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Webinar Report

“Self-reliant India: Challenges and Opportunities”

GUHAR organized the national webinar titled **“Self-reliant India: Challenges and Opportunities”** on 26th July 2020 in collaboration with A.N.S. College, Barh (Patna), Bihar (Patliputra University, Patna). It witnessed a footfall of young researchers, scholars, professors, and students from all across the. There were one hundred and forty participants. The seminar proceedings are as written below.

The webinar began with introductory opening remarks by organizing secretary Mr. Deepak Kumar. He introduced the webinar topic before the gathering. He dwelled upon the importance of achieving self-reliance in the era of globalization.

The welcome address was delivered by Mr. Divyanshu Shangari, Secretary (GUHAR) with much zeal and zest, he addressed the flamboyant audience and instilled in them more vigor and vitality. He briefed the participants about the history of GUHAR and various substantial efforts being made by the organization to further the cause of educating children belonging to weaker socio-economic strata in the villages. Furthermore, he acknowledged that amidst the tensions with china at the borders, the vocal for local initiatives or self-reliance by PM is a welcome step. It has given us a golden opportunity to reinvent Bharat on its own principles, values, etc. The recent upsurge of the ‘Boycott China’ movement could hit the right spot if we adopt the Swadeshi model of development in our country.

Introductory remarks were given by Dr. Indrajit Kumar Roy, Principal, A.N.S. College, Bihar. He appreciated the PM Modi initiative of achieving a self-reliant Bharat. However, he also outlined certain challenges like rigidity in rules, red-tapism, corruption, etc. in achieving self-reliant India. Sincere efforts need to be undertaken to revive the economy, giving employment to the migrant workers, revenue generation, etc. He asked the gathering to follow the slogan ‘Trust Thyself’ in order to fulfill our objectives of a superpower India.

The gathering was then addressed by the Chief Guest of the webinar, Dr. Balram Pani, Dean of Colleges, University of Delhi. In his address, he outlined the significance of self-reliant India. This pandemic has given us an opportunity to ensure an equitable and inclusive growth in India. This could be possible only when we utilize the advantage of our demographic dividend available in India. 65% of the young population below the age of 35 gives us the advantage of achieving sustainable growth in India. He argued that following independence, we developed our industries which enhanced our potential and kept us ahead among the developing countries. However, this development of industries stopped during the 1970s and 1980s, due to which we lagged behind at the global level. We missed out third industrial revolution i.e. manufacturing of electronic items and gadgets. Investments in Research and development increased with the initiatives taken by our Honorable PM after 2014. Today we are in a position to manufacture most of our defense equipment ourselves with little dependence on others. He suggested that only with self-belief, we can become self-reliant. PM's initiative for vocal-for-local needs to be further strengthened and encouraged.

The whole session was chaired by Prof. Pavnesh Kumar, Professor, Dean, School of Commerce and Management Sc., Mahatma Gandhi Central University, Motihari, Bihar. He appreciated GUHAR's initiative for organizing the webinar and bringing together a blend of industry and academia. Self-reliant India could also be termed as Confident India. He said India will be looked up to as a great leader in the post-Covid world because 60% of vaccines in the world are manufactured by India. We are already in the process of self-reliant India. For instance, in 2014, we had only 2 manufacturing units of smartphones but today we have 268 manufacturing units. Self-reliance is not Isolation rather it means that India is now in a position to lead the world economy. For this, he suggested many steps like - demographic dividend needs to be utilized to the fullest, farmers need to be given all necessary support system, one district one product schemes needs to be promoted, skill upgrading of workers needs to be done in order to prevent migration, concepts like Smart Village must be promoted, etc. These initiatives will go a long way in ensuring a self-reliant Bharata.

The first speaker Mr. Ajay Sharma, Assistant Secretary General, ASSOCHAM, reflected upon the challenges posed by the pandemic and how India has been able to combat it in its own ways. The idea of self-reliance was reflected in the fact that with the announcement of Aatma nirbhar package on 12th May, we started manufacturing our own PPE kits. Moreover, we also started exporting this PPE kit to other countries. This reflected the inherent potential and capabilities India has. The government has focused on the revival of the economy, modern infrastructure, technology, and demographic dividend, creating demand within the country. ASSOCHAM has been mandated with creating an ecosystem for leather industries. India has also attracted 17 billion dollars of FDI during this pandemic. He pointed out different measures for migrant workers, agricultural reforms, working capital loans for farmers, collateral-

free loans for MSMEs, etc. All these measures will go a long way in establishing a self-reliant India.

The next speaker Dr. Alok Kumar Chakrawal, Professor, Department of commerce and business administration, Saurashtra University, Gujarat, spoke on Make in India Drive and Self-reliant India. He said whatever is produced in India is Swadeshi. Instead of R & D, the time has come to focus on D & D (Develop and design). On 24th November 2014, the current government launched make in India drive. It said all foreign companies must start manufacturing in India. Many companies like Renault, Honda, Volkswagen agreed and started manufacturing in India. He said things are getting back to normal now. The unemployment rate has come down to 7.78% which was the same before the pandemic. The PM emphasized on tapping the vibrancy in the population. Vibrancy means asking all citizens to come forward and contribute to establishing self-reliant India. Make in India.

The next speaker Dr. Dinesh Chahal, Assistant Professor, Department of education, central university of Haryana, spoke on 'Aatma se Aatma nirbhar Bharat'. In order to become self-reliant, we need Shikshit Bharat, Swalambi Bharat, Sanskari Bharat, Samarth Bharat, and Shaant Bharat. Individual need to be honest, hardworking, visionary, and compassionate in order to fulfill the objective. Green culture needs to be adopted instead of greed culture. Use and grow culture needs to be promoted. These measures will make us self-reliant in all ways.

Vote of thanks was given by Dr. Vinay Kumar, Head Department of History, A.N.S. College, Barh (Patna), who provided a fitting closure to the webinar. Extending his gratitude to the various esteemed speakers who made the webinar a truly enriching experience for one and all present, Dr. Kumar gratefully recognized the contributions made by each and every speaker to the issues on Aatma Nirbhar Bharat and its many tangents. Furthermore, acknowledging the many hours of tireless work and efforts put into making this webinar a success, he extended his heartfelt gratitude to the organizers Mr. Deepak Kumar, Mr. Divyanshu Shangari, Mr. Kaustubh Singh, Mr. Nitanshu, Mr. Lovekesh and others without whom the webinar could not have turned out to be the success that it achieved.



Deepak Kumar
Organising Secretary
President (GUHAR)