

Genesis of ‘Make in India’: A study of Swadeshi Movement in India

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Abstract - Etymologically, ‘Swadeshi’ means ‘One’s own country’. It is made up of two words, namely, ‘Swa’ meaning ‘self or own’ and ‘Desh’ meaning ‘country’, which literally means ‘Make in India’ producing goods within the country. This program was officially launched on 25th September 2014 by the Government of India, to encourage companies to manufacture domestically (within India) by stimulating conducive investment into manufacturing sector. The initiative aims at ‘Transforming India into a global design and manufacturing hub’. But carefully observed, this program finds its genesis in Swadeshi movement, which was proclaimed on August 7th, 1905, at the Calcutta Town Hall, in Bengal. Boycotting the foreign goods, especially British made goods, was the core of ‘Swadeshi Movement’. The movement aimed at using goods produced in India. Bal Gangadhar Tilak encouraged Swadeshi and Boycott movement after the British government decided the ‘Partition of Bengal’ in 1905. Therefore, this paper attempts to find out the causes and importance of Swadeshi movement, its contribution in accelerating the freedom struggle.

Index Terms - Swadeshi, Domestic production, Boycott, Foreign goods, Self-sufficiency.

INTRODUCTION

Baron Curzon was appointed as Viceroy in 1898. At this time “Four out of five villages in India, did not had school. Three boys out of four grow up without any education and only one girl out of forty attended any kind of school”. His determination to improve the education system and putting matters in order has increased the intervention of British Government. He disapproved of the doctrine of laissez faire policy (nonintervention of state) and instead considered government intervention as necessary and emphasized that the government must maintain a few institutions (of every sort) as role models for private institutions to imitate. Baron Curzon introduced a strict control over private schools through a vigilant policy of inspection

and control. Such a policy aroused bitter feelings among some educated Indians, since it was believed that Curzon was bent on bringing the entire system of education under government control.

Baron Curzon set up the ‘Indian Universities Commission’ in 1902 to bring about a better order in higher education. The commission made a number of important recommendations, namely, to limit the size of the university senates, to entrust teaching in addition to examining powers to universities, to insist on a high educational standard from affiliated colleges, to grant additional state aids to universities, to improve courses of studies, to abolish second-grade colleges and to fix a minimum rate of fees in the affiliated colleges. The report was severely criticized and as a consequence, last two recommendations were dropped. Legislation with regard to the other proposals was passed despite bitter opposition in the legislature and the press media.

The administrative policy of Baron Curzon also gave rise to the first organized movement for national education. A body known as the ‘National Council of Education’ established a national college and a technical institution (the present Jadavpur University) in Calcutta (Kolkata) and 51 national schools in Bengal. These schools sought to teach trade in addition to ordinary subjects in matriculation syllabus. The effect of the movement was nevertheless noticeable elsewhere. Rabindranath Tagore started his famous school in West Bengal near Bolpur; the Arya Pratinidhi Sabha established Gurukulas at Vrindaban and Haridwar; and the Indian National Congress and the All-India Muslim League at their sessions in Allahabad and Nagpur, respectively, passed resolutions in favour of free and compulsory primary education. The movement for national education spread throughout Bengal, as well as to Varanasi (Banaras), where Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya founded his private Banaras Hindu University.

SWADESHI MOVEMENT

Bengal was the major province in British India and a focal point for Indian National Movement. The British recognized that Bengal with some 85 million people was too large for a single province. Britishers decided to divide Bengal and announced the partition of Bengal in July 1905. Indian National Congress initiated 'Swadeshi movement'. As a reaction against the partition, Bengali Hindus launched an effective boycott of British-made goods and dramatized their resolve to live without foreign cloth by igniting huge bonfires of Lancashire-made textiles. Such bonfires, re-creating ancient Vedic sacrificial altars, aroused Hindus in Poona, Madras and Bombay to light similar political protest. Instead of wearing foreign-made cloth, Indians vowed to use only domestic cottons and other clothing made in India. Simple hand-spun and hand-woven saris became high fashion, first in Calcutta and elsewhere in Bengal and then all across India, and displaced the finest Lancashire garments, which were now viewed as hateful imports. In one part of the country, violent agitation had already started on the question of the partition of Bengal. In the meantime, the patriot Bal Gangadhar Tilak declared "Swaraj (self-rule) is our birth right." Thus, Baron Curzon's educational reforms were considered sinister in their intentions and his alleged bureaucratic attitude was resented. Students refused using books made by foreign paper. Many Indians were imprisoned and retrenched from their job. Students participants were denied admission into universities and colleges and were not allowed to take up examination. Singing 'Vande mataram', was meant to sedition. This was the first instance, which used indigenous goods were taken an account.

The Swadeshi movement started in Bengal, slowly spread, and observed throughout the country by 1909. This is proclaimed as anti-partition and anti-colonial movement. In different region, the movement was known by different names, for example in Andhra Pradesh, it was called as Vande Mataram movement. Later movement by Mahatma Gandhi in 1915, such as Satyagraha movement, non-co-operation movement etc., were based on Swadeshi Movement. Key persons in Swadeshi Movement were: Bala Gangadhar Tilak, Bipin Chandra Pal, Lala Lajapat Rai, Aurobindo Ghosh, Vo Chidambaram Pillai, Babu Genu. Apart from boycotting of government services, foreign

goods, it aimed at promoting the use of domestically manufactured goods along with promoting National Education through the establishment of National Schools and Colleges. Therefore, this movement was important not only politically but also economically. This movement was a grand success as even landlords joined the movement. The emphasis was on Atma Shakti or self-reliance. Several exclusive Indian industrial ventures like, Bengal Chemical Swadeshi store, Lakshmi Cotton Mills, Mohini Mills and National Tannery were started.

The positive element of economic Swadeshi was the regeneration of indigenous goods. The boycott of foreign goods led to the increase in demand of indigenous goods especially clothes which fell short of supply. The mill owners of Bombay and Ahmadabad came to its rescue. The Boycott movement in Bengal supplied a momentum and driving force to the cotton mills in India and the opportunity thus presented was exploited by the mill-owners. Bengal had to supplement the supply from Bombay mills by the coarse production of handlooms. The weaving industry in Bengal was a very flourishing one till the British ruined it after they had established their rule over the province in the 18th century. The economic boycott movement seemed to be a suitable opportunity for reviving that industry. The clothes produce was very coarse but were accepted by the Bengalis in the true spirit of the Swadeshi Movement. Though Manchester cloth was the chief target of attack, boycotting and burning of foreign goods, was extended to other British manufacturers also, such as salt and sugar as well as luxury goods in general. Fines were inflicted on anyone found using foreign sugar. Foreign cigarettes were bought and burnt in the streets, Brahmins refused to assist any religious ceremonies in houses where European salt and sugar were used, and Marwari's were warned of importing foreign articles. All these bonfires however affected the economy of the people. To burn 'Manchester made goods' bought at a high price literally affects the people but swept by national enthusiasm, people continued to eschew and burn foreign goods. The social boycott was a very powerful weapon. A man selling or buying foreign goods or in any way opposing Swadeshi Movement and helping Government in putting it down would be subjected to various degrees of humiliation.

MAKE IN INDIA

Having discussed the heart and soul of Swadeshi movement, if we turn our attention to our current program, Make in India, is in line with Swadeshi Movement, what is needed to put India ahead of other economies and ensure growth through better technology and generate employment within the country by producing goods which are hitherto imported. This will also bring in more entrepreneurs to either create substitutes or develop new technology to foster growth. Going by History all the developed nations like USA, UK, Germany, France including countries like Japan have been largely thriving on this concept since ages and that is the reason today they are self-sufficient in virtually all fields be it Food, Pharma, Defense or Infra. Though, this encouragement has come very late in India, but it is required for the country to have its own sustenance in every field.

OBJECTIVES OF MAKE IN INDIA

1. Raise in manufacturing sector growth to 12-14% per year.
2. Create 100 million additional jobs in the manufacturing sector by 2022.
3. Increase in the manufacturing sector's share in the GDP to 25% by 2022.
4. Creating required skill sets among the urban poor and the rural migrants to foster inclusive growth.
5. A rise in the domestic value addition and technological depth in the manufacturing sector.
6. Having an environmentally sustainable growth.
7. Augmenting the global competitiveness of the Indian manufacturing sector.

There are multiple reasons why the government has chosen to focus on manufacturing. The key ones are discussed below:

1. For the past two decades, India's economic growth was led by the services sector. This approach paid off in the short-run, and India's IT and BPO sector saw a huge leap, and India was often dubbed the 'back office of the world'. However, even though the share of the services sector in the Indian economy rose to 57% in 2013, it contributed to only 28% in the share of employment. So, the manufacturing sector needed to be augmented to boost employment. This is because the service sector currently has low

absorption potential considering the demographic dividend in the country.

2. The share of manufacturing in the overall Indian economy is only about 15%. This is way lower than our neighboring countries in East Asia. There is an overall trade deficit when it comes to goods. The trade surplus in services hardly covers one-fifth of India's trade deficit in goods. The service sector alone cannot hope to answer this trade deficit. Manufacturing will have to chip in. The government is hoping to encourage businesses, both Indian and foreign to invest in manufacturing in India, which will help this sector and also generate employment in both skilled and unskilled levels.
3. To focus on manufacturing is that no other sector seems to have such a huge multiplier effect on economic growth in a country, according to various studies. The manufacturing sector has larger backward linkages and hence, growth in demand in manufacturing spurs growth in other sectors as well. This generates more jobs, investments, and innovation, and generally leads to a higher standard of living in an economy.

ADVANTAGES OF MAKE IN INDIA

The Make in India campaign has had several positive developments for the country. Below are some more benefits that have been derived from this mission.

1. Generating employment opportunities.
2. Increasing the GDP by expanding economic growth.
3. When FDI inflows become more, the rupee will be strengthened.
4. Small manufacturers will get a thrust, particularly when investors from abroad invest in them.
5. When countries invest in India, they will also bring with them the latest technologies in various fields.
6. Setting up manufacturing centres and factories in rural areas will foster the development of these areas as well.

CONCLUSION

The present 'Make in India' movement is based and inspired by the 'Swadeshi' movement. Being vocal for local is, in the real sense of the term, the recognition and promotion of the intrinsic strength of Indian

entrepreneurship. Hence Swadeshi and Make in India programs act as a bridge between robust localisation and inevitable globalisation, complementary to one another and not diametrically opposed. Though the names are different, intensions of both the movements are identical. Through Make in India, the government wants to revive the lagging manufacturing sector and spur the growth of the economy. The Government of India also intends to encourage businesses from abroad into investing in the country and also manufacture here, by improving the country's 'Ease of Doing Business' index. The long-term vision is to gradually develop India into a global manufacturing hub, and also boost employment opportunities in the country. Hence, some critics describe 'Make in India' movement as old wine in a new bottle. Constructive criticisms apart, both Swadeshi movement and Make in India program aims at making the country self-reliant and independent in terms of manufacturing goods needed by the people.

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