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# IMPACT

INNOVATIVE MANAGEMENT PRACTICES  
AND CREATIVE THINKING

A JOURNAL FOR MANAGEMENT PROFESSIONALS



# Greetings from **IMPACT**



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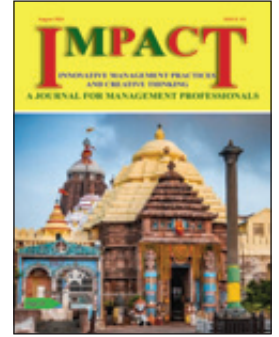
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Dear Readers,

### Reflections on July-August 2024: A World in Transition

As we look back on the significant events of July and August 2024, it becomes evident that the global landscape is undergoing profound changes, marked by political upheavals, economic shifts, and crucial developments in public health and international relations.

#### Political Shifts and Social Movements

In Bangladesh, a dramatic political shift occurred as Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina resigned amid violent protests. This resignation, followed by the establishment of an interim government with the military's backing, underscores the country's turbulent political climate and the critical need for a peaceful transition to democracy. Similarly, Nigeria witnessed widespread protests against bad governance and corruption, highlighting the populace's demand for accountability and better living conditions.

#### Economic Developments and Partnerships

India has been active on the economic front, with significant advancements in its fiscal policies and international partnerships. The country saw a notable increase in its GST collections, reflecting strong economic resilience. Additionally, the collaboration between India and Vietnam to develop the National Maritime Heritage Complex in Gujarat represents a deepening of maritime ties and cultural exchange.

#### Cultural and Heritage Recognition

On a more positive note, the global community celebrated significant cultural milestones. The recognition of Nelson Mandela's legacy sites as UNESCO World Heritage Sites was a poignant reminder of the enduring struggle for freedom and justice. Additionally, the awarding of Kashmir City with the World Craft City certificate by the World Crafts Council highlighted the rich cultural heritage and craftsmanship of the region, bringing international attention to its artistic traditions.

#### Looking Ahead

As we move forward, these events remind us of the interconnectedness of our world. Political stability, economic resilience, public health, and cultural heritage are all intertwined, shaping the global narrative. The challenges we face require collective action and a commitment to fostering peace, prosperity, and cultural understanding.

In conclusion, the events of July and August 2024 serve as a testament to the dynamic and evolving nature of our global society. As we navigate these times, it is imperative to remain informed, engaged, and proactive in addressing the myriad issues that impact our world.

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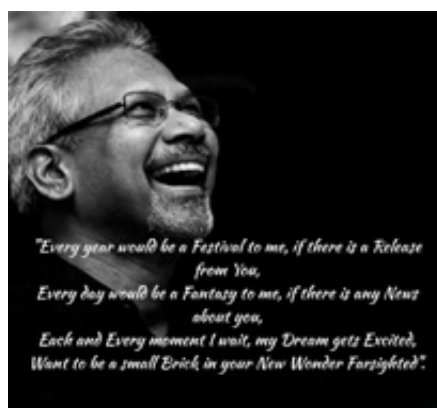
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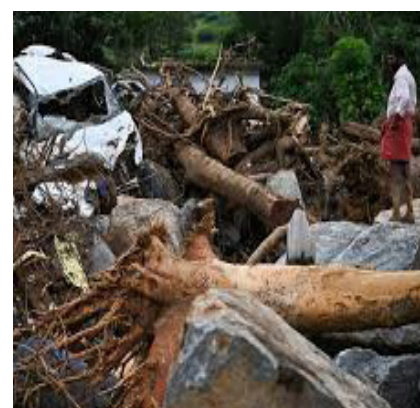
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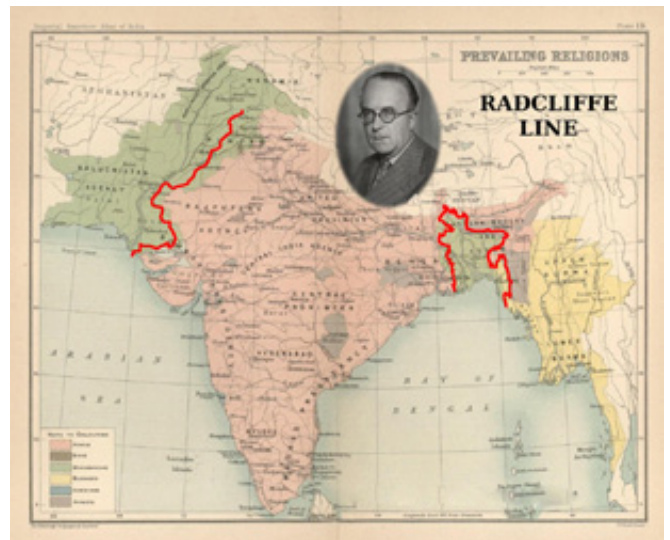
*Ms. Priyanka Chowdry*

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# Radcliffe Award

Soon after Lord Mountbatten became the Viceroy of India on 24th March 1947, Rajaji had a meeting with him and convinced him on the justification for the non Muslim areas of the Provinces of Punjab & Bengal to be retained in India. Thereafter, Lord Mountbatten assigned the task of bifurcating these two provinces (on the basis of the 1941 census) to his college mate Sir Cyril Radcliffe.

Arriving at India on 8th July 1947, Cyril Radcliffe found to his dismay, a tough task ahead of him, which had to be completed within about one month, before the partition of India on 15th August. He constituted the Punjab boundary Commission with four High Court Judges. Two Muslims, One



Hindu & One Sikh. They were Justices Mehr Chand Mahajan, Teja Singh, Din Mohammed &







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# The Times of India

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PRICE TWO ANNAS

## WAY OUT OF INDIAN DEADLOCK

### BRITAIN'S PLAN FOR SMOOTH TRANSFER OF POWER

#### Immediate Dominion Status Granted

#### PEOPLE ASKED TO DECIDE PARTITION QUESTION

#### Present Constituent Assembly Not Disturbed

**THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT HAVE PROMISED IMMEDIATE DOMINION STATUS TO INDIA—THIS YEAR—AND THEIR PLAN BY WHICH THEY WILL END THEIR 200 YEARS OF RULE PUTS FULL RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE FUTURE OF INDEPENDENT INDIA DIRECTLY ON THE SHOULDERS OF THE INDIAN PEOPLE, LEAVING THEM THE CHOICE OF PARTITION OR OF MAKING UP THEIR DIFFERENCES FOR UNITY'S SAKE.**

*Two-Fold Purpose*

The two-fold purpose of the plan, which was announced simultaneously to the Indian people and in both Houses of Parliament on Tuesday, is (1) to make possible the maximum degree of harmony and co-operation among the Indian

### MR. CHURCHILL'S SUPPORT

*Speedy Legislation*

Mr. Winston Churchill, speaking a surprise on Tuesday night, speaking in the House of Commons after Mr. Attlee had made the statement on India, he promised support to the legislation necessary to give parts of India full Dominion Status.

"It should not be right," he declared, "that such legislation should be delayed until it is so long that it is introduced and before it is passed into law."

*See Page 10*

### Only Practical Method

#### PREMIER'S VIEW

#### Plan Commended To Commons

LONDON, June 3.

The Prime Minister, Mr. Attlee, announced in the House of Commons today that the British offer of Dominion Status to one or two successor Indian authorities had been favourably received by all the three parties represented at the conference held by the Viceroy with the Indian leaders during the past few days.

The announcement was received with loud cheers.

Mr. Attlee, who was announcing the Government's plan for transfer of power to Indians, said that the British Government wished to make it clear that they have no intention of attempting to frame the ultimate constitution for India.

This was a matter for Indians

### MR. NEHRU COMMENDS PLAN TO NATION

#### Mr. Jinnah Hopeful Of League's Acceptance

#### SARDAR BALDEV SINGH CALLS IT "SETTLEMENT"

NEW DELHI, June 3.

BROADCASTING to the nation immediately after the announcement of the British Government's plan, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru said: "It is with no joy in my heart that I announce these proposals to you, though I have no doubt that this is the right course."

"The proposal to allow certain parts to secede, if they so wish, is painful for any of us to contemplate. Nevertheless I am convinced that our present decision is the right one even from the larger viewpoint."

Mr. Jinnah, who followed Pandit Nehru, said the League's final decision could only be taken by the League Council on June 5, but so far as he could gather, "on the whole, the reaction in League circles in Delhi has been hopeful."

Sardar Baldev Singh, who also spoke, commended the plan as the best under the circumstances.

Pandit Bhatia in his broadcast said: "Twenty nine months ago, soon after my assumption of office, I made to you from this place, I told you that we were on the march and the goal had still to be reached. There must my people and to have their troubles at first hand."

"Today I am speaking to you on another historic occasion when vital changes affecting the future of India is proposed. You have just heard an announcement on behalf of the British Government. This announcement lays down a procedure for self-determination in certain areas of India. It envisages on the



Lord Mountbatten.

### "UNIFIED INDIA BEST SOLUTION"

#### Viceroy's Appeal


### "THERE IS INDIAN CONSCIOUSNESS"

NEW DELHI, June 3.

The Viceroy, broadcasting tonight announced that His Majesty's Government had accepted his proposal that they should transfer power to one of two Governments of British India, each

Mohammed Munir. It was a matter of shame that the two children and wife of Justice Teja Singh were murdered by Muslims in Rawalpindi, soon after the boundary Commission for Punjab was constituted.

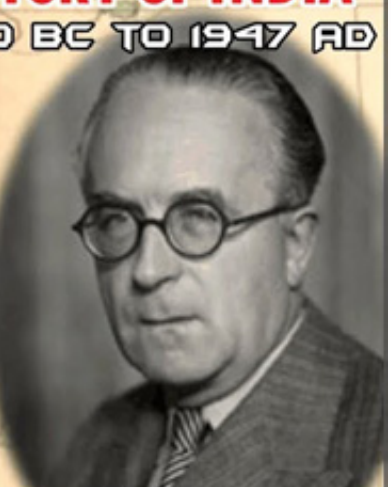
After the Radcliffe award was declared on 17th August 1947, two days after Independence, India continued to suffer from 'heart burn', because 'while Muslims formed about 53% of the total population of Punjab



## تاریخ ہندوستان

## HISTORY OF INDIA

1500 BC TO 1947 AD



ریڈ کلف ایوارڈ

## RED CLIFF AWARD 1947

# RADCLIFFE LINE



On the Bengal side, the heat burn was 'Chttagong Hill tracts', which were assigned to East Pakistan, though it had a non Muslim majority of 97% (most of them Buddhists), because it had no one to represent its case in the boundary Commission. These residents who enthusiastically hoisted the Indian National Flag on 15th August 1947, were forced to lower it and hoist the Pakistani Flag at gun point. This entire area is now part of Bangladesh. Though the Radcliffe award had given to India, East Punjab and West Bengal, it displayed several shortcomings, with which India had to silently put up. This in brief, is the story of the famous 'Radcliffe Award'.

in 1941, Pakistan received around 58% of the area of Punjab, including more of the most fertile parts'.

## Injustice in Radcliff award

- ◆ In Punjab a number of Muslim majority areas were snatched form Pakistan:  
Gurdaspur, Pathan Kot, Batala Tehsil, Ajnala Tehsil, Nokodar Tehsil, Jullundur Tehsil, Zira Tehsil and Ferozpur Tehsil.
- ◆ In Bengal a number of Muslim majority areas were snatched form Pakistan:  
Calcutta city, Murshidabad District, Nadia District

### Dr. H.V. Hande

*Former Health Minister of  
Government of Tamilnadu.  
Founder& Director of  
Hande Hospital.*







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# India at Olympics

India's relationship with the Olympics is a tale of passion, perseverance, and progress. From the nation's early participation to its contemporary achievements, the journey reflects India's evolving sporting culture and growing prowess on the global stage. Here, we explore India's history in the Olympics, notable achievements, challenges, and future prospects.

## Early Participation and Initial Struggles

India made its Olympic debut at the 1900 Paris Games, with athlete Norman Pritchard winning two silver medals in athletics. However, it wasn't until 1920 that India began sending a contingent



regularly. The early years were marked by struggles due to limited resources, inadequate infrastructure, and lack of professional training.

## The Golden Era of Hockey

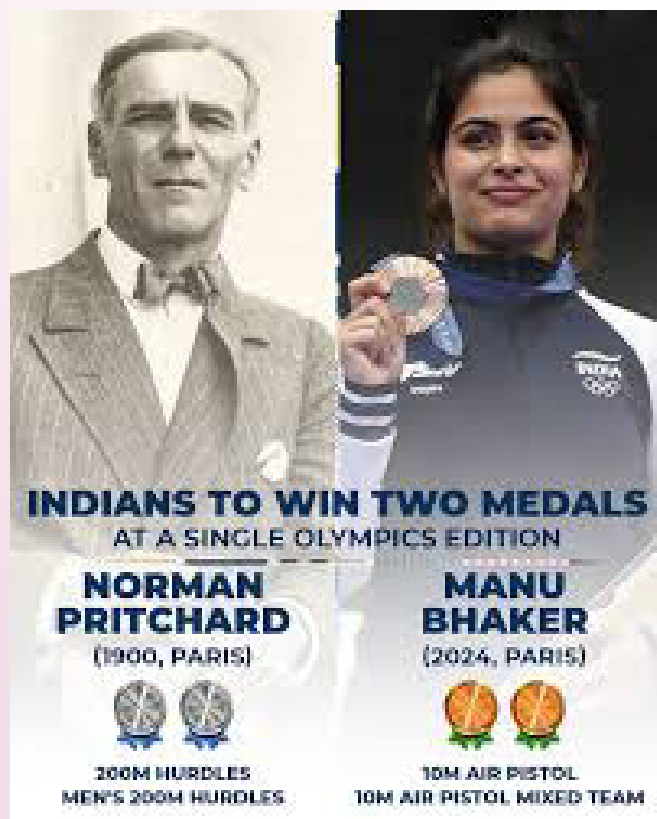
India's most remarkable success came in field hockey. The Indian men's hockey team dominated the Olympics from 1928 to 1956, winning six consecutive gold medals. Players like Dhyan Chand became legends, and India's supremacy in hockey became a source of national pride.

## Expanding Horizons: Beyond Hockey

While hockey remained India's stronghold, the country began making strides in other sports. In 1952, wrestler K.D. Jadhav won India's first individual Olympic medal, a bronze in wrestling. This marked the beginning of India's diversification into different sports.

## Post-Independence Challenges

After independence, India faced numerous challenges in maintaining its Olympic momentum. Political instability, economic constraints, and







a lack of focus on sports development led to a decline in performance. The country struggled to win medals, with sporadic successes in sports like boxing, shooting, and wrestling.

## The Turnaround: New Millennium Successes

The 21st century heralded a new era for Indian sports. Increased investment in infrastructure, better training facilities, and exposure to international competitions started yielding results.

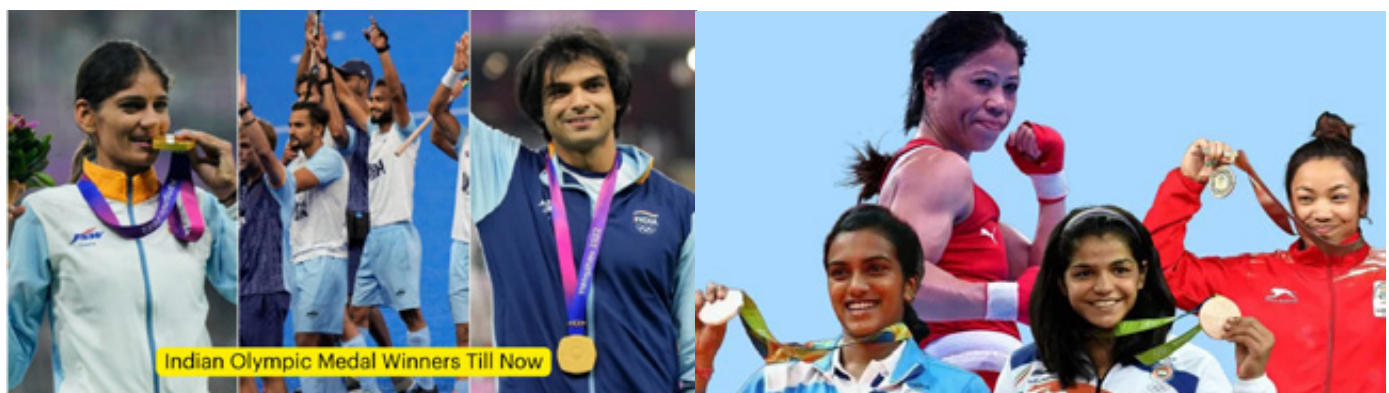
2000 Sydney Olympics: Weightlifter Karnam Malleswari won a bronze, becoming the first Indian woman to win an Olympic medal.

2004 Athens Olympics: Shooter Rajyavardhan Singh Rathore clinched a silver, signaling India's potential in shooting.

2008 Beijing Olympics: Shooter Abhinav Bindra made history by winning India's first individual gold medal. Boxer Vijender Singh and wrestler Sushil Kumar also won bronze medals, showcasing India's growing prowess in combat sports.

## Recent Achievements

2012 London Olympics: India won a record six medals, including silver medals by shooter Vijay Kumar and wrestler Sushil Kumar, and bronze medals in boxing, wrestling, and badminton.



Indian Olympic Medal Winners Till Now





2016 Rio Olympics: P.V. Sindhu (badminton) won a silver, and Sakshi Malik (wrestling) secured a bronze, highlighting the rise of women athletes.

2020 Tokyo Olympics: India achieved its best-ever performance with seven medals, including a historic gold by Neeraj Chopra in javelin throw. This success underscored India's emergence in track and field events.

## Key Factors Behind Recent Success

1. Increased Investment: Government initiatives like the Target Olympic Podium Scheme (TOPS) and private sector involvement have provided athletes with financial support and world-class training.

2. Professional Training: Access to international coaches, exposure to global competitions, and scientific training methods have significantly improved athlete performance.

3. Grassroots Development: Programs aimed at identifying and nurturing talent at a young age have started bearing fruit.

4. Role Models: Successful athletes like Abhinav Bindra, P.V. Sindhu, and Mary Kom have inspired a new generation of sports enthusiasts.

## Challenges Ahead

Despite recent successes, India faces several challenges:





**Infrastructure:** While improving, sports infrastructure still lags behind global standards in many areas.

**Talent Identification:** The vast pool of potential talent in rural areas often goes untapped due to lack of access and opportunities.

**Sports Culture:** Changing societal attitudes towards sports as a viable career option remains a work in progress.

**Support Systems:** Ensuring consistent support in terms of nutrition, mental health, and injury management is crucial for sustained performance.

### **Future Prospects**

India's Olympic journey is poised for further success, with several young athletes showing promise in various sports. The government's continued focus on sports development, coupled with increasing corporate sponsorships and a supportive sports culture, bodes well for the future.



### **Conclusion**

India's journey in the Olympics is a testament to its resilience and determination. From early struggles to contemporary successes, the nation's progress reflects a growing sports culture and a commitment to excellence. With sustained efforts and strategic investments, India is well on its way to becoming a formidable force in the global sporting arena.

Author: Ms. Parvathy Patel

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# Take Aways From The Union Budget 2024-25 Musings From An Insurance Pensioner

The entire nation heard the Union Finance Budget presented by our Honourable Finance Minister at the Parliament on July 23 2024.

As always, different view points emerged- some praising the Budget, some denigrating it and some in the via media.

Everybody is selfish. The question before each person is “What’s in it for me?”



For employees, another cheerful information- Employer’s contribution to NPS raised to 14% from 10% of the salary.

Credit of all tax deducted or collected to be allowed while computing TDS on salary.

Angel Tax on issue of shares of unlisted companies at a price exceeding fair market value abolished from April 1 2025.

Timelines for tax Reassessment to be reduced from 11 years to 5 years from end of relevant tax year.



Exemption limit for LTCG from Listed Securities raised to Rs 1.25 lacs from Rs 1 lac.

Import of three cancer drugs exempted from basic customs duty. Lung cancer drug earlier priced at Rs 204000 will get cheaper by Rs 19000.

BCD on cellphone and its charger/adaptor cut to 15% from 20%.

Custom duties on Gold and Silver reduced to 6% and that on Platinum to 6.4%.

## Pains

Amount received on buyback of shares to be taxed in hands of shareholders.

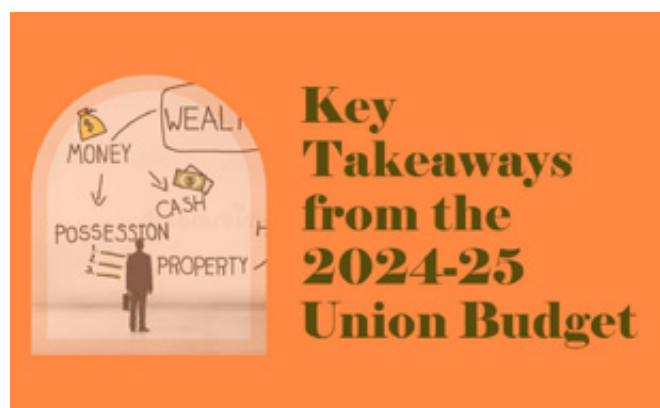
STCG on Listed Securities to be taxed at 20% from the earlier 15%.

TCS of 1% on luxury goods costing above Rs 10 lacs.

While LTCG rate for all categories of assets including house property and jewellery has been reduced to 12.5% from 20% , Indexation benefit is no longer available. So this could increase tax liability on sale of such assets.

## Sweetener for all Income Tax Payees

Tax slabs have been changed for those under the New Regime-



The 5% rate will apply from Rs 3 lacs to 7 lacs rather than Rs 6 lacs at present.

Similarly the 10% rate kicks in at Rs 10 lacs instead of Rs 9 lacs.

The result is a saving of further Rs 10000 for those with annual incomes of Rs 10 lacs or more. Those opting for the Old Regime will not get any of these. Their exemption limits etc remain the same. Standard Deduction also remains the same- Rs 50000.

The other tax slabs for income exceeding Rs 10 lacs under the New Regime remain the same.

## For Development Activities

Provision of Rs 1.52 lac crore for agriculture and allied sectors.

Upto Rs 10 lac support to students for domestic institution studies.

Rs 2.66 lac crore for rural development and infrastructure.

Three crore more houses under PM Awas Yojana.

Mudra loan limit enhanced to Rs 20 lacs from Rs 10 lacs.

12 Industrial Parks sanctioned.

11.11 lac crore rupees for Capital expenditure.

Rs 1 lac crore for Research and Innovations.

1000 Industrial Training Institutes to be upgraded.

Providing Internships to one crore youth, with interns receiving a stipend of Rs 5000 pr month and one time assidance of Rs 6000.

**UNION BUDGET 2024-25**

**Simplification of IT Act, Tax Reassessment, Capital Gains Taxation**

- Income-tax Act, 1961 to be made concise and easy to read
- Opening of Reassessment beyond three years from end of assessment year only if escaped income is ₹ 50 lakh or more, up to a maximum period of five years from end of assessment year
- Time limit for search cases to be reduced from 10 years to 6 years before year of search
- Short-term gains on certain financial assets to be taxed at 20%, Long-term gains on all financial and non-financial assets to be taxed at 12.5%
- Listed financial assets held for more than a year to be classified as long-term
- Vivad Se Vishwas Scheme, 2024 for resolution of certain income tax disputes pending in appeal

**Key Tax Announcements from Budget 2024**

**1. Standard Deduction Under the New Tax Regime:**

- Standard deduction for salaried employees: ₹50,000 to ₹75,000
- Deduction for family pensioners: ₹15,000 to ₹25,000

**2. Income Tax Slabs Under the New Tax Regime:**

Income Range	Tax Rate
Up to ₹3 lakh	Nil
₹3 lakh to ₹7 lakh	5%
₹7 lakh to ₹10 lakh	10%
₹10 lakh to ₹12 lakh	15%
₹12 lakh to ₹15 lakh	20%
Above ₹15 lakh	30%

**3. Capital Gains Taxes:**

- LTCG Tax rate is rationalised and fixed at 12.5% for all type of assets.
- STCG on certain financial assets increased to 20%

**4. Securities Transaction Tax (STT):**

- STT on sale of options: 0.0825% to 0.3%
- STT on sale of futures in securities: 0.01% to 0.02%

**5. Additional Tax Reforms:**

- TDS reduction on e-commerce transactions from 1% to 0.1%
- Abolished 'angel tax' for all investor classes

Rs 2 lac crores over 5 years for creating jobs for youth and for on skilling them.

The Insurance man in me- although I am a 78 year old pensioner- tells me that scope for our Field Force is enormous for improving their new business and thereby increasing the status of our Insurance Behemoth.

## Overall Picture

The overall mood in the country is excellent following the presentation of the Union Finance Budget and I am sanguine that LIC and its dedicated team will grab this opportunity to enhance their business so that we shall march towards our avowed objective of INSURANCE FOR ALL BY 2047.

JAIHIND.

**R. Venugopal**

*Mr. Venugopal has served in LIC of India from 1968 to 2006 for 38 years and retired as an Executive Director.*



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# Maniratnam's Deft Handling of Movie Storytelling

**M**aniratnam, one of India's most celebrated filmmakers, is renowned for his distinctive storytelling style that marries rich narratives with profound character development. His films often explore complex themes and social issues while maintaining a compelling cinematic experience. Here, we delve into the various facets of Maniratnam's storytelling prowess.

## 1. Narrative Structure and Style

Maniratnam's narrative structure often defies conventional linear storytelling. He is adept at employing non-linear narratives, weaving past and present seamlessly. This technique not only adds depth to the story but also keeps the audience engaged as they piece together the timeline. In films like "Alaipayuthey" and "Kannathil Muthamittal," flashbacks are used to enrich the present narrative, offering a more comprehensive understanding of the characters' motivations and backgrounds.

## 2. Character Development

Central to Maniratnam's storytelling is his meticulous character development. His protagonists are rarely one-dimensional; they are complex, flawed, and deeply human. For instance, in "Nayakan," the character of Velu Nayakan, played by Kamal Haasan, is both a feared gangster and a loving family man. This duality creates a

multifaceted character that resonates with the audience on multiple levels.

## 3. Realistic and Relatable Characters

Maniratnam's characters are grounded in reality, making them relatable to the audience. Whether it's the urban professionals in "Alaipayuthey," the rural rebels in "Raja," or the conflicted terrorists in "Dil Se," his characters often reflect the socio-political milieu of their times. This realism adds a layer of authenticity to his stories, making them more impactful.





## 4. Themes and Social Commentary

Maniratnam's films are known for their thematic depth and social commentary. He does not shy away from tackling controversial and complex issues such as terrorism, communalism, and political corruption. "Roja" and "Bombay" are prime examples, addressing the Kashmir conflict and Hindu-Muslim riots, respectively. These films not only entertain but also provoke thought and

discussion, reflecting Maniratnam's commitment to meaningful cinema.

## 5. Visual Storytelling

A master of visual storytelling, Maniratnam uses the camera not just to capture action but to convey emotions and themes. His collaboration with cinematographers like Santosh Sivan and P.C. Sreeram has resulted in some of the most







visually stunning sequences in Indian cinema. In “Thalapathi,” the play of light and shadow is used effectively to depict the moral ambiguity of the characters. The picturesque landscapes in “Roja” contrast starkly with the intense political drama unfolding, creating a visually compelling narrative.

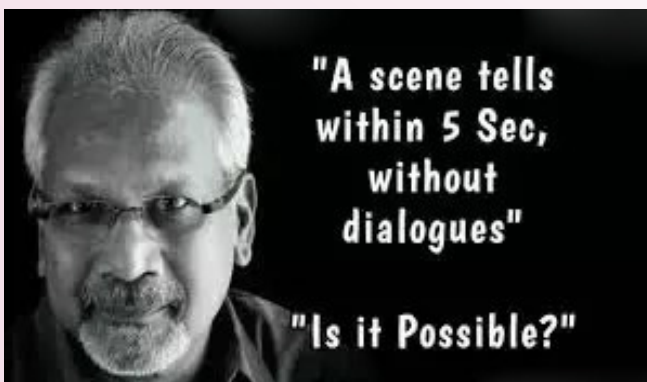
## 6. Music and Sound Design

Music plays a crucial role in Maniratnam’s storytelling. His long-standing collaboration

with composer A.R. Rahman has produced memorable soundtracks that are integral to the narrative. Songs in Maniratnam’s films are not mere interruptions but are woven into the fabric of the story, enhancing the emotional quotient. The haunting score of “Dil Se” and the evocative music of “Kannathil Muthamittal” are examples of how music amplifies the narrative impact.

## 7. Dialogues and Language

Maniratnam’s dialogues are often succinct yet powerful. They reflect the personality and background of the characters while driving the narrative forward. The use of regional languages and dialects adds to the authenticity of his films. In “Nayakan,” the Tamil dialogues lend a raw and gritty feel, while in “Dil Se,” the Hindi-Urdu exchanges capture the cultural context of the story.





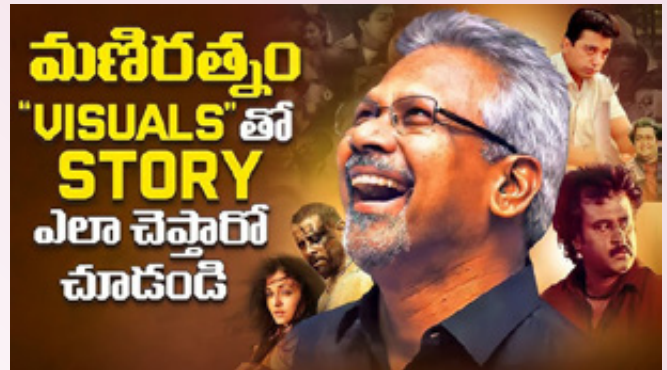
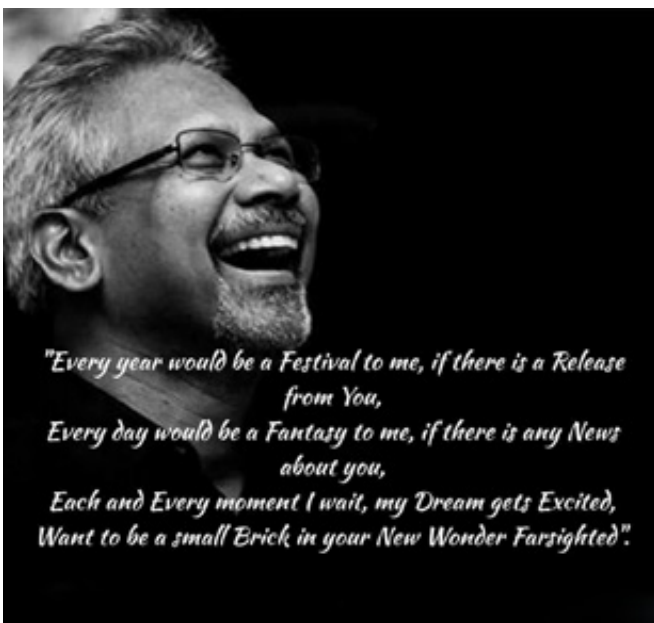


## 8. Subtlety and Nuance

Subtlety is a hallmark of Maniratnam's storytelling. He often leaves certain elements to the audience's interpretation, trusting them to read between the lines. This nuanced approach is evident in "Alaipayuthey," where the complexities of marital relationships are explored with a delicate touch. Similarly, in "Guru," the rise of the protagonist is depicted without overt moral judgment, allowing the audience to form their own opinions.

## 9. Strong Female Characters

Maniratnam is known for creating strong, independent female characters who play pivotal



roles in his narratives. From Revathi in "Mouna Ragam" to Aishwarya Rai in "Iruvar," his heroines are often portrayed with depth and agency. These characters are not mere accessories to the male protagonists but have their own arcs and contribute significantly to the story.

## 10. Symbolism and Metaphors

Maniratnam frequently employs symbolism and metaphors to add layers to his storytelling. The recurring motif of rain in "Mouna Ragam" symbolizes the emotional turmoil of the protagonist. In "Thalapathi," the use of fire and water elements underscores the internal conflict of the characters. These symbols enrich the narrative, offering a deeper viewing experience.

## Conclusion

Maniratnam's deft handling of storytelling is a confluence of narrative innovation, character depth, thematic boldness, and visual poetry. His films not only entertain but also challenge and inspire, leaving a lasting impact on the audience. By blending realism with artistic expression, Maniratnam has crafted a unique cinematic language that continues to influence and inspire filmmakers and audiences alike.

Author: Ms. Lakshmi Sastry

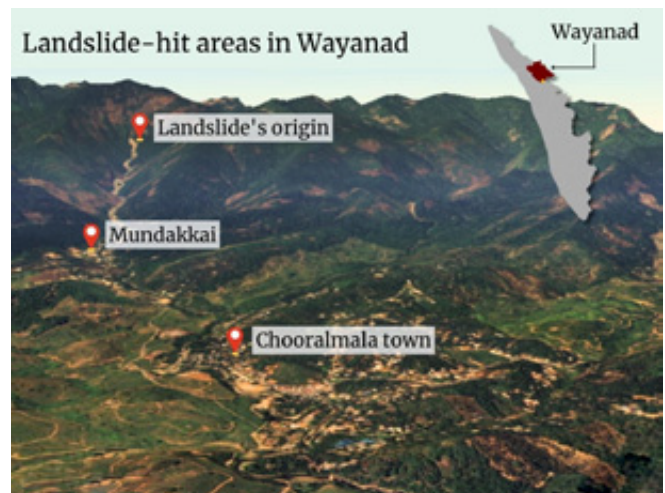
# Wayanad Nature's Disaster: Learning and Preparing for the Future

The recent landslides in Wayanad, Kerala, have been one of the most devastating natural disasters in the region's history. Triggered by incessant rainfall, the landslides have resulted in significant loss of life and property, with over 400 fatalities and many more injured or missing. This catastrophe underscores the urgent need to understand the causes and implement effective measures to mitigate future disasters.

## Understanding the Disaster

The landslides in Wayanad were not solely a natural phenomenon. While heavy rainfall was the immediate trigger, several underlying factors exacerbated the situation:

1. Deforestation and Land Use Changes: The extensive deforestation for agriculture, construction,



and tourism has destabilized the soil structure, making the region more susceptible to landslides.

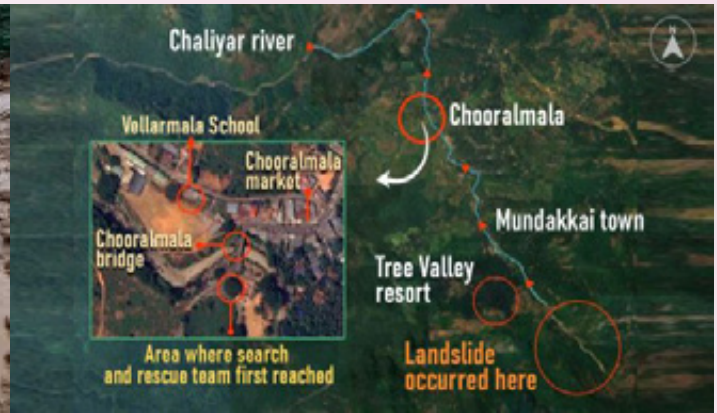
2. Unplanned Urbanization: Rapid, unplanned urbanization has led to the construction of buildings and infrastructure on unstable slopes without adequate safety measures.

3. Climate Change: Increasingly erratic weather patterns due to climate change have led to more intense and unpredictable rainfall, heightening the risk of such disasters.

## Coping with Future Disasters

To prevent similar tragedies in the future, a multifaceted approach is essential:





1. Improved Land Use Planning: Strict regulations must be enforced to control deforestation and manage land use sustainably. Reforestation and afforestation initiatives can help stabilize the soil and prevent erosion.

2. Early Warning Systems: Developing and deploying advanced early warning systems can provide timely alerts to residents about potential landslides, allowing for early evacuations and preparation.

3. Infrastructure Resilience: Building codes should be updated to ensure that new constructions in vulnerable areas are resilient to landslides. Retrofitting existing structures to withstand such events is also crucial.

4. Community Awareness and Training: Educating the local population about the risks and safety measures associated with landslides can significantly reduce casualties. Regular drills and training sessions should be conducted.

5. Environmental Conservation: Promoting and implementing environmental conservation practices can mitigate the effects of climate change and reduce the frequency of extreme weather events.

6. Policy and Governance: Strengthening policies related to disaster management and enforcing strict penalties for violations can ensure better adherence to safety norms. Collaboration between governmental and non-governmental organizations is vital for effective disaster management.

## Conclusion

The Wayanad landslides have been a tragic reminder of the destructive potential of natural disasters when compounded by human actions. While we cannot control the weather, we can certainly take steps to minimize its impact through careful planning, robust infrastructure, and community preparedness. By learning from this disaster and implementing comprehensive mitigation strategies, we can safeguard Wayanad and other vulnerable regions from future calamities.

Author: Mr.Suresh Vaidyanathan



# To measure the treasure

**Vidya Atai Mahadhana**

**Balake Kara Uparjana**

**T**he above lines are proverbial phrases in Odia and many other languages must have their own versions of the same message which can be understood as, Knowledge is the ultimate wealth or treasure and children should strive to earn it in life. Going little beyond, we had the explanation as how knowledge can neither be stolen nor destroyed by anyone and the more we share, the larger it becomes. I was crazy for those beautiful lines and used to wonder how such simple words are placed in appropriate positions and meaningful moral values are shared to us in simple lines. More than the hidden values, the visible words had attracted me more.

Then, as a kid, experience of those deeper values was zero but craze for those beautiful lines was enormous and knowingly or unknowingly I had chased the treasure called God which is completely invisible. From school days in place of chasing the visible treasures of living, I was busy enjoying the visible words, phrases and proverbs and without much consciousness I chased the invisible treasure of life hidden in those visible words.

Maybe our inner instincts connect us with the outer universe and at first unknowingly and then knowingly we reach our desired treasures. Sometimes our experiences become our ultimate treasure that no-one else can experience. And at other times, our invisible experiences take the shape of visible narrations that others experience by



reading our writings. And from time to time, when time has changed and so also our experiences, many forms of creations have resulted in visible cultural traits that include artforms, literature, sculptures, attire etc. And through them, those invisible values of life have found their expressions as visible living ways. And isn't it that, such travelling of knowledge is the greatest treasure of this universe?

Whatever maybe the language, the values remain the same and isn't it that language is a marvellous tool in the hands of human beings who treasure the experiences of life in various forms of writings from generation to generation. Those writings keep taking different forms though essentially the core message remains the same. Maybe that is how our scriptures and epics have travelled from time to time from region to region from religion to religion through different languages and are surviving among us in their latest online formats. Same goes with the other forms of art and craft activities through which they have travelled from an uncertain but certain past to till date. Recently the opening up of the treasure trove of the Puri Jagannath temple was in the limelight and isn't it that ancient or modern, temples are built by us and



even the visible treasures are also stored by us. From time to time, society is changing and so also the ways of administration.

Those ancient temples built by kings have stood as witnesses of the past glory and their safeguarding has become an essential aspect of every generation to preserve them as treasure. The ASI is engaged with that noble cause and helping our present government to restore various ancient temples and other monuments that stand as direct evidence of our past achievements. That's because the abilities are invisible aspects and they become visible only through such visible material manifestation. In a way we can say that, the socio cultural aspects and every other form

of human behaviour including our present day HR solutions are the means through which the invisible values of life are travelling across time and the materialistic developments are the means to experience those intangible values as tangible things. Man and material is the ultimate treasure that matter to those who mind it else nothing matters.

Everything matters as long as we mind it. Same ways treasures are different for different people as per their perceptions and the values they attach to it. For a yogi, the most precious and priceless gems are nothing but few stones and for a goldsmith those stones are the most precious treasures. For different people different things

## **RATNA BHANDAR**

**1** Jagannath temple's bank deposits would be around Rs 600 crore

**2** Nobody knows the exact quantity of gold and silver of the temple, and their market value

**3** Around 128kg gold ornaments and 221kg silver utensils stored in Ratna Bhandar were inventoried in 1978

**4** Gold donated by devotees to the temple is being deposited in a nationalised bank. Sources said its weight would be only around 3kg



**5** There is 60,426 acres of land owned by Lord Jagannath in Odisha and 395.2 acres of land in six other states (West Bengal 322.9 acres, Maharashtra 28.2 acres, MP 25.1 acres, Andhra 17 acres, Chhattisgarh 1.7 acres and Bihar 0.3 acre). Its valuation has not been made so far

matters in different ways and accordingly those things become precious treasures for them. For me family and friends, life, love, knowledge and time are the most precious treasures. Maybe, upon losing something that gives us the utmost pain can be a way to find out what is the most precious treasure for us. And at the same time it is advised that attachment is the main cause of sorrow. So is it possible to stay detached from everything or is it possible to stay attached to everything yet stay happy upon their detachment!!

Maybe that is the ultimate treasure we can try to acquire while being alive. We all know that our stay on earth is temporary yet our attachments are permanent. From the time of conception, we experience this process of attachment and detachment almost regularly. At first the zygote gets attached to the uterine wall of the womb

through the umbilical cord and after ten months the infant gets detached from there and come out to get attached to the mother's lap and from there the kid gets detached to get attached to the mother earth's surface. Gradually the physical attachment and detachment gives way to the psychological attachment and detachment. As kids we are madly attached with our parents and family members and as we grow slowly the attachment shifts to friends, teachers, then spouse and our children.

Somewhere we get detached from our parents and get attached to our children. Every transition leaves us with some amount of pain and pleasure. Along with the passing on process of bonding, the growth of "me and mine" also passes on. This, me and mine, determines everything that matters to us including the treasures. The instinct of attachment and holding together leads to the development of groups and as the group increases in size, the forces of detachment grows and so also the various aspects of our society leading to specialisation in every aspect. One such aspect is power.

The power to survive, the power to control, the power to rule, the power to decide things for ourselves and others. And those who are in charge of those essential things needed for survival like food, clothes and shelters are the ones able to control many things including many people. And from power comes the aspect of greed and attachments. It's good to be attached to our parents, our family, our friends and our organisations but our greedy attachment is not good, neither for us nor for others.

Just like the chain reaction of the nuclear fission, the society has undergone social fission and from two nuclei of male and female, several families have grown over the years and through their survival process the simple society like those of the tribal people have undergone sea changes and we all are witnessing a time of ours when it's like the explosion. Every aspect of human endeavour has reached the explosion stage including the hunger

## WHAT'S RATNA BHANDAR

The Odisha government has initiated a probe after it was revealed in April that keys to Jagannath temple's inner treasury had gone missing

### CASE OF THE MISSING KEYS

- Inner chamber keys have disappeared
- Temple's treasury Ratna Bhandar has two chambers – outer and inner
- Outer chamber's 3 rooms are in use
- No one's entered inner chamber after 1964
- Inner chamber has three keys to three doors, now missing
- It was opened in 1964 and an attempt was made in 1985
- In 1985, ASI officials heard the hissing of 'poisonous snakes' from inside the treasury after opening two of the three doors. Abandoned attempt
- Servitors (caretakers) believe opening the mysterious inner chamber will bring on disaster



### WHAT'S IN THERE?

- Inventory of outer and inner chambers was last prepared in 1978
- 128 kg gold ornaments kept in outer and inner chambers
- 150 varieties of gold jewellery including 3 haridakanti malas weighing around 120 tolas, kept in outer chamber, or Bahar Bhandar
- King Anaga Bheema Deb, temple records say, donated 2.5 lakh madha gold (1 madha = half tola = 5.8g) for Lord Jagannath's jewellery (1,450kg)



for power to control others. And in pursuit of this power hunger, religious sentiments are used as the weapons to control the minds of the people. More than the quintals of gold of the Lords, Lord Jagannath has been the treasure trove for every Odia person.

In the recently concluded national election, the ruling BJP tried its best to make its presence felt in the non BJP states including Odisha and Tamil Nadu. In Tamilnadu, it didn't achieve success but in Odisha, it formed the government. One of the political promises in Odisha was to open the four gates of the Puri Jagannath temple and opening up of the treasure trove or Ratna Bhandar of the Shree mandir. It's a little difficult task to become a political analyst as people sitting in power wear several masks and as an analyst if we reveal the real face of our rulers, our survival becomes difficult. If we analyse things that favour the ruling people, we don't do justice to our job. If I say,

Work is Worship, Duty is God, how to worship that God as a true analyst. As a chemical analyst, if we reveal the true nature of compounds and



chemicals, it will be solving mysteries of material world, but if we reveal the true nature of our rulers, our existence will become a mystery.

As soon as the BJP came to power, all other three doors including the Vyghra Dwara or the Tiger Gate of the West, the Aswa Dwara or the Horse Gate of the South and the Hasthi Dwara or the Elephant Gate of the North were opened up along with the main Gate the Singha Dwara or the Lion's Gate of the East which was kept open after the COVID -19 when all the four gates were made closed. As per the sources of the temple administration, except the Lions Gate, the other three gates were kept closed post pandemic

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# JAGANNATH TEMPLE'S 'RATNA BHANDAR' REOPENED



to facilitate the Shree Mandir Heritage Corridor Project which was the brainchild of Sri V K Pandian who had started his bureaucratic career as an young IAS officer joining as the sub collector of Dharamgarh in the Kalahandi district in the post-super cyclone hit Odisha in the year 2000. And till October 2023, this young IAS officer, husband of another IAS officer Sujata R K, went on to become one of the most successful beaurocrat achieving several laurels like the Helen Keller Award, the National Award from the President of India, the President's Award from the International Hockey Federation etc. In 2011, he was appointed as the Private Secretary of the ruling party president and Chief minister of Odisha Sri Naveen Patnaik ji and continued to hold the post till October 2023 when he took voluntary retirement from bureaucratic life and was appointed as the chairman of the 5T (Transformation Initiative) project with the rank of a cabinet minister and in November 2023 he was inducted formally into the ruling BJD party in presence of its party president.

I happened to watch the ambitious dam projects of the western Odisha in the National Geographic

Channel and was watching this bureaucrat and his team narrating the entire process. At the same time, once I was watching one interview of another bureaucrat now member of parliament Srimati Aparajita Sarangi who took retirement from bureaucratic life and joined BJP in Odisha and one of her arguments was how in the developing and transforming Odisha, most of the contracts particularly the mine lease contracts are given away to the southern contractors and not from Odisha.

Personally, now I am connected with Odisha through my family and friends and physically living in Tamilnadu interacting with the local Tamil friends more than the Odia people in my state. At personal level, these bureaucrats and political leaders are far separated from us (the public) though they are the public executives and the public representatives. Hence our knowledge of their abilities and their intentions are very minimal like some hidden treasure to be discovered. Yet, their impacts are felt till the grassroot levels. And those who get attached with this system of power finds it a little difficult to get detached.



Are our leaders so dedicated towards serving us that they find it very difficult to get detached from the system of power? And are elections in our country happening in the free and fair manner that put our leaders in position to serve us(rule us)? And the election agendas curated by some of the finest brains of this land include caste and religion as the most important factors. Yes religion and caste consciousness is close to our hearts and they are used as tools to break our hearts. For living we need the basic things and those basic things are no more distributed in their just ways.

Maybe, they were never distributed that way. And amidst those inequalities, the qualities of good life have unfolded themselves as the hidden values or the hidden treasures to be pondered while surviving in the visible unjust society. So, our political parties will be ever evolving with their propagandas be it building the Ram Mandir or the Sri Mandira Heritage Corridor Project or opening up of all the four dwaras of the Jagannath temple or its treasure trove.

When the government is changing, crores of public money is spent in abandoning some buildings and creating newer ones as symbol of victory which had happened in the past and now the present



government is busy digging out many past glories buried under monuments like the case of Gyanvaapi Masjid and many more. And in Odisha the current government made it a point to open up the inner chamber of the Ratna Bhandar whose key was in the treasury but the key that was brought from the collector office didn't open the locks and as per the SOP, the locks were broken, the precious treasures were shifted to a temporary room inside the temple and the inventory work is in progress while the ASI team is engaged in repairing work.

Well as per some of the experts and previous temple incharge, there is another secret chamber but the current team has not given any such clues. Whatever maybe the political strategy, the current visible reality is that in Uttar Pradesh, the Yogi Adityanath government has seen the downfall despite a grand ceremonial political stunt ( as per the political analysts) like grand opening of the Ram Mandir prior to the general election and the downfall of five consecutive time serving BJD government in Odisha despite the public Jodo Rathayatra where along with the photos and deities of lord Jagannath, the photos of V K Pandian had raised violence in several corners of Odisha.

This highly successful beaurocrat who left behind bureaucratic life and joined BJD and became Naveen Patnaik ji 's favourite took retirement from politics following the setback faced by BJD and the BJP's vitriolic campaign against Naveen Patnaik over his health conditions (considered as one of the main reason of success for BJP in Odisha) is now witnessing him as a much active Leader of Opposition in the Odisha Assembly. Sometimes the political strategies work as boomerang against the people in power and whatever maybe their hidden intentions, some good things happen externally. As I had mentioned the values of life travel across time through different forms of materialistic manifestations, the current efforts to make an inventory of the treasure trove of Lord Jagannath will fulfil one timely requirement like preparation



of a digital catalogue as we are in the era of Internet and AI.

The political losses to the people who were in power would put them to introspect and dig the personal treasure hidden within their hearts as their intentions and the true leaders will rise like a phoenix and the not so true leaders will get treasured to be rediscovered by people in the time yet to come. And somewhere having shown my craze for words, I am engaged in the task of putting those words in place, expressing my experiences which are my ultimate treasure trove and just like the story of the little shepherd from the town of Andalusia in Spain, who had the dream of a treasure trove hidden somewhere in the Pyramids of Egypt, who dared to cross the Gibraltar and the Sahara desert to reach the Pyramids of Egypt where there was no such treasure box but a gang of dacoits who looted him and thrashed him telling that they are not fools like him to cross the Sahara desert and the Gibraltar to reach the old fort area in Andalusia where, they had heard about a hidden treasure box, and the boy after reaching his place when recollected the place mentioned by the dacoits and dig out the same area happened to find out the treasure trove he had in his dream, I have found my treasure in my writings and my craze for such beautiful lines has become zero and those experiences of hidden values which was zero has become enormous.

Lord Jagannath is the ultimate treasure and within his incomplete avatars lie the complete essence of life and universe. His treasure troves are enormous but he is satisfied with the green leafy vegetables

offered by Vidura or the tuber crops offered by Jara Sabara or the Poda pitha offered by the old lady. Public may not get entry to those restricted treasure trove areas of the temple, but the treasure himself comes out of his temple for his devotees.

Let the treasure trove inventory be completed successfully and the stories of the Lord keep travelling across time. As per the belief systems, those entering the temple from the Singha Dwara gets moksha and the Vyaghra Dwara symbolises power, the Aswa Dwara demands one to give up lust before entering through that gate and the Hasthi Dwara is a symbol of Prosperity. As all the Dwaras are opened up for the general public, let the devotees find their ways to their treasure trove Lord Jagannath.

I have found my treasure trove in my family and friends, in getting back my lost loves, in my writings while experiencing him as my friend philosopher and guide. Lord Jagannath is treasured in the heart of every Odia person and also in the hearts of those non Odia people who have found their treasures in him. I have shared my experiences which no-one can snatch from me and it's growing when I am sharing with the beloved readers. I

Indeed knowledge is the treasure and experiential knowledge is the ultimate treasure trove. I am happy, I have tried to earn it a bit.

Jai Jagannath...

**Ms. Chinmayee**

*Am a full-time homemaker and a self-taught passionate artist and an amateur writer looking forward to take my passions to a professional level. I have written certain situational stanzas in English and an amateur autobiography of my life experiences from 1999 to 2021 in Odia titled Baishi Pabache meaning on the 22nd step.*





# The Escalating Israel-Hamas Conflict: August 2024

## Background and Recent Developments

The Israel-Hamas conflict, which reignited in October 2023, continues to escalate as it enters its tenth month. The conflict has seen significant casualties and destruction, with over 1,100 Israelis killed and more than 200 taken captive in the initial Hamas attack on October 7, 2023. The Gaza Strip has been heavily bombarded by Israeli forces, resulting in significant loss of life and infrastructure damage.

## Assassinations and Leadership Changes

In recent weeks, notable developments have further fueled tensions. The assassination of Ismail



Haniyeh, a prominent Hamas leader, in Tehran by suspected Israeli forces has been a critical flashpoint. Following his death, Yahya Sinwar has been appointed as the new political leader of Hamas. Israel views Sinwar as a significant threat, given his history and leadership within the organization.





## International Reactions

The United States, while reiterating its support for Israel's right to defend itself, has urged both Israel and Iran to avoid actions that could further escalate the conflict. U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken emphasized the need for de-escalation and cautioned against actions that could lead to broader regional instability.

## Military Actions and Diplomatic Efforts

The Israeli Defense Forces (IDF) have continued their operations against Hamas targets, including

recent airstrikes that killed key Hamas operatives responsible for attacks on Israeli territory. These strikes have been part of Israel's broader strategy to neutralize Hamas's military capabilities.

Diplomatic efforts have also been ongoing. A notable meeting in Cairo involved Israeli and Egyptian officials discussing potential negotiations related to the conflict. Despite the high tensions, there have been some reports of progress in these talks, particularly concerning the Philadelphi Corridor and the Rafah crossing, which are critical for the movement and supply lines in and out of Gaza.







## Regional Implications

The conflict has significant regional implications, particularly concerning Iran's involvement and support for Hamas. The assassination of Haniyeh in Tehran has brought Iran directly into the spotlight, with Iranian officials vowing a response. This has led to increased diplomatic activity, with neighboring countries like Jordan playing a crucial

role in mediating and attempting to prevent further escalation).

## Looking Ahead

The path forward remains uncertain. The international community continues to push for a ceasefire and long-term resolution to the conflict. However, with ongoing military actions, leadership changes within Hamas, and the complex geopolitical landscape of the Middle East, achieving peace remains a challenging prospect.

The situation demands a coordinated international response to address the underlying issues fueling the conflict and to provide humanitarian aid to the affected populations in Gaza and Israel. Without such efforts, the cycle of violence is likely to continue, causing further suffering and instability in the region.

Author: Ms Priyanka Chowdry



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