India and Emerging Global Challenges

As World Rebalances,

A much Complex World follows

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PREFACE

The World is going through a period of rapid and wrenching changes. With the emergence of IT revolution vis-à-vis Globalization altered the conventional definition of every Geo-political variables. Globalization is driven by technology. Information technology render nation and individual better mean of information sharing, while better connectivity and greater flow of people across the world creates a diverse culture. In turns, it transformed an individual into "A Global Citizen".

Technology reaches everyone so is the globalization and creates an integrated world (Global village). But unlike technology, globalization is a force that stimulates counterbalances. In search of right balance, globalization often creates paradoxes. Globalization levels the playing field for nations around the world but often in favour of developed nations and create discontent among developing nations so it calls for integrated world but not uniform or equal. Consequently, countries try to defend their national interests against globalization. In other words, globalization provokes nationalism as nations are becoming more nationalists in present scenario as it may be endangering the socio-economic landscapes and cultural demography of nation.

The study of global issues is more complex than ever now that we have truly become a "global village". We need collective commitment to resolve the problem for better and brighter future. The decision we make today, will determine our future generations. Together we are confronted with many pressings and often competing challenges that demand thoughtful responses and solutions. We have a long list of challenges like increasing population and dwindling resources, poverty and hunger, security crisis vis-à-vis national security and ever new emerging challenges like environmental issues, cyber security and many more. These crisis certainly represent problems facing our world today; on the other hand, I see these with sense of optimism as it renders opportunities to bring forth required changes that will uplift the current quality of life.

The world is more inter-connected than ever, so these problems don't concern a set of nations but whole world, but key player has to step in leading other nation to achieve the common shared objective for better world. Apropos India, where people embrace "Sarva Dharma Sama Bhava" which roughly embody secularism. This is very relevant to contemporary world where we witness conflicts over differences of race, religion, caste, language etc every then now. Presently we talk about "global village" but our approach to problem is not quite global. On the other, India always believe in "Vasudhaiva kutumbakam" which means 'The world is one family". This is evident from the participation of India in world war to UN peacekeeping for greater cause of world peace and tranquillity. These values which are deeply entrenched in the Indian society, signifing the importance of India in this world in developing a sense of global empathy where there is so much chaos everywhere.

To address the topic, first we need to identify key global challenges and its impacts through political, economical, social and environmental lenses and try to address key global challenges. Finally, there will be one epilogue which summaries the key role that India can

provide to overcome these emerging global challenges for better world as I want to term India as natural "world leader" for its unique and unprecedent achievement of unity in diversity. This can be evident in recent time as of now whole world starts recognising the role of INDIA.

PART ONE

The Global Challenges

Currently, world is facing multiple challenges. It would not be appropriate to refer any particular problem as most dangerous as it carries highest threat to the world without taking note of its long term consequences and its nature of inter-connectedness. But, one can infer overpopulation as mother of all problems as it is inherently connected with every problem, be it poverty and hunger or migration crisis, rise in unemployment, crime rate and violence, dwindling resources like water, land, minerals, forest to global security concerns like rise of extremist terrorist groups further up to ecological and environment concerns. We have some stringent and pressing challenges.

1)Overpopulation is a state whereby the human population rises to extent such that ecological settings get adversely affected. It can be caused by unplanned family management, lack of awareness, breakthrough in medicine etc and caused above mentioned problem. It is estimated that about 81 million people add to worlds population annually. Regions with higher population density like Indian subcontinent can feel the dire effects of overpopulation ranging from putting so much stress on natural resources, environmental deterioration, worsening of quality of life to even the disintegration of population.

2)Poverty and hunger - One of the goals of UN sustainable development. Poverty is the biggest impediment to the growth and development as individuals are being deprived of two square meal a day and basic facilities like, access to education and health, equal opportunity etc, to live life in some stead and on other hand individuals overconsume resources which is meant for everyone, such is economic disparities all over world.

Poverty is a veil behind which, lot of talent get wasted as they never get opportunity to showcase their talents. For the namesake we live in the era of globalization, where so many dying of hunger. It's a shame we have to share as around 821 million people afflicted with hunger every year (2018). Amartya Sen correctly said "hunger is not about availability of food but politics". This paralyze people to even think rationally.

3)Environmental and ecological concerns- this is serious implications of blind race of technological advancement and affluent use of limited resources. It concerns major issues like, a) Availability of fresh water, b) Amplified climate change and global warming, c) loss of biodiversity, d) Accelerated habitat loss, e) ozone layer depletion, f) desertification etc.

4)Health issues- it is frightening to look into data of people dying from curable and preventive diseases in low and lower middle-income countries due to inefficient or no health supporting infrastructure and skilled doctors. These countries have very high infant mortality rate and maternal mortality rate. Malnutrition is another disease which is ubiquitous. For just curiosity, data according to world health organization (WHO) suggests globally 50% of children under the age of five who die of pneumonia, measles, HIV, tuberculosis and malaria are in Africa. This suggests about the severe asymmetries of distribution of health facilities around the world.

5) Global security- From North Korea nuclear and missile threats in Korean peninsula to increasing militarization in south china sea region have taken a toll on global security. There

are myriad real threats to the world like destabilization of middle-east, India-Pakistan-china trilateral issues in which Pakistan is certainly combining with china to dismantle India's sovereignty and robust democratic practices, wargames in Africa, etc. Since world war-2, this is probably first time that so much violence is on the verge of happening in the wake of multipolar world, if robust steps have not taken.

Arm race further aggravate global security concerns all around world. Conflicts between Russia, USA and china have already increased the number of warfare machinery and artillery in their arsenal. Now, every country is competing to purchase weapon to safeguard their border. Increasing nuclearization and chemical weapon poses a serious threat to the world as whole world has to pay the price for someone recklessness.

6) Artificial intelligence- this is opportunity as well as threat. What do we need to understand is, this is unequivocally favours elites. But We live in world, where extreme poverty is reality, basis education is distant, health facilities are only in dreams for a very large population. So, we can say it's not feasible to think of A.I at this hour as it will cut employment, further widen inequality within societies, increase singularity, promote totalitarian governments and begin global arm race and autonomous weapons that are capable of everything- from assassinations to genocide.

7) Chinese hegemony- It's presence can felt from Chinese approach to its neighbours, south-china sea region and African countries. China is an export driven economic machine and have major share of world's total supply chain due unfettered access to world's vast market which provides them opportunity to meddle in other country's internal affairs. World has an array of middle power partners like India, japan, Taiwan, Australia, etc in Asia who detest Chinese expansionism and whose survival as sovereign state is in peril due to Chinese president Xi Jinping's totalitarian quest for power and grandeur. The new reality is conflicts rather than coexistence with china is going to define the horizon for countries that are unwilling to accept its hegemony and its false claim of territory.

8) prejudice and equality- it has been a persistence feature of modern human societies over time and space. We claim to get over the slavery system but not so much still Blacks are discriminated and recent incident of killing of George Floyd in United states proves it. But its not only blacks, Uyghurs Muslims have been put up in concentration camps in china, minority like Sikhs, Hindus, Christians etc are exploited and converted to Islam in Pakistan and Afghanistan, conversion in Africa in wake of better life, etc happening all over the world. Human right violation can be easily traced all around the world. Western nations coercing other nation to accept western ideology and paint as best. This destroys the native culture as it creates confusion in peoples in people's mind and leads to transgression.

9) Governance and leadership- International organizations like UN, WHO, WTO etc seemingly becoming less relevant than ever. These bodies have become mere an institution for geopolitics for influence in the interest of superpower like USA, China, European union etc to serve their cause. They don't care about weak nations. Like recent pandemic of coronavirus exposed the accountability of WHO to inform the spread to every other nation to stop the virus at earliest. Every international organization works on someone's behalf to promote their propaganda. It needs relooking and major reforms as world order is rebalancing with the emergence of significant regional organizations.

These are some key challenges I want to address but it's not end. There is a long list of challenges, the world currently faces.

India's relevance to challenges

A nation with 1.35 billion people of diverse ideologies, classes, races, castes, etc so much differences, still live in harmony with each other. This is the beauty of this nation which do not find anywhere. There is no other nation with this much diversity and still hold democratic values inside out. This nation cares about all as there is a proverb in Sanskrit treatise "Sarve Bhavantu Sukhinah" which can be translated in to as happiness and prosperity to all. Value like this is deeply entrenched in Indian societies and they believe in karma which says you are the only one accountable to your life, if you do good, good will happen to you and vice versa. This is not that India has no problem at all but the irony is that, it's opposite we have all sorts of problems but still we always mend a way out of every possible problem presented to us and it makes us very relevant to this modern complex world.

I want to start with problem of Chinese hegemony and their expansionism at global level. China is bullying every small neighbouring countries either by it's military might or making them fall into debt trap and not leaving any stone unturned to promote their coercive propaganda. India has been hesitant in the past to attempt formation of any overtly anti-china bloc but no more, India realised the mistake and now shed inhibition to take responsibility to convince partners and trying to bring a loose miniature grouping to fruition to checkmate Chinese imperialism.

India has been successful in lifting 271 million people out of poverty in a 10-year period from 2005/06 to 2015/16. This is an outstanding achievement and an example for the to follow but a long way to go and it is a persistent problem of society and recent coronavirus is also not helping the cause. India also a leader in imparting basic education to its population and came a long way to attain 75% literacy rate and recent proposal of National education policy (NEP) helping the Indian education system with some innovation reforms and flexibility given to students. One of major upshot of NEP is the promise of minimum 6% contribution of GDP to education. With education and awareness, there will be direct consequences in helping the matters of overpopulation, internal security like radicalisation of youth, Maoists etc and their occurrence will be less likely. Recent declaration of health id card and Ayushman Bharat for citizens of the country are helping highly anticipated health system of the country especially to the poor.

India's vision to develop themselves inclusive as well as exclusive competing global trends like 5G development and artificial intelligence is very impressive. Now India try to make for the lost time as we have let pass by two revolution 1) industrial revolution and 2) IT revolution. But now India is keeping in mind of next revolution so that we shall be ready when the time arrives as India continuously promoting research and development by public-private collaboration.

Innovation and technological advancement are two ways India can help themself as it helps to curb inflation as well as provide employment to large population. India has been pioneer in production of clean and renewable energy. India initiated International solar alliance in 2015 is big step in reducing carbon emission of the world. India's large share of energy production comes from renewable source. India is also very active in protection ecology and biodiversity as recently India made ecological sensitive zones and rolled out environmental impact assessment. India have made clear intention to make the planet better.

Importance of India to world has always been significant so it's not merely nature of India to be "world Guru" but it's duty also. Many countries are counting on India to lead them through, to check Chinese expansionism and totalitarian approach. World organization needs renewal with the inclusion of India as major stakeholder at all cost as world becomes multipolar world now. World is driving towards Human-resource based knowledge economy and India have around 50% of total population below the age of 25 years given proper education and skill set can lead the world to greater height. Now time has come to India to fully realise it's potential and triumvirate world leader with China and USA and perform its duty. World will surely take notice of India's challenges and learn.

THE END