

DRIVING GROWTH

The Enduring Legacy of the Indian Navy

In the contemporary global economy, the technology and services sectors have emerged as the primary engines of growth, innovation, and employment. Over the past decade, rapid digital transformation, coupled with increasing consumer demand for efficient solutions, has created unprecedented opportunities in these industries. For countries like India, where a large segment of the population is young and aspirational, the tech and services sectors offer a pathway not only for economic growth but also for skill development, entrepreneurship, and social mobility.

The technology sector, encompassing software development, artificial intelligence (AI), machine learning (ML), cloud computing, cybersecurity, and data analytics, has grown exponentially. Businesses across the globe are increasingly relying on digital platforms to enhance productivity, optimize operations, and reach new markets. This trend has led to a surge in demand for skilled professionals capable of developing and managing innovative solutions. Tech careers today are no longer confined to software engineers; roles in AI ethics, blockchain, cybersecurity, cloud architecture, and IoT (Internet of Things) are becoming increasingly vital. Additionally, the rise of start-ups and the government's push for digital entrepreneurship have created avenues for innovators to transform ideas into scalable businesses.

Parallelly, the services sector-including finance, healthcare, tourism, logistics, education, and professional services-continues to expand rapidly. The growing middle class, urbanization, and increasing disposable incomes have fueled demand for quality services. Opportunities in customer service, consulting, digital marketing, telemedicine, supply chain management, and hospitality are on the rise. Moreover, the adoption of digital tools in traditional services has created hybrid roles that require both technical and domain expertise. This intersection of technology and services is creating high-value jobs, making the workforce more versatile and adaptable.

The government and private sector initiatives to skill the workforce have further strengthened these opportunities. Training programs in coding, AI, digital marketing, and cloud computing, along with soft skills development, are equipping young professionals to thrive in a competitive market. Remote working and gig economy platforms have also widened employment access, allowing talent from smaller towns to contribute to global projects.

However, to fully leverage these opportunities, there is a need to focus on continuous learning, innovation, and adaptability. As automation and AI redefine traditional roles, employees must embrace upskilling and reskilling to remain relevant. Collaboration between industry, academia, and policymakers is crucial to creating a workforce that meets the evolving needs of tech and service industries.

■ PUPUJI KOUL

Indian Navy Day is an important observance in India that honours the achievements of and role of the Indian Navy in safeguarding the nation's maritime borders. Every year, people across the country celebrate this day to express their pride and gratitude for their naval forces. On this solemn occasion, we commemorate the decisive role of Indian Navy in Operation Trident during the 1971 Indo-Pak war. In 2025, Navy Day falls on Thursday, 4 December 2025. The day honours the courage, dedication, and strategic importance of India's naval personnel. It also raises awareness about the Navy's role in national security and maritime heritage. It is important to recognise how its history shapes the way it is observed today. The first Navy Day in India was celebrated in 1972 to mark the Indian Navy's successful attack on Karachi harbour during the 1971 war. The Indian Navy originated in 1612 as the East India Company's Marine, later transforming into a modern technology advanced force post-independence. Navy Day reflects both India's military legacy and commitment to strengthening maritime security. Operation Trident was a major naval offensive that crippled Pakistan's fleet at Karachi port. Before 1972, Navy Day was observed on different dates, including October 21 and December 1. The modern parade and demonstrations started to educate citizens about naval prowess and heritage. Naval Day has special importance for youth, students and nation's future. Commemorating Navy Day inspires patriotism and awareness about careers in the Indian Armed Forces. The day highlights, bravery, and discipline -qualities valuable for students' personal growth. It motivates youth to aspire for roles of national responsibility, including naval careers. Encourages understanding of maritime geography, defence technology, and sea-based security. The Indian Navy is the naval branch of the Indian Armed Forces and is led by the

President of India as Commander-in-chief. The Indian Navy has an important role in securing the marine borders of the country as well as enhancing the international relations of India through seaport visits, joint exercises, humanitarian calamity relief and so on. The modern Indian Navy is undergoing a speedy renovation in order to improve its position in the Indian Ocean Region. The strength of the Indian Navy includes over 67,000 personnel and about 150 ships and submarines. Navy Day in India originally coincided with the Royal Navy's Trafalgar Day. On October 1944, the Royal Indian Navy celebrated Navy Day for the first time. The idea behind celebrating Navy Day was to boost outreach and increase awareness about the Navy amongst the general public. Navy Day celebrations traditionally witnessed parades at various port cities as well as organising public meetings at inland Naval establishments. From 1945 onwards, after World War 11, Navy Day was celebrated on 1 December. On the night of 30 November 1945, on the eve of the Navy Day celebrations, ratings painted the slogans such as Inqilab Zindabad. In due course and until 1972, given the enthusiasm among public Navy Day was celebrated on 15 December, and the week in which 15 December fell was observed as Navy Week. In 1972, old traditions gave way to new reasons to celebrate the day. At the Senior Naval Officers Conference in May 1972, it was decided that Navy Day would be celebrated on 4 December to commemorate the actions of the Indian Navy during the 1971 Indo-Pak War, and Navy Week would be observed from 1 to 7 December. Navy Day in India is now celebrated to commemorate Operation Trident, which was the attack on the Karachi Harbour during the Indo-Pak war [on 4 December 1971] by the Indian Missile boats as well in to reverence all the martyrs of that war. During the attack, Indian sailors communicated in Russian to avoid detention. No

Indian sailors were killed in the attack. COVID-19 and Chinese attempts to change status quo along northern borders have posed new challenges. The Navy is ready to face both these challenges.' Admiral Karambir Singh, the Naval Chief said at a press conference on the eve of Navy Day 2020. India's Navy Day 2025 marks a significant occasion to honour the brave men and women who safeguard India's maritime boundaries. Celebrated annually on December 4, this day commemorates the valour and sacrifices of the Indian Navy, especially recognising the crucial role it played during the 1971 India-Pakistan war. So, the Day marks the anniversary of the Indian Navy's victory in the 1971 Indo-Pak war, where naval forces played a pivotal role in ensuring India's success. The day holds special significance as it commemorates the valour, dedication, and sacrifices made by the men and women of the Navy to safeguard India's maritime borders. The history of Indian Navy dates back to 1971 when the Indian Navy launched Operation Trident during the Indo-Pak war. On December 4, 1971, the Indian Navy's Western Naval Command executed a successful attack on Pakistani naval base in Karachi, inflicting significant damage on Pakistani ships and installations. The operation was a decisive moment in the war and showcased the Indian Navy's strength and strategic prowess. To honour this victory, December 4 was declared as Navy Day, marking the day with celebrations and events that highlight the Navy's achievements and its role in national security. Year: Indian Navy Day is celebrated with a specific theme that highlights the current focus of the Navy or its future objectives. The theme typically reflects national priorities, maritime security issues, and the Navy's evolving role in the region. The theme for 2025 Navy Day is Celebrating the courage, commitment and professional excellence of the Indian Navy. Indian, Naval Day is cele-

brated across the country with various events that showcase the Navy's strengths and achievements. The main celebrations are held in Mumbai, where Western Naval Command is based. The day typically begins with a wreath-laying ceremony to honour the martyrs who have sacrificed their lives for the nation's security. Senior Navy officials, including the chief of Naval Staff, attend the event and pay tributes to the brave personnel who lost their lives in the line of duty. In addition to the ceremonial events, the Indian Navy organises various public outreach programs, including exhibitions, seminars and open-house events at naval establishments. These events allow citizens to learn more about the Navy's role and its contribution to the nation. In major cities, naval ships are often open to the public, where people can visit and get an up-close look at the sophisticated technology and equipment used by the Navy. Navy personnel also take part in special drills and demonstrations showcasing the operational capabilities of the Navy. These demonstrations include aerial displays, warships showcase, and maritime rescue exercises. These activities not only engage the public but also strengthen the connection between the Navy and the people it serves. In 2025 the President of India Droupadi Murmu, will visit Kerala [Thiruvananthapuram] on December 3 and 4. On December 3, president graced the Navy Day 2025 celebrations and witnessed the operational demonstration by the Indian Navy there. The first In, short it is in the fitness of things to mention that the Indian Navy plays a critical role in protecting India's vast maritime borders and ensuring the security of its trade routes. The Navy's role extends beyond traditional defence duties, as it is also involved in humanitarian assistance, disaster relief, and maintaining peace in international waters. The Navy's role has grown in recent years, especially with the growing threats from piracy, territorial disputes, and regional instability.

Chinar-The real beauty of Valley

■ GL KHAJURIA



Chinar is virtually a person derivation meaning thereby 'chi' 'naar' haying affiliation to what is so called 'fire' or owing due to 'fiery colour of leaves when leaves fall in autumn and in their

turning out as golden yellow manifesting flaming red 'leaves. Basically, this beautiful, giant and majestic tree is not only indigenous but exotic one. The mention of chinar as boin' is found in the folk lore of Kashmir.

The Chinar tree is the real beauty of the Kashmir valley where many films have over the years bear affiliations to this majestic trees as for example the most prominent films like 'Azroo' and 'Jab Jab Phool Khiley have been shot in and around Dal lake and the most magnificent 'Parks' and Gardens of Kashmir. The picturesque and kaleidoscopic beauty of the Kashmir valley over the years have attracted and haunted the foreigners from China and western countries and they have described it as the 'Paradise on earth. The environment that surrounds the valley is unambiguously enchanting and enthralling more and more so due to these largely spread over 'Chinars' amongst other enchanting greenery of the flora and salubrious and lush green deodars, kails, oaks, spruce and fir with altitudinal variations apart from Pinus gerendana (chilgoza) which is richly found next to Paddar in Jammu region. But the majestic Chinar finds its rich and unique placement in Kashmir Valley. The 'Charchinari' amidst 'Dal Lake' can most conveniently be attributed as a 'heritage' of velvet Kashmir valley and the more you praise, the less it is and this valley is in no way less than Switzerland of Europe over the mother earth which having other enchanting and bewildering spots on the other parts of globe, yet the enchanting beauty of the velvet valley has got its own significance of rarity of beauty.

The magnificent and majestic 'Chinar' tree attains a gigantic height more than a 100 hundred feet with 40-50 feet girth



and with a round spreading crown, leaves are mostly heart shaped 10 to 25 cms and 12 to 30 cms in length and breadth deeply cut in triangular toothed lobes which give an appealing grace from long distance and provide abundant shade to the tourists and visitors alike. The bark of the tree is with silvery flakes.

The tree is propagated less by seed sowing, but it is preferential if it is propagated through cutting which yield successful results and as the locals go in far propagation through cuttings. At times, it is reported that there were as many as 70 garden in the velvet valley of paradise' which have now reduced to few and all those gardens were well flourished with majestic chinar with kaleidoscopic variety of flowers of multihued nature but ironically now only few survive in their splendence. The attention of the Govt. is invited to bring it to the pristine grandeur and glory to ensure and further invigorate more and more influx of tourists, pilgrims and cine-stars. These will in unison boost tourism which is the

dire demand of the day and we can yield hefty dividends apart from providing job to the local populace and improve their socio-economic conditions.

Shah Jahan amongst the mughals was over-enthusiastic in the formation of gardens and parks and as such he introduced the magnificent and majestic tree in the velvet valley of Kashmir in various parts and gardens extensively in Nishat Bagh, Shalimar, Harwan, Verinag, Hazrat Bal, Char Chinar, and on other prominent locations such as Tulmulla, Avantipura, Mansabal, Sopore, Bara-mulla, Anantnag so on and so forth.

It is added over here that this majestic tree occupies its prominence in almost every corner of the beautiful valley of Kashmir also nomenclatures as the "Paradise on earth". The majestic and magnificent tree gains an attitudinal height upto 2600mts but however in the lower belts of altitude this tree is cultivable and now in Jammu and its vicinity it is successfully flourishing to the extremes of Kud, Batote, Katra, Reasi so

on and so forth. The wood is as good as anything like manufacturing of plywood, apart from its multihued usages for the manufacture of furniture and its ilk. The tree as well find its usefulness in the firewood which mitigate problems of local populace of firewood in multitudinal ways. The timber is as well used for building construction and also used for the manufacture of furniture. It is, therefore, urged upon the Govt. to invigorate and boost 'chinar' plantation extensively and intensively not confined to the Kashmir valley but elsewhere too where it is well suited to site so as to enhance the beauty of the state and haunt more and more tourists apart from improvising the environment of the State. In other words, this will yield and boost the socio-economic status of the local populace and help in mitigating the firewood, timber and other related problems of the locals.

Since the valley of Kashmir 'falls under temperate zone so extensive efforts should be accelerated to enhance maximum plantation on the occasion of 'Arbor's' day as is being done in the sub-tropical region of Jammu on Vanamahotsava. Tree culture had been a ritual in our old scriptures if we unfold the pious pages of Vanupurana, Ramayana, Mahabharata, these echo that each part of the tree has most reverentially been prayed. Let us, therefore, pledge to carry this message to the posterity to come by so as to ensure our state ever-flourishing with trees like chinar and its allied so that the beauty of the velvet valley of Kashmir enchants throughout every nook and corner of the charming valley. Elsewhere too, where the sites are well suited in Chenab valley which is the biggest forest area of the state the inculcation of this majestic and beautiful tree shall occupy its own place of prominence. The 'pride chinar apart from being of magnanimity of beauty is having medicinal properties too. The bark of this majestic tree is boiled as vinegar which is curative to multihued diseases eg. Dysentery, diarrhoea, toothaches, hernia and many more of its allied.

(The author is Former Dy. Conservator of Forest, J&K)

Collaborative approach is needed for health

■ SHYAM SUDAN

There is an age old proverb that 'health is wealth, No doubt everyone wants to live a healthy life in his life span. In this modern and fast moving life people are suffering from lot of life style health ailments and other health related problems. Now a days the big issue for everyone's life is health. We can't say that people are not health conscious in their life style behaviour. But due to adulteration in the entire ecosystem and pollution in every component we are facing the crisis of health issues in our life. There are lot of government and private health care hospitals and clinics available in our country. Now almost in every big city and urban areas there is AIIMS like facilities are available in the country. The mega health insurance coverage scheme is also available for the welfare of general masses of our country. But due to population explosion we are facing the overburden in our health care clinics and hospitals. Now the health ailments are also of multiple in nature. Some of our health ailments needs immediate attention and instant treatment by the health experts. Some health ailments in our life needs gradually and prolonged treatment. They are not of emergence in nature. In our country mainly allopathy, homeopathy and Ayurvedic system of treatment is available for the welfare of people. No doubt allopathy is the prime sector of our health care industry. But we can't ignore the other two methods of health care system. Millions of people got the benefits by practising yoga and homeopathy treatment. Basically these are our ancient methods of treatment and world recognized methods of treatment.

Now there is an urgent need to merge these three methods of treatment under one umbrella for the welfare of humanity. Government is also looking for this kind of change. No doubt with the holistic approach and collaboration of all the health sectors we can bring a drastic change in our health system. If all the three system of health care work in a single desk and under one umbrella, we can achieve our target in a more comfortable way. All the three outpatient departments can give their contributions in a holistic manner with more positive way. With the collaboration of all we can give better treatment to the suffering population of our country. Only blaming each other and proving dominance over other we can't achieve our target. Our prime motive is to give relief to the patients and improve their health. During COVID pandemic we have learnt lot of things. No method of treatment is wrong and outdated in nature in three wings of our health system. Now it is a very apt time to launch this policy, one nation one health system. Our prime motive is to give comfort and relief to suffering population. There is no place of any kind of drift between the three system of health. Due to new kind of challenges in health sector we cannot depend on single approach of cure and relief. Proper synchronization and alignment among all health care clinics is very mandatory at present scenario. There is need of hybrid care centres at village level for the betterment of common masses.

Beyond Inclusion: Building a World Where Disability Isn't a Barrier

■ DR. KANIKA GUPTA

Every year on 3 December, the world observes the International Day for Persons with Disabilities (IDPD) - a day not just to acknowledge challenges, but to celebrate resilience, rights, and the extraordinary potential of over 1.3 billion persons with disabilities across the globe. Yet for many, this day also serves as a reminder that the promise of inclusion still remains unfulfilled. This year's theme, "Fostering Disability-Inclusive Societies for Advancing Social Progress," invites us to reflect on what inclusion truly means and how far we still have to go.

Inclusion Is Not Charity- It Is a Right: For decades, disability was seen through a lens of charity, pity or medical dependency. Today, global rights frameworks like the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD) and

India's own RPwD Act, 2016 define disability inclusion as a matter of justice and human rights. A society advances only when its systems- schools, transport, workplaces, health care, digital spaces- are built to accommodate diversity, not to exclude it.

"Persons with disabilities don't need sympathy. They need access, opportunity, and a society that believes in their potential."

Why Disability Inclusion Strengthens Social Progress: A disability-inclusive society is not only fair; it is smarter, healthier and more productive.

► **Economic Growth:** The World Bank estimates that excluding persons with disabilities can cost nations up to 3-7% of their GDP. Inclusion boosts workforce participation and innovation.

► **Social Cohesion:** When schools, neighborhoods and public spaces

become accessible, communities grow more compassionate and equitable.

► **Human Capital:** Inclusive education empowers children with disabilities to thrive, breaking cycles of dependency and marginalization.

► **Stronger Democracies:** Representation of persons with disabilities in governance ensures that laws reflect lived experience and universal needs.

India's Road to Inclusion: Progress and Gaps: India has taken significant steps- from disability quotas in jobs and education to Accessible India campaigns, sign language recognition, and expanding disability categories. However, barriers remain:

► Inaccessible buildings and public transport.

► Low literacy and employment rates among persons with disabilities.

► Persistent stigma.
► Limited health and rehabilitation services, especially in rural and conflict-affected regions.

To foster true inclusion, policy intent must be supported by budget allocations, monitoring, and community participation.

Stories That Inspire Change:
Across India, persons with disabilities continue to break stereotypes and these inspiring examples show what happens when inclusion becomes a priority:

A wheelchair-user teacher in Jammu & Kashmir, who navigated years of inaccessible infrastructure, now trains rural students in digital literacy, proving that opportunity, not sympathy, changes lives.

A group of deaf entrepreneurs in Delhi launched a café run entirely in sign language, turning disability awareness into a business model.

A visually impaired student from

Tamil Nadu cracked a competitive exam using screen-reader technology- showing how assistive technology unlocks human potential.

These stories remind us that persons with disabilities are not beneficiaries; they are contributors, leaders, and change-makers. Their achievements highlight what becomes possible when society removes barriers and provides equal opportunities.

What We Can Do Today: Inclusion begins with individuals. This IDPD, every citizen can contribute: use respectful language and break stereotypes, make schools and workplaces more accessible, hire persons with disabilities and promote skill development, encourage inclusive sports, arts, and community events and support local disability organizations and advocacy groups.

Conclusion: Inclusion Is a Journey We Must Walk Together

International Day for Persons with Disabilities is more than a date on the calendar. It is a call to transform empathy into action and awareness into policy. True inclusion will be achieved not when persons with disabilities adapt to society, but when society adapts to them. A society that includes everyone progresses faster, grows stronger and becomes more humane. Building a disability-inclusive nation is not the responsibility of a few; it is a collective commitment. When we remove barriers and unlock potential, we don't just empower persons with disabilities; we redefine what progress truly looks like.

Let this day inspire us to move beyond inclusion-towards a world where disability is not a barrier, but simply a part of human diversity.

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