

PM'S GLOBAL RECOGNITION

Prime Minister Narendra Modi has emerged as one of the most recognized global leaders of the 21st century, not only for his influence in Indian politics but also for his growing stature on the international stage. Over the years, Modi has been conferred with several prestigious international awards and honors by foreign governments and organizations. These accolades reflect recognition of his efforts in fostering global diplomacy, economic reform, and environmental advocacy.

In December 2020, Narendra Modi was conferred the Legion of Merit by the then U.S. President Donald Trump. The award, given to foreign leaders for exceptionally meritorious conduct in the performance of outstanding services and achievements, acknowledged Modi's leadership in advancing the U.S.-India strategic partnership and promoting stability in the Indo-Pacific region.

One of the highest civilian honors of the UAE, the Order of Zayed was awarded to Prime Minister Modi in August 2019. The award recognizes his efforts to strengthen bilateral ties between India and the UAE. Under Modi's leadership, the relationship between the two countries has grown significantly in areas of trade, investment, and strategic cooperation.

In April 2019, Russia awarded Modi its highest civilian honor, the Order of St. Andrew the Apostle, for promoting a special and privileged strategic partnership between India and Russia. This honor is a testimony to the long-standing friendship and multifaceted cooperation between the two nations.

During his state visit to the Maldives in June 2019, Modi was conferred with the Order of Nishan Izzuddin, the Maldives' highest honor awarded to foreign dignitaries. The award was in recognition of Modi's role in strengthening India-Maldives bilateral relations, especially in defense, infrastructure, and people-to-people ties.

Prime Minister Modi received the Global Goalkeeper Award in New York from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation for the Swachh Bharat Abhiyan (Clean India Mission). The initiative aimed to eliminate open defecation and improve sanitation across India, significantly transforming public health and hygiene in rural areas.

During his visit to Bahrain in August 2019, PM Modi became the first Indian Prime Minister to visit the Gulf nation and was honored with the King Hamad Order of the Renaissance. The award recognized Modi's role in enhancing bilateral relations and his contribution to regional peace and cooperation.

In 2018, the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) honored Narendra Modi with the UN's Champion of the Earth Award, the highest environmental honor of the UN. He shared the award with French President Emmanuel Macron for their joint efforts in launching the International Solar Alliance (ISA) and for promoting environmental sustainability. Modi was awarded the Seoul Peace Prize in 2018 for his contribution to international cooperation, global economic growth, and development. He was the 14th recipient and the first Indian to receive the honor. The jury highlighted his "Modinomics" approach and his role in improving the economic landscape of India and contributing to global peace.

Burgeoning Population-Boon or Bane

DR. BANARSI LAL

Every year 11th of July is observed as the World Population Day across the globe to create awareness on the global population issues such as family planning, gender equality, maternal health, poverty and human rights. The theme of World Population Day 2025 is "Empowering young people to create the families they want in a fair and hopeful world".

The theme of this year World Population Day is on empowering youth, reproductive agency and making sure that youths are able to exercise their rights, Maccess resources and opportunities to control their own futures. The objective is to give stress on gender equality, reproductive agency, youth empowerment and access to health and education. Uplifting the voices of women and girls to unlock our world's infinite possibilities. The day was established by the Governing Council of the United Nations Development Programme in 1989 in response to public interest after "Five Billion Day" on 11th July, 1987. The day was suggested by Dr.KC Zachariah when the population was reached to five billion. It was firstly observed on 11th of July, 1987. We observe the display of increasing population in every nook and corner of India. Government of India has launched various policies, schemes and programmes for population stabilization. The birth rate in India is still higher than the death rate. Illiteracy, early marriage, poverty and age old cultural norms are the major causes of overpopulation. The first World Population Day was commemorated in 1987 when the world's population touched the five billion mark. In many developing countries fertility rate is declining but even then population growth continues at an alarming rate. In 1804, world population was 1 billion; it was 2 billion in 1927, 3 billion in 1960, 4 billion in 1974, 5 billion in 1987, 6 billion in 1999, and 7 billion in 2013 and now it stands at approximately 7.7 billion, with an anticipated increase in around 8.5 billion in 2030, 9.7 billion in 2050. India, China, the United States, Indonesia and Pakistan are the world's five largest countries in terms of population. According to the UN world population grows at a rate of 1.2 per cent which makes a net addition of 77 million people every year. Six countries account for half of those annual increment-India tops the list with 21 per cent, followed by China 12 per cent, Pakistan 5 per

cent, Bangladesh, Nigeria and the United States with 4 per cent each. Following reasons explain why population matters. 2018 marks the 50th anniversary of a conference on family planning. In 1968, the International Conference on Human Rights was held. For the first time ever, family planning was affirmed to be a human right. Following reasons explain why population matters.

- ▶ Human beings are rapidly spoiling the earth's atmosphere.
- ▶ Around 800 million people are malnourished in worldwide and this number can increase significantly.
- ▶ Lack of education in reproductive health is a factor in the recent upsurge of infectious diseases.
- ▶ Water scarcity stems in many parts of the world due to increase in human demand. Worldwide water tables are dropping down.
- ▶ Wild habitats that shelter endangered plants and animals are giving way to human activities and needs.
- ▶ Pollution is causing many respiratory diseases in human beings.
- ▶ Farming lands are suffering from soil erosion and desertification.
- ▶ The competition for resources is increasing day-by-day and the poor are getting poorer.
- ▶ By rapid population pressure migration pressures are aggravated.
- ▶ Civil conflict often emerges in societies where rapid population growth combines with environmental scarcity to undermine governments.

The size of nation's population has a major impact on its development and operations. Reducing overpopulation is essential, whether on a national or global scale so as to ensure the long-term growth of our existing resources. India was the first country in the world to launch a state sponsored population control programme in 1952. It was however met with much skepticism. After 1952, sharp declines in death rates were not accompanied by a similar drop in birth rates. India has built-in population momentum because of its young age structure-one fifth of India's population is between 15-19 years of age. Different regions of the country with different demographic features required a different treatment was another reason of its failure. India's population growth rate depends on how effectively the four Indian states i.e. Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Rajasthan and

Madhya Pradesh implement the policies because these states constitute 40 per cent of the country's population growth. Improved health services are mostly needed in these states. The fertility rate in these states is the highest. It has been observed that it has taken more time for the message like family planning to reach in these large agricultural and predominantly rural population states. It has been studied that fertility reduction began in the coastal areas of South India and then proceeded to spread inland. This was an advantage that the South had compared to the North. The Southern states have done better in providing family planning services. Population control programme has not been able to make inroads into all the pockets of the North Indian states as a result of which India's population has grown by gigantic proportions and in 2000 India touched 1 billion people mark i.e. 16 per cent of the world's population living on 2.4 per cent of the world's land area.

In this century the global population has increased threefold- while India's population has increased five times in the same period. In 1911 India's population was 252 million, 342 million in 1947, 361 in 1951, 846 million in 1991, 1 billion in 2000 and 1.27 billion in 2013. It can be mentioned that before independence India took 42 years to add 100 million. Since 1951 when the first census in India was conducted, about 600 million have been added to the population of India. The first 100 million was added in 12.5 years, the second 100 million in 9.3 years, the third 100 million in 6.4 years, the fifth and sixth 100 million in 5.8 years. It was estimated that the population of Kerala, Tamil Nadu and Orissa would increase by 15 to 19 per cent during 1998-2016, while it would increase over 40 per cent in the states of Bihar, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh, the highest anticipated increase being in Uttar Pradesh with 55 per cent. According to estimate of Sample Registration System of the Office of Registrar General of India, the population of India is increasing at 15.5 million per year. 15.5 million addition in existing population every year requires the opening of 66,000 new primary schools annually, creating 30 lakh new non-agricultural jobs every year and accommodating 50 lakh additional labourers in the agro-sector. No doubt, China has a different political system which can impose the one-child policy, but its suc-

cess cannot entirely be attributed to the compulsion factor. China has certainly been able to educate its people on the importance of having a small family and has offered lucrative financial aid to small families. It reduced its infant mortality rate to 6.8 per 1000, in comparison to 32 per 1000 in India. It has achieved almost 100 per cent literacy thereby making its people to understand the benefits of small family. There is need to aware the rural masses on problems associated with large families and benefits of small families. A metamorphosis is needed in the attitude of people. The National Population Commission was constituted on May 11, 2000, the day when India crossed the one billion mark. The commission is optimistic that population of India would be stabilized by 2045. Even if the goal is achieved, how we will meet the basic needs of people? The population growth rate in India has slowed down by 0.99 per cent, but it is nearly three times that of China's growth rate of 0.34 per cent.

It is estimated that world's urban population would rise to 5 billion by 2030 which was around 3 billion in 2003. Tokyo, the world's most populous city with 37.39 million was projected to still be the largest in 2020 followed by the Indian city Delhi. India should make population control a top priority because all the fruits of development are lost due to increase in population which lowers per capita needs of the people and reduces growth benefits per head. There is dire need for higher quality services in reproductive health and family planning together with supporting measures. Government alone cannot achieve these ambitious goals. People, NGOs, Panchayats and private sector participation is must. There is need to protect and empower the youths both males and females. The knowledge of sexuality should be imparted to them. There is also need to avoid the unwanted pregnancies. Child marriages should be avoided. Laws and policies for girl child rights should be implemented. Equal education is needed for both boys and girls. There is need to invite governments and institutions to adopt policies to tackle population problems. There is also need to tackle urbanisation, resources use and climate change issues as the world population exceeds 8.1 billion in 2025.

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Employment Linked Incentive Scheme: A Catalyst for Jobs, Economic Growth, and Formalisation

JYOTI VIJ



With the world fast moving towards automation, the Government of India's recently approved Employment Linked Incentive (ELI) scheme, comes as a very timely and measured step. With an outlay of nearly Rs 1 lakh crore, it is a bold policy intervention in India's evolving employment landscape especially in manufacturing sector. Designed to support the creation of more than 3.5 crore jobs over the next two years, the ELI Scheme is not just an economic measure-it is a strategic investment in the future of India's workforce, directly supporting the Government's Vksit Bharat@2047 vision. ELI is going to be a major catalyst of job creation in the country.

Unlike many other countries where population would soon start reducing or have started reducing, India still has a large working-age population which needs to be supported by more job opportunities. The ELI Scheme seeks to bridge the persistent gap between job seekers and job creators, and more importantly, between informal work and formal employment.

Beyond the immediate employment outcomes, it is important to note that the ELI Scheme also strengthens India's progress towards several

Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) particularly in SDG 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth), by incentivising formal, long-term employment; in SDG 1 (No Poverty) and SDG 10 (Reduced Inequalities), by offering targeted financial support to low-wage earners and first-time job-seekers. The linkage of the scheme to EPFO registration and disbursement through Aadhaar-enabled DBT systems ensures that it not only generates jobs but also expands social protection coverage, which is critical for building a just and inclusive economy.

Recognising such efforts by India, ILO recently acknowledged India's achievement and officially published on its dashboard that 64.3% of India's population (as against 19% earlier in 2015), i.e. over 94 crore people, are now covered under at least one social protection benefit.

The emphasis on manufacturing is particularly welcome. As global value chains undergo realignment, India is fast emerging as a trusted alternative in sectors such as textiles, electronics, automobiles, consumer goods, and pharmaceuticals. By supporting long-term employment generation in these sectors, the ELI Scheme complements existing initiatives like PLI schemes, Make in India, and Skill India, and would accelerate industrial growth in both urban and semi-urban clusters.

For MSMEs, which often face constraints in scaling up formal hiring due to cost concerns, the scheme offers critical relief. The employer-side incentives reduce the marginal cost of new hiring,

thereby encouraging expansion, formalisation, and workforce upgradation.

Globally, wage-linked incentive schemes have proven effective in promoting employment. Countries like Germany offer employer subsidies for apprenticeships and long-term hiring; South Korea provides targeted wage support to employers of young and older workers; and Singapore ties financial assistance to up skilling and employment retention. The United States has the Work Opportunity Tax Credit (WOTC), which rewards employers hiring individuals from disadvantaged groups. India's ELI Scheme incorporates global best practices while customizing for local needs-such as our large informal labour market, demographic dividend, and expanding digital infrastructure. The ELI Scheme reflects a maturing of India's employment policy-shifting from short-term relief to long-term labour market development. In the face of global megatrends like ageing populations as well as the digital and green transitions, such effective policies are crucial to grant more people access to quality jobs. We at FICCI urge our members to come forward to use this scheme. Employers-especially in the MSME segment-must recognise this as more than a financial benefit. It is a tool for sealing operations, tapping into young talent, formalising payrolls, and creating lasting economic value. As the apex industry chamber, FICCI stands committed to support this cause.

(The writer is Director General, FICCI)

Butterfly Diversity Study Reveals 219 Species in Jammu & Kashmir's Bani Region

DR. TASLIMA SHEIKH

A recent comprehensive study has highlighted the rich butterfly diversity in Tehsil Bani, located in the Kathua district of Jammu and Kashmir, India. The research, led by writer along with Dr. Wasim Sajad Malik, Sat Paul Pakhru (IFS) and Muhammad Asghar Hassan, has been published in the prestigious journal SHILAP Revista de Lepidopterologia [Volume 53(210): 247-293, June 2025].

Over a span of five and a half years (March 2014 - September 2019), the team documented 219 species of Papilionoidea butterflies from six families, including 26 species protected under India's Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972 (Amendment 2022). The study was conducted in and around the newly established Bani Wildlife Sanctuary, a region previously lacking faunal documentation.

The butterflies were found associated with 40 different



host plant families, with Fabaceae, Poaceae, and Malvaceae being the most dominant. However, host plant data was available for only 64% of the species, leaving significant gaps in ecological knowledge that need further exploration.

Notably, the checklist also integrates historical and bibliographic references to butterfly fauna from Jammu &

Kashmir, making it a valuable baseline for future conservation, research, and habitat management efforts in this Himalayan region.

The authors emphasize the urgency of biodiversity documentation in lesser-known protected areas to support evidence-based conservation planning, especially amid increasing habitat pressures and climate uncertainties.

Ride the Winners' Wave: A Momentum Investing Guide

ANIL SALGOTRA



A common tendency among investors is to book their profits on the stocks that have delivered sizable absolute returns relative to the broader index. This is often driven by the belief that, following a sharp outperformance, the future returns may be limited. Consequently, proceeds are redeployed into the underperforming stocks on the expectation that these laggards will eventually catch up with their outperforming peers.

However, a more systematic and potentially rewarding approach involves increasing the allocation to the stocks that have already demonstrated outperformance, provided the selection is carried out judiciously. The core of this strategy is to enhance exposure to the recent winners-stocks that have gained meaningfully and consistently-while simultaneously, also, trimming the positions in those that have persistently underperformed. The rationale is rooted in the principle that momentum tends to persist- recent winners are likely to remain winners, and the prevailing trend is expected to continue.

In technical terms, this approach is referred to as a momentum strategy, wherein the fund managers regularly increase the portfolio weight of stocks that have shown strong and

sustained performance. A key advantage of this investment style is that it transcends traditional classifications such as value, growth, or quality. It is style-agnostic, dynamically reallocating capital toward what is working across all categories, irrespective of underlying labels.

Importantly, the efficacy of a momentum strategy is not limited to price appreciation alone-a common misconception. Rather, it hinges on a combination of robust price action and improving fundamentals, particularly earnings growth and upward earnings revisions. This blend of technical strength and fundamental support renders momentum more durable, as trends tend to reverse gradually unless disrupted by a major external shock.

Thus, placing calculated bets on the current market favourites-those backed by both price and earnings momentum-offers a higher probability of sustained outperformance.

For investors seeking to implement a momentum strategy, professionally managed funds offer a convenient and accessible solution. These funds simplify the process of identifying momentum stocks-a task that often requires technical and fundamental analysis. Consider the ICICI Prudential Active Momentum Fund, an open-ended fund that selects stocks based on earnings or price momentum. The New Fund Offer (NFO) period runs from July 8, to 22, 2025.

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Paper bag day is celebrated annually on 12th July. It is aimed at raising awareness about the benefit of using paper bags instead of plastic bags. As we become aware of the danger of plastic bags, the observation enhance awareness to the public of better alternative like paper bags. While there is no specific officially declared theme for World paper bag day 2025, the core message and focus will remain likely around promoting paper bags as a sustainable alternative to plastic and encourage eco-friendly practices. This could be expressed through theme like reduce plastic, embrace paper bags "Choose Paper, save environment."

Let us celebrate the humble paper bag, which does more than carrying our groceries. Today, millions of people choose to switch to paper bags for carrying their shopping, as the wide spread use of plastic and its harmful effects on the environment at large, raise alarm bells in our collective consciousness. So how do paper bags aid us in the fight against environmental pollution and climate change? Firstly paper is biodegradable, which immediately makes it a preferable alternative to plastic, which is not. Paper bags are also made of renewable raw materials, which encourages a sustainable lifestyle, as they can be recycled. This gives our environment, a bit of break

EMBRACE PAPER BAGS

too. Paper bags can be quite durable, except when soggy, and have more up market aesthetic appeal thanks to high-end brands popularizing minimal and sustainable packaging. So really, what is not to love about paper bags?

History of Paper Bag Day:

It is not clear who officiated paper bags day, we can surmise that it must have been founded in order to raise convenience about important environmental issue like climate change and to promote a more sustainable life style by introducing paper bags as alternatives to plastic bags. An American school teachers - turned Priest - Turned inventor Francis WOLLE in 1852, invented and patented the first paper bag machine, after which he and his brother founded the Union Bag and paper company. In 1871, Margaret E. Knight decided to refine Wollé's design by inventing a machine that would produce paper bags with boxy bottoms. This improvement earned her the title of "Mother of the grocery Bag" as it was the key template for the foldable paper bags we use today. In 1883, Charles Stillwell Tweaked Knights Design further, adding placated sides to paper bags in order to make it easier to carry, fold and store. In 1912, Walter Deubenbes added a cord to reinforce the paper bags and handler for ease of carrying. Thus, the final product, which is the bag of today, is clearly and com-

bined effort of all these inventors. Thanks to them.

How to Celebrate Paper Bag Day:

1. Switch on two paper bags. If you have not done so, there is no better day to make an informed decision to switch to using paper bags for most of the shopping as they are safe, durable and stronger.

2. Have fun with paper bags. Paper bags can be fun, too. Many craft activities can be like creating scrap book, making paper bag puppet, decorating paper bags with kids with old paper bags. Paper bags come in handy due to their alternative uses. For instance paper bags work better then wipers to clean windows. They can be used for decorations even as an eco friendly option for packing lunches.

3. Recycle at home. Recycle your paper bags if they are still in good condition. Store them carefully for reuse. If they are damaged, they can be used in composting, as well as for wrapping food items (like garlic and onions). Not only does store fruit in paper bags ripen them and keeps them in good condition. They won't end up in landfills or pollute oceans and rivers. And if you are looking to save money, many stores offer reusable paper, shopping bags that can last for years.

As plastic bags waste is causing serious threat to the environment across the world, GOI has announced a draft

"Plastic Waste Management (Amendment) Rules 2021" on March 11, 2011. For combating any social issues 'bans' have been a favorite measure of Indian Policy. The policy is being implemented in centre as well as states but not successful at length. Reports have indicated that plastic items (plastic bags) is increasing @7% per year as against 3% of global average. The Govt. will have to take strict action and seek people's cooperation to switch on to paper bags and shun plastic bags.

Paper Bags Day is all about choosing to be more sustainable and eco-friendly, as we grapple with the all-too-real crises like climate change and globalization. A simple switch to paper bags will make a difference. Paper bags are toxin free and safe for use, so we have a reason to appreciate this invention. We have to ensure that the next generation does not experience doomsday early due to global environmental crises that are making life on earth more of a challenge. Heavy words, we know but simple, conscious decisions like switching to paper bags and choosing recyclable materials for everyday use can help combat these universal challenges and ensure a sustainable future. World paper bag days is a significant opportunity to learn about the environmental benefits of paper bags and opt for paper bags, embrace sustainability and shape a greener future together.