

VIKSIT BHARAT

In the coming 25 years, India will be counted in the category of developed nation by 2047. Because the country is continuously growing. This Corona epidemic has definitely pushed the country's economy and country back by a few years, but efforts are being made by the country's economists and the country's government to bring it back to its normal level. The most important thing is that our India in 2047 will be as we make it today. So why don't all of us countrymen see our country at a different stage after completion of 100 years of independence.

In 2047, fights on the level of gender equality and religion will reduce in India. All people are going to live in India on the principle of Vasudev Kutumbakam. Poverty, unemployment, corruption, malnutrition and various social evils will end in India by 2047. India will be able to become a developed nation only when every citizen of the country eats up and the evil spread in the society will be eradicated because society is formed from people, villages from society, districts from villages, states from districts and countries from states. In this way, then first of all we have to make the people and society of India understand the spirit of complete nation building.

Global road safety and India's challenge

■ SHIVANSHU K. SRIVASTAVA

In the ever-evolving landscape of road safety, the recently released World Health Organization (WHO) Global Status Report on Road Safety 2023 serves as both a beacon of progress and a stark reminder of persistent challenges. While the overall global trend indicates a promising 5% decrease in annual road traffic fatalities from 2010 to 2021, India emerges as a disconcerting outlier, experiencing a troubling 15% increase in road traffic deaths during the same period.

The WHO report presents a comprehensive examination of the state of road safety worldwide, revealing that India has witnessed a rise in road traffic fatalities from 1.34 lakh (134,000) in 2010 to 1.54 lakh (154,000) in 2021. This concerning surge stands in sharp contrast to the positive trajectory reported by 108 UN member nations, which collectively demonstrated a decrease in road traffic deaths. The dissonance in these trends prompts an urgent need for introspection and targeted interventions to address the multifaceted challenges that contribute to the perilous nature of Indian roads.

India's road safety challenges are complex and multifactorial, rooted in a combination of rapid urbanization, a surge in vehicular density, inadequate infrastructure, and lax enforcement of traffic regulations. As cities expand and more vehicles take to the roads, the infrastructure struggles to keep pace, resulting in congestion, compromised safety, and an increased risk of accidents. The need for a holistic approach that encompasses infrastructure development, public awareness campaigns, and stringent law enforcement becomes evident in addressing this critical issue.

The surge in road traffic fatalities in India is not just a statistical anomaly but a reflection of the intricate interplay of factors contributing to the nation's road safety challenges. Urban planning that prioritizes pedestrian safety, well-designed roads, and efficient traffic management systems are essential components of the solution. Equally critical is the need for robust law enforcement to ensure compliance with traffic regulations, deterring reckless driving, and holding violators accountable.

The WHO report, however, goes beyond the borders of any single nation, spotlighting a broader global issue. It underscores a disturbing reality - the risk of death on the roads is three times higher in low-income countries compared to high-income counterparts, despite low-income countries accounting for only 1% of the world's motor vehicles. Shockingly, nine out of 10 road traffic deaths globally occur in low- and middle-income countries, highlighting the urgent need for targeted interventions to address the disparities in road safety.

Low-income countries face unique challenges that contribute to the elevated risk of road traffic fatalities. Insufficient investment in road infrastructure, limited emergency medical services, and a lack of awareness regarding safe road usage are among the key contributors. Bridging the gap in road safety standards between high- and low-income countries requires concerted efforts in the form of financial investment, educational initiatives, and robust regulatory frameworks.

Improving road safety is not merely a matter of reducing fatalities; it is an integral aspect of achieving broader sustainable development goals. As the global community strives towards creating safer and more inclusive societies, road safety must occupy a central place in policy discussions. This involves not only addressing immediate challenges but also fostering a culture of responsible driving, improving emergency response capabilities, and implementing sustainable urban planning practices.

In low-income countries, the disparities in road safety outcomes are often exacerbated by limited resources and competing priorities. Insufficient investment in road infrastructure, coupled with a lack of proper maintenance, creates hazardous conditions for road users. In emergencies, inadequate emergency medical services contribute to delayed responses and increased fatality rates. Addressing these issues requires not only financial investment but also a concerted effort to educate the public on road safety practices and enforce regulations that prioritize the well-being of road users.

The WHO report serves as a wake-up call, prompting a reevaluation of priorities and a redoubling of efforts to address the root causes of road traffic fatalities in India. Policymakers, law enforcement agencies, and the public must come together to identify specific strategies for improving road safety. This may include investing in infrastructure upgrades, increasing law enforcement presence, and launching public awareness campaigns to instill a sense of responsibility among road users.

The global decrease in road traffic deaths is indeed encouraging, but the concerning rise in fatalities in India underscores the need for immediate and focused action. The WHO report emphasizes that road safety is not a luxury but a necessity, particularly in low-income countries where the burden of fatalities is disproportionately high. It is a call to action for the international community to recognize the importance of road safety as an integral part of sustainable development, ensuring that roads become safer for everyone, regardless of their location or economic status.

In conclusion, the intersection of global road safety trends and India's specific challenges calls for a nuanced and comprehensive approach. The WHO report provides a roadmap for addressing the disparities in road safety outcomes, urging governments, organizations, and individuals to prioritize and invest in measures that can save lives. As the world navigates the complex crossroads of urbanization, technology, and societal needs, ensuring the safety of road users must be a shared responsibility, transcending borders and economic divides.

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Modi's Viksit Bharat Campaign @2047

■ OMKAR DATTATRAY

Prime minister Narendra Modi launched with great fanfare and enthusiasm much publicized Viskit Bharat Campaign @ 2047.The PM urges the youth of the nation to share their ideas to make India a developed nation by 2047 ,saying that this is the time when the nation can make exponential growth in its development journey .The Prime minister Modi launched viksit Bharat @ 2047 voice of youth via video conferencing .During the program ,he addressed the Vice Chancellors of Universities ,Heads of institutes ,and faculty members in workshops organized at Raj Bhawans across the country to mark the beginning of this initiative .The prime minister began his address by extending a huge thank you to all Governors for organizing today's workshop for the development of Viksit Bharat and said that today is a special occasion regarding this resolution .Modi lauded their contribution of bringing together all the stakeholders who hold the responsibility of guiding the youth of the nation in accomplishing the goal of Viksit Bharat 2047.PM Modi highlighted the role of educational institutions in the personality development of an individual and said that a nation becomes developed only with the development of its people .Underlining the importance of personality development in present era ,the PM extended his wishes for the success of the voice of youth workshop .The prime minister said that in the life of any nation ,history provides a time period when the nation can make exponential strides in its development journey .For ,India ,"This Amrit Kaal is ongoing" and this is the period in the history of India when the country is going to take a quantum jump and leap .He gave examples of many nearby countries that took such a quantum jump in a set timeframe and turned into developed nations ."For India ,this is that the time ,right time,(Yahi Samay hai,Sahi Samay hai.' he said ,adding that each and every moment of this Amrit Kaal should be utilized .The prime minister reiterated the glorious struggle for freedom as a source of motivation .He said each endeavor such as Satyagraha ,revolutionary path ,non-cooperation movement ,Swadashi and social and educational reforms during that time were geared towards freedom .The period saw Universities like Kashi ,Lucknow ,Vishwa Bharti ,Gujarat Vidyapeeth ,Nagpur university ,Annamalai ,Andhra and university of



Kerala strengthen the consciousness of the nation .An entire generation of youth dedicated to the freedom of the nation came into being whose every effort was directed towards the goal of independence ."Today every institution and every individual should move forward with a resolution that every effort and act will be for Viksit Bharat .The aim of your goals ,your resolutions should only be one-Developed India ."The PM emphasized that teachers and universities ponder about finding ways to make a developed country at a faster pace and also identify specific sectors for improvement towards becoming a developed nation.PM Modi underlined the need to channel the energy of the students and youth of every university towards achieving the common goal of "Viksit Bharat." Noting the diversity of ideas ,the PM stressed linking all the streams towards building a developed India .Modi urged everyone to go beyond their limits to contribute to the vision of Viksit Bharat @2047.He suggested running special campaigns in every college and university in the country to connect more and more youth with this campaign .The PM mentioned the launch of ideas portal related to Viksit Bharat and informed that suggestions can be given on 5 different themes ."A prize has also been arranged for the best 10 suggestions .You can also give your suggestions on MyGov he added "idea starts with I just as India starts with an I "the prime minister remarked as he underlined that the idea of development can only begin with the 'I' of self .Elaborating on the exercise of seeking suggestions ,the prime minister emphasized the need to create an Amrit generation which keeps the national interest paramount

.He stressed the need to go beyond education and skills and called for alertness for the national interest and civic sense among citizens, "When citizens ,in whatever role ,start doing their duty ,the country moves forward ."the PM said .He gave examples of the preservation of natural resources through water conservation ,saving electricity ,using fewer chemicals in framing and using public transport .He asked the educationist fraternity to suggest ways of giving new energy to Swachhita Abhiyan ,combating lifestyle issues and exploration of the world beyond mobile phones by the youth .He asked them to be role models for the students .He said that social thinking is reflected in the governance too and asked the gathering to see that degree holders should have at least one vocational skill ."You should carry forward a comprehensive process of brainstorming on these topics at every cap ,every institution and at the state level ."he said .Drawing the analogy of the period of development of Viksit Bharat to that of an examination ,the PM mentioned the confidence ,preparation ,and dedication of students as well as the contributions of the families in maintaining the required discipline to accomplish the goal .He remarked that the exam date has also been declared for us as the citizens of the country ."We have 25 years of Amrit Kaal in front of us .We have to work 24 hours a day for the goal of Viksit Bharat .This is the environment we have to create as a family the PM emphasized .Noting that the rapidly increasing population of the country is empowered youth ,Modi informed that India is going to be the leader in terms of the working -age population for the coming 25-30 years and the

world recognizes this ."Youth power is both the agent of change and also the beneficiaries of change ."He stressed that next 25 years are going to be decisive for the careers of the youth in colleges and universities of today .Noting that it is the youth who are going to create new families and a new society in the future ,the PM said that it is they who have the right to decide how a developed India should be. With this spirit,the PM added ,the government wants to connect every youth of the country with the action plan of a developed India .The PM stressed moulding the voice of the country's youth into the policy strategy for building a developed India and highlighted the role of educational institutions that maintain maximum contact with the youth .Concluding the address ,PM underlined that the roadmap of progress will not be decided by the government alone but by the nation ."Every citizen of the country will be input and active participation in it ."Modi pointed out that even the biggest resolutions can be accomplished by the mantra of Sabka Prayas that is public participation .He said Viksit Bharat has to be built only through Sabka Prayas .He said this is a great campaign to write the future of the country .He urged youth to turn in their suggestions to further enhance the grandeur of Viksit Bharat .In short Viksit Bharat @ 2047 requires the participation of the country's youth and the PM Modi solicited the participation ,suggestions ,ideas and action of the youth for making the nation developed by 2047.

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Strategies for Empowerment of Women through Extension and Advisory Services

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India is predominantly an agrarian economy. Women are the backbone for the rural development and they are considered as the vital part of the Indian economy. Women farmers contribute enormously to the Indian agriculture and allied sectors such as livestock production, post-harvest operations, horticulture, fishery, forestry, sericulture etc. This has been proved by various studies. Women farmers work hard to grow and process the food. In order to reduce the rural poverty and achieve the food and nutritional security, there is dire need to promote the gender equality and empower the rural women. The women farmers play the key role in achieving the sufficient food grain production. If women are empowered with the same opportunity as men have, then food security can significantly improve. It is a complex problem but with the comprehensive approach, it can be achieved. In agricultural sector diverse opportunities can be created to empower them. They have less access of land and machinery. They are heavily involved in the domestic activities which are hidden economically. Empowering women is key to food security. They can be empowered through extension and advisory services. Empowering women by strengthening a range of assets is critical for enhancing their welfare and improving the status of future generations. There is need to enhance the land rights of women. Women comprise the largest percentage of the workforce in the agricultural sector but they do not have control over all the land and productive resources.

Women constitute the 43 per cent of the world's agricultural labour force which increases to about 70-80 per cent in some countries like India. Women are the major producers of food in India. Around 70 per cent of the agricultural work is performed by the women. Agricultural extension is one such effort taken by the government and non-government organisations that aims at reaching to farmers.

The efforts include bringing about a positive change in knowledge, attitude and skills of the farmers by providing training and technical advice and also assisting them in taking decisions in adoption of new research results. Importantly, the clientele of such programmes and efforts is inclusive of both farmers and farm women.

Managers of these programmes often consider men as farmers and women as farmer's wife thereby systematically marginalizing and underestimating women's productive role in agriculture. The agricultural extension service in India mainly focuses on male farmers and it has failed to tackle the great

structural problem of invisibility of female farmers. Women farmers are bypassed by male extension workers. It would be correct to state that women farmers in India have failed to get their due share in extension services apropos their contribution to the Indian agriculture. Extension services in India need to be refined, modified and redesigned so as to reach farm women effectively. The purpose of agricultural extension services can be achieved for sustainable rural development only if sincere attempts are made to provide and improve farm women's access to the available extension services and advisories thereby leading to their technological empowerment.

It has been observed from the last three decades that both the male and female labour force in agriculture is declining .The number of men in agriculture has decreased from 81 per cent to 63 per cent and women from 88 per cent to 79 per cent. The extension machinery in India can be classified in four heads namely(a)Extension services offered by the Indian Council of Agricultural Research(ICAR),(b)Extension services provided by the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare(c)Extension services provided by the Ministry of Rural Development and(d) Extension services offered by Non-Government Organisations(NGOs).

Out of four extension systems, training and visit is the major extension system operating in India under the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare for more than 30 years. Although this programme is in operation for so long, it still lacks necessary inbuilt structural arrangements for reaching female farmers. Contact farmers involved in this very programme are mostly male farmers and the numbering of female farmers is very low. It was reported that the extension needs of women were often perceived by the extension agents to be in the disciplines of home science, nutrition, childcare, tailoring etc. The information regarding to new farm technologies was hardly passed on to them.

Various rural development programmes were launched in India from community approach in 1950s' to special target group approach in 1970s'.None of these programmes addressed to the specific needs of women farmers and remain concentrated on male farmers.

In 1980s' integrated approach was started that attempt to integrate women in the mainstream of development by structurally making them beneficiaries up to an extent of 40 per cent.

A number of services supportive for women's socio-economic empowerment were implemented.

These approaches were not directed towards fulfillment needs for agricul-

ture-related services and concentrated mainly on the issue of employment and social empowerment. In 1993-94, a project aimed at gender-gap reduction among women farmers of the Northern India was launched by the government of India. The limited coverage of this project shortens its impact. Such programmes need to be appreciated for being the pioneering one in this regard. ICAR is another important system for transfer of farm technologies all over the country.

This system has operated through various frontline extension programmes, all of which now have been merged with the Krishi Vigyan Kendras (KVKs) since April 1996.In KVKs, special extension and advisories services are provided to the farm women. There is a provision for special training programmes for women are made.

These programmes restricted mainly in the areas like home economics and ignored women's productive role in agricultural operations.

The efforts made so far in this direction appear to be localized and remain largely invisible. Involvement of women in agricultural development process by ICAR has been further strengthened when the concept of Farming Systems approach to research/extension was institutionalized by several ways including assessment and refinement of agricultural technologies through institutionalizing village linkage programme. Still these efforts are very limited to make a substantial dent on the overall agricultural scenario. From the very beginning Non-Government Organisations (NGOs) have involved women component in their mandate. They too have given more emphasis on issues related to social empowerment of women.

They also have given little attention on women's role in agriculture. Therefore, all the major extension systems in India, the participation and benefits accrued to women farmers are minuscule. If proper extension and advisories are provided to the farm women then they can be empowered.

There is a need to delineate and discuss the reasons attributable to poor access of farm women to extension services in India.

The causative factors found were-lack of approach of farm women to extension centres, less communication channel of farm women, less income to purchase farm inputs by farm women, lack of land, inconvenient time and location of meetings, gender biasness by extension staff, lack of gender-appropriate technology and lack of authority to them.

The other factors were low farm women literacy, lack of tendency to innovate and make decisions in farming, less

women workers in extension services and lack of structural arrangements for women farmers in extension programmes. Indian women despite playing an important role in agricultural production, processing and storage, generally lack the right to property and the control of resources usually pass on from men to men keeping women out of the chain of inheritance. This makes them the largest group of landless labourers. Certain structural changes need to be done in the existing extension machinery of India. Changes in attitude of professionals towards women need to be done. In order to improve the access of farm women, it is prime importance to sensitize the concerned extension workers, extension managers, development administrators and policy makers with the realities of farm women, so that they can be considered as an equally strong force for agricultural and rural development on the same footing as men. Timely and appropriate extension and advisories can really empower the farm women.

Attitudinal changes of extension workers, extension managers and all other concerned with agricultural development efforts cannot be ruled out in order to bring significant improvement in the women's access to extension system in India.

In India, where these functionaries are mostly males, gender sensitization training can be one of the methods to bring out these attitudinal changes. The efforts for improving the women's access to extension services need to be directed towards bringing out some institutional changes in the present machinery of extension in India. Farm women should be provided with greater access to credit facilities and other inputs by simplifying the existing procedures suiting to the educational levels of women folk. Flow of credit, inputs and marketing facilities to farm women can be done through women's cooperatives and mahilla mandals.

Different extension agencies are focusing on a limited scale to integrate farm women in mainstream of development efforts. The efforts of these agencies need to be managed more efficiently so as to have a synergistic effect to solve the problem of poor women access to extension services. The planners should give due recognition to women farmers in designing the development programmes.

There is also the need to recruit more extension functionaries in all levels of agricultural extension system. Certain institutional adaptations in the present extension system should be made for a positive step in this direction.

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