

ANALYSIS OF THE UPA GOVERNMENT'S PERFORMANCE (2004-14)

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ABSTRACT

The investigator critically analyses the a range from non-performance to the best performing government since independence., it is equally important to realize that all performed Governments have set some definite trend keeping social and economic objectives set forth. LPG era made a drift towards services which made Indian Economy gather momentum and faster growth ever experienced.

Now the time has come to elucidate the happenings in growth between two time periods 2004-05 & 2013-14. The theme here is on analysis of macro performance of Indian Economy during United Progressive Alliance (UPA) Governments. Only three time periods are considered with truncation in between. The time slots are: 2004- 2014.

The method of comparative statics is used to have a trend analysis. There is, however, appropriate linkage provided to events that happened at domestic and beyond National Boundaries. Trends, break ups and continuity are identified to project wherever necessary. The investigator sets the various indicators are considered for analysis like Education, Economic Expansion and Growth, Foreign Direct Investment, Production of Food Grains (in MTs), Index of Industrial Production (%), Electricity Generation GDP, Gross Savings (% of GDP), Centrally Sponsored Schemes, Capital Formation (% of GDP), Per Capita Net National Income at current prices, Foreign Exchange reserves US\$ Billion etc.

INTRODUCTION:

As India prepared to elect members of the sixteenth Lok Sabha opinion polls showed, Congress is heading for a rout. Recent economic news about faltering growth, rising prices, weakening currency and burgeoning deficit does little to improve its prospects. An apparent defeat and weariness hanged over the party as it seek a third term. The general impression going around has been that UPA has landed the country in an economic mess. There were two things to note about the perception, which had become conventional wisdom. First, there was a sharply contradictory view about what UPA did wrong.

Further, Congress squandered resources on populist schemes like NREGA and NFSA, reversed liberalisation and starved growth enabling sectors like infrastructure. The only consensus that gained the ground has been that UPA was an economic disaster and must go. It was a period during which growth accelerated, Indians started saving and investing more, the economy opened up, foreign investment came rushing in, poverty declined sharply and building of infrastructure gathered pace.

Welfare Across all Sections in India-The governments led by Congress have been always been concerned for the welfare of the masses. Poverty elimination and inclusive growth remained the top most priorities for the welfare of every state. To meet these socio-developmental objectives, the Congress governments in India have introduced a number of welfare schemes with special emphasis on helping the poor, destitute women, children, Schedule Castes

and Schedule Tribes, other Backward Classes, physically handicapped, widows and orphans, literate and illiterate poor, rural and urban, so on and so forth.

Better Education-Throughout the Congress led dispensations in India, it has given priority to the education sector. For this the UPA government spent, huge amounts in this sector. The expenditure on education and other related departments increased by Rs.1,45,810.7 Crore i.e., by 151 per cent as compared to only Rs.27500.34 Crore i.e., by 45 per cent during the NDA period. In the first 7 years of UPA, the total expenditure on education and other related departments increased by Rs.1,75,443.3 Crore i.e., by 181%. The expenditure spent in year 2004-05 was 96694.1 Crore's and it increased to 272137.43 Crore's in the year 2010-11.

School Education-The Right to Education Act brought in by the UPA Government has improved enrolment in schools across the nation. The country to a large extent has achieved the success in coming closer to the figure of universal education at the primary school level. Drop-out rate in the schools declined and thereby raising the retention of students in the middle and secondary school levels. If we compare, the Gross Enrollment Ratio in schools in 2003-04 was 98.3 per cent at primary level, 62.5 per cent at the middle level, and it increased to 116.0 per cent at primary and 85.5 per cent at the middle level. Furthermore, nearly ten-fold increase in the expenditure under Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan has led to better literacy levels in India. The UPA government enacted the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education (RTE) Act, 2009, which has played a vital role towards universalization of education for children between 6 to 14 years of age. Since the enactment of the Act, 30,888 primary school buildings, 10,644 upper-primary school buildings, 6,88,385 additional classrooms, 5,18,700 toilet facilities and posts of 7,00,475 teachers have been sanctioned.

Higher Education-The UPA government has continuously increased the expenditure in education sector in the subsequent Five Year Plans which resulted in the enrolment of more students in schools and colleges. Central Universities have increased from 17 to 44 during 2004 to 2013. While coming to IITs, nine such institutions were added to the existing seven IITs during this period. Number of IIMs increased from 6 to 13 during this period. Furthermore, Five ITSERs and 2 IIITs were also added in the period.

Economic Expansion and Growth-In the first six years of UPA, the Indian economy expanded by Rs.32,356.18 billion i.e., by 100 per cent compared to only Rs.10,381.25 billion. In the 9 years of UPA, the Indian economy expanded by Rs.67,784.11 billion i.e., by 209 per cent in the year 2009-10. The GDP at market price increased from 32422.09 billion in 2004-05 to 100206.2 billion in 2012-13. In the first six years of UPA, the per capita income increased by Rs.22,106. In the 9 years of UPA, the per capita income increased by Rs.44,604 i.e., by 185 per cent. The Per Capita income also increased from 24143 Rs in 2005-06 to 68747 Rs in 2012-13.

Foreign Direct Investment-In the first six years of UPA, the inflow of Foreign Direct Investment increased by \$27,120. In the 9 years of UPA, the inflow of Foreign Direct Investment increased by \$20,966 million or by 350 per cent.

Agricultural Credit:

Food Grain Production-In the first six years of UPA rule, the total food grains production increased by 20 million tonnes. In the 9 years of UPA, total food grains production increased by 57 million tonnes i.e., by 29 per cent. In the first six years of UPA government, the total net irrigated area increased by 40.38 lakh. In the 6 years of UPA, the total net irrigated area increased by 43.83 lakh or by 7.4 per cent.

Power Generation & Electricity Capacity-During the first six years of the UPA rule, the total power generation capacity increased by 13,870 MW. In the 9 years of UPA rule, the total power generation capacity increased by 67,193 MW i.e., by 295 per cent. Per Capita consumption of electricity has gone up from 559 kWh in 2002 to 813 kWh in 2011. Furthermore, the power generation from renewable resources and nuclear energy has reached record levels. In the first six years of UPA, total of 65,953 or 407 per cent more villages were electrified. In the 7 years of UPA rule, the total villages electrified were 84,259 i.e., 521 per cent higher than the NDA period. In 2004 the number was 3884 that became 18306 in 2011.

Micro/Small and Medium Enterprises-While coming to the Micro/Small and Medium Enterprises, during the first six years of UPA rule, the employment in these enterprises increased by 64 million i.e., by 226 per cent compared to only 5 million comprising 23 per cent in the NDA period. Furthermore, during the 8 years of UPA government, the total employment in the micro, small and medium enterprises were increased by 73 million comprising 258 per cent.

Employment Generation-The UPA government tenure witnessed an impressive increase of employment in the organized sectors both public and private. During the six years of UPA government, employment generation in both public and private sectors have seen an increase of 22.50 lakh (male-14.07 lakh & female-8.43 lakh) as compared to a decline of 16.70 lakh (male-17.75 & female-1.05) in the NDA period. In the 7 years of UPA, the total employment opportunities created by both public and private sectors was 25.41 lakh (male-16.03 lakh and female-9.38 lakh). During the same period, the organized private sector created 30 lakh (male-23.12 lakh and female-6.88 lakh) employment opportunities.

Communication and Technology- The total telephone connections have increased by 522.87 million that is 531 per cent under the first six years of UPA rule as compared to only 61.73 million i.e., In the 9 years of UPA, the total telephone (wireline plus wireless) connections have increased by 799.61 million that is by about 813 per cent.

Heavy Industry: Automobile Production:

In the first four years of UPA, the total automobile production has increased by 23.86 lakh i.e., 28 per cent as compared to slightly higher increase in the NDA period which is about 24.84 lakh i.e., 52 per cent. In the 9 year period of UPA, the total automobile production increased by 121.58 lakh that is 144 percent.

Social Indicators:

Total Development Expenditure-The total development expenditure in the first six years of UPA period, increased by Rs.3,132.87 billion comprising 146 per cent as compared to only Rs. 581.71 billion comprising 42 percent in the NDA period. Furthermore, in the 9 years of UPA rule, the total development expenditure increased by 257 per cent i.e., Rs.5,528.76 billion. The total development expenditure on social services under the first six years of UPA, increased by 243 per cent amounting Rs.727.22 billion as compared to only 63 per cent amounting Rs.92.03 billion in the NDA period. In the 9 years of UPA rule, the total development expenditure on social services increased by Rs.842.05 billion i.e., 282 per cent. The total development expenditure on economic services during the 9 years of UPA government, increased by Rs.3,742.52 billion i.e., by 325 per cent.

Poverty Scenario-The Congress-led UPA have done a tremendous job in reducing the poverty rates. The total number of poor people below poverty line has declined by 138 million between 2004-05 and 2011-12.

Expenditure on Minorities-The total expenditure of the UPA government of Indian minorities increased by Rs.1,449.7 Crore (i.e., 1010 percent) from Rs.143.53 Crore in 2006-07 to Rs.1,593.23 Crore in 2012-13.

Centrally Sponsored Schemes-Total job cards issued under MGNREGA has increased from 3.78 Crore in 2006-07 to 12.70 Crore in 2012-13. In the 8 years of UPA government, the total expenditure for National Social Assistance Programme (NSAP) has increased by 554 per cent amounting Rs.4,830.61 Crore, from Rs.872.56 crore in 2004-05 to Rs.5,703.17 crore in 2011-12.

Under the *Swarna Jayanti Swarozgar Yojna* (SGSY), the UPA-I increased the availability of funds by Rs.1,491.85 Crore i.e., about 99 per cent compared to the fund made available in the NDA period wherein it had declined by Rs.747.13 Crore i.e., 38 per cent. In the UPA-I, the total number of Swarogaris assisted under SGSY increased by 29.19 lakh i.e., about 63 per cent compared to NDA's achievement. Out of total achievement by the UPA-I, the total number of Swarogaris assisted in the SC/ST communities increased by 14.96 lakh i.e., 72 per cent compared to that of NDA's achievement. Furthermore, it can also be observed that the share of SC/ST Swarogaris assisted has increased by 7 per cent from 45 per cent in 2004-05 to 52 percent in 2010-11.

Healthcare-Consistent investments in public healthcare are showing better results as the infant mortality rate, maternal mortality rate and life expectancy levels have improved steadily. After the Rural Health Mission, a National Health Mission has been launched which include better health services for the urban poor. Absence of new endemic Polio cases for the last few years is an achievement that has been hailed at international forums. With

the sufficient health interventions during pregnancy and at birth, Infant Mortality Rate (IMR) has reduced from 58 per 1000 live births in 2004 to 44 per 1000 live births in 2011.

Furthermore, special programmes for mothers and children have led to better longevity of the citizens during the last 9 years. Indians are living longer and life expectancy has increased by more than 5 years for both men and women during last decade. Allocation in the 12th Five-Year Plan for the Health Sector has been increased to Rs. 3 lakh Crore from Rs. 90,000 Crore under the 11th Plan i.e., an increase of 335 per cent. To improve the general health of children, allocation for the Integrated Child Development Scheme has been increased four-fold in the 12th Five Year Plan of what has been under the 11th Five Year Plan.

Social Security for Special Sections-The UPA government has always accorded high priority to the welfare of minorities and other disadvantaged sections of the society. There has been a ten-fold increase in the expenditure on minorities since 2004-05. Minorities have been benefitting from the PM's new 15 point programme, the Multi-Sectoral Development Programme and the various scholarship schemes for minority students. Fifteen per cent of all priority sectors lending from banks now reaches minorities to help them start and expand small businesses. More than 20 million scholarships were awarded to students from Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and minority communities under various schemes. Expenditure on Minority related schemes in 2006-07 was 143.53 Crore and it was increased to about 1593.23 in 2012-13

Average GDP Growth Rate-Average GDP Growth Rate during the period of the UPA Government (2004-05 to 2013-14) has been 7.7 per cent despite global financial crisis in this period. Agriculture growth rate has been rising consistently. It was 2.5 per cent and 3.7 per cent during 10th and 11th Five-Year Plans respectively. It was projected to grow at 4 per cent during the 12th Plan. India's GDP at current prices has increased almost three times during the last 9 years. In 2004-05 it was 32.42 Lakh which increased to 100.28 8 in 2012-13.

Financial Inclusion-Rapid economic growth and enhancement in wealth has spurred financial inclusion of the population as has been never before. The total number of accounts under Pension Fund has increased from four Crore in 2002-03 to more than 16 Crore's by 2011-12. Total enrolment in Employees Pension Funds has increased from 3.95 Crore to 8.85 Crore. The number of branches of commercial banks has increased from 53,000 to more than 88,000 since 2004. The number of bank accounts has increased from 43.97 Crore's to 77.32 Crore's as of last year.

Supporting Small Businesses-Credit and loan facilities to Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises have grown nearly seven times in the last seven years. In the last two years, 80 thousand Micro Enterprises have been supported by the Prime Minister's Employment Generation Programme thereby, creating job opportunities for 9.23 lakh people. The number of Employee Provident Fund (EPF) Accounts has reached 16.62 Crore in 2011-12 which was 4.08 in 2002-03. Total units under EPF regulations increased from 3.45 lakh in 2003 to 7.3 lakh in 2013.

Generating more Jobs-Unemployment rate in the country is steadily declining due to the UPA government's economic policies which led to the decrease of unemployment percentage from 8.2 in 2004 to 5.6 in 2012. Average Industrial Growth during 2004-05 to 2011-12 has been the highest ever at 8.5 per cent per annum, thereby, creating productive employment for young people. National Skills Development Authority has been working with other stake holders, including the private sector, to train 50 million people for the workforce during next 5 years.

Poverty Reduction-Under the UPA Government, poverty in India has declined in an unprecedented manner. Average decline in poverty was 2 per cent, per annum during the period of 2004-12, almost twice the rate of the preceding decade. It was 40.71(37.2 per cent) Crore in 2004 and down to 26.93 (21.93 per cent) Crore in 2012. The Government launched 16 Flagship Programmes both in rural and urban areas during the 11th Five Year Plan and allocations for them have been more than doubled under the 12th Five Year Plan. Expenditure on Flagship programmes have been increased by more than 100 per cent for 12th Five Year Plan.

Rural Welfare-In India consumption has increased phenomenally in both urban as well as rural areas, as fruits of economic growth have reached the common man. In the backdrop of the UPA government's pro-poor policies, consumption in rural areas registered an increase of 3.4 per cent which was only 0.8 per cent during 1999 to 2004. Rural wages have increased by 16 per cent each year. In the last 9 years, since 2004-05, wages for rural workers have tripled and thereby, improving the purchasing power of the majority people in villages. This establishes the fact that economic growth during the U.P.A. has been both inclusive and widespread.

Direct Benefit Transfer-Using broadband and information technology, the Unique Identification Authority of India has issued more than 51 Crore Aadhaar Cards across the country. These, cards have enabled the people to receive Direct Benefit Transfers in 184 districts. More than six Crore consumers are now availing Direct Benefit Transfer for LPG in 184 districts across the country. Direct Benefit Transfers under the LPG have crossed a sum of 2000 Crore till December 2013.

Infrastructure :

Road Infrastructure-Indian Railways is one of the world's largest rail network systems, carrying 8,224 million people in 2011-12. In 2003-04 total 5112 million passengers were traveling in the railway. During the UPA government's tenure, goods carried on the railways have doubled to more than 1 billion tons a year. In 2003-04 goods carried via railways was 274032 million, which increased to 677614 million in 2011-12.

Road Infrastructure-During the last nine years of the UPA rule, around 17,394 kms of highways were built and upgraded by the National Highways Authority of India. There has been a nearly ten-fold increase in the investment in road construction in rural areas under the UPA government. More than 20,100 kms all-weather roads have been constructed/upgraded and an expenditure of over 6,450 Crore has been incurred during 2012-13. Meanwhile, the connectivity in rural areas has helped small farmers in carrying their agricultural goods to markets where they get improved returns for their products.

Power Generation Capacity-India has added more power generation capacity in the last 9 years than in the entire preceding period since Independence. Per Capita Consumption of Electricity has gone up from 559 kWh in 2002 to 813 kWh in 2011. Power generation from renewable resources and nuclear energy has reached record levels.

Tele Density in Rural Areas-Under the tenure of the UPA government, telephone density in rural areas has increased 25 times. It was 15.7 per cent in 2004 and has increased to 41 per cent in 2013. India has one of the lowest telecom prices in the world making telephones accessible to the poor. Those who cannot afford private phones are being provided connectivity through village level telephony. Broadband has reached 2.5 lakh villages by 2014. Internet and Broadband Services have increased more than 100 times during the UPA tenure. It was 4.74 million in 2004 and has increased to 485.68 million till 2012. Under the National Knowledge Network, high speed data links have been provided to 998 institutions of higher education.

Ensuring Safety and Security-The UPA government's approach in dealing with left-wing extremism in a holistic manner in the areas of security, development, ensuring rights of local communities and good governance is showing results in declining violence in LWE affected areas. In the last four years, lives lost in LWE-related incidents were reduced by more than half. As per the ministry of home affairs, in Naxal affected areas, 1553 Naxal-related violence incidents took place 2004 which resulted in 566 deaths and in 2012, 14, 15 such incidents took place which left 415 people dead (Ministry of Foreign Affairs).

Governance and Transparency:

Administrative Reforms-The historic Right to Information Act was enacted, thereby, empowering citizens to know how the government functions. This Act has been brought into place so as to increase transparency and accountability in the functioning of the central, state and local governments, as well as recipients of government grants. More importantly, the Act has enabled citizens to get justice and obtain redress of long pending

grievances. The government has set up the Second Administrative Reforms Commission, which made several recommendations for comprehensive reform of public administration in the country.

E-Governance-The Government has successfully implemented e-governance projects relating to income tax, customs and excise, railway reservation, e-credit of India Post Monthly Income Scheme to investor's account, dematerialization of National Savings Certificate and Kisan Vikas Patra, so on and so forth. Facility for online submission of passport applications has been introduced and introduction of e-passports has been initiated. Passport Seva Project has been approved so that all passports get issued within three days of police verification by 2009. Schemes for computerizing over 13,000 districts, subordinate courts, and all 646 consumer forums, are under implementation.

Anti-Corruption Measures-The UPA government remained committed to ushering in reforms for greater transparency, probity, integrity and accountability in governance. To keep pace with the aspirations of the people for clean and transparent governance, the UPA government has taken several legal and administrative measures like Right to Information Act, Priority attached to the enactment of the Whistle Blowers' Protection Bill, Enacting the Lokpal and the Lokayuktas Act, To amend the Prevention of Corruption Act and the Delhi Special Police Establishment Act, Right of Citizens' for Time Bound Delivery of Goods and Services and Redressal of their Grievances' Bill. Administrative steps have been initiated to reduce discretionary powers of public servants and to ensure expeditious disposal of disciplinary proceedings.

As one of the impediments felt in tackling corruption is lack of adequate protection to complainants. Therefore, "The Public Interest Disclosure and Protection to Persons Making the Disclosure Bill, 2010" has been introduced in the Lok Sabha. India has ratified the United Nations Convention against Corruption. With a view to ensuring full compliance with this Convention, the "Prevention of Bribery of Foreign Public Officials and Officials of Public International Organizations Bill 2011" was introduced in the Lok Sabha.

Judicial Reforms:

The Judicial Standards and Accountability Bill-This Bill has been introduced in the Parliament. The Judicial Standards and Accountability Bill tries to lay down the enforceable standards of conduct for judges and it creates mechanisms to allow any person to complain against judges on grounds of misbehavior or incapacity. The proposed Bill would strengthen the institution of Judiciary by making it more accountable thereby, increasing the confidence of the public in the institution.

The Judicial Appointments Commission Bill, 2013-This Bill has been introduced in Parliament. The Bill seeks to broaden the appointment procedure and make it more participatory to ensure greater transparency and objectivity in the appointments to higher judiciary. The proposed Bill would enable equal participation of Judiciary and Executive, make the system of appointments more accountable, and thereby, increase the confidence of the public in this prestigious institution. The Criminal Law (Amendment) Act, 2013, provides for stringent punishment for sexual offences against women and children and more sensitive treatment of victims during investigation and trial. Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, 2005 ensures safety of women at home. Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013 ensures improvement in working condition for women. Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act, 2012 guarantees safety of children in the society. Marriage Laws (Amendment) Bill, 2010 ensures women a better deal after marriage. Women's Reservation Bill or the Constitutional 108 Amendment Bill was passed by the Parliament in 2010 ensuring 33 percent reservation for women in the Lok Sabha and Legislative Assemblies. Expenditure on Mid-Day-Meal (MDM) increased by Rs.8565 Crore i.e., 646 per cent between 2003-04 (Rs.1,325 Crore) and 2011-12 (Rs.9,890 Crore), Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY) increased by Rs.28,955 Crore i.e., 299 per cent between 2001-02 to 2003-04 (Rs.9,682 Crore) and 2004-05 to 2008-09 (Rs.38,637 Crore).

CONCLUSION:

In short the UPA needs a strong team of dedicated workers who can carry out the party's message to the common man. Sixty years in the life of a nation is a very short time. During this period there has been significant development in every sphere of life. Today, India is an economic power. This progress could not have been possible without the vision, foresightedness, dedication and devotion of the Congress leaders. Congress Party realizes that there are a number of tasks pending and is determined to provide to every citizen of India a bright and happy future. The party has an approach and positive outlook to achieve what it desires for the people of the country. People cannot forget the sacrifices made by the Congress leaders both in achieving independence and thereafter, maintaining the integrity of the country. Although, the parties with communal ideologies have triumphed and the Congress influence has dwindled under the hate politics of other parties especially the BJP, the people of the country deep in their hearts know that in the hands of the Congress lies the bright future of this country. Furthermore, although people of the country currently seems to be infected by the hate politics, however, the ideology of secularism followed by congress will bounce back in the coming years or we can say decades.

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