

Role of India in 21st Century

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"We no longer discuss the future of India. We say the future is India". India in the 21st century has some unique challenges and opportunities to become a Super Power. The future of India is bright but there are challenges of over population, poverty, food, health, education, employment, urbanization, resources and constant risk of religious violence. In the following paragraphs I would address some the opportunities and challenges.

The population has already increased three fold in 50 years to over a Billion now! It is expected that the population of India would grow to 1.5 Billion in 2030; this over population could lead to pollution, traffic, shortage of drinking water and food.

Economic liberalization has linked India far more than before to the global market place and particularly the United States. Indian economy is growing very fast at the rate of 8–9% today and expected to grow at 10–12% in future. India has produced a number of billionaires but also a large percentage of its population below the poverty line. India needs to make efforts to include the rest of the population participate in the economic growth.

A massive investment in education is the key formula for success; mass education for the general population including minorities can alleviate poverty in getting a higher growth rate. It is predicted that India would achieve 100% literacy, become a developed country by 2030!

Providing employment for the 10 million youngsters who join the labor force every year is a challenge. Even though the economy is currently growing at 8-9% per year, it is only producing half the jobs needed primarily due to IT sector. India needs to invest more in manufacturing and other sectors and infrastructure to create more jobs.

The infrastructure in the last sixty years has significantly improved but still quality of roads and transportation needs to further improve for journey of India into the 21st century. It would be necessary to launch a large investment program in roads and transportation that could bring jobs to the labor force.

India is the greatest democracy in the world. Poorer and less educated Indians are more likely to vote than educated elite. For the poor, casting their ballot has become a major act of political participation while the educated classes take a more cynical view of politics as a playground for the corrupt politicians. Educated Indians should actively participate in politics to continue the progress of India into the 21st century.

India is lobbying for a permanent seat on the United Nations Security Council. The rise of China has provided a new strategic rationale for closer Indo-US cooperation in helping India achieve a great power status.

I see a number of bright spots; India is making serious efforts to address the challenges and exploit the opportunities to continue on the path of becoming a Super Power in the next 20 years. Mera Bharat Mahan!!!