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QUOTE OF THE MONTH

**"Empowering the Individual
means**

Empowering the Nation.

**Empowerment is
best served through
Rapid Economic Growth with
Rapid Social Change."**

~ Former Prime Minister
Atal Bihari Vajpayee

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ONE NATION SCHEMES

UPHOLDING INDIA'S UNITY, DURABLY

Recent events in Bangladesh, where foreign influences and internal chaos reduced a democratically elected government to utter chaos, ending in the horrific genocide of Hindus must serve as an early wake up call to Bharat. India must learn from this and prevent such foreign meddling in its affairs.

As Atal Bihari Vajpayee once eloquently said, "We should cherish the diversity that underpins this unity. But we must, under all circumstances and at any cost, keep our national unity and integrity intact." Indeed, has stood resilient against countless challenges to its unity. This unity is the bedrock of India's identity, and it is

this unity that the Modi government seeks to protect and strengthen.

In a country as diverse as ours, with hundreds of languages, myriad cultural practices, and multiple faiths, initiatives that promote uniformity and equity are essential to ensure Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas.

It is important to recognise that voices within and outside the country have sought to divide us, questioning the essence of our unity and striving to sow discord. Certain vested deep state interests have frequently indulged in narratives aimed at breaking India. At top Indian institutions, we have witnessed protests and slogans by the Tukde Gang that openly attacked the nation's integrity. Calls to sever the "chicken neck" of India, the narrow Siliguri Corridor that connects the northeastern states to the rest of the country have raised serious questions about intentions of these "Indians".

Historically, the southern states have also seen political narratives emerging from opposition parties hinting at a separatist agenda. This divisive narrative threatens the cultural and emotional bonds that hold India together. Globally, wealthy and influential figures have openly declared their intent to destabilize the Indian government. Even the Leader of Opposition's frequent appeals abroad for foreign intervention in India's domestic affairs only add fuel to this fire.

Against this backdrop, Prime Minister Narendra Modi's govt has been steadfast in its commitment to preserving the unity and harmony of the nation.



The government under Modi's leadership has implemented several "One Nation" policies aimed at unifying various systems across the country to enhance efficiency, transparency, and accessibility and are emblematic of the government's vision to bind the nation together, transcending barriers of geography, language, and economic disparity. Here are some key initiatives and their aims:

ONE NATION, ONE ELECTION

To synchronise State Assembly & Lok Sabha Elections and minimize the administrative and logistical challenges associated with conducting multiple elections. This initiative while still a work in progress is very much in line with other efforts.

ONE NATION, ONE TAX - GST (GOODS & SERVICES TAX)

To increase ease-of-doing-business by unifying the tax structure across India by replacing multiple indirect taxes with a single tax system.

ONE NATION, ONE MARKET - E-NAM (NATIONAL AGRICULTURE MARKET)

To create a unified national market for agricultural products, allowing farmers to sell their produce to buyers across the country.

REACH MORE MARKET

- ✓ Real time information on trade and price
- ✓ Extended access to markets across the state
- ✓ Information on quality of commodities

NOW DO TRADE FROM ANYWHERE
Mobile app launched in 12 languages for ease of business

eNAM Process Flow

- Farmer Registration
- Lot Declaration
- Product Registration
- Sampling
- Trading
- Investment & Investing
- Online Payment
- Quality based trading
- ePayments
- Gate Exit
- Post Trade
- Commodity Return
- Commodity

ONE NATION, ONE SUBSCRIPTION

To democratize access to research - are not merely administrative policies.

ONE NATION, ONE RATION CARD

To ensure that beneficiaries of the Public Distribution System (PDS) can access their food rations anywhere in India, not just their home state.



The One Nation schemes are thus a testament to the commitment to build a stronger, more cohesive India while creating more inclusive systems and driving vast economic efficiencies, while delivering public goods with a much smaller government. In doing so, the government not only strengthens the threads of our unity but also ensures that the fabric of our democracy remains intact for generations to come.

This issue of Economic Newsletter is a celebration of these transformative initiatives, a reaffirmation of the vision of a united India that thrives on its diversity.

PRASHANTH G. S.

Convener, Economic Cell - BJP Karnataka

ONE NATION, ONE ELECTION

DECOUPLING ELECTION FROM ADMINISTRATION



The “One Nation, One Election” initiative proposes synchronizing India's electoral cycles to hold concurrent elections for the Lok Sabha and State Legislative Assemblies. The idea of reverting to simultaneous elections has been advocated by various political leaders over the decades. But only Prime Minister Narendra Modi and the Bhartiya Janata Party (BJP) have finally taken up the initiative to propose a bill in the Parliament to implement the same - after nearly 60 years of continuous election cycles that hindered progressive administration in most states.

The Union Cabinet approved the 'One Nation, One Election' Bill, to hold simultaneous elections for the Lok Sabha and State Assemblies and it was introduced in the Parliament on 17th December 2024.

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

At the time of India's independence in 1947, elections for both the Lok Sabha and State Assemblies were conducted simultaneously. This practice continued until 1967 when certain State Assemblies were dissolved prematurely, leading to unsynchronized election cycles. Over time, the gap between national and state elections widened, resulting in a continuous cycle of elections across the country.

The “One Nation, One Election” initiative in India proposes synchronizing the electoral cycles of the Lok Sabha (House of the People) & State Legislative Assemblies to conduct simultaneous elections nationwide. This proposal is driven by several key considerations:

• REDUCTION IN ELECTION EXPENDITURE

Conducting separate elections leads to significant financial costs for the exchequer. For instance, the 2019 general elections were among the most expensive globally, with expenditures exceeding ₹ 60,000 crore. Simultaneous elections are expected to substantially reduce these costs by consolidating resources and minimizing repetitive expenses.

• MINIMIZATION OF GOVERNANCE DISRUPTIONS

Frequent elections necessitate the enforcement of the Model Code of Conduct (MCC), which restricts the government's ability to announce new schemes and policies. This can impede developmental activities and policy implementation. Holding elections simultaneously would limit the frequency of MCC enforcement, thereby reducing disruptions to governance.

• EFFICIENT UTILIZATION OF SECURITY & ADMINISTRATIVE RESOURCES

Elections require extensive deployment of security personnel and administrative staff to ensure their smooth conduct. Frequent elections strain these resources and divert them from their primary duties. Simultaneous elections would allow for more efficient allocation and utilization of these resources.

• ENHANCEMENT OF POLICY CONTINUITY & STABILITY

The perpetual election cycle often leads to short-term policy planning aimed at immediate electoral gains, potentially undermining long-term developmental goals. Simultaneous elections could encourage governments to focus on sustained policy initiatives, fostering greater continuity and stability.

• REDUCTION OF VOTER FATIGUE

The frequency of elections can lead to voter fatigue, potentially affecting voter turnout and engagement. By

consolidating elections, citizens would be called to vote less frequently, which could enhance voter participation and interest in the electoral process.

• STRENGTHENING OF FEDERAL STRUCTURE

While some critics argue that simultaneous elections might undermine federalism, proponents believe that it would promote co-operative federalism by aligning the electoral processes of the Centre and the States, fostering a more synchronized approach to governance. Implementing the "One Nation, One Election" proposal requires constitutional amendments and a broad political consensus.

The government has demonstrated its intent to engage in consultations and consider all legal aspects before proceeding with this transformative shift in India's electoral process.

THE HIGH LEVEL COMMITTEE ON SIMULTANEOUS ELECTIONS



The High-Level Committee on Simultaneous Elections, chaired by former President Ram Nath Kovind, was established to explore the feasibility of conducting concurrent elections for the Lok Sabha (House of the People) and State Legislative Assemblies in India. **The committee's report, submitted in March 2024, outlined several key recommendations:**

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

• PHASED IMPLEMENTATION

The committee proposed initiating simultaneous elections in a phased manner, beginning with synchronizing the election schedules of the Lok Sabha and select State Assemblies. This approach aims to gradually align electoral cycles across the nation.

• SINGLE ELECTORAL ROLL & VOTER ID

To streamline the voting process, the committee recommended the adoption of a unified electoral roll and a single voter identification system for all elections, enhancing efficiency and reducing duplication.

• ELECTION COMMISSION OVERSIGHT

The Election Commission of India should be entrusted with the responsibility of managing the logistics and execution of simultaneous elections, ensuring uniformity and adherence to established protocols.

• CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS

Implementing simultaneous elections necessitates amendments to the Constitution, particularly concerning the terms & dissolution procedures of legislatures. The committee emphasized the need for a comprehensive legal framework to support this initiative.

• CONSENSUS BUILDING

Recognizing the diverse political landscape of India, the committee underscored the importance of building a broad consensus among political parties, state governments, and other stakeholders to ensure the successful implementation of simultaneous elections.

• ECONOMIC IMPACT

The committee highlighted that the implementation of simultaneous elections could potentially boost India's GDP by 1 to 1.5%, attributing this to reduced election-related expenditures and minimized disruptions to governance.

CONSULTATION PROCESS

The committee engaged in extensive consultations with a wide range of stakeholders, including:

• POLITICAL PARTIES

Discussions were held with representatives from various national and regional political parties to understand their perspectives and concerns regarding simultaneous elections.

• CONSTITUTIONAL EXPERTS & ACADEMICIANS

The committee sought insights from legal scholars and experts in constitutional law to assess the legal feasibility and implications of the proposed electoral reforms.

• ELECTION COMMISSION OFFICIALS

Consultations with current and former officials of the Election Commission of India provided practical insights into the logistical and administrative aspects of conducting simultaneous elections.

• PUBLIC FEEDBACK

The committee also invited suggestions and opinions from the general public and civil society organizations to ensure that diverse viewpoints were considered in the deliberation process.



These consultations were instrumental in shaping the committee's recommendations, ensuring that the proposed framework for simultaneous elections is comprehensive, inclusive, and reflective of the aspirations and concerns of various segments of Indian society.

A committee chaired by former President Ram Nath Kovind was constituted to examine the feasibility of simultaneous elections. The committee's extensive report recommended holding state & general elections together and suggested that if a government loses an election, fresh polls would be held, but its tenure would last only until the next synchronized election.

KEY CONCEPTS IN THE BILL

The "One Nation, One Election" proposal encompasses several key components:

• SYNCHRONIZATION OF ELECTIONS

Aligning the election schedules of the Lok Sabha and State Assemblies to enable simultaneous voting.

• CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS

Implementing this proposal would require amendments to the Constitution, particularly Articles 83, 85, 172, 174, and 356, to adjust the terms and dissolution procedures of legislatures.

• INTERIM MEASURES

In cases where a government falls before completing its

term, provisions would be made to install an interim government until the next synchronized election.

• EXCLUSION OF LOCAL BODIES

The current focus is on simultaneous elections for the Lok Sabha and State Assemblies, excluding municipal elections to avoid complications requiring ratification by half of all state legislatures.

CONCLUSION

The "One Nation, One Election" presents a transformative shift in India's electoral process, aiming to enhance efficiency and reduce the frequency of elections. The success of this initiative would have far reaching impact on the nation's development, politics and public perception of governance.

With the nation set on a path of becoming "Viksit Bharat" by 2047, the successful implementation of "One Nation, One Election" will be a cornerstone of accomplishing that vision because more governance with less govt will be critical for more efficient delivery of services to the public and enabling more involvement from people in governance.

Therefore, it is in our own interest and in our future generation's interest that this scheme should get implemented uniformly, quickly and effectively across the country for everyone's benefit.

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GST: ONE NATION ONE TAX

LANDMARK REFORM IN INDIA'S TAX REGIME

The Goods & Services Tax (GST), implemented on July 1, 2017, is a landmark reform in India's tax regime. It transformed a fragmented tax system into a unified structure, embodying the principle of "One Nation, One Tax."

This visionary initiative has simplified compliance, boosted revenues, and fuelled economic growth, making it a cornerstone of India's journey toward becoming a \$5 trillion economy.

THE CORE OF 'ONE NATION, ONE TAX'

GST was introduced to replace a convoluted web of central and state taxes, including VAT, service tax, excise duty etc. By unifying these under a single framework, GST created a seamless market across India. The elimination of differential state taxes has reduced inter-state trade costs and fostered a more competitive economic environment.

REVENUE TRENDS & ECONOMIC IMPACT

Since its inception, GST collections have shown remarkable growth. Monthly collections surged from an average of ₹ 89,885 crores in 2017-18 to ₹ 1.85 lakh crores in 2024-25, reflecting an annual growth of approximately 12%. This growth underscores the success of GST as a robust revenue-generation mechanism.

Key factors driving this growth include:

TECHNOLOGICAL ADVANCEMENTS

Technological advancements have transformed GST into a modern, efficient, and transparent tax system. By streamlining processes, reducing fraud, and fostering compliance, technology has driven the significant growth in GST collections and strengthened India's fiscal framework. As digital tools continue to evolve, their role in enhancing GST's efficiency and effectiveness will only grow, ensuring sustained economic progress. Technology has played a pivotal role in the growth of GST through;

• INTRODUCTION OF E-WAY BILLS (2018)

The introduction of e-way bills revolutionized goods transportation by ensuring transparency since real time tracking of goods reduced tax evasion. Further-



more, mandated documentation for goods movement has curbed the instances of tax manipulation.

• INTRODUCTION OF E-INVOICING (2020)

E-invoicing which is mandatory for businesses with turnover above 5 crores has ensured improved Input tax credit (ITC) claims by ensuring accurate and authenticated invoices as a result of which discrepancies in ITC claims have been minimized.

• ENHANCED GSTN CAPABILITIES

The Goods and Services Tax Network (GSTN) serves as the digital backbone of GST operations. With its user-friendly interface and robust IT infrastructure, GSTN has enabled E-Filing of Returns wherein taxpayers can file returns online through a standardized process, reducing paperwork and human error. Furthermore, Integrated systems provide real-time data sharing between central and state tax authorities, ensuring transparency.

COMPLIANCE MECHANISMS

The compliance mechanism under GST has played a crucial role in the growth of GST over the years. While challenges were being faced by the Tax payers initially during GST implementation, the system now has been simplified to a major extent by making it user-friendly. The registration process is also simplified as the GST system has introduced a centralized online registration process, enabling businesses to obtain GSTIN with minimal administrative hurdle and the robust compliance mechanisms have brought about a unified market, reduced operational costs, and improved ease of doing business.



• UNIFIED NATIONAL MARKET

GST has eliminated the cascading tax effect, ensuring taxes are levied only on value addition. This reform has lowered overall costs and made Indian products globally competitive. Businesses now operate in a single market, enhancing trade efficiency and reducing logistical complexities.

• EASE OF DOING BUSINESS

GST's digital framework simplifies compliance, reducing paperwork and administrative burdens. Small and medium enterprises (SMEs) particularly benefit from these streamlined processes, enabling them to focus on growth.

• FORMALIZATION OF THE ECONOMY

Mandatory GST registration for businesses above specific thresholds has expanded the taxpayer base to over 1.5 crore entities by 2024. This formalization has increased government revenues and strengthened economic accountability.

• SUPPORT FOR MSMEs

The GST Composition Scheme allows businesses with turnover below ₹ 1.5 crore to pay tax at a flat rate, reducing compliance burdens and supporting small enterprises.

• BOOST TO EXPORTS

GST's zero-rating of exports and seamless ITC refunds have reduced costs for exporters, enhancing their global competitiveness. This has been pivotal in driving export growth under initiatives like "Make in India."

Enhanced tax collections have enabled the government to allocate resources more efficiently, thereby fostering economic growth.

POLICY ADJUSTMENTS

The GST Council, the apex decision-making body for Goods and Services Tax (GST) in India, has played a crucial role in refining the GST framework since its implementation in July 2017.

By addressing policy gaps and adapting to the needs of the dynamic economy, the council has ensured the system's robustness, fairness, and growth. The Council has periodically adjusted the tax rates to address industry concerns and ensure affordability for consumers.

PROMOTING CO-OPERATIVE FEDERALISM

The GST Council's inclusive structure ensures that decisions on tax rates and policies are made collaboratively. This co-operative approach has been instrumental in addressing challenges and optimizing the system's efficiency. The Council operates on a principle of shared decision making where every state's voice is heard.

The GST regime exemplifies co-operative federalism in action, reflecting a shared commitment between the Centre and states to modernize India's tax system. By fostering collaboration, addressing concerns, and promoting economic integration, co-operative federalism under GST has laid a strong foundation for India's unified and inclusive economic growth.

SECTORAL AND ECONOMIC GROWTH

Key sectors like e-commerce, automotive & consumer goods have significantly benefited from GST's unified tax structure. Additionally, initiatives promoting digitalization and formalization of informal sectors have driven higher compliance and collections.

Conclusion

The BJP-led NDA Govt's visionary implementation of GST has revolutionized India's tax system. By uniting the nation under a single tax regime, GST embodies the spirit of "One Nation, One Tax" and sets the stage for sustained economic growth.

As India continues to refine its GST framework, the reform remains a beacon of co-operative federalism and fiscal innovation, steering the country towards its economic aspirations.

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ONE NATION, ONE MARKET

UNIFIED NATIONAL MARKET FOR AGRI PRODUCE

The “One Nation, One Market” initiative is a comprehensive effort by the Indian govt to create a unified national market for agricultural produce. This ambitious project aims to integrate and streamline agricultural markets across the country, providing numerous benefits to farmers, traders, and consumers alike. Let's delve into the various aspects of this initiative, including its origins, implementation, and impact on the Indian Economy.

ORIGINS & CONCEPTUALIZATION

The concept of “One Nation, One Market” for agriculture emerged from the need to address the fragmentation of agricultural markets in India. Historically, agricultural marketing in India has been administered by individual states under their respective Agricultural Produce Marketing Committee (APMC) regulations. This system resulted in the division of states into multiple market areas, each governed by separate APMCs with their own marketing regulations and fees.

The fragmentation of markets within states hindered the free flow of agricultural commodities and led to multiple levels of handling and *mandi* charges. This system ultimately escalated prices for consumers without providing commensurate benefits to farmers. Recognizing these challenges, the NDA govt, led by PM Narendra Modi, conceptualized the “One Nation, One Market” initiative as part of a broader vision to unite India's markets, empower producers, and strengthen consumers.

KEY COMPONENTS & IMPLEMENTATION

The primary vehicle for implementing the One Nation One Market concept is the National Agriculture Market (e-NAM), an online trading platform for agricultural commodities. e-NAM was launched by PM Narendra Modi on April 14, 2016. The platform is completely funded by the Central Government and implemented by the Small Farmers Agribusiness Consortium (SFAC) under the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare.

FEATURES & WORKING MODEL

e-NAM provides a national e-market platform for transparent sale transactions and price discovery in regulated markets, kisan *mandis*, warehouses, and



OBJECTIVES OF E-NAM

- Integrate markets at the state level and eventually across the country through a common online platform
- Streamline and standardize marketing and transaction procedures across all markets
- Promote better marketing opportunities for farmers by providing online access to more buyers and markets
- Remove information asymmetry between farmers and traders
- Enable better and real-time price discovery based on actual supply and demand
- Ensure transparency in the auction process
- Establish quality assaying systems to promote informed bidding by buyers

private markets. Participating states are required to enact provisions for e-trading in their APMC Acts. The government provides free software and financial assistance of ₹ 75 lakh per *mandi* for hardware, quality assaying equipment, and infrastructure creation. The system allows for liberal licensing of traders and commission agents by state authorities without requiring physical presence in market yards. A single license for traders is valid across all markets in a state. The platform promotes the harmonization of quality standards for agricultural produce and provides assaying infrastructure in every market.

SCALE OF DEPLOYMENT & BENEFICIARIES

The One Nation One Market initiative, through e-NAM, has achieved significant scale and impact. As of December 2021, e-NAM had integrated 1,000 markets across 18 states and three Union Territories. More than 1.69 crore farmers and 1.55 lakh traders are registered

on the e-NAM platform. The platform recorded a total trade volume of 4.13 crore MT of bulk commodities and 3.68 crore numbers of coconut and bamboo, worth approximately ₹ 1.22 lakh crore in the last year. In Uttar Pradesh alone, 33.15 lakh farmers and 125 *mandis* were registered under e-NAM as of December 2021.

ECONOMIC IMPACT

The One Nation One Market initiative, particularly through e-NAM, has had a significant impact on the agricultural economy, such as:

• PRICE DISCOVERY & MARKET EFFICIENCY

The platform enables better price discovery based on real-time supply & demand, leading to more competitive pricing for agri produce. By removing information asymmetry between farmers & traders, the system promotes fair pricing, reduces exploitation of farmers.

• REDUCED TRANSACTION COSTS

The integration of markets and streamlining of procedures has led to a reduction in transaction costs for both farmers and traders. Single-point levy of market fees across states has further reduced the financial burden on market participants.

• INCREASED MARKET ACCESS

Farmers now have access to a wider pool of buyers across the country, potentially leading to better prices for their produce. Buyers can participate in trading at local level even if they are situated outside the *mandi* or state, increasing competition & market efficiency.

• TRANSPARENCY AND REDUCED CORRUPTION

The online platform has introduced greater transparency in the auction process, reducing scope for unfair practices & corruption. Real-time info on prices and arrivals in nearby *mandis* helps farmers make informed decisions about when and where to sell their produce.

• FINANCIAL INCLUSION

The system promotes quick payments to farmers, enabling them to build healthier financial profiles over time. This improved financial standing can potentially lead to better access to credit and other financial services for farmers.

CHALLENGES & FUTURE OUTLOOK

While the initiative has made significant strides, it still faces some challenges such as:

• INFRASTRUCTURE & DIGITAL LITERACY

Many rural areas still lack the necessary digital infrastructure and internet connectivity for seamless participation in e-NAM. There is a need for continued

efforts to improve digital literacy among farmers and small traders to fully leverage the platform.

• RESISTANCE FROM TRADITIONAL INTERMEDIARIES

Some traditional market intermediaries have resisted the shift to online trading, fearing loss of business or influence. Continued engagement and education of all stakeholders are necessary to overcome this resistance.

• QUALITY STANDARDIZATION

Ensuring uniform quality standards across diverse agricultural produce from different regions remains a challenge. Continued investment in quality assaying infrastructure and training is crucial.

• EXPANDING COVERAGE

While the initiative has made significant progress, there is still a need to integrate more markets and reach a larger number of farmers across the country.

FUTURE PROSPECTS

The One Nation One Market initiative, particularly through e-NAM, has laid a strong foundation for the transformation of agricultural marketing in India. **As the system continues to evolve and expand, it is expected to:**

1. **Further integrate with other government initiatives like the Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana (crop insurance scheme) and soil health card program to provide comprehensive support to farmers.**
2. **Incorporate advanced technologies like blockchain and artificial intelligence to enhance traceability, quality assurance, and market predictions.**
3. **Expand to include more commodities and value-added agricultural products, creating a truly comprehensive national agricultural marketplace.**
4. **Foster greater collaboration between states, potentially leading to more harmonized agricultural policies and practices across India.**

In conclusion, the One Nation One Market initiative represents a significant step towards modernizing and unifying India's agricultural markets. By leveraging technology to create a transparent, efficient, and inclusive marketplace, it has the potential to transform the lives of millions of farmers and reshape the agricultural economy of India. As the initiative continues to evolve and overcome challenges, its impact on rural prosperity and overall economic growth is likely to be substantial and far-reaching. ■

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ONE NATION ONE SUBSCRIPTION

DEMOCRATIZING KNOWLEDGE

In the era of Kali Yuga where information is power, equitable access to knowledge is more critical than ever. Recognizing the importance of democratizing knowledge, the Indian government has proposed an ambitious initiative titled "One Nation, One Subscription" (ONOS).

This step aims to provide universal access to a wide range of academic, research, and professional content for all citizens of India. Before we dive deep into this scheme, let us first understand the plight of Indian students and why more and more are going abroad for higher studies.

INDIAN STUDENTS ABROAD: RISING BRAIN DRAIN

As of 2024, a staggering 13,35,878 Indian students are pursuing higher studies abroad. This figure has steadily increased from 13,18,955 in 2023 and 9,07,404 in 2022. Among these students, Canada hosts 4,27,000, followed by 3,37,630 in the United States, 8,580 in China, 900 in Israel, and 2,510 in Ukraine. Surprisingly, even countries like Pakistan are hosting 14 Indian students in small numbers. Indian students are spread across 108 countries, in total. This concerning trend of migration shows the immense outflow of talent and resources from India to other nations.

In contrast, the number of foreign students coming to India for higher studies is significantly lower. Bureau of Immigration (BoI) statistics show that only 40,431 foreign students enrolled in Indian institutions in 2023, compared to 7.65 lakh Indian students who went abroad the same year. The figures for 2022 are equally stark: 31,910 foreign students in India versus 7.50 lakh Indian students abroad. This growing mismatch underscores the challenges India faces in retaining talent and attracting international students.

GRIM PROJECTIONS FOR THE FUTURE

Globally, tertiary education enrollment is on the rise, with India and China accounting for nearly 33% of the international student population in 2023. The number of students studying abroad is projected to increase from six million in 2019 to over nine million by 2030, according to data from Navitas Australia. India's contribution to this growth is expected to be substantial, with Indian students projected to spend \$70 billion

on international education by 2025. This expenditure highlights the growing preference for global qualifications among Indian students.

ECONOMIC IMPLICATIONS

Indian students are major contributors to the economies of host countries. For instance, in the 2023-24 academic year, India emerged as the largest source of international students in the United States for the first time in 15 years. Indian students contributed approximately \$11.8 billion to the U.S. economy in 2023 through tuition fees and living expenses. Similarly, the UK has seen Indian students surpassing China as the top source of non-European Union students, contributing billions of dollars to its economy. In the UK alone, Indian students spent an estimated \$5.9 billion, with expenditures breaking down into \$3.4 billion on tuition and fees, \$1.3 billion on housing, and \$1.2 billion on other living expenses. While host countries benefit economically, India experiences a significant loss in talent and resources.

THE GOVERNMENT'S RESPONSE

Recognizing these challenges, the Indian government has undertaken various initiatives to enhance the quality of higher education and research in the country:

• ENHANCING RESEARCH INFRASTRUCTURE

Programs like the Higher Education Financing Agency (HEFA) and the Scheme for Transformational and Advanced Research in Sciences (STARS) aim to bolster research capabilities.

• INSTITUTES OF EMINENCE (IOE)

Selected institutions are granted autonomy and additional funding to compete globally.

• PRIME MINISTER'S RESEARCH FELLOWSHIP

Provides lucrative scholarships to retain talent within the country.

• NATIONAL EDUCATION POLICY (NEP) 2020

Focuses on multidisciplinary education, research promotion, and fostering innovation.

To increase seats & opportunities as per the population requirement, Modi govt has established numerous



higher education institutions, including 7 IITs, 16 IIITs, 7 IIMs, 15 AIIMS, and 390 universities since 2014.

ESTABLISHING ANUSANDHAN NATIONAL RESEARCH FOUNDATION

Shri Narendra Modi had highlighted the critical role of Research and Development in shaping India's future during the Amrit Kaal in his address to the nation from the Red Fort on 15th Aug 2022. He issued a powerful call to action with the slogan "Jai Anusandhan."

To further this vision, the Government of India established the Anusandhan National Research Foundation last year, marking a significant milestone in promoting research & innovation. The Anusandhan National Research Foundation (ANRF) plans to mobilize ₹ 50,000 crore during 2023-28 through funds like the ANRF Fund, Innovation Fund, and Science and Engineering Research Fund. Of this, ₹ 14,000 crore is allocated by the Central Government, with the remainder to be sourced from public and private sector donations, philanthropists, and international bodies. R&D programs launched as part of these efforts include:

- Prime Minister Early Career Research Grant (PMECRG)
- Mission for Advancement in High-Impact Areas - Electric Vehicle (MAHA-EV)
- Inclusivity Research Grant (IRG)
- Partnerships for Accelerated Innovation and Research (PAIR)

ONE NATION, ONE SUBSCRIPTION

The One Nation, One Subscription scheme is one such effort to address the gap in access to high-quality academic resources.

THE WHAT

The One Nation One Subscription (ONOS) scheme is an initiative by the Indian govt to provide nationwide access to over 13,400 international scholarly journals across disciplines, including science, technology, engineering, medicine, management, social sciences, and humanities. The program aims to democratize access to research, fostering innovation, interdisciplinary collaboration & academic growth across the country.

THE WHEN

ONOS will officially launch on January 1, 2025, and will provide access to research journals for a 3-year period from 2025 to 2027. The program will expand to include private institutions and public libraries in subsequent phases.

The WHY

The initiative aims to:

- Provide universal access to scientific knowledge and research publications.
- Eliminate disparities in resource access between institutions and regions.
- Encourage collaborative and innovative research.

The scheme addresses critical issues in Indian academia, such as the lack of affordable access to high-quality research journals, particularly in tier 2 and tier 3 cities. By providing equitable access to international scholarly content, ONOS seeks to strengthen the country's research ecosystem, promote core and interdisciplinary research, and reduce the digital divide.

WHO DOES IT BENEFIT

ONOS will directly benefit nearly 1.8 crore students,



faculty, and researchers from state-funded higher education institutions, including universities, IITs, and R&D labs. The program is particularly transformative for institutions in remote regions, where access to such resources was previously limited. Initially, ONOS will benefit over 6,380 institutions, including 451 state public universities, 4,864 colleges, and 172 institutes of national importance.

In later phases, access will be extended to private institutions and public libraries *via* a public-private partnership model. Future phases will extend its impact to private academic institutions and the general public through public libraries.

• HOW IS THE PROCESS

ONOS will be managed through a centralized digital portal, allowing eligible institutions to access journals seamlessly. The Information and Library Network (INFLIBNET), an autonomous inter-university center under the UGC, will coordinate the scheme. A unified portal will serve as the gateway for resource access, with ANRF periodically reviewing its usage and contributions by Indian researchers.

• HOW MUCH

The Indian government has allocated ₹ 6,000 crore for ONOS over 3 years (2025-2027). This funding will cover national licenses with major international publishers like Elsevier, Springer Nature, and Wiley, ensuring access to their journals.

• WHAT PROBLEM HAS BEEN SOLVED?

India's investment in the One Nation One Subscription (ONOS) initiative stems from the pressing need to

address critical challenges within the global scholarly publishing ecosystem.

The traditional subscription-based model, where journals charge institutions and individuals to access research articles, has long been criticized for its inefficiencies, exorbitant fees, and restrictive access. At the same time, while the Open Access (OA) model aims to make research freely available, its prevalent form - gold OA - poses significant financial barriers through high article processing charges (APCs). For example, journals like Nature Communications demand up to \$ 6,790 per paper, making it prohibitively expensive for many researchers, especially from developing nations like India.

Scientific knowledge, as a public good, must be accessible to all, especially when it is often generated through taxpayer-funded research. However, the current system disproportionately benefits a small group of commercial publishers, predominantly based in Western countries, who profit extensively while limiting access to vital research.

With profit margins exceeding 30%, these publishers exploit publicly funded research by charging institutions to access knowledge they have already supported.

India's ONOS initiative is a response to these systemic issues. By investing in a centralized subscription model, India aims to democratize access to high-quality research.

While the global push for OA publishing continues, India's strategy ensures that its academic community can access critical resources immediately without the prohibitive costs associated with APCs or subscription fees.

This approach not only addresses the inequalities in the current publishing model but also strengthens the country's research ecosystem by enabling wider participation and collaboration.

CONCLUSION

Several other countries, such as Norway, Finland, and Germany, have implemented similar approaches to provide their academic and research communities with wide access to scholarly journals through national licensing agreements with publishers. However, India's ONOS is unique in its scale and ambition, as it seeks to provide access to over 13,400 journals for nearly 1.8 crore students, researchers, and faculty members across thousands of institutions, including those in tier-2 and tier-3 cities.

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ONE NATION, ONE RATION CARD

EMPOWERING WORKERS WITH NATIONAL MOBILITY

The One Nation One Ration Card (ONORC) is a groundbreaking scheme implemented by the NDA government led by Pradhan Mantri Shri Narendra Modi to ensure the food security and enhance the public distribution system across the country. Launched in 2019, this initiative aims to provide nationwide portability of ration cards, allowing ration card holders from anywhere to access their food grain entitlements from any Fair Price Shop (FPS) across India.

By December 2023, the scheme had been successfully implemented in all 36 States/UTs with approximately 81 crore beneficiaries being covered under the scheme. To illustrate the portability, we can take the example from one state like Maharashtra, where from January 2020 to December 2023, 64,854 ration card holders in Maharashtra received food grains from other states, while 521,696 ration card holders from other states accessed their entitlements in Maharashtra.

ORIGINS & CONCEPTUALIZATION

The One Nation One Ration Card (ONORC) scheme was originated and implemented by the Government of India, specifically the Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food & Public Distribution. The scheme was launched in August 2019 as a pilot project in 4 states.

The NDA government led by Shri Narendra Modi was inspired to launch the One Nation One Ration Card scheme due to several key factors:

• MIGRANT WORKERS' NEEDS

The scheme was primarily designed to benefit migrant households and workers. It aimed to ensure that migrant labourers could access their food security entitlements from anywhere in the country, regardless of their place of origin.

• COVID-19 PANDEMIC IMPACT

The Covid-19 outbreak and subsequent lockdowns in India highlighted the vulnerabilities of migrant workers. This crisis underscored the urgent need for a portable food security system, to expedite the ONORC rollout.

• REFORMING PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION SYSTEM

The scheme was part of broader efforts to reform



India's Public Distribution System (PDS), which has historically faced issues of inefficiency and leakages.

• ENSURING FOOD SECURITY

ONORC aims to revolutionize India's public distribution system, which currently provides food security to approximately 237 million low-income households across the country.

• TECHNOLOGY-DRIVEN REFORM

The scheme aligns with the government's push for technology-driven system reforms under the Atma Nirbhar Bharat Abhiyan.

• UNIVERSAL ACCESS TO PDS

The government sought to provide universal access to PDS food grains for migrant workers across the country.

• ELIMINATING HUNGER

ONORC contributes to the broader goal of eliminating hunger in India by 2030, addressing India's poor ranking (102 out of 117) in the Global Hunger Index.

TECHNOLOGY DRIVEN REFORMS

By implementing One Nation, One Ration Card, the NDA government created a more flexible, accessible, and efficient food security system that could adapt to the mobile nature of India's workforce while leveraging technology to reduce the fraud and improve



service delivery. The technology for ONORC was developed through a collaborative effort involving multiple government agencies:

- **The Integrated Management of Public Distribution System (IM-PDS) portal** provides the technological platform for ration card portability
- **The Annavitran portal** hosts data on food grain distribution through electronic Point of Sale (ePoS) devices within states
- The scheme utilizes **Aadhaar-based biometric authentication** and seeding of ration cards with Aadhaar numbers to enable nationwide portability
- **The government launched a mobile app called "Mera Ration"** to provide real-time information and assist beneficiaries in accessing their entitlements
- The implementation involves **setting up ePoS devices at Fair Price Shops across the country**, equipped with biometric authentication systems
- **A central database was established by the central government**, along with state governments and relevant agencies, to contain beneficiary information and enable information exchange across states and union territories

KEY FEATURES OF THE SCHEME

• NATIONAL PORTABILITY

ONORC enables migrant workers and their families to buy subsidized food grains from any FPS across India, regardless of their place of origin.

• AADHAAR INTEGRATION

The scheme uses Aadhaar seeding to nationalize ration cards, ensuring beneficiaries can access their entitlements through biometric authentication

• TECHNOLOGY-DRIVEN

Implementation involves electronic Point of Sale (ePoS) devices at FPS for biometric verification and a centralized database for seamless information exchange

• UNIVERSAL RATION CARD

Existing ration cards are transformed into universal cards under the National Food Security Act (NFSA)

BENEFITS OF THE ONORC

The One Nation, One Ration Card scheme provides easy access to subsidized food grains for migrants, ensuring food security regardless of the original location where the card was issued and the location where the benefit is being availed. It maintains a uniform ration quality and quantity across all states. It allows beneficiaries to switch to alternative FPS in case of issues.

ONORC is particularly beneficial for women and vulnerable groups by reducing discrimination in accessing entitlements. **ONORC contributes to the NDA govt's goal of eliminating hunger by 2030 in India.**

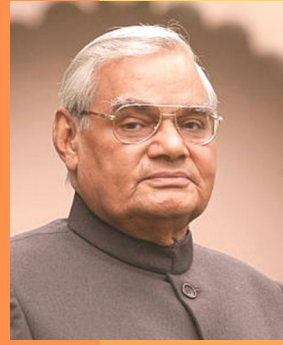
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INFOGRAPHICS

25-DEC-2024

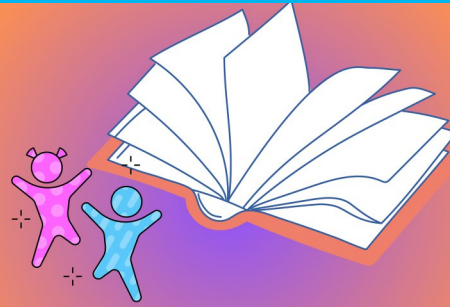
BIRTH CENTENARY OF SRI ATAL BIHARI VAJPAYEE



Atal Bihari Vajpayee ji's leadership, and his efforts in shaping the country's development and policies laid a strong foundation for the Vikasit Bharat.

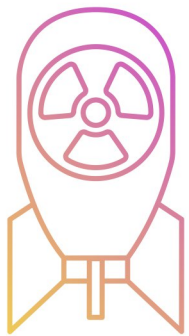
REMEMBERING ATAL JI'S 10 MAJOR CONTRIBUTIONS TO OUR NATION!

ROADS FOR PROGRESS GOLDEN QUADRILATERAL



EDUCATION FOR ALL SARVA SHIKSHA ABHIYAN

ROADS FOR EVERYONE PM GRAM SADAK YOJANA



ESTABLISHED INDIAN DOMINANCE IN WORLD AS A PEACEFUL BUT NUCLEAR POWER **POKHRAN-II TESTS**

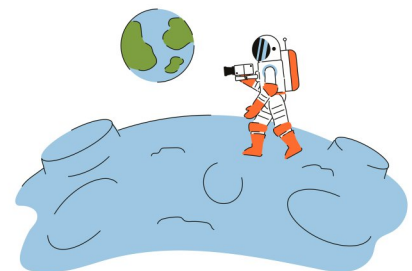


BRINGING PEOPLE TOGETHER BY LIBERALIZING TELECOM SECTOR TO ENCOURAGE FDI and PRIVATE INVESTMENTS **NEW TELECOM POLICY 1999**

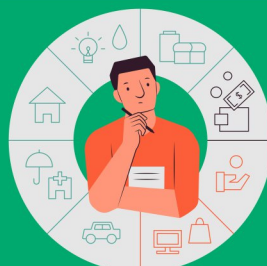


FAVOURABLE POLICIES FOR INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY SECTOR GROWTH WITH INVESTMENTS IN EDUCATION, RESEARCH & DEVELOPMENT **TECHNOLOGY GROWTH**

SKY IS NOT THE LIMIT, REACH FOR THE STARS AND THE MOON **CHANDRAYAAN - I**



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