

INDIA-INDONESIA CONNECT

India and Indonesia share history and culture and that connection happened centuries before the bilateralism and international diplomacy came into being. So when Prime Minister Narendra Modi is spending three out his six-day foreign journey in the country three countries, he is nurturing that special relationship and giving it a modern context. No wonder PM Modi spoke about the wonder that the unity of two nations – one with the largest population in the world and the second with largest Muslim population with strong cultural roots – would play out. He spoke about India's non-expansionist and development oriented approach while addressing the Parliament of Indonesia where President Prabowo Subianto and top ministers were present. Indonesia is an interesting country where Muslims celebrate their cultural roots and they don't shy away from owing their past. President Prabowo Subianto himself is vocal about the Indian connection of Indonesia. He said in the Parliament that before going to India in January, he had tested his DNA and found that he have an Indian DNA. He admitted that every time he hears Indian music, he finds his body moving. Besides, he admitted that almost 50% of the Indonesian language is derived from Sanskrit with many Indonesian names also rooted in Sanskrit. India, on its part is interested in further cementing its cultural relation with Indonesia. Also the visit gains importance because of the Mallaca Strait which is secured by Indonesia. Due to the tension in Hormuz Strait the other routes of navigation have gained importance. Security of Indian and Pacific ocean has become importance and it is here that the two countries can cooperate to make the world a safer place. Besides, India is selling BrahMos supersonic cruise missile to Indonesia. Ideologically both the countries believe in free world and democracy.

The enduring legacy of Dr Syama Prasad Mookerjee

Gajendra Singh Shekhawat

History often remembers great leaders through the political battles they fought. Yet the most enduring contribution of statesmen is rarely confined to politics alone. Their real legacy lies in the institutions they create, the ideas they nurture and the values they leave behind for future generations. As the nation commemorates the 125th birth anniversary of Bharat Kesari Dr. Syama Prasad Mookerjee, it is worth revisiting an aspect of his public life that deserves far wider attention: his lifelong commitment to institution building as the foundation of nation building.

Independent India did not emerge merely from a political struggle. It had to build universities capable of educating its citizens, research institutions that could advance scientific knowledge, industries that could generate economic self-reliance, cultural organisations that would preserve civilisational heritage, and public institutions that could uphold democratic values. Dr. Mookerjee understood early that a nation's future depends not only on visionary leadership but also on strong institutions that outlast individual leaders and governments.

His remarkable academic career reflected this conviction. Appointed the youngest Vice-Chancellor of the University of Calcutta, he assumed office at a time when higher education was becoming central to India's intellectual awakening. For him, universities were not merely places that produced graduates; they were institutions that shaped informed citizens capable of contributing responsibly to public life. Education, in his view, was inseparable from the larger task of nation building.

His commitment to scientific and technological advancement extended well beyond the university campus. As a member of the Court and Council of the Indian Institute of Science, Bengaluru, he con-



tributed to strengthening one of India's premier centres of scientific research. In 1947, he laid the foundation stone of the Department of Power Engineering, recognising that engineering education and technological capability would become indispensable to an independent India's economic progress. Long before innovation became a central policy objective, he had recognised that scientific excellence and industrial development would determine the country's long-term strength.

This vision found practical expression after Independence when Dr. Mookerjee became India's first Minister for Industry and Supply. During those formative years, the newly independent nation faced the enormous challenge of creating an industrial base almost from scratch. Institutions such as the Chittaranjan Locomotive Works and the Sindri Fertilizer Factory were established not merely as manufacturing units but as symbols of India's determination to achieve technological competence and economic self-reliance. For Dr. Mookerjee, industrialisation was never an end in itself; it was an investment in national capability and collective confidence. Institution building, however, requires more than physical infrastructure or administrative efficiency. It demands compassion,

public spirit and a deep sense of moral responsibility. These qualities were evident during the Bengal famine of 1943, when Dr. Mookerjee devoted himself to organising large-scale relief efforts for those affected by one of the greatest humanitarian tragedies of the twentieth century. Following Partition, he worked extensively for the rehabilitation of displaced persons, recognising that national reconstruction involved

healing human suffering as much as rebuilding institutions.

His public life also reflected a profound appreciation of India's civilisational heritage. As President of the Maha Bodhi Society of India, he played an important role in strengthening India's cultural and spiritual ties with Buddhist nations. He participated in welcoming the sacred relics of the Buddha's chief disciples, Arhant Sariputra and Arhant Maudgalyayana, to India, recognising the enduring significance of civilisational diplomacy. Even today, India's efforts to share these holy relics with countries such as Mongolia demonstrate how cultural heritage continues to strengthen international goodwill and deepen historical bonds.

Equally revealing was his concern for literature and scholarship. His correspondence shows the assistance he extended to the eminent poet Kazi Nazrul Islam during a period of personal difficulty. Such episodes remind us that public leadership is often measured not only by major policy decisions but also by quiet acts of generosity that seldom attract public attention.

Dr. Mookerjee carried the same institutional outlook into the Constituent Assembly. Describing the framing of the Constitution as "a great responsibility"

and "a solemn and sacred trust", he underlined the moral obligations that accompany constitutional governance. Those words remain strikingly relevant today. The strength of the Constitution ultimately depends not only on its written provisions but also on the integrity of Parliament, the independence of public institutions, the rule of law and the civic responsibility of citizens. Constitutional democracy flourishes only when institutions command public trust and operate with integrity.

As India advances towards the goal of becoming a developed nation, Dr. Mookerjee's vision offers an important reminder. Economic growth alone cannot define national progress. Lasting development requires sustained investment in education, scientific research, technological innovation, cultural preservation and institutions that inspire public confidence.

Roads, airports and factories are indispensable, but so are universities that encourage inquiry, laboratories that expand knowledge, museums that preserve heritage and public institutions that safeguard constitutional values. Institutions possess a remarkable quality: they outlive governments, political movements and even generations. They preserve accumulated knowledge, provide continuity amid change and enable societies to pursue long-term national goals. Leaders may shape history, but institutions sustain civilisation.

That perhaps is the most enduring lesson of Dr. Syama Prasad Mookerjee's public life. His legacy rests not merely in the offices he held or the debates in which he participated, but in his unwavering belief that strong institutions are the true custodians of a nation's aspirations. As India continues its journey of development, strengthening those institutions that promote knowledge, scientific temper, cultural confidence and constitutional values would be the most meaningful tribute to his memory.

WHY QUIET CONTRIBUTORS DESERVE MORE THAN APPLAUSE

Sakshi Sethi

In contemporary organisations, the ability to draw attention is increasingly being misunderstood for the ability to generate effect. Visibility often wins faster attention than consistency and noise is frequently valued over content. As these organisations become more driven by optics and perception, a key question emerges: are we actually acknowledging contribution or just applauding performance that is easier to notice? Well, a simple metaphor describes this: the difference between a fish employee and a chicken employee. A fish moves quietly, adapts to changing conditions and keeps progressing steadily without seeking attention. On the other hand, a chicken is loud and highly visible, creating constant activity around itself. While both may contribute, visibility and noise should not be mistaken for meaningful or consistent performance. This seemingly humorous metaphor illustrates a larger workplace issue: organisations typically reward people who are most visible rather than those who regularly generate outcomes. Across industries, praise typically goes to individuals who demonstrate their activities successfully, while silent participants undertaking unseen yet vital roles remain neglected. The tragedy is not merely that loud contributors are rewarded. The real



loss is that silent contributors slowly stop giving their best.

Institutions are often held together by those who work beyond the spotlight, sustaining stability despite uncertainty. Ironically, their reliability often works against them; quiet proficiency is rewarded with greater responsibility but rarely with attention, until dedication gradually transforms into exploitation. This phenomenon is noticeable primarily at educational institutions, where visible achievements such as board results, public events, competition victories and social media milestones are extensively celebrated. Yet be-

hind every success lies the invisible labour of teachers and staff providing emotional support, resolving conflicts, offering remedial guidance, managing administrative demands, communicating with parents and handling crises. Much of this vital labour remains unnoticed simply because it does not produce immediate visibility or public applause. The silent instructor who regularly alters learning results may receive less appreciation than someone who just shows enthusiasm in public spaces.

In the process, leadership judgment often becomes distorted, with visibility mistaken for ownership, constant updates for productivity and relentless activity for dedication. More often than not, the calmest individual in the room may be carrying the heaviest responsibility. The deeper con-

cern lies in what modern workplaces have started rewarding. In an age shaped by constant broadcasting, being seen is increasingly valued as much as actual work. This performative mindset has quietly entered professional spaces, where productivity is often judged less by outcomes and more by visible busyness. Emails become signals, meetings become stages and activity begins to overshadow impact. The consequences are profound. Quiet high performers burn out; mediocrity learns the art of self-promotion and organisations gradually become ecosystems where optics overshadow substance. Trust erodes, collaboration weakens and thoughtful contributors withdraw from environments that reward volume over value. This raises an uncomfortable but necessary question: Are we rewarding genuine contribution or merely performance theatre? The answer often defines institutional health. Strong leadership lies in seeing beyond noise. Recognising those who bring stability in crises, deliver consistently and strengthen systems without seeking applause. What truly matters is who keeps the organisation moving forward when conditions become difficult. Wise institutions understand this. They do not measure worth by spectacle alone but by sustained impact.

The writer is an educator and a counsellor; Views presented are personal.

Stitching the Value Chain: How PM MITRA Parks are Rewriting India's Textile Destiny

Shri Pabitra Margherita

For centuries, India's identity was deeply woven into its textiles, from the lasting warmth of Kashmir's Pashmina and the golden luster of Assam's Muga silk, to the royal Kanjeevarams of Tamil Nadu, the weaves of Chanderi, and the legendary textile craftsmanship of Surat. Today, this sector remains a strong pillar of our economy, contributing 2.3% to GDP, 13% to industrial production, and 12% to exports. As India's second-largest employer after agriculture, it provides direct livelihoods to 45 million people and sustains over 100 million indirectly, strengthening rural communities and driving financial autonomy for millions of women nationwide.

In contrast to the consolidated ecosystems of global competitors, India's textile value chain historically evolved into a geographically dispersed model. Spinning, weaving, processing, garmenting, and export activities developed independently across different states, meaning a single garment often crossed multiple borders during production. This fragmented footprint created structural barriers. It suppressed scale-up, modernisation, automation and ultimately labor productivity.

Compounding this is the high logistics burden caused by multi-modal connectivity gaps. Every hand-off between scattered production stages incurs extra handling and freight charges. Multi-stage long-distance transship-

ments swell cumulative logistics costs and destroy "speed to market" which is a fatal disadvantage in modern retail's high-frequency ordering cycles.

Consider the environmental imperative. Textiles account for 8% to 10% of global greenhouse gas emissions and 20% of industrial water pollution. Enforcing regulations and sustainable effluent management across thousands of scattered, tiny units was historically a major administrative challenge.

To systematically dismantle these barriers, the Central Government under the leadership of Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi launched the PM Mega Integrated Textile Region and Apparel (PM MITRA) scheme in October 2021, supported by a ₹4,445 crore budgetary outlay. This pivotal intervention introduces a holistic model where the Central Government drives development in absolute unison with State Governments, industry players, and private partners.

At the heart of this scheme lies the visionary 5F formula of Farm to Fibre to Factory to Fashion to Foreign, championed by Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi. This philosophy directly addresses what distinguishes India on the global stage: our complete and incredibly diverse value chain. Unlike global peers relying strictly on raw material imports or final garment assembly, India participates in the entire lifecycle of textile creation, from fields of our farmers to high-fashion runways. Because of this unique depth, our growth

strategy must uniquely balance global competitiveness with absolute social equity. While scaling up, we must carefully protect the welfare of every sector so that from the humble grower and rural weaver to the apparel exporter, no one is left behind. The PM MITRA framework achieves this equilibrium.

Strategically locating these parks near major raw material hubs minimises transport costs and ensures an unhindered supply for manufacturing. More importantly, this proximity enables strict end-to-end traceability. As global brands mandate organic or sustainable certifications, these integrated parks provide a verifiable chain of custody, satisfying stringent global ESG norms and hence paving a path for commanding premium pricing abroad. Co-locating spinning, weaving, processing, and garmenting within contiguous 1,000+ acre parcels eliminates multi-state transshipments, drastically slashing freight costs and transport emissions while accelerating speed to market. Aligned with national logistics corridors like Dedicated Freight Corridors and expressways, the journey to foreign markets becomes highly cost-effective. Every park features plug-and-play industrial infrastructure including dedicated power substations, continuous water supply, and ready-to-move-in factory sheds alongside common facilities like advanced Common Effluent Treatment Plants utilizing Zero Liquid Discharge (ZLD) technology, and modern amenities, shifting the infrastructure burden away

from businesses and improving our ease of doing business.

PM MITRA Parks are transitioning rapidly from blueprints to ground realities. The scheme comprises seven strategic parks: five Greenfield developments in Virudhunagar (Tamil Nadu), Navsari (Gujarat), Kalaburagi (Karnataka), Dhar (Madhya Pradesh), and Lucknow (Uttar Pradesh), alongside two Brownfield developments in Warangal (Telangana) and Amravati (Maharashtra). To date, the scheme has captured over ₹69,899 crore in total investment interest, with ₹27,658 crore already grounded.

On May 10, 2026, Hon'ble Prime Minister inaugurated the first operational PM MITRA Park at Warangal, Telangana. This park has already witnessed ₹3,862 crore in grounded investments and operationalizes world-class eco-infrastructure, features that represent the sustainability standards being established across all seven park sites.

Parallel nationwide execution highlights swift cooperative federalism with MoUs signed with all seven states, 100% of the land acquisition done, and environmental clearances secured. For the five Greenfield sites, JV agreements and SPVs are fully incorporated, anchoring rapid physical progress. Dhar (Madhya Pradesh), the largest park at 2,158 acres, has drawn ₹21,436.9 crore in investment interest, mirroring strong momentum across Gujarat (₹13,084 crore), Maharashtra (₹12,925 crore), Tamil Nadu (₹6,600

crore), Uttar Pradesh (₹5,345.8 crore), and Karnataka (₹1,700 crore). This effective execution is a testament to the proactive leadership of Union Minister of Textiles, Shri Giriraj Singh. Under his able leadership the Textiles Ministry has successfully accelerated its operational frameworks, cutting through administrative bottlenecks and fostering an unprecedented level of cooperative synergy with state governments.

But numbers only tell a part of the story, the real measure lies in human impact. Each park is structurally engineered and expected to generate approximately 3 lakh direct and indirect employment opportunities. Across all seven sites, this translates to over 21 lakh formal livelihoods, offering a major socio-economic lift to our rural households and women, who traditionally form the backbone of apparel manufacturing.

This large-scale infrastructure effort serves as the definitive launchpad for the textile sector's ambitious Vision 2030 for scaling India's textile industry into a \$350 billion global powerhouse by the end of this decade. By replacing historical fragmentation with world-class, integrated scale, PM MITRA is executing a profound structural shift. Guided by a strong leadership, we are transitioning India into the undisputed, sustainable, and highly competitive epicenter of textiles.

(The author is the Union Minister of State for Textiles. The views expressed are personal)