinivasan had hundreds of corporate communication professionals, sadly



First edition – March 2006

no CEO was willing to give his interviews for an eMagazine which was to be launched. All the CEOs and top management professionals preferred to give their interviews to the leading magazines and newspapers and not to a tiny eMagazine, the concept of which was not popular then.

Finally, Dr Y S Rajan, a close associate of Dr Abdul Kalam and the co-author of the book 'India 2020' with Dr Kalam encouraged the team to go ahead with the new initiative and offered to give his first interview and launched the first edition of the eMagazine online on 6th March 2006. The first edition carried the interviews of Dr Y S Rajan and B Suresh Kamath, Chairman of Laser soft Infosystems Limited, a leading banking software company. That marked the humble beginning of a long journey.

Introducing innovations

The concept of Podcasts emerged in 2005. PreSense integrated many interviews with podcast links. Realising the importance of an eMagazine, many international communication professionals came forward to give their interviews. PreSense invited them as Guest Editors. The Guest Editors were, the Presidents of Chartered Institute of Public Relations (London), Public Relations Society of America,

Public Relations Institute of Southern Africa and Institute of Public Relations of Singapore and more.

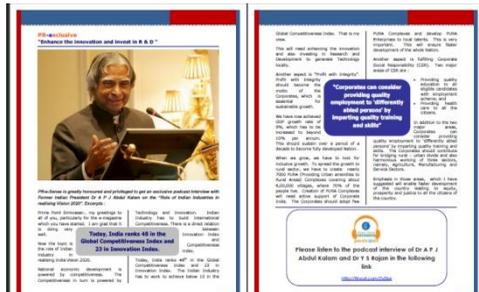
Change of Logo and new layout



In February 2008, with PReSense completing two years, it underwent a major reform with the change in its

masthead and the layout, to make it appear savvier to the readers. The same Masthead continues till date.

PReSense had the privilege and honour of carrying an exclusive interview with Dr. Abdul Kalam, former President of India, in its second anniversary issue.



First exclusive interview with Dr APJ Abdul Kalam for Feb 2008 edition

The interview was recorded over phone and the audio version was also integrated with the article. This enhanced our image and credibility greatly among readers.

Dr Abdul Kalam launched cartoon character Prince



Dr Abdul Kalam launching the first Prince cartoon on 24th July 2008 at Raj Bhavan, Chennai



On the suggestion of Dr. Abdul Kalam, PReSense introduced cartoons in its July 2008 edition onwards. Mr Triambak Sharma, a noted cartoonist and editor of Cartoon watch, a cartoon magazine, created a new cartoon character, PRince. PRince was launched by Dr Abdul Kalam himself at Raj bhavan, Chennai. The Cartoon Character Prince was designed similar to cartoon character 'Common Man' of R K Laxman. But Prince, dressed in trendy manner, represents the aspirations of the youth of the country. PRince Cartoon is being featured regularly in monthly editions, since then. PReSense has published 160 PRince Cartoons, highlighting topical themes, till September 2021.



Triambak Sharma

In April 2010, The Wall Street Journal reproduced one of the PRince cartoons, with prior permission from the Editor (picture). This gesture attests the popularity of the eMagazine at the global level.

Digital Media Partnership with Global events

PreSense continued to win increasing recognition among the literary and corporate readers and in April 2008, several international organisations approached the editorial team for their association with PReSense, as a Digital media partner in global events. Normally, only print and television media are preferred by international organisations for media partnership. For the first time in the world, an eMagazine, viz. PReSense became the media



May 2008 edition

partner in 2008 for the international conferences organised by Chartered Institute of Public Relations at London in UK, and by Public Relations Society of America at Detroit in USA. Thereafter, PReSense was invited to be the Digital media partner for several other international conferences held in different countries like South Africa, Singapore, etc.

Resuming the journey after a brief break – Broad-basing readership

PReSense focussed on communication related themes till its 60th edition. After a brief break of a few months, the editorial team resumed PreSense in April 2012 with the 61st edition, coinciding with the Sansad Ratna Awards 2012 to the top performing MPs. The tagline 'Communicate the Communication' used in the first 60 editions of the eMagazine was changed to 'Spreading Positive Vibrations'. Though the masthead continued to be the same, the name of the eMagazine was changed from "PR-e-Sense" (while reading, PR pause e pause sense) to Pre-Sense (while reading, Pre pause Sense).

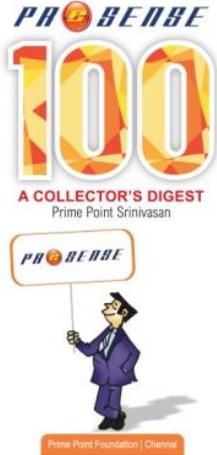
The format of the contents of the eMagazine changed in its 62nd edition and PreSense still continues in the revised format. The PreSense edition carries contents from different domains including Health, Current Affairs, Economics, Politics, Governance, Heritage, History, Technology, Media, etc. The new format has interested a larger audience of readers. The contents cater to readers of different age-groups. PreSense is widely shared through emails and social media.

Digest of articles

Subsequently, digest of articles published up to 110, 130 and 150th editions with titles PreSense100+, PreSense130 and PreSense 150 respectively were also released both in print and ebook format. The digest of articles published up to 175th

PreSense Speaks | Cover Stories 2021

edition was released on 26th September 2021 in 8 volumes.
(The links are given at the end).



Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam
Former President of India



Dr. Rajaji Marg
New Delhi-110011

FOREWORD

I am very happy to know that the PreSense monthly magazine published by Prime Point Foundation is bringing out a book based on some of the unique articles, interviews and events published in its editions so far since from March 2006. The 100 issues of the publication have gone through an eventful journey. Focusing on knowledge capture and in-particular knowledge dissemination, I recollect my direct association with PreSense in July 2008, when I lauded the earnest character, 'friction', created exclusively for PreSense.

I see PreSense continuing in its journey under the mentorship of Prime Point Foundation, maintaining its status as a must-read online, in the fast moving and evolving world of communication, knowledge and connectivity.

I congratulate the Editorial Team of PreSense for bringing out the 100th Edition as a Collector's Digest.

28th May 2015

A handwritten signature in black ink, likely of Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam.

15th Anniversary of PreSense and launch of ebook

15th Anniversary of PreSense was celebrated virtually on 24th July 2021. Shri Arjun Ram Meghwal, Hon'ble MoS for Parliamentary Affairs, Government of India launched an ebook while his travelling in train, virtually. The ebook titled "PreSense Speaks on Communication, Journalism and Reputation Management" contains



Shri Arjun Ram Meghwal launching the
ebook from the running train

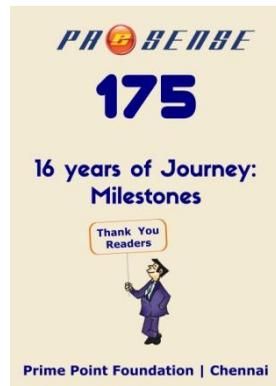
select articles published in PreSense from the beginning till that time.

Flagship Initiatives

Prime Point Foundation (Publisher) and PreSense have started four initiatives viz. (1) Sansad Ratna Awards for outstanding Parliamentarians, (2) Next Gen Political Leaders to develop future political leaders, (3) Digital Journalists Association of India to create digital journalism awareness and (4) Education Loan Task Force to create education loan awareness among students. All the initiatives are flagship initiatives in their own fields and are managed independently by professionals of the respective fields.

Many eminent and globally renowned persons like Jimmy Wales (Founder of Wikipedia), Vinton Cerf (Father of Internet), Dr APJ Abdul Kalam (Former President of India) and many Indian Constitutional authorities, Senior Political leaders, heads of global organisations have shared their views exclusively with PreSense. Many eminent professionals, advocates, academicians, social workers, journalists have been and are associated with the Editorial Board to provide high quality contents. PreSense is managed by enthusiastic professionals voluntarily without any commercial motive and without soliciting advertisements. Every edition is released on the first day of calendar month, digitally, through various groups and social media.

PreSense has achieved the highest credibility for its positive journalism. With the support and guidance of readers, PreSense continues the journey in the digital world.



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<http://www.prpoint.com/publication/presense-16years-journey.pdf>

Managing Mobile Addiction – Patience, Perseverance and Perfection Needed

By Priyadarshni Rahul, Editor (Oct 2021)



The growth of technology has changed the way of our lifestyle, working style, communication and human behaviour too. The pandemic and consequent lockdown have created many

insights and opportunities that were not dreamt of or that could have taken decades to implement and practice. During this time, people learnt the importance of family, supremacy of lifestyle, importance of hygiene and health, connecting beyond boundaries, virtual work mode, etc. At the same time, we have seen youngsters and adolescents being glued to gadgets with 5000 virtual friends but a desolate in reality.

Smartphone Obsession

When you step into a restaurant, all that you find is the family waiting for their food to be served with each one of them busy with their smartphones. Once the food is placed, they are busy clicking multiple pictures of the food and family selfies with a huge smile (by the time the food gets cold) and the smiles seize immediately after the pictures. They are back to their smartphones, posting the pictures - forgetting that restaurants are actually the spot to enjoy conversations and eating with their family. If this is the scenario with family, the scenario with friends is even worse. After posting the pictures on social media, the only excitement is the 'likes' and not the food they came for!

During any festival, the earlier practice was to visit friends and families, later we telephoned to share the greetings, later we texted them our wishes, still later we sent a graphical card of wishes over WhatsApp and now we just send emojis – taking us back to the Stone Age days when we were unaware of a written alphabetic way of communication. Technology has taken its full circle in emotional communication, taking us back to pictorial communication. This is not just a random connect but a message to humankind that technology is not emotional.

Recent Surveys

As per the 2014 definition of World Health Organisation, the Adolescents are defined as young people between the ages of 10 and 19 years. Today, 20% of people in the world are adolescents, constituting 1.2 billion people worldwide. India has the largest adolescent population in the world, 253 million - every fifth person is in the age group of 10 to 19 years. This age group is very tough to handle by the parents and teachers. As per 2001 Indian Census children in the age group of 5 to 9 are 12.5% of the population and adolescents in the age group 10 to 19 are 21.9% of the population. This age group between 5 to 21 comprising of 34.4% (more than one-third of the population) are the future builders of our nation and they need to be nurtured carefully.

Another important study made recently reveal that the average age at which children start using gadgets has fallen over the past decade from 3 to 5 years to 12 to 18 months. That means parents allow their babies to use the gadgets. More than 60% of parents are worried about the impact of screen time on the eyes of their children. Another survey report published in a leading newspaper reveal 65% children became device addictive during lockdown, of them 70 percent developed lot of physical problems like obesity, headache, eye pain and itching, etc.

Present Challenge

An adolescent is bombarded with opportunities, information and distractions. He observes and learns from his surrounding, both good and bad. For his age he receives more information than what he can consume. He doesn't get timely advice and attention from his aspiring busy parents or the society at large. He struggles to analyse, accommodate and reject his massive data. This leads to suffocation and urge to resolve the chaos. He traces some respite from his peer groups, intelligentsia and his environment. In the name of exposure, the society exposes the naïve minds to obscenity and filth through movies, social media, and internet series. The child grows way beyond his age and this untimely exposure creates doubts, confusions and inquisitiveness that may misguide the child.



The '80s and the '90s kids, who had time to explore periodically, consume gradually and gain knowledge. But the 2k kids are pushed through the throat, to keep up to the technological explosion leading to challenges to their peaceful pace. A five-year-old child can operate a smart phone better than holding a painting brush. Appreciating arts and creativity narrows down as its understanding disappears. 'My home, My world' mania mainly takes the front seat due to the disassociation with the real world. Living in a bubble is considered the trend, very unfortunately. This leads to anxiety and fear to face the real world.

Over-pampering by parents is killing the fighting spirit in young blood. Competitiveness is the essence that creates

sportsmanship in children. It is not 'always' desirable to be unsuccessful and less competitive. Either children don't compete fearing defeat or they don't give their fullest as 'success' is being given a new definition worrying the children's mental health. It is natural to fail and human to err. This has to be made clear and understandable to the adolescents. Small failures should give the child the strength to stand and run faster.

Unfortunately, the gadgets they use are not able to totally fix the emotional and human support they require. This leads to self-doubt, restlessness and dependency. That is the reason why children attempt to take grave steps for the smallest failures or problems. When they are in 30's and 40's, they find it difficult to match with the reality and cope with the pressure. They collapse, mentally, emotionally and morally resulting in grave physical ailments.

Expert view – Impact on the brain

Dr A V Srinivasan, an internationally reputed Neurologist agrees that this situation cannot be avoided. He says that this has got both advantage and disadvantage. He suggests teachers and parents to educate children to use the gadgets effectively to their advantage.



Dr A V Srinivasan

Dr Srinivasan adds, "With the advent of latest gadgets, the brain has now become more a 'seeing brain' than a 'thinking brain'. The positive or negative effect of this can be studied only after a decade. Seeing brain has got tremendous potential for improvement in the learning of Science and Technology, because they see it and do it, with the help of 'mirror' neurons. The negative side is that when a person commits a

crime, certain areas of his brain are activated. Similarly, when a person watches the crime either directly or through devices, the same areas of his brain is seen activated. That was why our elders always insisted to see, listen and speak only good things. On the other hand, if children watch positive visuals, it also stimulates their brain positively and can learn many things. Frequent movement of images on the screen and the closeness to the eye would affect their vision.”

When asked about the role of teachers and parents, Dr Srinivasan said that parents should have a complete control of the hours of mobile devices used by children. “Excessive use of gadgets may affect their vision and brain. Children may not like to be monitored. They should be educated and informed. The schools should also teach them the medical side of using gadgets with positive and negative aspects. Patience, Perseverance and Perfection in handling should be the basic mantra for the parents,” Dr Srinivasan concluded.

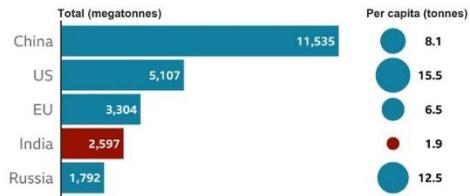
Top Ten Countries Emit 68% of Greenhouse Gases

Dr Sudarshan Padmanabhan, Editorial Advisor (Nov 2021)

Ten countries, including China, The US, India, The EU and others contribute around 68% of the Greenhouse gas emission globally leading to climate change and global warming. This is a matter of serious concern for mankind.

India is the world's fourth biggest emitter of carbon dioxide

Total and per capita emissions of CO₂ per year



2019 data, EU includes UK
One megatonne = 1,000,000 tonnes

Source: EC, Emissions Database for Global Atmospheric Research



What is Climate Change?

According to the United Nations, "climate change refers to long-term shifts in temperatures and weather patterns. These shifts may be natural, such as through variations in the solar cycle. But since the 1800s, human activities have been the main driver of climate change, primarily due to burning fossil fuels like coal, oil and gas."

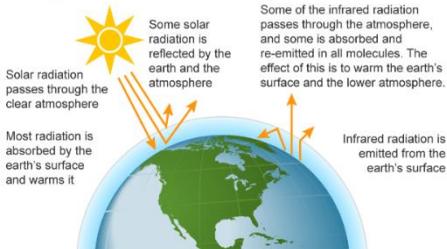
Fossil fuels generate greenhouse gases that blanket the earth's atmosphere thus trapping sun's heat and cause raise in earth's temperature. The main culprits are carbon-dioxide and methane. These are generated by vehicles and industries that burn fossil fuels. Deforestation also releases carbon-dioxide. Landfills with garbage produce methane – another greenhouse gas. Therefore, energy, industry, transport, buildings, agriculture, cattle farming and land use are the main contributors to greenhouse gases emission. Climate change leads to many events such as temperature increase, droughts,

water scarcity, forest fires, floods, melting polar ice, huge storms, rising sea levels and reducing bio-diversity.

People in various parts of the world are experiencing climate change in different ways. It affects all aspects of our lives like

health, food availability, housing, food safety and work. The UN claims that in the future, climate refugees will increase rapidly.

The greenhouse effect



The UN reports that the greenhouse concentration is at the

highest levels in 2 million years. No country can escape its responsibility of fighting global warming. Everyone is affected by climate change. The top 10 countries contribute over 68% and the 100 least emitting countries contribute 3%. The countries that create most damage to the climate should take more responsibility. Hence, the commitments should be equitable.

What are the proposed mitigation measures?

Climate change solutions have to be economically viable while protecting our health, environment and forests. The UN has facilitated global agreements such as the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and the Paris Agreement. Broadly, the measures to be adopted are: cutting emissions of greenhouse gases, climate impact adaptation and financing climate adjustments by lower income and lower emission economies. There is no time to waste. Most countries are looking at 2050 for net zero emissions.

This would be too late since 2030 is the target to keep the global warming below 1.5 degree Centigrade. Adaptation to

climate impact can provide a renewed impetus to employment, homes, businesses, infrastructure and natural eco-systems. Technology can also play an important role in protecting people from climate hazards and saving lives and property.

Conference of Parties 26 (COP26)



World leaders pose for a group photo during an evening reception to mark the opening day of the COP26 UN Climate Summit, in Glasgow. (Photo | AP)

2021 United Nations Climate Change Conference also known as COP26 was held in Glasgow, Scotland, United Kingdom, from October 31 to November 13, 2021. This was the 26th Conference, presided over by Alok Sharma, Minister of State, Cabinet Office, UK. COP26 saw a stronger commitment to drastic measures to address climate change as envisaged in the Glasgow Climate Pact. Expectedly, coal and fossil fuel were the points of contention. Interestingly, earlier summits were sponsored by fossil fuel companies.

For COP26, the UK government sought sponsors who had a real commitment to climate change. British Energy, banking and insurance companies sponsored the event. COP26 also

turned back the clock on American reluctance to work on climate change mitigation during President Donald Trump's administration. Due to the global pandemic COVID-19, COP26 was postponed to 2021 October. The current President of America, Joseph Biden Jr, immediately rejoined the climate talks and even sent former President Barack Obama as one of the delegates to assure the world community that America meant business.

COP26 was attended by various Heads of State including the United States of America, Germany, France, Spain, India, Egypt, Israel, and Canada. Heads of States from 120 countries and 25,000 delegates from 200 countries participated in COP26. Microsoft founder Bill Gates called for a Green Industrial Revolution. Chinese President did not attend the event instead sent a written statement. China was represented by climate change envoy Xie Zhenhua. It should be noted that China is responsible for almost 27% of World's GHG emissions and was expected to push back on the commitments to reduce carbon emissions by reducing the usage of coal and protecting forests. The notable absentees were the Heads of States from Saudi Arabia, South Africa, Russia, Iran, Mexico, Brazil, Turkey, Malaysia and Vatican City.

While COP26 was expected to arrive at a consensus to end coal power and fossil fuel dependence in phases, China and India were against a stringent resolution. Despite a weakened resolution, COP26 was able to achieve the first climate deal in the form of the Glasgow Climate Pact with an explicit commitment to reduce the use of coal, proposing drastic cuts in Greenhouse Gas emissions and a promise of funding support for developing countries trying to adapt to the climate change. The takeaways from COP26 are numerous:

1. 197 countries agreed to seriously work for mitigating climate change

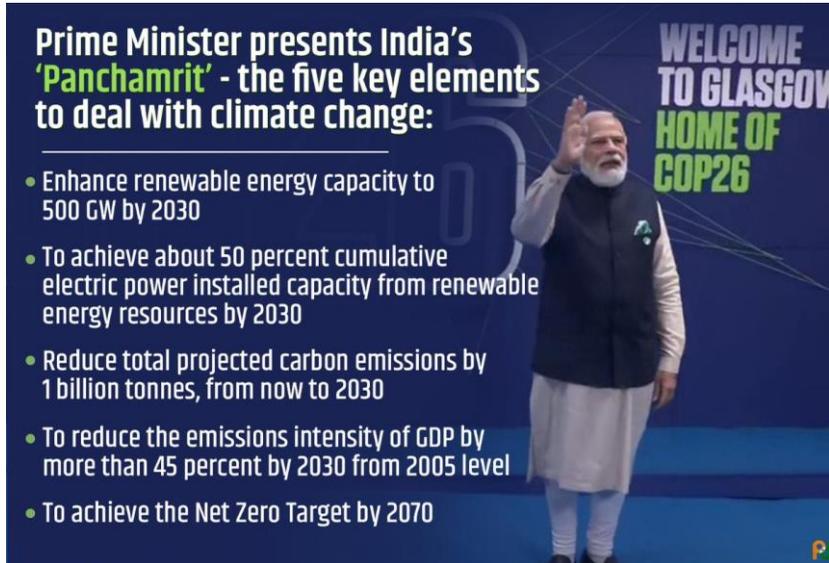
2. The Glasgow Climate Pact takes the Paris Agreement forward which agreed on a goal of limiting the increase of the global average temperature within 2 degree C above pre-industrial levels and make an effort to limit the average temperature within 1.5 degree C
3. Coal was identified as the biggest contributor to climate change, which is a first.
4. 140 countries pledged to reach net-zero emissions. These countries contribute to 90% of global GDP.
5. 100 countries including Brazil pledged to reverse deforestation by 2030.
6. 40 countries pledged to move away from coal.
7. India has promised to draw half of its energy from renewable sources by 2030 and achieve carbon neutrality by 2070.
8. 24 developed countries and major car manufacturers such as GM, Ford, Volvo, Jaguar, Land Rover and Mercedes Benz have committed to work towards zero emissions globally by 2040. Many others like Volkswagen, Toyota, Peugeot, Honda, Nissan and Hyundai have not signed the pledge, unfortunately.
9. Advanced economies have pledged financial support for climate change mitigation and adaptation efforts.

The 12th and last day of COP26 was also labelled as the longest day. Till the last moment, an agreement was elusive though almost all the participating countries agreed on the general principles on climate mitigation and adaptation. But differences about financing, commitment required to keep the temperature within 1.5 degree C, adaptation, loss and damage and carbon market mechanisms remained.

Many civil society groups working on climate justice emphasized the need to think of an equitable solution since the people at the bottom of the pyramid tend to get affected incommensurately. Hence the effort to address the climate

change should be equitable, inclusive and sustainable, ensuring climate justice.

India's five commitments



The image shows Prime Minister Narendra Modi on a stage, gesturing with his right hand. Behind him is a large blue backdrop with white and green text. The text on the backdrop reads: "Prime Minister presents India's 'Panchamrit' - the five key elements to deal with climate change:" followed by a list of five commitments. To the right of the list, it says "WELCOME TO GLASGOW HOME OF COP26".

Prime Minister presents India's 'Panchamrit' - the five key elements to deal with climate change:

- Enhance renewable energy capacity to 500 GW by 2030
- To achieve about 50 percent cumulative electric power installed capacity from renewable energy resources by 2030
- Reduce total projected carbon emissions by 1 billion tonnes, from now to 2030
- To reduce the emissions intensity of GDP by more than 45 percent by 2030 from 2005 level
- To achieve the Net Zero Target by 2070

India is the third largest emitter of carbon dioxide following China, US, and closely followed by EU and Russia. But India's per capita emission is 1.9 tonnes which is much below US (14.2), China (7.4) and Japan (8.15). Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi has given the following five commitments to reduce the emission of Greenhouse Gas. He was also praised for finding a middle ground without sacrificing India's Global commitment to climate change and economic development.

- By 2030 - 500 GW energy from non-fossil fuel sources
- By 2030 - 50% of its energy from renewable (presently 70% from coal)

- From now to 2030 - total projected per capita carbon emission reduced to 1 billion tons from the current level of 1.9 billion tonnes.
- By 2030 - 45% reducing carbon intensity of its economy
- By 2070 - net zero emission

India has demanded 1 trillion dollars in climate finance. Prime Minister Modi also emphasized the need for lifestyle changes. To realize its commitments, India has to go for electric vehicles rapidly, reducing carbon footprint of polluting industries drastically, creating forests to absorb carbon dioxide and a major push towards solar power in the next couple of decades.

How can we contribute individually?

Individually, every Indian should try to reduce the carbon footprint and the emission of GHGs. Some measures that ought to be taken are:

1. Using public transportation
2. Replacing lamps at homes and offices with LED bulbs
3. Investing in energy efficient appliances
4. Reduce plastic waste
5. Increase forest cover by planting trees

Natural Disasters That Caused Havoc in India in the last Ten years

Ramesh Sundaram, Editorial Advisor (Nov 2021)

Here the natural disasters are classified as a) Floods, b) Glacier melt down, c) Drought, d) Cyclones and d) Earthquakes.

Major catastrophes that caused severe damage to human life, cattle and property are covered, with latest happening as first. Most of these natural disasters are attributed mostly to Climate Change and Global Warming.

Floods



Chennai Floods 2015

The La Nina caused severe drought in the southern most parts of India. Tamil Nadu was most affected. There was a failure of North East Monsoon for 3 consecutive years. Chennai faced severe water crisis with four of its reservoirs becoming completely dry. Groundwater level dipped to an abysmal low.

A research study by Indian and American experts have put this drought as worser than 1896-97 famine.

- 2021 Chennai Floods: Severe depression in Bay of Bengal caused heavy rainfall and caused inundation of many areas of Chennai city and its peripheral areas. The city received almost about 140mm Of rain in one single night, resulting in overflowing of rivers and lakes.
- 2017 Mumbai Floods: This was the second largest in Mumbai history. The flooding was attributed to Global Warming and Climate Change. A phenomenal 470mm of rainfall in 12 hours caused the floods.
- 2017 Gujarat Floods: The flood was caused by heavy rainfall and outflow of water from dams in Gujarat and Rajasthan.
- 2017 West Bengal Floods: Cyclone Komen in July caused heavy flooding and inundation of many areas in West Bengal and Jharkhand.
- 2017 Bihar Floods: Floods are due to heavy rain and resultant heavy water outflow from Gandak and Kosi rivers. The State is prone to flooding due to heavy rain during monsoon.
- 2017 North East Floods: Flood water from Brahmaputra river caused massive flooding. Apart from about 2 million people, wildlife in Kaziranga National Park and other sanctuaries in the area were also severely affected.
- 2015 Kerala Floods: The flooding caused major disaster in the State. More than 36,000 people were displaced and 445 people were feared dead. The 5 flood gates of Idukki dam were opened for the first time in the State's history
- 2015 Chennai Floods: The floods due to very heavy rainfall severely affected Chennai, Chidambaram and Cuddalore districts of Tamil Nadu. Very large

- areas of Chennai and its neighborhood areas were severely inundated mainly due to sudden opening of Floodgates of Chembarambakkam Lake.
- 2015 Gujarat Floods: Cyclone caused floods. Ameli district in the State was most severely affected. Many landslips occurred. Gir National Park was totally inundated leading to perishing of large number of cattle.
- 2014 Kashmir Floods: Due to heavy rainfall and flooding a large number of villages were affected. Many areas in cities were severely inundated.
- 2012 Brahmaputra Floods: Flooding of the river caused severe damage to Kaziranga National Park in Assam.

Glacier's meltdown

The Nanda Devi Himalayan glacier suddenly melted and broke causing heavy deluge of ice and water in downstream areas of Uttarakhand on February 7, 2021. Chamoli district of the State was worst affected. Two hydel projects of Rishi Ganga and Tapovan were almost totally destroyed by the avalanche. More than 200 people were feared dead or missing. Climate Change and Global Warming are the chief causes.

Drought

The La Nina caused severe drought in the southern most parts of India. Tamil Nadu was most affected. There was a failure of North East Monsoon for 3 consecutive years (2016-18). Chennai faced severe water crisis with four of its reservoirs becoming completely dry. Groundwater level dipped to an abysmal low. A research study by Indian and American experts have put this drought worser than 1896-97 famine.

Cyclones



Cyclone Tauktae hitting Gujarat

- May 2011 Cyclone Tauktae: Maharashtra and Gujarat, 175 dead, many reported missing, property loss was pegged at \$2.1 million.
- November 2020 Cyclone Nivar: Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu and Puducherry. Property loss \$ 600 million.
- May 2020 Cyclone Amshan: West Bengal, Orissa and Andamans, property loss \$ 13.7 billion.
- June 2020 Cyclone Vayu: Maharashtra and Gujarat, property loss \$ 140,000 million.
- August 2020 Cyclone Fani: Property loss \$ 8.1 billion.
- April 2019 Cyclone Gaja: Tamil Nadu and Kerala, huge damages to property.
- November 2019 Cyclone Titli: West Bengal, Orissa, Andhra Pradesh, property loss \$ 920 million,
- November 2017 Cyclone Ockhi: Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Maharashtra and Gujarat.

November 2016	Cyclone Vardah: Tamil Nadu, Kerala and Andhra Pradesh, \$ 3.38 billion damages.
October 2014	Cyclone Hudhud: Andhra Pradesh, Orissa, Andaman Islands, property loss \$ 3.6 billion.
October 2012	Cyclone Nilam: Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, Orissa, property loss \$ 56.7 million.
December 2011	Cyclone Thane: Tamil Nadu, Puducherry and Kerala: \$ 235 million.

Earthquakes

More than 8 major earthquakes occurred in India and its neighboring countries during the last 10 years.

Major among them was the earthquake that occurred in Sikkim in September 2011. More than 8900 deaths were reported and about

21,500 people were severely affected. The property loss was to the tune of \$ 10 billion and more.



2015 Earthquake at Nepal – 1500 killed

Earthquakes in chronological order:

April 2021	India- Assam	May 2013	India	-
January 2017	India, Bangladesh	September 2009	Kashmir	
			Gangtok, Sikkim	
January 2016	India, Bangladesh and Myanmar	August 2009	India	-
			Andaman Islands	

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October 2015	India, Afghanistan and Pakistan	February 2008	India – West Bengal
May 2015	India and Nepal,	November 2007	India – Gujarat
April 2015	India and Nepal		

Why Brilliant Brains Leave India? – An Analysis

By Priyadarshni Rahul, Editor (Dec 2021)



For many decades, even from Mahatma Gandhi's days, our country has been discussing the issue of 'Brain Drain'. In recent years, the discussion has gathered more pace on why brilliant minds are migrating overseas. Persons of Indian origin have set off a new trend in occupying the top positions globally in Information Technology

Companies, Universities, Media channels, Politics, etc. Even as we take pride that Indians are taking top slots in different verticals globally, we are pretty much concerned as to why the country has not been able to recognise their talents and retain them for India's development. Can we limit, if not prevent brain drain to retain these intellectuals here? Or is it a market driven mechanism that's encouraging India's brilliant minds to migrate for better opportunities?

Who leaves India and why?

In 1990, nearly 7 million Indians were residing outside the country. In 2010, the figure rose to 17 million. In 2020, it is around 33 million. Out of this, the US alone accounted for nearly 5 million Indians who had left home. It is also reported

that the majority of the top rankers of Class 10 and 12 are silently leaving India since 1996.

Three types of categories of people, namely: (1) Students for higher studies, (2) Professionals and (3) High Net Worth individuals (HNIs) leave India every year. Reports indicate that in the last 5 years, 5 lakh people left India. One may well argue that this is a small percentage of the nation's 1.3 billion population. The figure as a proportion of the nation's population may be small, but it is significant considering their huge contribution to their host countries, which otherwise would have benefitted India on a large scale. Hence, it cannot be ignored.

Prior to foreign invasion, India has been the epicentre of knowledge. We had great mathematicians like Aryabhatta and Bhaskara. We had great Universities in Nalanda, Kasi and Kanchi. We dominated globally in the spheres of literature, music, architecture, education, medicine, surgery, astronomy, chemistry, astrology, etc. After nearly a thousand-years foreign rule, India has sadly lost its pristine glory. Unfortunately, now we do not have a single University in India, which ranks among the top 100 at a global level. With a billion plus population, India is no longer able to produce Nobel Laureates.

Venkatraman Ramakrishnan, an Indian born Bio Physics Scientist, after completing his college education, was denied a lecturer's post at Madras University. He migrated to US and UK and became a Nobel Laureate in 2009. He is one of very few people holding dual citizenship in the US and UK. The Indian Government honoured him with the second highest civilian award Padma Vibhushan in 2010.

Dr C S Ranawat, a medical professional, was denied employment in a leading Indian Medical University. He migrated to the US to become a world-renowned Orthopaedic

surgeon, who had the distinction of operating on the Indian Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee. He was also honoured by the Indian Government with the third highest civilian award Padma Bhushan in 2001.

Ramanujam, a clerk in the Madras Port Trust, was spotted by a Britisher and sent to London. He soon became a world-renowned Mathematician. Today, it's a matter of pride that he is referred and quoted by scientists the world over in their research works.

We can keep listing such persons, rejected by the Indian education system, but who went on to earn worldwide recognition to become eminent personalities. We can attribute this phenomenon to many reasons, ranging from plain and simple discrimination to water tight government policies which inhibited recognition and encouraging talent.

While writing this story, we had discussions with successful persons of Indian origin abroad, Indian educationists and a few others.

Says Ms. Jay Amburkar, Managing Director of one of the leading Global Consultancy firms, talented Indian's leave the country due to (a) lack of a conducive and quality atmosphere to thrive, (b) mark-based education system without skill development and (3) wage gap. Jay Amburkar, a brilliant engineer left India for the US 10 years ago and she has reached the level of a Managing Director, primarily because of her talents.

Talking about wages, the average income of Indians in America is around 1.30 lakh dollars per annum, almost twice that of the US Average of 0.65 lakh dollars. In 2019, Indian immigrants were less likely to be in poverty (5 percent) than immigrants overall (14 percent) or the U.S. born (12 percent).

These data indicate that the Indians who are migrating to other countries, particularly the US and European countries get better opportunities to showcase their skills and earn more. Though the Indian Government took steps to bring down the brain drain through the National Skill Development Mission, but it did not achieve its objective.

Many people we spoke to say that the present mark-based education system in India has not led to skill development. Even the brilliant students, who migrate to other countries, have to develop the skills to rise up the ladder. "Culture of teaching and learning has to change. Doing courses for jobs is the main motive here, not passion or excellence", Says Dr Sudarshan Padmanabhan of IIT Madras.

One of the successful entrepreneurs in the US, who chose to be anonymous, says that he was forced to migrate to the US, because he was denied an opportunity in India due to the government's reservation policies (69% in Tamil Nadu), despite his outstanding academic achievements. "The US recognizes talents, irrespective of caste, creed and nationality", he adds. However, another section, who supports the reservation policy argues that this policy has helped lot of downtrodden and under privileged people to come up in life and reach higher places, which could not be possible without this policy. At the same time, the reservation policy with less space for meritorious persons has added forced competitive spirit among the affected persons to scale up to greater heights globally.

Prof. Sree Sreenivasan, Former Dean of Columbia University and one of the top 50 opinion makers in the US confirms that opportunity is lacking in India to brilliant students. "The Indian elementary, secondary and college system has produced the leaders of the top companies in the world (from Silicon Valley, to Pepsi to Chanel) to the heads of American universities and

colleges. Hence the issue isn't education, it's about opportunity", adds Prof. Sree Sreenivasan.

Agreeing with him, Prof. G Ramesh, Adjunct Professor at Indian Institute of Management, Bengaluru says that India has been providing great people to the world. "Typical class room setting in India is very highly competitive, unlike in the US. We prepare them for the competition from school days", he adds.

Why is India not able to come out with Global products?

Indians are leading global tech giants such as Google, Adobe, Microsoft, etc. On the one hand , India as such has not produced any global product so far. Japan and China are able to bring out their own global products. In India, our educational institutions do not give importance to Research and Innovation. We have only very few Incubation Centers, to develop market- driven products. Even the researches done in the Universities are not market oriented. Even the academicians accept that our students are not trained for skills and leadership. Though the present New Education Policy addresses many of these issues, implementation is not fast, due to bureaucratic delays and alleged corruption. Some States do not implement such initiatives for their own political reasons and ends.

With great vision, Prime Minister Narendra Modi has brought out lots of schemes like Start Up India, Stand Up India, Make in India, etc. to encourage innovation and entrepreneurship. Bureaucratic delays and alleged corruption normally put hurdles in implementation.

After the Prime Minister's announcement inviting all Non-Resident Indians to return and launch their projects in India, one of the enterprising professionals resigned from his lucrative job abroad and returned to India to start his own

start-up. Vexed with the lack of encouragement and bureaucratic delays and corruption, he returned after three years.

Two years ago, Prime Minister Modi visited IIT Madras Research Park and found a brilliant person with an innovative product. He spent 15 minutes time with him and asked officials to give all support, as the product was needed for the country. Till date, he could not meet even the senior officials of the Ministry. If he had been spotted by any foreign country, he would have been offered great support giving enough reason to leave the country. This is only the tip of the iceberg. This is how we are losing talents because of our casual and insensitive approach. Unfortunately, even our political parties shout on less important matters and block the proceedings of Parliament. Ironically, intellectuals are not vote bank material.

“We are yet to create an eco-system, which encourages research and innovation. Even though the present Government has taken baby steps, to nurture innovation and research, financial and environmental support are needed”, says D N Prakash, a Trade Union leader and former Banker from Karnataka.

Dr Sudarshan Padmanabhan of IIT Madras also agrees that the Innovation and ecosystem needs to be improved. “We have to encourage fresh ideas, innovation and good practices in all professional disciplines”, he adds.

Investment in research is very low. Investment is looked at in terms of immediate benefits and returns. Government funding is lacking in areas of demand where research is needed most. On the positive side, it is also pointed out that many Indian transnationals such as Tata’s and the Mahindra group are acquiring global brands thus expanding their global footprint.

What the Government should do?

Japan and China have global products. They started the process as early as the 70s and implemented faster. They could penetrate the global market and thus make international brands. According to Prof. G Ramesh of IIM, Bengaluru, the Governments of China and Japan used to push their companies in the global market with financial support. "Indian Government is always afraid of promoting companies for fear of being criticized. The Government has to decide to promote 20 good companies, in spite of what people say. They should also give financial assistance. But they should do it transparently", he adds.

Prof. Ramesh further adds that one Indian Company that secured 500 million dollars project abroad could not produce the sovereign guarantee from the Indian Government. At the same time, the Chinese Government provided the required guarantee and edged out India to get the project for their Company.

Conclusion

India has a great chance of becoming a global leader in three domains viz. Pharma, Automobile and Software. Mahindra has already entered the US market and has become a global brand. There is a mindset that only capturing the US market is global. Capturing Europe, Africa and other markets also are global.

Some of our educational institutions have entered various other countries. Financially we are listed in New York Stock Exchange. Tata and TVS group companies and many Chennai based units are supplying automobile spare parts to leading global brands.

“The government has to support the entrepreneurs financially and help them to bring out global products, removing the bureaucratic delays and reported corruption. In my view, Start-up Companies, if encouraged, may become global brands, because they are risk takers, fleet footers and technology players”- Prof. G Ramesh

“The government has to support the entrepreneurs financially and help them to bring out global products, removing the bureaucratic delays and reported corruption. In my view, Start-up Companies, if encouraged, may become global brands, because they are risk takers, fleet footers and technology players.”, Says Prof. G Ramesh with confidence.

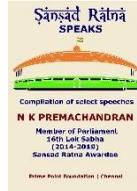
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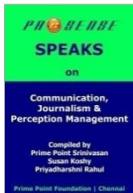
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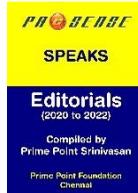
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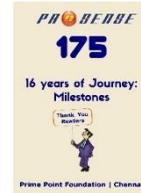
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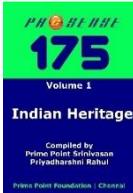
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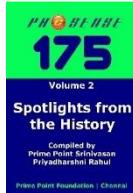
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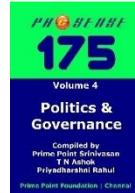
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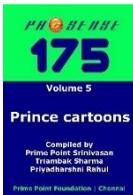
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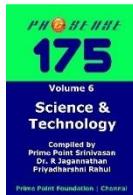
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Index

A	
A K Patnaik.....	29, 32, 38
Accreditation	61
Afghan Govt.....	73
Afghanistan History	76
Ajay Kumar Misra.....	33
Annual Financial Statement.....	17
Arjun Ram Meghwal	31, 32, 34, 84
B	
B Suresh Kamath.....	80
Badri	9
Bhartruhari Mahtab.....	32, 33, 40
Brain	63, 67, 105
Brain Drain.....	105
C	
Chhaya Verma.....	33
Climate Change.....	92, 93, 94, 99, 100, 101
COP26	94, 95, 96
Covid-19.....	51, 52, 53
D	
D N Prakash	110
Deforestation.....	92
Digest of articles	10, 83, 114
Digital India Programme	42
Digital Journalist	8, 10, 12
Digital Journalists Association.....	8, 12
Digital Journalists Association of India	8, 12
Digital Media	82
Digital Media Guidelines 2021.....	43
Dr A V Srinivasan	65, 67, 69, 90
Dr APJ Abdul Kalam ...	6, 7, 10, 11, 13, 30, 31, 34, 36, 39, 64, 79, 80, 81, 82, 85
Dr Ashok Pandey	9
Dr N Ramamurthy.....	65
Dr R Jagannathan.....	9
Dr R Nurullah	9
Dr S K Kharventhan.....	30, 113
Dr Y S Rajan	7, 80
Dr. P Sudarshan	9
E	
Editorial Team	9, 13
Editorials.....	8, 13, 113
Education Loan Task Force ..	7, 11, 85
F	
Facebook	42, 44, 45, 48
Finance Minister	17, 22
Financial Advisor.....	19, 20
G	
Global communication	56
GNSS.....	24, 25
GPS	25
Greenhouse Gases.....	92

PreSense Speaks | Cover Stories 2021

I

ICCO	60
IIT Madras	9, 11, 31, 67, 108, 110
India 2020	80
India Book of Records	11
Intermediaries	44
IRNSS.....	26, 27, 28

J

Journey of 'PreSense'	79
Journey of Ezine.....	7
Journey of Ezine PreSense	7
Jury Committee	11, 31, 32, 34, 35

K

Kabul.....	70, 71, 72, 73, 74, 76, 77, 78
------------	--------------------------------

L

London.....	7
-------------	---

M

M R Sivaraman.....	17
Maxim Behar	55
Member of Parliament	31, 39

N

Natural Disasters	99
Next Gen Political Leaders ..	11, 57, 85

O

OTT Platforms.....	42
--------------------	----

P

P C Gaddi Goudar	33
Parliament ...	7, 12, 17, 18, 20, 21, 29, 30, 31, 34, 35, 36, 38, 39, 40, 43, 110
Podcast.....	7
PreSense Speaks Series	8, 13
Prime Minister Modi	98, 110
Prime Minister Narendra Modi	97, 109
Prime Point Foundation... ..	1, 7, 10, 30, 31, 39, 62, 85
Prime Point Srinivasan... ..	9, 10, 13, 17, 29, 31, 35, 63, 79, 80
Print Media.....	55, 58
Priyadharshni Rahul. ..	9, 13, 55, 79, 87, 105
PRS India.....	30, 31, 34, 35

R

Ram Mohan Naidu.....	33
Ramesh Sundaram.....	9, 13, 99
Revenue Secretary.....	17, 19

S

Sansad Ratna Award ..	7, 11, 12, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 38, 39, 41, 83, 85, 113
Sansad Ratna Awards ...	7, 11, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 38, 39, 41, 83, 85, 113
Satellite Navigation	23
Shrirang Appa Barne.....	31, 32, 33
Smartphone Obsession.....	87
Social Media	42, 45, 55, 56
Sree Sreenivasan	108
Srinivas Gopal.....	9

PreSense Speaks | Cover Stories 2021

Subash Ramrao Bhamre	33
Sunil Arora	29, 32, 36
Supreme Court... 9, 29, 32, 38, 45, 47, 48, 49, 54	
Susan Koshy	17, 23

T

T N Ashok.....	9, 51, 70
Taliban	70, 71, 72, 74, 77, 78
Tamil Nadu.....	7, 11
Triambak Sharma.....	9, 82
Twitter	42, 44, 45, 48, 59

U

Union Budget	17, 20, 21
--------------------	------------

V

V. Rajendran	23
Veda	63, 66
Vedic Mantras	65, 67
Vedic Vibrations	63, 65
Vishambhar Prasad Nishad.....	33

W

WhatsApp... 42, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 88	
World Communication Forum ..	55, 57
World Health Organisation.....	52