



REPORT ON :

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE PURVODAYA PERSPECTIVES

(3RD Edition)

***Connecting India's Eastern Borders
and South East Asia through Economic Corridors***

13 - 14 DECEMBER, 2025

Hotel Swosti Premium, Bhubaneswar, Odisha



Chief Guest and Dignitaries of Inaugural Session



Panelists of Track 1.5 – Business Dialogue



Session I: Panelists



Session II: Panelists



Session III: Panelists



Session IV: Panelists



Purvodaya Young Thinkers Meet

Acknowledgments

At the outset, The Energy Forum expresses its sincere gratitude to Shri Dharmendra Pradhan, Hon'ble Union Minister of Education, for his immense continued intellectual support to the concept of “Purvodaya Perspectives” and his valuable keynote address articulating the national vision of Purvodaya as a cornerstone of Viksit Bharat. We are deeply thankful to the Hon'ble Governor of Odisha, His Excellency Dr. Hari Babu Kambhampati, for gracing the inaugural on the conference and providing inspiring insights on the “Purvodaya” vision and the role of eastern India in India's growth journey. We are thankful to the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA), Government of India for their continued support towards organizing the conference. Our sincere appreciation is on record to the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII), for their continued association in organizing this flagship dialogue at Bhubaneswar.

We are grateful to all the distinguished speakers, panelists, diplomats, policymakers, industry leaders, academicians and experts from India and abroad who enriched the conference through their thoughtful deliberations, diverse perspectives and actionable insights across multiple thematic sessions. Their contributions significantly enhanced the quality and relevance of the discussions. Our sincere thanks are due to the Chairpersons and Moderators of various sessions for steering meaningful discussions and ensuring focused and outcome-oriented deliberations. We also appreciate the support extended by partner organizations, institutions, and stakeholders who contributed to the planning and execution of the conference.

We acknowledge the active participation and valuable interventions of industry representatives, MSMEs, startup entrepreneurs, young innovators and students, whose engagement brought practical, ground-level perspectives to the dialogue and reinforced the importance of inclusive and future-oriented policymaking. We also extend our sincere thanks to the media, journalists and professionals for their extensive coverage and support, which amplified the reach and impact of Purvodaya Perspectives 2025. Their role in disseminating key discussions, policy insights and outcomes of the conference to a wider audience greatly contributed to informed public discourse and enhanced the visibility of this important dialogue.

Finally, The Energy Forum thanks all participants, delegates and contributors for their presence and cooperation, which made Purvodaya Perspectives 2025 a meaningful platform for dialogue, collaboration and forward-looking policy discourse.

The Energy Forum (TEF)

ABOUT US

The Energy Forum (TEF), established in 2018, a New Delhi based independent think tank, conducts intensive research and analysis on a wide range of issues related to the global energy sector, with focus on the Indian energy space. It aims to put collective knowledge and experience in making the planet a better place to live in by formulating new paradigms for sustainable transitions and engendering robust developmental narratives. TEF is supported by a network of scientists, economists, policy makers, diplomats, researchers and academics considered experts in their respective fields.

VISION

To be India's premier platform advancing sustainable, secure and inclusive energy systems and policy prescription for prosperity by fostering research, innovation, dialogue and strategic collaboration, across government, industry, academia and global partners.

MISSION

To conduct high-quality research, analysis and policy advisory on energy security, clean and renewable energy, energy transitions and rural energy access; to facilitate dialogue between government, industry and academia; and to support national goals for sustainability, efficiency, and self-reliance.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AI	Artificial intelligence
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
AEO	Authorised Economic Operator
BIMSTEC	Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation
BIRAC	Biotechnology Industry Research Assistance Council
BRICS	Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa
BYD	Build Your Dreams
C2S2	Cetus Consulting Solution Services
CII	Confederation of Indian Industry
COSMI	Confederation of Micro, Small and Medium Industries
CATL	Contemporary Amperex Technology Co., Limited
EV	Electric Vehicle
FTA	Free Trade Agreement
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GCC	Gulf Cooperation Council
IORA	Indian Ocean Rim Association
iDEX	Innovations for Defence Excellence
IDRBT	Institute for Development and Research in Banking Technology
KIIT	Kalinga Institute of Industrial Technology
KISS	Kalinga Institute of Social Sciences
LNG	Liquefied Natural Gas
MPIDSA	Manohar Parrikar Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses
MW	Megawatt
MSMEs	Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises
MEA	Ministry of External Affairs
NIFTEM	National Institute of Food Technology Entrepreneurship and Management
NYK	Nippon Yusen Kaisha
IPEF	Indo-Pacific Economic Framework for Prosperity
PP&R	Policy Planning & Research
PSUs	Public Sector Undertaking
R&D	Research and Development
SIDBI	Small Industries Development Bank of India
SAARC	South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation
SHANTI	Sustainable Harnessing and Advancement of Nuclear Energy for Transforming India
UPI	Unified Payments Interface
3i	Institute Industry Interface

Connecting India's Eastern Borders and South East Asia through Economic Corridors

“Purvodaya” is a transformative initiative of the Government of India aimed at accelerating the development of the Eastern and North Eastern states by leveraging their rich resources, historical legacy and strategic maritime location. Coined by Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi in 2016, the concept gained formal policy backing in the Union Budget 2024, with emphasis on human resource development, infrastructure creation and economic opportunities. Measures such as establishing NIFTEM in Bihar, hosting Pravasi Bharatiya Divas in Odisha and organizing global investment summits reflect efforts to attract investment and diaspora participation. Historically, eastern states like Odisha played a major role in maritime trade and cultural exchange with Southeast Asia, leaving deep civilizational imprints across the region. Purvodaya thus seeks to revive this legacy and integrate it into India's vision of Viksit Bharat.

The initiative aligns closely with India's Act East Policy, focusing on enhanced connectivity through roads, railways, ports, waterways and digital networks. Strategic projects such as the India–Myanmar–Thailand Trilateral Highway, Kaladan Multimodal Project and expanded port-led development aim to link eastern India and the North East with Southeast Asia. The Bay of Bengal has emerged as a vital geo-economic and strategic hub within the Indo-Pacific, with growing relevance of regional groupings like BIMSTEC, ASEAN and IPEF. Through improved connectivity, blue economy initiatives and regional cooperation, Purvodaya aims to transform the eastern region into a key driver of India's external trade and economic growth.

Purvodaya Perspectives is an annual International Conference organised by The Energy Forum (TEF), New Delhi that brings together policy makers, academics, stakeholders to debate, discuss and brainstorm various issues that confront the Purvodaya states. This conference is the third in a series. Taking into account the issue that confronts these states which are rich in mineral resources and boast historical maritime tradition, the focus of this year would be how to leverage the connectivity potential of these states to emerge as important stakeholders in India's external trade and emerge as major stakeholders of Viksit Bharat. The third edition of this conference discussed the potential of Bay of Bengal in India's policy towards Indo Pacific, leveraging regional and sub regional organisations, advancing cooperation in the blue economy, sustainable development and transformation to green economy.

Inaugural Session

Shri Siddharth Pradhan, Trustee - The Energy Forum:

The Trustee of The Energy Forum highlighted the emergence of the Purvodaya Perspectives as a flagship program of the Ministry of External Affairs outside Delhi. He acknowledged the support of the Ministry along with key contributors and described Purvodaya Perspectives as an important platform that shapes the vision of what eastern India can and should deliver in the future. The term “Purvodaya,” coined by the Prime Minister in 2016, emphasizes the development of eastern India as essential to India's overall growth. The idea was taken forward by Shri Dharmendra Pradhan, Hon'ble Minister of Education and has since been a driving force of turning it into reality.



One-third of India's population live in the eastern and northeastern states, yet they contribute only about 12% to the national GDP. He stressed the fact that India cannot reach its full potential unless this share rises significantly. The region's strategic location along the eastern seaboard connects India to Southeast Asia and beyond, reviving historic trade links. Historically, strong trade and commerce enabled prosperity and cultural development in the region. Shri Pradhan underlined connectivity—through trade, industry and waterways—as the key to future growth. He emphasized inclusive regional participation and meaningful dialogue to shape actionable outcomes from the conference.

Shri Pradipta Mohanty, Immediate Past Chairman, CII Odisha State Council and Chairman, SNM Group:

Purvodaya is a noble vision to position Eastern India as a key growth engine for the nation. The region, comprising Odisha, West Bengal, Jharkhand and the Northeast, has strong natural resources, a long coastline, skilled human capital and a growing industrial ecosystem. These strengths place eastern India in a pivotal role in advancing manufacturing, logistics, connectivity and global trade. The development of the eastern economic corridor is transforming links between industry, ports, hinterland and global markets through improved rail, multimodal logistics and port infrastructure.



There has been a significant shift from raw resource extraction to value addition, clean technology, and responsible industrial growth. Frontier technologies, green energy, digital governance, and sustainable infrastructure are aligning the region with national initiatives like Make in India and Viksit Bharat.

The blue economy offers major opportunities in maritime trade, fisheries, port-led development and coastal tourism. Strong collaboration between government, industry, States and Indo-Pacific partners is essential to realize this vision. With its strategic location and growing capabilities, Eastern India has the potential to drive India's next phase of growth and become a powerhouse in the Indo-Pacific region.

Ms. Aparna Ray, Joint Secretary, Ministry of External Affairs:

Ms. Ray hailed the goal of Purvodaya Dialogue in strengthening ties between Eastern India and Southeast Asia. The dialogue aimed to ground foreign policy ambitions in practical experiences and real-world insights from diverse stakeholders. She highlighted:

- The theme of the corridors reflects long-standing historical, cultural and economic connections that people of eastern India have traditionally shared with the east. These linkages, built on peaceful and mutually beneficial partnerships, now need to be strengthened for inclusive growth.
- The Act East policy provides the framework for this cooperation, with Eastern India serving as the strategic linchpin. The eastern seaboard is India's key maritime gateway to the Indo-Pacific, supported by major government investments in ports, coastal shipping, inland waterways and logistics. Emerging hubs such as Kolkata, Paradip and Visakhapatnam will enhance multimodal connectivity linking markets, industries and people.
- Regional groupings like ASEAN, BIMSTEC and IORA reinforce this integration with a focus on peace, prosperity and progress. In a time of global uncertainty, it is an opportunity for innovation in areas like supply chains, blue economy, digital partnerships and frontier technologies. She stressed the importance of sustainability, disaster preparedness and coastal resilience.



His Excellency Dr. Shankar Prasad Sharma, Ambassador of Federal Democratic Republic of Nepal:

The theme of the Purvodaya Perspectives aligns closely with the aspiration of Nepal to build stronger economic linkages, enhance mobility and create new avenues for trade, energy and technological partnership.

- India's eastern region has long served as the natural bridge between South Asia and Southeast Asia which is crucial in greater economic dynamism, supply chain resilience and deeper people to people engagement. For countries like Nepal, regional connectivity is a path towards shared prosperity.
- Enhanced cross border roads, railways, transmission lines, energy trade, digital connectivity and streamlined trade procedures contribute to strengthen the economic future in the region. Infrastructure and trade diplomacy highlight the importance of coordinated policies that complement investment.
- The emphasis on the blue economy reminds us of our responsibility to foster sustainable economic growth and frontier technology partnership signal our commitment to innovation especially in clean energy, digital systems and resilient infrastructure.
- Nepal deeply values its long-standing partnership with India through various connectivity initiatives, cross border transmission lines, trade facilitation measures and hydropower cooperation. Strong connectivity helps to uplift lives, enable opportunities and deepen trust among nations and Nepal remains committed to advance partnership that supports sustainable development, energy security and inclusive growth across the regions.



Shri Dharmendra Pradhan, Hon'ble Union Minister of Education:

The Hon'ble Minister in a video message appreciated Purvodaya Perspectives 2025, aimed to advance the Purvodaya vision of the Hon'ble Prime Minister of India. Union Budget 2024 also introduced the Purvodaya plan for the inclusive development of the eastern region of the country encompassing Odisha, West Bengal, Bihar, Jharkhand and Andhra Pradesh.



- The Purvodaya Perspectives initiative aims to transform this region into the growth engine of Viksit Bharat. Purvodaya is the epicentre of our development narrative with Odisha standing as the gateway of the Purvodaya and leading the narrative. Vital infrastructure projects have emerged around ports and mineral hubs. The region is rapidly emerging as a strategic energy corridor with expanded refining, petrochemical and gas infrastructure.
- Sustainable growth is a priority, including green hydrogen, biofuels, and low-carbon refining. The petroleum and product pipelines along the eastern region are becoming a powerful energy gateway for crude oil, LNG and petrochemical trade. They link crude imports to refineries, refineries to industries and industries to domestic and global markets. This integrated network reduces logistics costs, strengthens energy security and makes eastern India an attractive destination for global investors.
- There is significant scope to build energy partnerships between India's eastern seaboard and Southeast Asia that can support secure, affordable and sustainable growth for all our countries. The government, through various policies, has focused on sustainability, climate change and green growth.
- The region's rich human resources and premier educational institutions strengthen its development potential. Collaboration with Southeast Asia, investment promotion and youth empowerment are key to future growth.

His Excellency Dr. Hari Babu Kambhampati Hon'ble Governor of Odisha:

The Purvodaya Perspectives 2025 conference is a platform that reflects India's evolving aspirations, civilizational self-confidence and collective commitment to unlock the potential of eastern India. Main points of Hon'ble Governor address are:

- For centuries, the eastern region of our country stood as a beacon of prosperity and cultural brilliance but it declined over time due to historical disruptions, episodic neglect and infrastructural constraints. The Purvodaya vision under Prime Minister Narendra Modi seeks to restore the region's rightful place as a central driver of India's economic strength and a vital contributor to Viksit Bharat by 2047.



- Significant investments in connectivity, infrastructure, industry and digital networks are transforming eastern India, with Odisha emerging as a leading state due to its rich resources, strong governance, long coastline and skilled workforce. Key developments in Odisha include semiconductor manufacturing, large-scale railway and road projects, port-led industrial growth, green hydrogen initiatives, and tourism and heritage revitalization.
- Revival of ancient maritime and cultural links with Southeast Asia through modern economic corridors, alongside major connectivity projects in the Northeast to ensure integration and strategic security.
- Blue economy, sustainable development and integrating traditional knowledge, coastal heritage and community led practices with modern infrastructure. The rise of the east will shape the rise of India and the rise of Odisha will ignite new areas of progress for the entire region. He expressed his confidence that the insights from this conference will lead to practical strategies that strengthen the Purvodaya vision and build future ready pathways linking India's eastern borders with Southeast Asia through resilient, sustainable and transformative economic corridors. This shared effort is vital to India's future growth, regional cooperation and long-term prosperity.

Release of occasional paper by The Energy Forum

The Energy Forum released the following two occasional papers by the Chief Guest, His Excellency Dr. Hari Babu Kambhampati, Hon'ble Governor of Odisha, in the presence of other distinguished dignitaries.

- ***“Abandoned Oil Wells: Future Gold Mines.”*** of Mr. Sunit Roy.
- ***“India's Green Energy Transition: Navigating Green Hydrogen Energy Transition Challenges through Technology, Critical Minerals and Strategic Partnerships”*** of Mr. Vaibhav Dev and Suddhasatwa Basu.

Track 1.5 Business Dialogue

The conference started with a business dialogue to bring the industry stakeholders to participate and share their views on the theme of this conference. They remain vital to operationalize the Government's vision of Purvodaya.

This business dialogue was chaired by Shri Ujjal Chakraborti, Executive In-Charge Tinsplate Division, Tata Steel Ltd:

The chair highlighted the vision of connecting India's eastern borders with Southeast Asia through an economic corridor and he appreciated the initiative in bringing together industry leaders, government and knowledge partners for shared development goals. The Track 1.5 business dialogue aligns policy intent with business aspirations focused on eastern India. He emphasized that the eastern India is the centre of the Indian industry with major industrial hub for steel, mining and heavy industries.



The Purvodaya states viz. Odisha, West Bengal, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand and Bihar etc. are strategically located along the Bay of Bengal and are very critical for strengthening geopolitics and trade. These states are well positioned to connect India with Southeast and Southern Asia. Multimodal connectivity with neighboring countries is identified as the core objective. He cited the India–Myanmar–Thailand Trilateral Highway as a key example of progress wherein around 70% of the 1,500–2,000 km highway has been completed and is expected to finish by 2027. Policy support and regulatory frameworks are critical for future success and a collaborative approach including MSMEs is needed to co-create a roadmap for advancing the Purvodaya initiative.

Shri Devendra Thakar, Chief Executive Officer, The Dhamra Port Company Limited:

Speaking in this session Shri Thakar appreciated the diverse audience with strong participation from young people. He highlighted the progress made since last year in developing connectivity corridors and infrastructure, particularly in Odisha wherein the state government is actively working to connect industrial and resource hubs. He emphasized that logistics and infrastructure are the backbone of rapid economic growth and essential for unlocking industrial potential.



The government has a significant role in supporting mining and industrial sectors through planned corridors and port connectivity. Four major corridors being developed in partnership with Indian Railways, especially around the Talcher region, showcases smooth mineral evacuation and investment confidence. The focus on port-led development, with identified land parcels near ports, aims to reduce costs and attract future industries, following successful global models as that of Japan and China. He expressed his confidence that collaboration between government, industry and stakeholders is turning past discussions into tangible progress and will continue to deliver results.

Shri Sujith Haridas, Deputy Director General, Confederation of Indian Industry:

Shri Haridas emphasized that while the government has launched many schemes to promote regional development, especially in the Northeast, industry must do more to unleash the economic potential of the region. MSMEs, particularly micro enterprises which is almost 97% of the MSMEs are the second largest employer in the country after agriculture and form the backbone of the Indian economy by contributing significantly to GDP, exports and employment.

However, most micro enterprises lack awareness of government schemes, access to funding, basic business management skills and meaningful digitization. Emerging technologies like AI is rapidly transforming industries, but micro and small enterprises are being left behind due to poor guidance and limited technical access. Large industries must play a stronger role by supporting MSMEs through handholding, professionalization and enabling access to funding rather than direct financial aid.

He highlighted CII's initiatives that connect MSMEs with training, technology and engineering institutions to bridge the skills and technology gap. He also pointed out the mismatch between education and employability, stressing the need for quality skill development linked to real opportunities. Empowering MSMEs and entrepreneurs is essential for local employment and sustainable regional growth. Shri Haridas also called for stronger industry-to-industry collaboration, especially with Southeast Asia, to create platforms that drive business opportunities beyond government-level engagement.



Shri G Suresha- Executive Director, Odisha Assets, AM/NS India:

Shri Suresha highlighted the strong development potential of Purvodaya, particularly Odisha, due to its rich mineral resources. A key challenge identified is the high logistics cost in India, which is nearly double that of China, reducing global competitiveness for industries like steel and mining. To address this, he stressed the need for better connectivity through quality road networks, and river ports. Improving logistics would reduce turnaround time, lower costs and boost exports. He also emphasized the importance of developing townships and urban infrastructure to attract skilled and technical manpower.

Inclusive growth is highlighted through skill development of local communities, including women, so that they can participate in industrial activities. Digitalization is identified as a major enabler to reduce delays, improve coordination and eliminate inefficiencies in transportation. While large industries use data-driven systems, MSMEs and transporters lack access to such digital tools and need government support. Learning from China's integrated and fast-moving logistics model, he called for stronger policy support, faster project implementation and better land and infrastructure facilitation.

Keynote Address

His Excellency Dr. Shankar Prashad Sharma, the Hon'ble Ambassador of Nepal to India:

Dr. Sharma highlighted the importance of connectivity under the Purvodaya Perspectives 2025 framework, emphasizing how Nepal, India, and the wider Asian region can benefit, particularly through clean energy cooperation. He underscored:

- Nepal's close cultural, linguistic, digital and economic ties with eastern India, noting progress in digital connectivity such as UPI integration. Cross border energy cooperation lies at the heart of Nepal's clean energy pursuit. Nepal's energy sector is presented as predominantly clean, with about 3,800 MW of hydropower already developed and an enormous hydropower potential of 83,000 MW, of which 42,000 MW is commercially exploitable.
- A key milestone is the “Nepal–India vision document-2022” that enables joint hydropower development, cross-border electricity trade and transmission infrastructure, supported by significant Indian public and private investments. Nepal aims to develop 28,500 MW of hydropower by 2035 and export up to 15,000 MW of clean electricity, with agreements already in place to export 10,000 MW to India as also growing exports to Bangladesh through trilateral arrangements.
- The expansion of high-voltage cross-border transmission lines is strengthening regional power markets and laying the foundation for an interconnected BIMSTEC and eventually ASEAN energy grid, aligned with the vision of “One Sun, One World, One Grid.”
- Harmonized regulations, open power markets, climate-resilient infrastructure and regional cooperation to address climate change will help the Purvodaya vision. Nepal positions itself as a future clean energy hub and invites regional and global partners to invest not only in renewables but also in digital connectivity and infrastructure for a shared, sustainable future.



Session 1

Purvodaya & Indo-Pacific: Aligning Infrastructure, Trade and Economic Corridors

Chair: Ms. Aparna Ray, Joint Secretary (PP&R), Ministry of External Affairs.

Prof. S.K. Mohanty, Research and Information System for Developing Countries in his presentation emphasized:

- India's engagement with the Indo-Pacific region is a core part of its long-term development vision. India aims to become a developed country by 2047 under the Amrit Kaal vision, with trade as the main driver of growth, supported by both export-led and domestic demand-led strategies.
- The Indo-Pacific engagement is guided by principles of inclusivity, ASEAN centrality, security and growth. India's strategy is shaped by key doctrines such as SAGAR, Act East Policy and the Indo-Pacific Oceans Initiative, along with modern free trade agreements. The region is crucial for supply chains, technology-intensive goods, energy security, blue economy and emerging markets.
- Trade data shows that India exports more to the Indo-Pacific than it imports, with a relatively low and manageable trade deficit compared to the Asia-Pacific region. The focus is increasingly on the quality of trade, technology content and value addition. Eastern states, especially Odisha, have shown strong growth driven by external trade and multi-sectoral development.
- Odisha is well linked to the Indo-Pacific through exports in minerals, manufacturing and agriculture, though diversification into machinery and electronics is needed. The blue economy, ports, inland waterways, maritime infrastructure, and skill development are the major future growth areas. Deeper regional integration, trade diversification, and education and training are essential for sustaining high growth and achieving India's 2047 goals.



Shri Nawaz Rajabdeen, Founder President, Confederation of Micro, Small and Medium Industries (COSMI), Sri Lanka in his presentation highlighted the following:

- The Indo–Sri Lanka Economic Corridor is a major opportunity for regional economic transformation based on shared prosperity and integrated growth. As global supply chains reorganize, the Indian Ocean is emerging as a global maritime hub, with India and Sri Lanka repositioning themselves strategically.

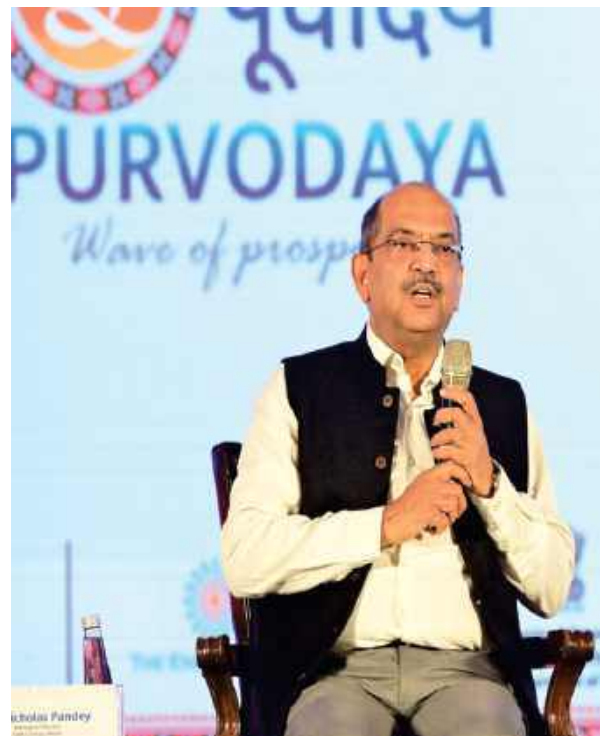
This corridor integrates ports, logistics, energy, cross-border power, digital connectivity, trade, manufacturing, services and investment. From the perspective of Sri Lanka's MSMEs sector, strong potential exists for joint ventures with India, particularly Odisha.



- Odisha's industrial growth in Aluminum and mineral processing aligns well with Sri Lanka's mineral sand exports, which can be jointly developed into high-value products like titanium for the aviation industry. Shri Nawaz highlighted the successful empowerment of women entrepreneurs in Sri Lanka through MSME formalization and training. Improved air and maritime connectivity between Sri Lanka and Odisha are seen as essential to unlock trade and manufacturing growth.
- Although Sri Lanka was the first country to sign an FTA with India, many opportunities still remain underutilized. The corridor offers Indian investors advantages such as faster shipping times, lower costs, a skilled English-speaking workforce and trade facilitation benefits.
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Shri V S Chauhan, Executive Director, Deloitte India highlighted the following:

- There exist shared challenges among South Asian countries, especially landlocked nations like Nepal and Bhutan that depend on transit through India, unlike Sri Lanka which faces different trade dynamics.
- Global growth is faster in services and digital trade, which must be considered alongside traditional goods trade. He pointed at the inefficiencies in transit routes—Nepal and Bhutan rely mainly on Kolkata and Visakhapatnam ports—underscoring the need to improve containerization and port infrastructure in Odisha. He challenged traditional ideas of comparative advantage, citing examples such as India exporting petroleum products to the UK due to its refining capacity and importing gold and silver from the UK despite the UK not producing them, showing that trade flows are shaped by complex investment and policy factors.
- The trade policy must be aligned with investment policy to make regions attractive for investors and boost exports. He argued that non-tariff barriers, such as regulatory and compliance issues are a bigger obstacle to international trade than tariffs, particularly for countries in South Asia. These barriers disproportionately affect MSME exporters, who often lack the capacity to navigate complex foreign market regulations.
- Stronger policy support and the expansion of Authorized Economic Operator (AEO) programs. These programs identify trusted exporters and importers who face fewer border checks, reducing costs and delays. Shri Chauhan suggested mutual recognition of AEOs across BIMSTEC, SAARC or bilateral arrangements to build trust, streamline trade and facilitate smoother regional integration.



Shri Nicholas Pandey, Managing Director, Kalika Group, Nepal emphasized:

- India and Nepal share a trade relationship worth about \$8.5 billion, with India exporting \$7.3 billion to Nepal and Nepal exporting only \$1.3 billion to India, resulting in a large trade deficit for Nepal.
- Shri Pandey emphasized the need for deeper economic inter-dependence through joint product development, border economic zones and improved trade infrastructure. Initiatives such as Purvodaya aim to transform Eastern India into a steel and manufacturing hub, supported by port-led industrialization, transit hubs, multimodal logistics (including facilities in Assam) and power bridges to enable Nepal to export electricity.
- China currently has advantage in cost competitiveness, project delivery speed, infrastructure and skilled manpower, particularly in construction and manufacturing. However, India has strong technical capabilities and with improvements in infrastructure execution and workforce skills, it can emerge as a major manufacturing and industrial hub and serve as a viable “China plus one” alternative.



Keynote Address

Shri Sanjeev Sanyal, Member, Economic Advisory Council- Prime Minister:

- India's primary regional imbalance is not North–South but East–West, with eastern India lagging behind the western and southern regions on most economic and social indicators. Using data from the 1960s onwards, he highlighted that states like West Bengal, Bihar and Odisha once held significant shares of India's GDP but experienced long-term decline or stagnation.
- West Bengal, once a leading economic powerhouse, has seen a sharp fall in both GDP share and per capita income, now ranking below the national average. Bihar's decline has been even steeper, with per capita income around one-third of the national average, while Odisha has improved in recent decades but remains below average. In contrast, western and southern states accelerated after the 1991 liberalization, driven by strong urban growth hubs.
- Economic growth is concentrated in powerful urban networks such as Mumbai–Pune–Ahmedabad and Chennai–Bengaluru–Hyderabad. Eastern India lacks a comparable 21st-century urban network. Smaller eastern cities are currently unable to drive large-scale growth on their own.
- Reviving Kolkata as a major economic engine is essential for the region's revival. Re-energizing Kolkata and linking it effectively with cities like Bhubaneswar, Patna, Ranchi and Guwahati could create a high-growth corridor. Without such an urban-led strategy, eastern India will continue to underperform. The Purvodaya vision therefore depends on restoring Kolkata's central role and building strong regional connectivity to drive the rise of the east.



Session II

From SAGAR to MAHASAGAR: India's Transforming Relationship with its Oceanic Partners

Chair: Dr. Smruti S. Pattanaik Research Fellow, Manohar Parrikar Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses:

India's earlier SAGAR initiative, which focused mainly on the Indian Ocean, has now evolved into the broader MAHASAGAR framework. This shift reflects India's expanding global and geostrategic ambitions, particularly its aspiration to lead the global south. MAHASAGAR goes beyond maritime security to include the blue economy, economic development, capacity building and wider regional cooperation. It positions the Indian Ocean within a larger Indo-Pacific perspective rather than treating it in isolation. The initiative underscores India's holistic and forward-looking approach to regional growth, security and leadership in the Indo-Pacific.



Prof. Sanjay Chaturvedi, Vice President, South Asian University highlighted the following:

- India's shift from SAGAR to MAHASAGAR represents a transformation from transactional engagement to genuine oceanic partnerships in the Indo-Pacific. It highlights the importance of viewing the Indo-Pacific from an “Indo” perspective rooted in India's geo-historical and multi-directional identity.
- MAHASAGAR is a broader civilizational and philosophical project that moves beyond contested cartographies and narrow geopolitical definitions. He argued that the oceans have never been an empty space awaiting the colonial and imperial orders but a dynamic world shaped by social, cultural, economic and political orders. The vision challenges land-centric and state-centric thinking and stresses the necessity of multilateral ocean governance. It builds on SAGAR's focus on responsibility and cooperation rather than dominance.
- Climate change, ecological risks and interconnected maritime systems are key drivers of this expanded vision. MAHASAGAR reflects a shift toward a relational, multiplex, and planetary maritime order. The MAHASAGAR vision could serve as the anchor for India's positioning in IORA. Inclusive alliances with States, businesses, academia, MSME and civil society, guided by trust and hope rather than fear-driven geopolitics.



Comde. Abhay Kumar Singh (Retd.), Research Fellow, Manohar Parrikar Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses in his presentation highlighted:

- Seas now carry not only commerce and energy but also competition, climate change, technological disruption and aspiration of States. For India, this reality is neither abstract nor distinct. It is immediate, structural and strategic. India is a maritime nation by geography, by trade dependence and increasingly by a strategic outlook.
- India, once focused mainly on continental concerns, has shifted towards a strong maritime outlook due to its heavy reliance on sea-based trade and energy security. The Indian Ocean is India's main economic artery and strategic frontier, where disruption directly threatens national security and resilience. This dependence is shared with many littoral and island states, creating a common strategic interest in maritime cooperation. India's eastern seaboard, including the Bay of Bengal and the Andaman and Nicobar Islands, is a key link to Southeast Asia and the Indo-Pacific. Recognizing this, India moved from inward maritime defense to outward partnership.
- This shift was articulated through the 2015 SAGAR doctrine, which promoted inclusive security, cooperation and capacity building. India's credibility has been built through humanitarian assistance, anti-piracy efforts, maritime awareness sharing and institution building.
- The concept of “good order at sea” connects security, economic activity and environmental sustainability. As maritime challenges expanded beyond the Indian Ocean, SAGAR evolved into MAHASAGAR in 2025. MAHASAGAR extends cooperation across regions, stressing mutuality and holistic growth. The credibility of India maritime leadership will depend less on rhetoric and more on the implementation consistency over the next decade.



Dr. Manish Dabhade, Associate Professor of Diplomacy, JNU and Founder, The Indian Futures, New Delhi highlighted:

- The shift from SAGAR to MAHASAGAR represents a strategic reimagining of India's maritime geography and global role. A decade ago, India unveiled its maritime vision called Sagar. It was born in a belief that the Indian Ocean must not be a theatre of rivalry, but a stage for inclusive progress and helped establish India as a dependable maritime partner and first responder. However, by 2025, India's rise as a major global economy, its leadership in fora like the G20 and BRICS, and the growing importance of the Indo-Pacific and global South created the need for a broader framework.
- Increasing trade disruptions, geopolitical conflicts, climate shocks and infrastructure vulnerabilities highlighted this necessity. MAHASAGAR thus emerged as a transformation from a regional vision to a global commitment. It emphasizes inclusive, scalable and sustainable maritime partnerships across the Indian Ocean and beyond.
- The Indian Ocean is a global economic superhighway connecting billions of people and accounting for a major share of world trade. India's eastern seaboard is a new gateway to the Indo-Pacific and a driver of economic diplomacy. MAHASAGAR promotes maritime economic corridors, port-led growth and integration into global value chains. The shift positions India as a predictable, rules-based and collaborative maritime enabler rather than a dominant power.



Prof. Harsh V. Pant, Vice President - Studies and Foreign Policy, Observer Research Foundation emphasized:

- It is important to link India's eastern flank with East and Southeast Asia through well-designed economic corridors. This explains India's strategic shift from the SAGAR vision to the broader MAHASAGAR framework, reflecting a move from a limited Indian Ocean focus to a comprehensive Indo-Pacific strategy.
- While SAGAR centred on security and growth in the Indian Ocean, MAHASAGAR expands cooperation across trade, development, capacity building and security. This transition is driven by changing global power dynamics, including a more inward-looking United States and the growing influence of China.
- The Indo-Pacific is now seen as a single inter-connected strategic and economic space with India at its centre. At the same time, traditional globalization is under strain, making trust-based and issue-driven partnerships more important. India's look East policy has become Act East Policy and India's centrality in the region has become a critical driver.
- India is therefore redefining itself as a wider Indo-Pacific player rather than just a regional maritime power. The strategy calls for new partnerships in areas such as blue economy, sustainability, technology and security, especially with East and Southeast Asia. Shri Pant also highlighted India's evolving role as a preferred security partner and first responder. He also stressed that eastern Indian states, particularly Odisha, must anchor this engagement for MAHASAGAR to succeed.



Shri Vishal D. Bajpai, Head of Indian Ocean Business, Tata NYK Shipping

- The upcoming decades as India's key maritime moment, with sea trade set to drive export-led growth over the next 25 years. Over 95% of India's trade by volume and 70% by value moves by sea, while the Indo-Pacific region accounts for nearly two-thirds of global maritime trade and GDP. This makes maritime strategy a crucial lever for India's economic future.
- Eastern India's Purvodaya states play a central role, as they hold major mineral reserves, steel capacity and modern port infrastructure. These states are expected to contribute nearly two-thirds of India's steel capacity by 2031 and could add up to a trillion dollars to GDP by 2030. Despite ASEAN's larger economy, India's trade with the GCC is higher, revealing untapped potential on the eastern maritime front.
- The Bay of Bengal and Nicobar region offers strategic opportunities to create secure logistics and transshipment corridors. He emphasized green shipping, alternative fuels and decarbonization as new opportunities for eastern India. Partnerships with global hubs like Singapore can support ammonia and biofuel production.



Ms. Adhyanti Sardanarini Wirajuda, Director, ASEAN Economic Cooperation, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Indonesia:



- ASEAN, with 11 member states and a population of over 670 million, is a major growth engine in the Indo-Pacific and values its deep historical maritime links with India. From ASEAN's viewpoint, the ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific (AOIP) remains the guiding framework, emphasizing inclusivity, openness, rules-based order and ASEAN centrality. From Indonesia's perspective, India is a key maritime partner both bilaterally as a fellow Indian Ocean littoral state as well as regionally, particularly in supply chains, the blue economy and people-to-people ties.
- MAHASAGAR represents an evolution of the Sagar vision towards a wider Indo Pacific partnership including engagement with ASEAN and other littoral states. ASEAN views MAHASAGAR positively when it complements, rather than competes with, the AOIP.
- The Bay of Bengal is a complementary connector to ASEAN's main maritime routes and enhances the regional resilience. Strengthening ASEAN–India corridors require integrating land and sea routes and focusing on practical delivery. Initiatives should reduce transaction costs, improve sea lane resilience and create viable economic opportunities.
- Purvodaya is relevant when it supports ASEAN connectivity and inclusive value chains. Effective cooperation must prioritize outcomes for coastal communities and MSMEs. ASEAN-led platforms, especially following the 2025 ASEAN–India Summit and the 2026 Year of Maritime Cooperation, are key to implementation.
- ASEAN led mechanisms that anchor regional confidence alongside investment ready projects in sustainable fisheries, coastal resilience, marine debris reduction, ocean renewable energy and green ports are linked intrinsically to trade facilitation and corridor outcomes.
- Maritime cooperation should build not only trade and security, but also trust and long-standing cultural connections between India, ASEAN and Indonesia.

Purvodaya Young Thinkers Meet

Shri Sidhartha Pradhan, Trustee - The Energy Forum:

- Shri Pradhan placed emphasis on inspiring youth to become innovators, icons and unicorn founders. He further explained how platforms like The Energy Forum (TEF) can support startups and innovation. He cited an example from the petroleum and energy sector, where five public sector undertakings jointly operate a revolving fund of ₹250 crore annually to support startups and innovation.
- While access to such funding is highly competitive, startups were encouraged to directly write to the concerned PSUs. He concluded by offering support by the TEF through coordination and follow-up to help young innovators access opportunities and resources.



Padma Vibhushan Dr. Anil Kakodkar, Former Chairman, Atomic Energy Commission:

- India's influence in a changing global order depends less on hard power and more on its soft resources. While acknowledging past global reactions to India's nuclear choices, he emphasized that influence today is shaped by image, culture and societal strengths.
- India's most distinctive resource is its youth, especially given their role in startups and innovation. Rather than focusing only on traditional commerce and manufacturing, we should focus on untapped potential in natural resources, agriculture and horticulture, particularly in eastern regions.
- In the digital and knowledge era, geographic remoteness and weak physical infrastructure are no longer major barriers to economic participation. Digital technologies allow people anywhere to contribute to manufacturing, services and value creation. This creates an opportunity to bridge regional and social disparities within India and across Asia.
- Leveraging education, digital skills, traditional knowledge, culture and art can drive new forms of entrepreneurship. Collaboration among eastern countries, led by India, can counter growing global uncertainty and power-driven politics.
- Youth-led startups can connect tradition with modern technology and link markets east and west. There is a strategic opportunity for India to lead through innovation, culture and human capital rather than dominance.



Shri Priyadarshi Mohapatra, Chief Executive Officer, Cure Bay:

- Machines are enablers but the ideas are the contribution of the entrepreneurs who have the power to change the world. The collective energy and ideas of entrepreneurs are more powerful than any technology, as true innovation comes from identifying and solving challenges.
- Entrepreneurship is a mindset that exists beyond starting companies and can emerge in everyday decisions. Disrupting the existing norms can create scalable opportunities. Focusing one's vision to the opportunities available in the country by leveraging technology and community trust can aid in building ventures. Solving local problems can have a global impact. He stressed that entrepreneurship is about courage, context-driven innovation and long-term value creation.



Shri Sabyasachi Patnaik, Tech Entrepreneur:

- Hard work is the universal foundation of every entrepreneurial journey with no shortcuts to success. Chasing money directly often leads to failure, while focusing on creating real value ensures that financial rewards follow naturally. Entrepreneurs must stay committed to the bigger picture and remain clear about their core intent. Patience is essential, as meaningful growth takes time, much like nurturing a seed.
- Enjoying one's work makes the journey sustainable and fulfilling. Entrepreneurship teaches resilience and the ability to adapt rather than wait for challenges to pass. He highlighted the importance of speed in technology-driven businesses, where rapid change can outpace competitors. At the same time, entrepreneurs must balance failing fast with long-term planning.
- Dealing with ambiguity is an unavoidable part of the process. One key advantage of entrepreneurship is the freedom to chart one's own path. He urged entrepreneurs to engage with government policies and institutional support. Strong IT policies and support systems in Odisha and across India offer valuable opportunities that entrepreneurs should actively leverage.



Session III

Purvodaya: Advancing Cooperation for Blue Economy and Sustainability

Chair: Shri Subrat Tripathi, President-Business Development, Adani Ports Special Economic Zone:

Shri Tripathi contrasted humanity's advanced exploration of space with its limited ability to explore the deep oceans, highlighting the vast untapped potential of the maritime domain. Trade is a major growth driver, supported by India's recent policy incentives to boost ship building, a sector with strong employment multipliers. The development of Vizhinjam transshipment port is a landmark achievement, enabling India to handle ultra-large container vessels and reduce reliance on foreign hubs. This success signals the rise of port-led industrial development as India's next growth phase. The ports must be integrated with logistics, corridors and industrial ecosystems rather than function in isolation. Odisha, in particular, is uniquely positioned due to its ports and mineral-rich hinterland. Better connectivity across eastern and central India can unlock large-scale prosperity. Port-led development can prove to be a transformative opportunity for regional and national economic growth.



Shri Satish Chandra Mishra, Founder and Chief Executive Officer, Artha Shastra Institute, Indonesia:

- Vast potential and complexity of building a strategic partnership between India and Indonesia in the blue economy exist, trust and deeper engagement beyond numbers are essential. The renewed focus on the blue economy arises as both countries aim to become developed nations within a century of independence, leading to highly ambitious economic targets. This sector spans food security, poverty reduction, environmental sustainability, tourism, technology and maritime security, making cooperation both critical and challenging.
- The changing global order, marked by a shift from unipolarity to multipolarity and China's growing influence, adds strategic urgency to an India-Indonesia compact. Effective collaboration requires enabling conditions such as strong maritime security, institutional linkages and human capital development. He cautioned against linear projections, stressing that the blue economy is dynamic and influenced by evolving global and domestic factors.
- While nations pursue self-sufficiency in basic needs, future challenges like technology and pandemics demand collective action. Productivity growth, innovation and AI cooperation are key areas for partnership. The blue economy represents a moving, complex opportunity that must be approached with flexibility, long-term vision and contextual awareness.



Dr. Ajay Pradhan, Vice President, Chief Executive Officer & President, C2S2, New Delhi:

- Waterborne transport corridors are reshaping Asia and strengthening India's, especially Odisha's and the Northeast's, role in global trade. Asia now dominates global maritime activity, driven by high trade volumes, technological advances and strong regional development focus. India's strategic location, along coastline, island territories and expanding port infrastructure position it as the next major maritime hub after China.
- Major public and private port projects, along with initiatives like SAGARMALA, are transforming ports into integrated industrial and logistics ecosystems. Inland waterways are reducing transit costs and improving connectivity to the Northeast and neighboring countries. BIMSTEC cooperation, transport agreements and upcoming free trade arrangements will further boost regional integration.
- Green and digital maritime corridors, especially with Singapore are modernizing ports and promoting sustainability. Strategic corridors linking East Asia, Russia and Arctic routes will redefine Indo-Pacific trade flows.
- Odisha emerges as a key gateway with multiple ports, industrial clusters and future cruise and coastal shipping potential. The long-term corridor development will bring prosperity, influence and economic integration to India and the wider region



Shri Rikesh Gurung, Founder & Chief Executive Officer, The Green Road:

- Meaningful progress depends on trust, cooperation and people-to-people connections. Drawing from the strong India–Bhutan relationship, Shri Gurung highlighted how shared policies, cultural ties and collaboration shape sustainable partnerships. He pointed out that Purvodaya should focus not just on profit but on “true profit” rooted in human values, environmental responsibility and social well-being.
- The blue economy is a vital area of regional cooperation, connecting landlocked and coastal nations through rivers, biodiversity and shared ecosystems. Challenges such as climate change, microplastic pollution and governance complexities demand collective solutions beyond borders.
- He emphasized youth involvement, knowledge sharing and mentorship as keys to future innovation. Bhutan's philosophy of Gross National Happiness shapes a balanced approach to development over rapid growth. Economic cooperation with India, including trade and financing opportunities is crucial. He advocated for collaboration-driven, purpose-led entrepreneurship that serves communities and strengthens regional ties.



Session IV Frontier Technologies in Shaping Purvodaya Vision

Chair: Shri Satyajit Mohanty, Joint Secretary, Ministry of Defence:

Shri Mohanty urged young innovators to take risks and choose unconventional paths, quoting Robert Frost poem “The Road Not Taken” to emphasize that bold choices make a lasting difference. Drawing on 25 years of government experience, he advised against excessive risk aversion, which often leads to regret later in life. He highlighted that true disruption requires courage, even if it involves setbacks along the way. He acknowledged the growing support from the Indian government and active promotion of innovation and industry collaboration.



He pointed to major initiatives such as the National Quantum Mission, AI Mission, Semiconductor Mission, and various startup funding programs. These include support from SIDBI, the Ministry of Defence's iDEX program, and BIRAC for biotechnology. However, he cautioned innovators not to rely solely on government subsidies. Real value creation comes from looking beyond state support. India's demographic dividend, talent pool, and skills provide a strong foundation for frontier technology leadership. The future of innovation belongs to those willing to disrupt and think boldly.

Ms. Naimisha Pradhan, focused on Nuclear Energy and how that would shape the Purvodaya vision:

- India's journey toward Viksit Bharat 2047 will be shaped by the systems it builds today, including laws, infrastructure and innovation ecosystems. Ms. Naimisha highlighted two converging developments: the approval of the new civil nuclear “SHANTI” Bill and the Purvodaya initiative positioning eastern India as a hub of competitive growth. For decades civil nuclear power has largely been a state led domain, understandably cautious, very tightly governed and built for safety and sovereignty.
- The new bill is a message that India is now trying to move from a closed system to a managed scalable ecosystem with clearer roles, with accountability and a great room for industry to participate in building, supplying and supporting the sector. The nuclear reform signals a shift from a closed, state-led model to a scalable ecosystem with greater industry participation.
- Nuclear energy is emphasized as a source of reliable, round-the-clock baseload power essential for modern industry. She stressed that Purvodaya must go beyond attracting projects and instead build capability, reliability and quality to succeed in open markets. While nuclear is a high-entry-barrier sector favoring large firms and startups can still play a critical role. They can contribute through technologies like digital twins, robotics, predictive maintenance and quality assurance systems. This creates an opportunity for eastern India to lead by filling gaps in the value chain.
- The reform should build confidence that clean energy can scale responsibly and competitively. She also noted that public awareness and acceptance of nuclear energy in India still needs strengthening. She concluded that if implemented well, the nuclear pathway can generate not just power but skills, innovation and opportunities for a new generation.



Dr. G Venkat Raman, IIM, Indore:

- To compete effectively with China, India must first understand China's strengths in high-end technological innovation. Using CATL (Contemporary Amperex Tech Co. Ltd) and BYD as examples, Dr. Raman highlighted how China now dominates the global EV battery supply chain through major breakthroughs like sodium-ion batteries and advanced cell architectures.
- These innovations signal China's shift from being merely a manufacturing hub to a self-sustaining global innovation powerhouse. The Chinese state has played a key role by heavily investing in R&D but private firms also thrive in a highly competitive, Darwinian market.
- China's “engineering state” model integrates science, technology and manufacturing to gain long-term strategic advantages. Chinese companies simultaneously innovate across products, processes, technology and organizational structures, unlike many Western firms. Universities such as Tsinghua act as incubators for national tech champions, supported by strong state-industry-academia collaboration.
- This “triple helix” model fuels leadership in critical technologies like AI, quantum computing and green tech. For India, this creates serious challenges to Atmanirbhar Bharat and global manufacturing ambitions.
- China's dominance in advanced industries widens the technology gap. India must carefully navigate global tech bifurcation amid US–China rivalry. He concluded that China's civil–military fusion further heightens security concerns, making strategic preparedness essential for India.



Dr. Srinivas Yanamandra, IDRBT, Hyderabad:

- Growing importance of looking east in shaping India's fintech future. Shri Srinivas explained that while Western countries rely heavily on private-sector innovation, eastern nations emphasize government-supported digital public infrastructure.
- India's success with UPI and fast payment systems is a model distinct from crypto-currencies and private-led systems in the West. He stressed the need to integrate India's payment systems with those of ASEAN and BIMSTEC countries to build a strong cross-border payment architecture.
- Initiatives like Project Nexus and regional partnerships as key opportunities. The creation of regional regulatory sandboxes is proposed to support fintech innovation with collaborations with the governments, regulators and with the frameworks that can be created by multilateral entities.
- Rising cybercrime from parts of the eastern region poses serious risks to fintech gains. Therefore, cooperation with neighboring countries on law enforcement and information sharing is essential. He argued that looking east is not just a strategic choice but a necessity to sustain innovation, security and growth in India's fintech ecosystem.



Shri Bikash Mohanty, Global Programme Leader, Strategy & Transformation Executive:

- Frontier technology is connected with history, values and responsibility to show how human imagination and innovation have evolved over thousands of years. Modern technologies such as drones are innovative yet powerful enough to be used both for good and harm.
- The technology advances should be handled responsibly. Young entrepreneurs should think not only about innovation, but about purposeful and ethical innovation that serves society and coexists with nature. The Purvodaya vision is framed as an opportunity to shape a future where technology improves lives rather than creates new risks.
- India's progress should be measured by quality of life, not just GDP growth. Innovation should focus on basic needs such as food, agriculture, air and water. Examples of carbon-capture devices and manufacturing opportunities in smartphones show how innovation can turn challenges into national opportunities.
- Self-reliance, sustainability, and job creation through indigenous innovation would be important. Shri Mohanty called for responsible people-centric technological growth led by thoughtful entrepreneurs.
- India's progress should be measured by quality of life, not just GDP growth. Innovation should focus on basic needs such as food, agriculture, air and water. Examples of carbon-capture devices and manufacturing opportunities in smartphones show how innovation can turn challenges into national opportunities.
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Key Recommendations

1. Adopt a Holistic, Corridor-Based Development Approach for Eastern India:

- Shift from isolated infrastructure projects to integrated economic corridors.
- Align ports, rail, roads, inland waterways, digital infrastructure, townships and industrial clusters into a single development vision.
- Treat Eastern India as a gateway to Southeast Asia and not just a domestic growth zone.

2. Accelerate Decision-Making and Project Execution:

- Reduce delays caused by fragmented approvals and coordination gaps.
- Improve alignment between central government, state governments, industry and local institutions.
- Emphasize speed, predictability and accountability in execution.

3. Reduce Logistics Costs and Improve Supply-Chain Efficiency:

- Dedicated freight corridors
- Multimodal transport integration
- Inland waterways and river ports
- End-to-end digitization of logistics
- Treat logistics as a competitiveness enabler, not just infrastructure.

4. Place MSMEs and Micro-Enterprises at the Center of Growth Strategy:

- Integrate MSMEs into supply chains
- Provide mentoring, technology support and market access
- Support MSMEs in becoming bankable, compliant and scalable.

5. Promote Digital, AI and Technology Adoption—Especially for MSMEs:

- Advisory platforms and awareness programs
- Affordable AI and automation tools
- Leverage universities and technical institutions as technology extension hubs for MSMEs and startups.

6. Strengthen the Education–Skills–Industry Pipeline:

- Align curricula with real industry requirements.
- Mandate internships, apprenticeships and live industry projects.

- Position higher education institutions as:
- Problem solvers for MSMEs
- Innovation and mentorship centers
- Shift focus from skilling numbers to employability and productivity.

7. Encourage Problem-First, Impact-Oriented Entrepreneurship:

- Promote startups that solve large-scale societal and regional problems, especially in:
 - ★ Healthcare
 - ★ Agriculture and aquaculture
 - Climate resilience
 - Rural livelihoods
- Challenge assumptions about market size, willingness to pay and scale in underserved regions.

8. Focus on Business Model Innovation, Not Technology Alone:

- Encourage hybrid and full-stack solutions combining:
 - ★ Physical infrastructure + digital platforms
 - ★ Human handholding + automation

9. Build Trust-Centric and Community-Embedded Models:

- Treat trust as a strategic asset, particularly in rural and semi-formal markets.
- Design transparent, participatory and locally embedded solutions.
- Use community intermediaries to strengthen adoption and last-mile delivery.

10. Improve Access to Capital for Manufacturing and Deep-Tech Ventures:

- Address capital intensity and long gestation challenges through:
 - ★ State and central incentive alignment
 - ★ Better awareness of funding schemes
 - ★ Anchor-industry-led MSME ecosystems
- Encourage startups to approach investors with clear, sustainable business models, not grant dependency.

11. Create Clearer Startup-Government Engagement Pathways

- Enable startups to participate meaningfully in government procurement and large projects.

- Promote partnerships between startups and large system integrators.
- Institutionalize continuous dialogue between policymakers and innovators.

12. Institutionalize Mentorship, Handholding and Ecosystem Support

- Provide sustained mentorship beyond funding, including:
 - ★ Strategic guidance
 - ★ Policy navigation
 - ★ Psychological support for long-gestation ventures
- Help entrepreneurs balance incremental innovation with long-term disruption goals.

13. Promote Collective Action Through Industry and Startup Ecosystems

- Encourage participation in clusters, industry bodies and regional platforms.
- Use collective forums for:
 - ★ Policy advocacy
 - ★ Investor engagement
 - ★ Peer learning and collaboration
- Reduce isolation of startups and MSMEs.

14. Foster Industry-to-Industry Engagement with Southeast Asia

- Strengthen B2B and sector-specific linkages beyond government-level engagement.
- Support joint ventures, technology partnerships and structured market-entry mechanisms.
- Improve institutional support for market intelligence and regulatory understanding.

15. Balance Speed with Patience and Long-Term Vision

- Move quickly on technology and execution while remaining patient in:
 - ★ Market development
 - ★ Trust building
 - ★ Institutional change
- Prioritize value creation and impact before short-term monetization.

Cultural Evening



Activities At Glance



Book Release by Smt. Nirmala Sitharaman Hon'ble Minister of Finance & Corporate Affairs and Shri Dharmendra Pradhan Hon'ble Minister of Education



Talk by Padam Vibhushan Dr. Anil Kakodkar on India's energy security import reduction and sustainability



A roundtable with H.E. Stephen Harper former Prime Minister of Canada and Shri Dharmendra Pradhan Hon'ble Minister of Education on India-Canada energy relations





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