



CURRENT AFFAIRS MAY

THE POLITICS OVER THE PRESENCE OF ROHINGYAS —

The Jammu and Kashmir National Panthers Party (JKNPP) recently put hoardings across the city threatening the Rohingya and Bangladeshis migrants to immediately leave the Jammu or face the consequences.

Rohingyas were first denied citizenship in 1982 by General Ne Win's government in the erstwhile Burma. Since then, this Muslim minority group (in the Buddhist majority Myanmar) largely lives in the troubled state of Rakhine. The Jammu and Kashmir government recently

said that more than 1,200 Rohingya families, comprising of 6,000 people, have been living in different parts of Jammu for the last six years. They are registered with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and also with the Union Home Ministry.

But now, they are at the crossroads of a fierce political debate raging in this winter capital, whether they should be allowed, at all, to live in the state.

India and Rohingya Muslims

A small ethnic minority from Myanmar's Rakhine state, the Rohingyas have been facing several years of violent persecution at the hands of the Myanmar government, military and Buddhist nationalists. Lakhs of Rohingyas have fled their home country in the past five years, seeking safety in neighbouring countries. India, however, has not officially recognised Rohingya Muslims as refugees. On April 3, Union home ministry officials reportedly held a meeting to discuss the Centre's plans to identify "illegal" Rohingya settlers, for possible arrest and deportation under the Foreigners Act.

This, according to human rights body Amnesty, would be a blatant "violation of India's commitments under international law" since it would amount to sending the Rohingya community back to a place where they have faced horrific abuses.

Amnesty also called upon India to sign and ratify the international Refugee Convention

of 1951, as well as the 1967 Protocol Related to the Status of Refugees. India is one of the few democracies that has not ratified the Refugee Convention, which governs how distressed refugees are treated in nations where they seek asylum.

India should provide for Rohingyas

It is time for India to actively provide for Rohingya refugees while assuring that the grievances of the local host communities are promptly addressed. India has a long history of providing sanctuary to persecuted people, ranging from the Parsis many centuries ago to Tibetans, Sri Lankans and Afghans more recently. It will be a shame if that changes just as the world is expecting India to adopt a global leadership role in addressing the most pressing problems that cause human suffering

THE BELT AND THE ROAD

China will host the Belt and Road Forum (BRF) over two days starting May 14 in Beijing where high-level delegations, including 29 Heads of State, will gather to discuss President Xi Jinping's ambitious strategy and accelerate the pace of its implementation. China's One Belt One Road (OBOR) strategy envisions an overland Silk Road Economic Belt and the 21st Century Maritime Silk Road to foster trade and enter new markets.

What it is

The strategy aims to connect Asia, Europe and Africa, particularly the developing East Asia economic circle at one end and developed European economic regions at the other. The Belt refers to the Silk Road Economic Belt which comprises three overland routes: connecting China, Central Asia, Russia and Europe; linking China with the Persian Gulf and the Mediterranean Sea through Central Asia and West Asia; and connecting China with Southeast Asia, South Asia and the Indian Ocean. The Road refers to the 21st century Maritime Silk Road designed to push trade from China's coast to Europe through the South China Sea and the Indian Ocean in one route, and from China's coast through the South China Sea to the South Pacific in the other.

Why is OBOR so important for China?

While the BRF will host 29 Heads of State and over 100 ministerial-level officials to increase international cooperation, the OBOR policy itself is aimed at boosting domestic growth in

China which has slipped in recent years. Experts maintain that OBOR is China's blueprint for economic diplomacy, and its strategy to begin a second phase of 'opening up'. Experts also believe China felt "isolated", considering it is not involved with G7, and is limited to the BRICS countries. They say China needed another window to continue its economic expansion, and OBOR fits the bill.

How will it be implemented?

At its core, OBOR would need the eastern (developed) parts of China to trade with the US and developed countries, while the central and western provinces, which have witnessed minimal growth, will feed Asia's developing countries. However, a major roadblock for OBOR at present is the lack of infrastructure in South and Southeast Asia to foster trade. China hopes to work with interested countries and improve connectivity of their infrastructure construction plans and technical standard systems. OBOR also requires the construction of international trunk passageways and an infrastructure network connecting all sub-regions in Asia, and between Asia, Europe and Africa.

And what does OBOR mean domestically for China?

The Chinese government has dovetailed all major government policies with OBOR. The engines of OBOR are three economic circles in China: Guangdong, Macau and Hongkong; Beijing, Tianjin and Hebei, and Hunan province. China has adopted a two-pronged strategy domestically — a national policy and a city-level policy. OBOR is also shaped to for 'domestic readjustment' in China to shift the focus of development from the east coast provinces, which have benefited from the economic boom these last 25 years, to the central and western provinces.

What has China committed to OBOR?

It has committed a total of about \$100 billion to three new infrastructure funds: a \$ 40 billion fund to the Central Asia-focused Silk Road Fund, a \$ 50 billion fund to a new Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) and a \$ 10 billion fund to the BRICS-led New Development Bank.

Nepal signed up to China's new Silk Road drive, a massive infrastructure project spanning some 65 countries at the centre of the Asian giant's push to expand its global influence. The long discussed deal between impoverished Nepal and its much bigger neighbour comes

just days before China hosts a summit for 28 leaders near Beijing, showcasing the ambitious plan.

The One Belt, One Road Initiative (OBOR) spearheaded by President Xi Jinping The deal will see China plough money into Nepal for a series of projects including boosting its road network, power grid and a new railway connecting the capital Kathmandu with Lhasa in Tibet.

Analysts have expressed concern over the Asian giant's attempt to take a lead in global commerce, cautioning that an integrated world trade system where China's Communist party sets the rules could come with serious risks and hidden costs. New York-based Fitch Ratings said that political motivations might trump "genuine infrastructure needs and commercial logic", leading to "a heightened risk of projects proving unprofitable".

India

The newly inked deal will be closely watched by Nepal's other large neighbour, India, which has traditionally played the role of big brother to the much smaller country. Landlocked Nepal remains dependent on India for the majority of its imports, but the previous administration aggressively courted China as part of a nationalist drive to decrease the country's reliance on New Delhi.

- India and Chile agreement on expansion of India-Chile PTA which was signed on 6th September, 2016 is finally being implemented on 16th May, 2017. The Union Cabinet had approved the expansion of PTA in April, 2016.
- The expanded PTA would immensely benefit both sides as a wide array of concessions has been offered by both sides on a number of tariff lines which will facilitate more two way trade.
- India and Chile had earlier signed a Preferential Trade Agreement (PTA) on March 8, 2006 which came into force with effect from August, 2007. The original PTA had a limited number of tariff lines wherein both sides had extended tariff concessions to each other. India's offer list to Chile consisted of only 178 tariff lines whereas Chile's offer list to India contained 296 tariff lines at 8-digit level.

The expanded PTA has a wider coverage wherein Chile has offered concessions to India on 1798 tariff lines with Margin of Preference (MoP) ranging from 30%-100% and India has offered concessions to Chile on 1031 tariff lines at 8-digit level with MoP ranging from 10% -100%. These tariff lines were based on HS 2012 when the negotiations had been concluded.

With the implementation of the HS 2017 Nomenclature with effect from 1st January, 2017, both sides have aligned their Annexes on India's Schedule of Tariff Concessions, Chile's Schedule of Tariff Concessions and the Schedule on Rules of Origin as per HS 2017 Nomenclature for issue of Notification. This would facilitate exporters of both sides to take the advantage of tariff concessions as per the expanded PTA immediately which covers around 96% of bilateral trade.

- Chile is the fourth largest trading partner of India in LAC region after Brazil, Venezuela and Argentina. India's bilateral trade has grown substantially to reach a level of US\$ 3,646.45 million during 2014-15 as compared to US\$ 2,655.35 million in 2011-12 as per the Department of Commerce statistics. However, during year 2015-16, bilateral trade declined by (-) 27.60% and stood at US\$ 2,639.99 million with exports US\$ 679.32 million and imports US\$ 1,960.67 million. The decline in bilateral trade was due to extraneous reasons such as fall in prices of crude oil and international commodities. During the last few years, bilateral trade has been in favour of Chile because of import of high volume of copper ore which constitute more than 88% of the imports from Chile.

India's exports to Chile are diverse which consist of transport equipment, drugs and pharmaceuticals, yarn of polyester fibres, tyres and tubes, manufacture of metals, articles of apparel, organic/inorganic and agro chemicals, textiles, readymade garments, plastic goods, leather products, engineering goods, imitation jewellery, sports goods and handicrafts. Major items of Import from Chile are copper ore and concentrates, iodine, copper anodes, copper cathodes, molybdenum ores & concentrates, lithium carbonates & oxide, metal scrap, inorganic chemicals, pulp & waste paper, fruits & nuts excluding cashews, fertilizers and machinery.

Keeping in view that Chile is the founding member of the Pacific Alliance to which India is an Observer Member.

Biggest expansion of nuclear power

In the biggest expansion of the country's nuclear power industry, the Union Cabinet gave its approval for the construction of 10 units of the new indigenous 700 MWe (mega watt electric) pressurised heavy water reactors (PHWRs). Never before have 10 nuclear reactors been cleared in one go. The addition of 7,000 MWe is more than the combined present installed capacity of 6,780 MWe. There are 22 reactors under operation as of today.

What

1. The new reactors are of significantly higher capacities compared to the PHWRs currently under operation — the standard PHWR being used in India is of 220 MWe though two 540 MWe reactors were installed in Tarapur in 2005 and 2006.
2. The ten reactors will be installed in Kaiga in Karnataka (Unit 5 and 6), Chutka in Madhya Pradesh (Unit 1 and 2), Gorakhpur in Haryana (Unit 3 and 4) and Mahi Banswara in Rajasthan (Unit 1, 2, 3 and 4)
3. The decision to step up the indigenous civil nuclear reactor programme comes amid festering concerns over the deployment of imported light water reactor-based projects in collaboration with global vendors such as Toshiba-Westinghouse and Areva.
4. The Nuclear Power Corporation of India Ltd (NPCIL) will set up the projects deploying the proposed 700 MWe reactor units, which mark a big leap for the state-owned NPCIL that has so far been building smaller-sized 220 MWe and 540 MWe reactor units as part of the country's indigenous nuclear power programme.
5. Prior to the Cabinet announcement, NPCIL has said it is planning to commence work on 16 new reactors by March 2017, including eight indigenous PHWRs of 700 MWe each with a total capacity of 5,600 MWe and eight LWRs based on international cooperation — with Russia, France and the US — totalling a capacity of 10,500 MWe, a source working in the Department of Atomic Energy said.
6. A total of 7,000 MWe capacity will be added. It will help produce clean energy," Power Minister Piyush Goyal said at a briefing after the Cabinet meeting. Officials indicated that "substantial economies of scale" are being targeted, alongside "maximisation of cost and time efficiencies" by adopting the fleet mode for execution of the projects based on the 700 MWe units.
7. As the government marks three years of its nation and people-centric governance, in a first of its kind project for India's nuclear power sector, the ten new units will come up in fleet mode as a fully homegrown initiative.
8. It would be one of the flagship 'Make in India' projects in this sector," an official statement issued after the Cabinet meeting said.
9. Sites for nuclear power plants are selected after carrying out extensive studies by specialised national agencies at the siting stage and the sites are recommended after these meet the criteria laid down in the Atomic Energy Regulatory Board (AERB) code on Site Evaluation of Nuclear Facilities.

The Supreme Court's use of its vast powers under the Article has done tremendous good to many deprived sections. However, it is time to institute checks and balances

For a number of years, it has been my practice not to speak about the cases in which I had appeared as a lawyer, for it had been my view that doing so would not be appropriate. However, I now feel that remaining silent today is not an option. I am having in mind the recent judgments of the Supreme Court invoking Article 142 of the Constitution to achieve results of a far-reaching nature, outside the laws governing the issues.

Article 142 provides that “the Supreme Court in the exercise of its jurisdiction may pass such decree or make such order as is necessary for doing complete justice in any cause or matter pending before it...” Ordinarily, a student of law would not recognise this provision as a potent tool in the hands of the Supreme Court to bring about changes in significant policy issues to affect the public at large.

In the early years of the evolution of Article 142, the general public and the lawyers both lauded the Supreme Court for its efforts to bring complete justice to various deprived sections of society or to protect the environment.

One of the important instances of application by the Supreme Court of Article 142 was in the Union Carbide case — relating to the victims of the Bhopal gas tragedy — where the Court felt a need to deviate from existing law to bring relief to the thousands of persons affected by the gas leak. In this judgment, the Supreme Court, while awarding compensation of \$470 million to the victims, went to the extent of saying that to do complete justice, it could even override the laws made by Parliament by holding that, “prohibitions or limitations or provisions contained in ordinary laws cannot, ipso facto, act as prohibitions or limitations on the constitutional powers under Article 142.” By this statement the Supreme Court of India placed itself above the laws made by Parliament or the legislatures of the States.

Foraying into forbidden territory

Fortunately, this statement was toned down later in Supreme Court Bar Association v. Union of India. It was said therein that the said article could not be used to supplant the existing law, but only to supplement the law.

However, in recent years, one has come across several judgments of the Supreme Court wherein it has been foraying into areas which had long been forbidden to the judiciary by reason of the doctrine of ‘separation of powers’, which is part of the basic structure of the Constitution.

Unfortunately, these judgments have created an uncertainty about the discretion vested in the court to invoke Article 142 where even fundamental rights of individuals are being ignored. What we have found is that the court, in its anxiety to do justice in a particular case or matter, has failed to account for the far-reaching effects of its judgments, which may result in the deprivation of the rights of a multitude of individuals who are not before the court at that time. Here, I have in mind the following cases:

The coal block allocation case: Allocation of coal blocks granted from 1993 onwards was cancelled in 2014 without even a single finding that the grantees were guilty of any wrongdoing. The cancellation carried with it a penalty of ₹295 per tonne of coal already mined over the years. Article 142 had necessarily to be invoked. The individuals were not heard on their particular facts, but only their associations were heard. The result was devastating, so far as these lessees were concerned.

Referral to Constitution Bench

While one ponders over the possible solution to this conundrum, one cannot lose sight of the fact that today, we have a court of 31 judges who sit in thirteen divisions of two or three to deliberate on the seminal legal issues of the day. One would even be compelled to observe that India has thirteen Supreme Courts as each division represents, by itself, the Supreme Court of India, and each bench is independent of the other. I would therefore propose that all cases invoking Article 142 should be referred to a Constitution Bench of at least five judges so that this exercise of discretion may be the outcome of five independent judicial minds operating on matters having such far-reaching impact on the lives of people. I also propose that in all cases where the court invokes Article 142, the government must bring out a white paper to study the beneficial as well as the negative effects of the judgment after a period of six months or so from its date.

The time has come for the Supreme Court to introspect on whether the use of Article 142 as an independent source of power should be regulated by strict guidelines so that, in the words of Justice Benjamin Cardozo, the judge “is not a knight-errant roaming at will in pursuit of his own ideal...”

What is Goods and Service Tax (GST) and which are the commodities proposed to be kept outside the purview of GST?

It is a destination based tax on consumption of goods and services. It is proposed to be levied at all stages right from manufacture up to final consumption with credit of taxes paid at previous stages available as setoff. In a nutshell, only value addition will be taxed and burden of tax is to be borne by the final consumer. Alcohol for human consumption, Petroleum Products viz. petroleum crude, motor spirit (petrol), high speed diesel, natural gas and aviation turbine fuel & Electricity.

What are the Opposition's objections?

The Congress wants a provision capping the GST rate at 18 per cent to be added to the Bill itself.

It also wants to scrap the proposed 1 per cent additional levy (over and above the GST) for manufacturing states.

This levy was demanded by manufacturing states who argued that they needed to be compensated for the investment they had made in improving their manufacturing capabilities.

The Centre had agreed to this demand to encourage the states to support the GST Bill.

The third demand by the Congress was to change the composition of the GST council—the body that decides the various nitty-gritty's like rates of tax, period of levy of additional tax, principles of supply, special provisions to certain states, etc. The proposed composition is for the Council to be two-thirds comprised from states and one-third from the Centre. The Congress wants the Centre's share to be reduced to one-fourth. This demand, however, was rejected by even the Rajya Sabha Standing Committee.

Congress wants

a specified GST rate of 18 % should be capped in the Constitutional Amendment Bill, the 1% additional tax abolished GST Disputes Settlement Authority formed to settle state disputes.

AIADMK has opposed because of the following reasons

GST will impact on the fiscal autonomy of states and the huge permanent revenue loss .

GST Council as a constitutional body would impinge on the legislative sovereignty of Parliament and the State Legislatures and would jeopardise the autonomy of the states in fiscal matters.

GST council's decision making and voting right gives veto to Centre .

State wanted petroleum and petroleum products out of GST's ambit permanently. a broad consensus on important issues such as the compensation period and methodology, revenue-neutral rates, floor rates with bands, commodities to be excluded from GST and clarity on dual administrative control among others.

NASA names new space bacteria after APJ Abdul Kalam

A form of bacteria found only on the International Space Station has been named *Solibacillus kalamii*, after late Indian president Dr APJ Abdul Kalam, by National Aeronautics and Space Administration. The discovery was made by a team of researchers at the Jet Propulsion Laboratory – Nasa's lab for inter-planetary travel research.

Dr Kasthuri Venkateswaran, a senior research scientist at JPL, said while the genus is named *Solibacillus*, which is a spore-forming bacterium, naming the species after Kalam came "naturally" to him and his team. "Being a fellow Tamilian, I am aware of the huge contributions by Dr Kalam," he told PTI. Kalam, an aerospace scientist, had his training at Nasa in 1963 and went on to set up India's first rocket-launching facility in a village in Kerala.

The bacterium was found on a high-efficiency particulate arrestance (HEPA) filter that was on board ISS for 40 months, PTI reported. The HEPA filter is a part of the routine cleaning system on the ISS. One of Venkateswaran's major responsibilities is to ensure the spacecraft that fly to other planets are totally sterile before leaving earth.

Venkateswaran says the *Solibacillus kalamii* has not been found on earth yet, but it is not an extraterrestrial lifeform. "I am reasonably sure it has hitch hiked to the space station on board some cargo and then survived the hostile conditions of space," he said. Earlier this month, Venkateswaran published his discovery in the International Journal of systematic and Evolutionary Microbiology.

While the bacterium has not been characterised completely yet, Venkateswaran hopes it will be helpful in biotechnology applications. It could also be a source for chemicals that can help against radiation damage, he added.

Paytm gets RBI approval for payments bank

Paytm Payments Bank, which got the final approval from the Reserve Bank in January, hopes to start operations by the month-end, Paytm founder and chief executive Vijay Shekhar Sharma said on Friday.

“If the RBI blesses us, we will be able to have our bank by this month-end. Banking must be made available to everyone, the money that the customer puts in isn’t a liability but an asset,” Sharma said at the India Today Conclave.

Stating that banking in the present form is outdated, he said, “Versace suits will not change the banking model. Our payments bank will be built on a new model that will be focussed on bringing financial services to the hundreds of millions of unserved/under-served.”

Taking a swipe at the way banks have dealt with loans given to industrialists and especially in dealing with the big-ticket defaulters, Sharma said, “the present financial system penalises a sincere person, but if someone speaks the language of those in the corridors of power, he takes a loan of hundreds of crores and fails to pay it back, he will still manage to live in London or such locales.” Sharma expressed belief that with greater penetration of mobile Internet connectivity, his business will grow further.

Paytm currently has about 21.5 crore subscribers, Sharma said adding as against this SBI has 20.7 subscribers.

Paytm does about 20 crore transactions a month, while according to RBI data, all other e-wallets put together do 19 crore transactions.

“You can undermine a business but not a technology; it is a tsunami,” he said on online payments and smart phones. To further deepen this, we need better Internet network and telecom connections, he added.]

Environment Ministry and Ozonation, Organize First “Ozone2Climate” Technology Roadshow Post-Kigali Amendment

In a first, Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, along with the UN Environment OzonAction’s Compliance Assistance Programme, organized an “Ozone2Climate” Technology Roadshow, post Kigali Amendment to the Montreal Protocol, on the sidelines of the South Asia National Ozone Officers Annual Network Meeting – 2017 in Agra today. The Roadshow was inaugurated by the Secretary, Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Shri Ajay Narayan Jha. The Technology Roadshow was organized

for the first time as part of the annual network meeting for Ozone Officers of South Asia.

Speaking on the occasion, Shri Jha said, the “Ozone2Climate Technology Roadshow”, had 13 exhibitors that promoted ozone and climate-friendly alternative technologies to HCFCs and HFCs in the refrigeration and air-conditioning (RAC) sector. The Technology Roadshow showcased current refrigeration and air conditioning equipment designed to be more energy efficient, hence with a double benefit of saving money for consumers, and with a much lower impact on the environment. Over 200 refrigerant technicians, ozone officers, business representatives and government officials attended the Roadshow.

Head of the United Nations Environment’s OzonAction, Dr. Shamila Nair-Bedouelle, highlighted UNEP’s Compliance Assistance Programme (CAP) which provides significant support to Article 5 countries with meeting and sustaining their obligations under the Protocol. “The national ozone officers’ network meetings are a flagship of the CAP and offer a forum for exchange of experience and knowledge transfer among national ozone officers,” she said. Organising O2C Technology Roadshow, along with the network meeting represents an innovative approach by the South Asia network to bring the state-of-the-art technology to the policy makers, she said.

Along with the Technology Roadshow, UN Environment is also organising the annual network meeting for South Asia Ozone Officers from May 23 to 26, 2017. The meeting focused on current policy and technology updates on ozone and climate friendly alternatives to HCFCs and HFCs specifically post-Kigali amendment, linking the HCFC phase out to future HFC phase down, the implications of Kigali amendment for the network countries and challenges and opportunities from a policy and technology perspective.

Delegates from 20 countries and industry visited the 2017 exhibition and this was the first time the Ozone2Climate Technology Roadshow was organised as a part of the annual network meeting globally. The National Ozone Officers (NOOs) from 13 South Asia network countries visited the Technology Roadshow and gained information on state-of-the-art HCFC/HFC alternative technologies.

The Technology Roadshow was organized in association with Refrigeration and Air-Conditioning Manufacturers Association (RAMA), Indian Polyurethane Association (IPUA), Energy Efficiency Services Limited (EESL), GIZ and UNDP. Joint Secretary, MoEFCC, Shri Manoj Kumar Singh, Regional Director, UN Environment Asia Pacific Office, Dr. Dechen Tshering, Chief Officer, Multilateral Fund Secretariat, Mr. Eduardo Ganem, Executive Secretary, Ozone Secretariat, Ms. Tina Birmipili, Head of Branch, UN Environment

OzonAction, Dr. Shamila Nair-Bedouille, and Country Director, UNDP, India. Mr. Jaco Cilliers were among those present on the occasion.

The Technology Roadshow was attended by leading ozone and climate global technology providers and several industry representatives.

Dhola-Sadiya: A Bridge of New Hope for the North East

Road connectivity in the North-East will see a major transformation when Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi inaugurates the country's longest river bridge –the Dhola- Sadiya Bridge in Assam tomorrow. This new, three lane, 9.15 kilometre bridge has been built over river Lohit, a tributary of the Brahmaputra, linking Dhola to Sadiya in Assam . The bridge will fill a huge connectivity gap that has existed in the region. Till now, the only means to cross the Brahmaputra at this location has been by ferry only in day-time and even this is not possible during floods. The last bridge over the Brahmaputra was the Kalia Bhomora Bridge at Tejpur. This will however change from tomorrow with the Dhola-Sadiya bridge ensuring 24X7 connectivity between upper Assam and Eastern part of Arunachal Pradesh.

The bridge will also reduce the distance from Rupai on NH- 37 in Assam to Meka/ Roing on NH-52 in Arunachal Pradesh by 165 KM. The travel time between the two places will come down from the current six hours to just one hour – a total five hour reduction. This will result in saving of petrol and diesel worth Rs 10 Lakh per day.

The Dhola-Sadiya bridge promises to usher in prosperity in the North-East. It will provide efficient road connectivity to remote and backward areas which have poor road infrastructure. This bridge will also give a major boost to overall economic development of the areas north of Brahmaputra in upper Assam and Arunachal Pradesh. It will also cater to the strategic requirements of the country in the border areas of Arunachal Pradesh, besides facilitating numerous hydro power projects coming up in the state , as it is the most sought after route for various power project developers.

The total length of the Dhola-Sadiya Bridge project, including the approach roads on each side, is 28.50 km. The length of the bridge itself is 9.15 Km. It has been constructed on BOT Annuity basis at a total cost of Rs 2,056 crore, as part of the Arunachal Package of Roads and Highways under the Ministry's SPECIAL ACCELERATED ROAD DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME for NORTH EAST (SARDP-NE). The objective was to bring the people of Assam and Arunachal Pradesh closer to each other.

Doors close on 25-year-old FIPB

The Cabinet has approved a proposal to scrap the Foreign Investment Promotion Board (FIPB), with the Centre indicating that the 25-year-old institution has outlived its use.

The government will soon come out with a notification that will lay down which ministry or department is responsible for clearing proposals in the 11 sectors where approvals for FDI are not through the automatic route, Finance Minister Arun Jaitley said in a briefing following the Cabinet meeting on Wednesday.

“In the last three years, 91-95 per cent of FDI came into the country through the automatic route. The balance 5-9 per cent that needed approval are restricted to just 11 sectors and they will continue to need approval,” he added. The 11 sectors include defence, retail and telecom. In sectors where there are concerns related to security, FDI proposals will also need Home Ministry approval, Jaitley said.

In this year’s Budget, the Finance Minister had announced that the government had decided to do away with the FIPB and the details would be finalised shortly.

FDI proposals over ₹5,000 crore will continue to require final approval from the Cabinet.

“With FIPB getting abolished, it is expected that foreign investment proposals will be considered by the concerned ministry in consultation with the DIPP (Department of Industrial Policy & Promotion),” said Radhika Jain, Director, Grant Thornton Advisory.

“Towards this end, it is hoped that DIPP comes out with clear guidelines and operating procedures defining the parameters that should be considered for clearance of proposals.”

PM lays Foundation Stone for IARI at Gogamukh

The Prime Minister Narendra Modi has laid the Foundation Stone of the Indian Agricultural Research Institute at Gogamukh in Assam’s Dhemaji district located on the Assam-Arunachal Pradesh border.

This will be the third Indian Agricultural Research Institute (IARI). The setting up of a new institute is envisaged to help in the overall development of agriculture sector in North-East India. The institute will have facilities related

to farming, horticulture crops, animal husbandry and silk pest farming. Prime Minister also spoke of “Panch Tatva” for the overall development and to boost connectivity in the North-East India. The five ways are highways, railways, waterways, airways and I-ways or the optical fibre network.

Apart from IARI in the national capital, the work on setting up of second IARI in Ranchi, Jharkhand has commenced.

IARI

The Indian Agricultural Research Institute (IARI) commonly known as Pusa Institute is India's premier national Institute for agricultural research, education and extension. Situated in Delhi, it is financed and administered by the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR). The IARI was responsible for the research leading to the "Green Revolution in India" of the 1970s.

India and Mauritius

India and Mauritius have signed four agreements after delegation-level talks between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Prime Minister of Mauritius Pravind Kumar Jugnauth in New Delhi.

Prime Minister Pravind Jugnauth has chosen India as a destination of his first visit since taking over as prime minister of Mauritius early this year. India has extended a 500 million dollar line of credit to Mauritius.

The Line of Credit has been signed between SBM Mauritius Infrastructure Development Co. Ltd and Export-Import Bank of India. Further, both the countries have agreed that effective management of conventional and non-conventional threats in Indian Ocean is sine qua non for pursuing economic opportunities. India and Mauritius agreed to keep a vigil against piracy, humans and drugs trafficking as well as illegal fishing and other forms of illegal exploitation of marine resources. India had also appreciated Mauritius for signing and ratification of the framework agreement on International Solar Alliance. Both the countries have also agreed to cooperate hydrography for a secure and peaceful maritime domain. India is also supporting the National Coast Guard of Mauritius to augment its capacity through Project Trident. India will also renew the life of the Coast Guard Ship Guardian, which was given to Mauritius under an assistance programme.

Four Agreements

Agreement on Maritime Security

- Memorandum of understanding (MoU) for setting up of a civil services college in Mauritius.

- MoU was signed between the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) and Mauritius Oceanography Institute in marine sciences and tec.
- Submission of instrument of ratification of International Solar Alliance (ISA) by Mauritius.

India–Mauritius

Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Mauritius Prime Minister Anerood Jugnauth during the former's state visit, March 2015. Mauritius naval officers welcome Indian Navy personnel at Port Louis, Mauritius on 31 October 2014. Adm. Robin K. Dhowan inspecting a guard of honour in Mauritius, January 2015. India–Mauritius (or Indo-Mauritian relations) refers to the historical, political, economic, military, social and cultural connections between the Republic of India and the Republic of Mauritius. Connexions between India and Mauritius date back to 1730, diplomatic relations were established in 1948, before Mauritius became independent state. The cultural affinities and long historical ties between the two nations have contributed to strong and cordial relations between the two nations.

More than 68% of the Mauritian population are of Indian origin, most commonly known as Indo-Mauritians. India and Mauritius co-operate in combating piracy, which has emerged as a major threat in the Indian Ocean region and Mauritius supports India's stance against

Trade

Share of top five investing countries in FDI inflows for India. (Apr 2000 – Sept 2016)

Rank Country Inflows

(Million USD)	Inflows	(%)
1 Mauritius	101,759.68	32.81%
2 Singapore	50,559.91	16.30%
3 United Kingdom	24,072.30	7.76%
4 Japan	23,760.	47 7.66%
5 United States	19,380.43	6.25%

Foreign direct investment (FDI) in India has reached 2% of GDP, compared with 0.1% in 1990, and Indian investment in other countries rose sharply in 2006.

Economic and commercial corporation has been increasing over the years. India has become Mauritius' largest source of imports since 2007 and Mauritius imported US\$816 million worth of goods in the April 2010-March 2011 financial year. Mauritius has remained the largest source of FDI for India for more than a decade with FDI equity inflows totalling

US\$55.2 billion in the period April 2000 to April 2011.

"India and Fiji on Defense Cooperation - Agreement"

India and Fiji has signed an MoU on defence cooperation after the delegation level talks between Minister of Defence, Finance and Corporate Affairs, Arun Jaitley and the Minister of Defence and National Security of Fiji, Ratu Inoke Kubuabola in New Delhi. The MoU envisaged cooperation on defence industry, military training, humanitarian assistance & disaster management. In particular, Defence partnership as well as the maritime security and naval cooperation were identified as an area of promise. The MoU provides for stepping up of defence and security ties in defence production and military training.

Fiji

Fiji, which is officially known as Fiji Island Republic (Fiji: Matatinu-to-Waka-i-Koaya, Vitti), is an island country in Melanesia of the South Pacific Ocean. It is located about 2000 km northeast of New Zealand's northern island. Nearby neighboring countries include West to Vanuatu, Tonga in the east and Tuvalu in the south. During the 17th and 18th centuries, Dutch and English explorers discovered Fuzzy Fuzzy was in an English colony until the year 1970. Due to abundant forests, minerals and aquatic sources, Fiji is the most advanced country in the islands of the Pacific Ocean. Currently tourism and Chinese exports are the biggest source of foreign exchange. The currency here is Fiji Dollar

The largest island of Fiji formed from volcanic activity starting 15 million years ago, there are a total of 322 islands in this country's archipelago, out of which 106 are permanently settled. In addition to this, there are about 500 minor islands which together make up 18,300 square km area We do. There are two major islands of the archipelago, Veti levu and Vanuwa levu, which occupy approximately 850,000 inhabitants, 87% resides.

India - Fiji

India-Fiji Fiji is an archipelago with 332 islands located in the heart of the Pacific Ocean. The main ethnic groups in Fiji include Fiji, Indian, European and other Pacific Islanders. So far, about 37% of the total inhabitants of the country belong to Indian origin. In order to oversee the interests of the people of Indian origin, a Commissioner of India was represented from 1948. After Fiji's independence in 1970, the post of Commissioner was upgraded as High Commissioner. In the past few years, bilateral relations between India and Fiji have

grown rapidly. Several MoUs have been signed between the two countries in the field of Health, Tourism, IT, Defense and Security.

Fiji Tour of Modi Ji

Modi is ready to make a diplomatic reach to the Pacific community during Fiji travels. In the first summit with India, Prime Minister Modi is expected that he is very beautiful in all the 14 countries of the South Pacific Islands. And whose diverse cultures and lifestyle, and partners in the United States-related institutions, as well as participants of the Pacific Islands forums of this islands And we have a good understanding among them. In this meeting, problems of lack of diplomacy are being resolved and there is hope for achieving a state-of-the-art roadmap for improving India's relations with Pacific Islands, The attention of the neighboring country has also attracted.

India - Fiji's development partnership

In this background of shared interests and renewed hopes, extensive issues will be discussed with Prime Minister Modi's fuzzy counterpart and underline the commitment and commitment of India to the development and renaissance of this archipelago nation. In the dialogue, it will be noted that expanding development cooperation with Fiji and expanding participation in areas such as health, education and capacity building will be taken care of. Both countries have chosen as areas of future cooperation in key areas of information technology, tourism and solar energy.

India has to play a leading role in modernization of Chinese factories in Fiji and this island country was given a loan of \$ 50.4 million in July 2005. In addition to the Chinese industry, tourism is the mainstay of this country's economy, which will attract more tourists from around the world, "the place where happiness is invented" ("Where you find happiness.").

Indian and Fiji: Building Bridge

In this tour, a special emotional tune will be heard for the vibratory Indian - the Fijian community, which acts as a producer between the two countries. India's relations with Fiji began when in 1879 the British Government brought the nation to this island in the form of indentured labor for transplantation of sugarcane. From 1879 to 1916, 60,000 Indians were brought to Fiji. After compromising the name of Giriditi, they were called Girrimiti and now the number of these people of Indian origin is 37 percent of the 8,49,000 population (estimated 2009).

Indian - Fijian now has made penetration in every area of life in Fiji and he has enriched parents to be friendly to his versatile talents. Whether it is business, politics, culture, entertainment, Indian - the physicians have left their continued impression in every field. Mahendra Pal Chaudhary, after winning the 1999 election, achieved the special achievement of becoming Fiji's first Indian-Fijian Prime Minister. This community has been mixed with Fiji lifestyle, but it has maintained its important cultural and spiritual relations with the land its ancestors left decades ago.

Asian Development Bank (ADB) and Punjab National Bank (PNB) signed a \$ 100 million loan agreement for financing for solar roof projects

Asian Development Bank (ADB) and Punjab National Bank (PNB) signed a \$ 100 million loan agreement for financing for solar roof projects

Asian Development Bank (ADB) and Punjab National Bank (PNB) signed a \$ 100 million loan agreement yesterday, which will be guaranteed by the Government of India. Through this loan, huge solar roofing systems installed on industrial and commercial buildings across the country will be financed. PNB, in fact, will utilize the funds from ADB to provide loans to various developers and its ultimate users to install solar systems on roofs of various buildings.

This is the first installment of the \$ 500 million multi-financed fund facility approved by ADB in 2016 under solar roof investment program. This funding involves \$ 330 million from ADB's general capital resources and \$ 170 million received from the ADB-run multi-million dollar Clean Technology Fund (CTF). The first installment of \$ 100 million will be funded entirely with CTF.

Asian Development Bank (ADB)

The Asian Development Bank (ADB) is a regional development bank which was established on December 19, 1966 to facilitate the economic development of Asian countries. This bank incorporates members of the UN Economic Commission for Asia and Far East (now UNESCAP-UNESCAP) and non-regional developed countries. This bank was formed with 31 members, now ADB has 67 members, 48 are from Asia and Pacific and 19 members are outside. The format of ADB was largely built on the basis of the World Bank and similar to the World Bank (World Bank) here also there is a system of weighted vote system in which the distribution of votes is done on the basis of the members' capital contribution ratio. At

present, both the United States and Japan have 552,210 shares, both of which have the largest share of shares, which is 12.756 percent of the total.

Punjab National Bank (PNB)

Punjab National Bank is a major and old bank of India. It is a scheduled bank, Punjab National Bank (PNB) was registered on May 19, 1894 with its office in Lahore under the Indian Companies Act in Anarkali market. Punjab National Bank is India's second largest public commercial bank and there are about 4,500 branches in 764 cities in India. According to Banker Elmanax, this bank is ranked at 248th position in the world's largest banks. Punjab National Bank is a banking subsidiary in the UK, as well as branches in Hong Kong and Kabul and representative offices in Almaty, Shanghai and Dubai.

solar energy

Solar energy is the energy that is obtained directly from the Sun. Solar energy only changes the weather and the climate. Here is the support of all kinds of life (trees and animals) on the earth.

Although solar energy is used in a variety of ways, but the energy of turning the energy of the sun into electricity is mainly known as solar energy. The energy of the sun can be transformed into two types of energy. With the help of the first light-electric cell and the second by heating the liquid with the sun's heat, by running the electric generator.

Benefits of solar energy:

Solar energy does not pollute the air, the heat coming from the sun cleans the environment and maintains the Earth's balance of equilibrium, maintenance for solar panels is very low, except alternatively mechanical parts, almost no maintenance is not needed. Once installed, the cause of concern will not be much. The energy that has come out is free.

Loss of solar energy

There are many problems of solar energy too. Large scale investment has to be made on panels for generating electricity. Secondly, there is less sunlight in many places in the world, so the solar panels are not effective at all. Third, solar panels do not make much electricity during the rainy season.