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Rising India's Green and Sustainable Growth Agenda

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Prime Minister Modi's theme of Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam for the G20 starkly underscores the challenges faced by the global community. We are currently dealing with the effects of climate change, which have worsened due to decades of inaction, as well as worries about a future global recession. Yet, though the world embraces climate action, these issues remain interconnected. The costs associated with taking proactive steps to phase out non-renewables and undertake heavy green investments are juxtaposed against the cost of living, the debt crisis, populist policies, and liquidity tightening across major economies.

The need to develop modern jobs and human capital capable of navigating the maze-like world that is rapidly changing adds to the difficulty of combating climate change. At the launch of the report "A Green and Sustainable Growth Agenda for the Global Economy," Bhupinder Yadav, the Union Minister for Forests, Environment, and Climate Change, and Suman Berry, Vice Chairperson for Niti Aayog, acknowledged this.

Navigating these choppy waters requires training to understand these complexities and work within the governance structures to enable meaningful change. Therefore, we require individuals who are not only adept at undertaking public policy analysis to identify the best policy measures but are also capable of guiding national policy positions in international negotiations.

These individuals must be experts in the science of public policy. This requires critical thinkers who can work out the root cause of policy challenges. An approach of this kind requires an acute understanding of design thinking principles. To understand how the issue affects end users or citizens, one would need to go in depth. The policymaker must think about the problem from their perspective. After all, the goal must be to make the lives of each citizen better off without making anyone worse off.

However, our society's byzantine structure adds new dimensions to working on policy problems. For instance, often, citizens act in a manner that appears contrary to their interests. Sitting in state

capitals, it is easy to dismiss this behaviour as people not knowing what is good for them and attributing it to illiteracy. Yet, that's not the case. Individuals are also influenced by invisible forces that affect their behaviour. These are the socio-political and economic realities that people live in. Therefore, training in these sciences and the ability to strategize how individuals, communities, and organisations will respond to situations also seem essential.

Lastly, any policy that affects the life of any citizen must also be based on evidence. Therefore, not only is the training in data collection, analysis, and evaluation essential, but so is the training in being able to ask the right questions. If one makes a list of things that a public policy professional should know, that list would carry on to multiple pages.

However, do we have enough time to train our professional bureaucracy in all these skills? Many of our states have already crossed below the replacement fertility rate, with others soon to follow suit. We are running out of time to reap the benefits of the demographic dividend. As a result, Amitabh Kant, India's G20 Sherpa, suggested that we need to increase capacity in institutions, systems, and human resources.

This realisation has indeed taken seed in the government's agenda, as evidenced by Prime Minister Modi's ardent push to build capacities across the civil services for a rising India. He has promoted lateral entry and launched initiatives such as Mission Karmayogi and autonomous bodies such as the Capacity Building Commission to improve the training of civil servants. As we build capacity, we must also be equally conscious of the training we want to impart to the next-gen of policy leaders, both inside and outside the traditional bureaucracy.

Equally challenging is the fact that the policy professionals that India produces will also have to cope with a world and society undergoing rapid transformations. Therefore, they need to be prepared to anticipate future policy challenges and work on addressing the root causes before they become severe. Thus, the training has to be swift while enabling the participants to critically think about issues and situations. They would need to be equally adept at dealing with the problems of

the samaaj, sarkaar, and bazaar—an approach that cuts across traditional disciplines, sectors, and knowledge principles.

However, we have only addressed supply-side issues. Industry, academia, and the government would need to realise the value that public policy professionals bring. They would be ideal candidates to engage the ecosystem in achieving a green and sustainable growth agenda while also adequately representing the interests and concerns of the stakeholders- be it the industry, the citizens, or a third party affected by the unintended consequences of the actions.

The merit of India's demand for differentiated responsibilities is undeniable. However, our ability to operationalize it hinges on whether we can adequately engage various strands of society, both domestic and international, to achieve the common goal of climate change mitigation. Our success will ultimately rest on creating a professional public policy army that can assist, advise, and augment our widely understaffed and under-resourced bureaucracy in this ever-transforming world.

Objective: Build a case for the need for public policy professionals in SSB (samaaj, sarkaar and bazaar)

First step: convince the reader that public policy is involved in all the important areas/ problems/ challenges that India faces/ needs to deal with

Second step: important people have also said so (quotes etc) and the govt is making efforts (CBC etc)

Third step: But these need to be augmented, better focused etc skills necessary, supply and demand

Conclusion:

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