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අර්ධ වාර්ෂික ප්‍රකාශනය



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කළමනා | Kalamana | களமனா

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උපදේශක | Advisor | ஆலோசகர்

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අර්ධ වාර්ෂික ප්‍රකාශනය



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Reimagining Thought, Inspiring Action

විචිත නවීකරණය සහ ක්‍රියාකාරී පරිවර්තනය
சீந்தனையை செப்பனிடலும் செயலூக்கமளித்தலும்

Anusha Batawala Gamage
Chief Editor

අනුෂා බටවල ගමගේ
ප්‍රධාන සංස්කාරක

அனுஷா பட்டவல கமகே
பிரதம பதிப்பாசிரியர்



Kalamana is more than a publication; it is a reflection of the evolving intellect and practice of Sri Lanka's public service. Curated by the Sri Lanka Institute of Development Administration (SLIDA), it serves as a platform for connecting knowledge with action, bringing together policy insights, administrative experience, and forward-looking ideas that shape effective governance.

This edition represents a deliberate transformation. We have re-envisioned Kalamana in both appearance and presentation to create a more engaging, accessible, and intellectually stimulating experience. The refined design, stronger visual narratives, and structured content reflect our commitment to presenting knowledge in a manner that resonates with today's dynamic public sector. As evident in the rich themes explored, from sustainable development to leadership maturity, this edition moves beyond information sharing towards inspiring critical thinking and meaningful change.

The theme of this issue underscores a vital message: the future of public service lies in integration, of sustainability, innovation, and human-centered leadership. It reminds us that transformation is not only about systems and policies, but about the mindset, values, and capabilities of those who serve.

Kalamana is envisioned as a living platform, one that grows through dialogue, reflection, and shared experience. It is a space where ideas converge, where practice informs theory, and where public servants become thought leaders.

As we present this renewed edition, we reaffirm our commitment to continuous improvement and to remaining relevant in serving the nation's administrators.

We warmly invite all public sector officers to share their thoughts, experiences, and insights with Kalamana, and become part of this collective journey of learning and transformation.

"කළමනා" යනු ලිපි එකතුවක් පමණක් නොවේ. එය රාජ්‍ය සේවයේ දැනුම, අත්දැකීම්, විමසුම් සහ අනාගත දැක්ම එකට මිශ්‍ර වන බුද්ධිමය සංවාද වේදිකාවකි. ශ්‍රී ලංකා සංවර්ධන පරිපාලන ආයතනය ලෙස, එම වේදිකාව ගොඩනැගීම අපගේ වගකීමක් මෙන්ම කැපවීමක්ද වේ. දැනුම හා ක්‍රියාව, අත්දැකීම් හා අදහස්, සහ පරිපාලනය හා මනුෂ්‍යත්වය එකිනෙක හමුවන තැනක් ලෙස අපි "කළමනා" දකිමු.

මෙම සංස්කරණය, එම දැක්මට නව පෙනුමක් හා නව ගැඹුරක් එක් කරන උත්සාහයකි. ආකෘතියේ සිට ඉදිරිපත් කිරීම දක්වා සිදුකළ මෙම නව සැලසුම, පාඨකයාට වඩාත් ආකර්ෂණීය, පැහැදිලි සහ සිතුවිලි අවදි කරන අත්දැකීමක් ලබාදීමට අරමුණු කර ඇත. මෙහි අන්තර්ගතය කාලීන රාජ්‍ය සේවය මුහුණදෙන අභියෝග, වගකීම් සහ අවස්ථා සමඟ ගැළපෙන අයුරින් තේමාගත කර ඇත.

මෙම කලාපයේ තේමාව තුළින් මූලික වශයෙන් ඉස්මතු වන්නේ ඉතා වැදගත් පණිවිඩයකි. එනම් රාජ්‍ය සේවයේ අනාගතය ගොඩනැගෙන්නේ ප්‍රතිපත්ති හෝ ක්‍රමවේද පමණක් මත නොව, එය ක්‍රියාවට නගන මානව සම්පතෙහි අයුරින්, සිතුවිලි සහ නායකත්ව ගුණාංග මතය. එබැවින් "කළමනා" යනු හුදෙක් කියවීමට පමණක් නොව, සිතීමට, සාකච්ඡා කිරීමට සහ වෙනසක් ගොඩනැගීමට ආරාධනා කරන වේදිකාවකි.

මෙම සංස්කරණය ඔබ වෙත පිරිනමමින් එම වේදිකාව රාජ්‍ය සේවයේ සාමූහික බුද්ධිමය ගමනට අඩුණ්ඩුව දායක වන ප්‍රකාශනයක් බවට පත් කිරීමට අපගේ කැපවීම නැවත තහවුරු කරමු.

ඔබගේ සිතුවිලි, අත්දැකීම් සහ අදහස් "කළමනා" සමඟ බෙදාගනිමින්, මෙම සංවාදයේ සජීවී කොටස්කරුවන් වන ලෙස සියලු රාජ්‍ය සේවක මහත්ම මහත්මීන්ට ආරාධනා කරමු.

"களமனா" என்பது வெறுமனே ஒரு வெளியீடு மாதிரிமன்று. அது இலங்கையின் அரச சேவையின் அறிவுத்திறன் பரிணாமத்தையும் நடைமுறையும் பிரதிபலிக்கும் ஒரு வெளிப்பாடு. இலங்கை அபிவிருத்தி நிருவாக நிறுவகத்தின் மூலம் தொகுக்கப்படும் இது, அறிவையும் செயலையும் இணைக்கும் ஒரு பாலமாக செயல்படுகிறது. கொள்கைகள் தொடர்பான ஆழ்ந்தறிவு, நிர்வாக அனுபவங்கள், மற்றும் திறன் வாய்ந்த ஆட்சியை உருவாக்கும் முன்னோக்கிய சிந்தனைகளை இது ஒருங்கிணைக்கிறது.

இந்த பதிப்பு திட்டமிட்ட மாற்றத்தை பிரதிபலிக்கிறது. "களமனா"வை தோற்றத்திலும் வெளிப்படுத்துகையிலும் மெருகூட்டி, மேலும் ஈர்ப்பான, அணுகக்கூடிய மற்றும் அறிவுசார் தூண்டுதலை வழங்கும் அனுபவமாக மாற்றியமைத்துள்ளோம். மேம்படுத்தப்பட்ட வடிவமைப்பு, வலுவான காட்சிப் பிரதிபலிப்புகள் மற்றும் கட்டமைக்கப்பட்ட உள்ளடக்கம் ஆகியவை, இன்றைய இயக்காற்றல் வாய்ந்த அரச துறையுடன் ஒத்திசைவாக அறிவை வழங்கும் எங்கள் உறுதிப்பாட்டை வெளிப்படுத்துகின்றன. நிலைபேறான அபிவிருத்தி முதல் தலைமைத் திறன் முதிர்ச்சி வரை பரந்துபட்ட தலைப்புகளில் இந்த பதிப்பு ஆராய்வது, தகவல் பகிர்வைத் தாண்டி விமர்சன சிந்தனையையும் அர்த்தமுள்ள மாற்றத்தையும் ஊக்குவிக்கிறது.

இந்த வெளியீட்டின் தொனிப்பொருள் ஒரு முக்கியமான செய்தியை வலியுறுத்துகிறது: அரச சேவையின் எதிர்காலம், நிலைபேறான தன்மை, புத்தாக்கம், மற்றும் மனித மையப்படுத்தப்பட்ட தலைமைத்துவம் ஆகியவற்றின் ஒருங்கிணைந்த செயற்பாட்டில் தங்கியுள்ளது. மாற்றம் என்பது முறைமைகள் மற்றும் கொள்கைகளில் மட்டுமன்றி, சேவை வழங்குநர்களின் மனப்பாங்கு, விழுமியங்கள் மற்றும் செயற்திறன்களிலும் ஏற்பட வேண்டும் என்பதை இது நினைவுபடுத்துகிறது.

"களமனா" கருத்துப்பதிவுகள், பிரதிபலிப்புகள் மற்றும் அனுபவ பதிவுகள் மூலம் வளர்ந்து வரும் உயிரோட்டமுள்ள ஒரு தளமாக உருவாக்கப்படுகிறது. இது சிந்தனைகள் ஒன்றிணையும் இடமாகவும், செயற்பாடுகள் கோட்பாடுகளாக உருவாகும் தளமாகவும், அரச சேவையாளர்கள் சிந்தனையாளர்களாக உருமாற்றும் களமாகவும் விளங்குகிறது.

இந்த புதுப்பிக்கப்பட்ட பதிப்பை வழங்கும் இந்த நேரத்தில், தொடர்ச்சியான முன்னேற்றத்திற்கும், நாட்டின் நிர்வாகிகளுக்கு பொருத்தமானவர்களாகத் திகழ்வதற்கும் எங்களது உறுதிப்பாட்டை மீண்டும் வலியுறுத்துகிறோம்.

அரச துறையில் பணியாற்றும் அனைத்து உத்தியோகத்தார்களையும் தங்கள் கருத்துகள், அனுபவங்கள் மற்றும் பார்வைகளை "களமனா"வுடன் பகிர்ந்து கொள்ளவும், கற்றல் மற்றும் உருமாற்றத்தின் இந்தக் கூட்டுப் பயணத்தில் ஓர் அங்கமாக மாறவும் அன்புடன் அழைக்கிறோம்.

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Turning Green into Gold: How Sri Lanka Can Unlock the Value of Nature



By
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Deputy Director (Climate Change)
Ministry of Environment



By
Mrs. Pranidhi P. A. Bopagamage
Deputy Director
National Productivity Secretariat

"Green transformation is not only the essential way to address climate change, but also a new engine for economic and social development..."¹

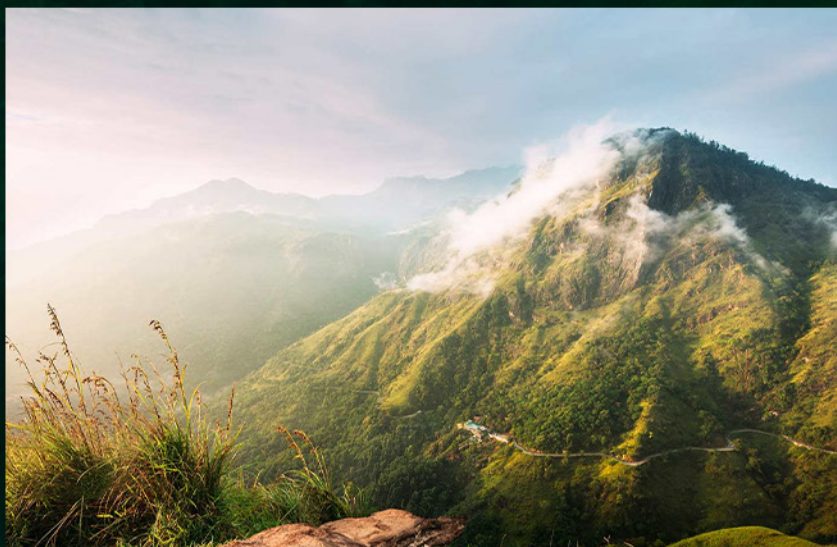
Instinctively, we visualize factories, highways, and exports when we think of economic growth. However, above our heads and below our feet, we have another kind of capital — the natural ecosystem that gives life. Clean rivers, mangroves that shield us from storms, rainforests rich in biodiversity, and even the thrill of a hike in the Knuckles Range are all ecological products. The question is: how do we assign them the value they deserve?

This is the same question that China has considered and found a resounding answer to. It has demonstrated that prosperity can be aligned with ecological balance through new policies, pilot projects, and intelligent financing tools that convert the wealth of nature into shared prosperity. Sri Lanka, with its fertile landscapes and strong cultural connection to nature, has much to learn from this approach.

From Theory to Action

The idea behind China's strategy is simple but powerful: treat ecosystems as capital. They provide goods and services clean water, fertile soils, forest carbon sinks that underpin our survival but rarely show up in GDP. To measure the value of this invisible contribution, China introduced Gross Ecosystem Product (GEP) accounting, a framework that quantifies ecological contributions in economic terms.

The underlying logic draws from established economic theory. Under a Pigouvian tax, polluters pay for the harm they cause, while under the Coase theorem, beneficiaries compensate those who protect shared resources. Either way, nature's services cease to be a "free good" and begin to be recognized as assets. In practice, this means that a province protecting a river upstream is compensated by industries and cities downstream.



¹ H.E. Xi Jinping, Leaders Meeting on Climate and Just Transition (2025).

Hidden Wealth of Sri Lanka



Natural abundance is a blessing for our island nation. We have the rainforest canopy of Sinharaja, mangroves in Puttalam, cloud forests in Horton Plains, and coral reefs in Trincomalee are just a few of our many treasures. These ecosystems provide life-saving services: flood control, carbon storage, pollination, and cultural inspiration.

However, their economic value is rarely taken into consideration. Take Sinharaja: villagers sacrifice access to forest resources for the sake of conservation but receive

little in return. Or consider our mangroves: they protect coastal communities during storms, yet short-term profits from shrimp farming continue to drive their destruction. Without proper recognition of these ecological products, communities bear the costs while society enjoys the benefits.

Sri Lanka has experimented with environmental levies and carbon credit projects, but these efforts are scattered and underdeveloped. We do not yet have a national mechanism for quantifying and incorporating ecological value into policy.

Lessons from China

The institutionalization of ecological compensation is an important lesson we can learn from China. The country has succeeded in balancing ecological conservation with social justice by introducing policies under which downstream users of clean water or beneficiaries of flood management systems that make payments to upstream communities. If a similar system were adopted in Sri Lanka, industries and cities along the Kelani and Mahaweli rivers could contribute directly to conservation efforts in rural catchment areas, ensuring that those who protect the resource are fairly compensated.

China has also demonstrated that ecological value can generate stronger market positioning. Products such as tea and bamboo crafts, marketed with ecological branding, earn premium rates in both domestic and foreign markets. Sri Lanka could benefit from this approach by marketing Ceylon Tea, cinnamon, and Ayurvedic herbal products not only as luxury goods but also as symbols of ecological stewardship. This narrative would resonate with environmentally conscious consumers across the globe and directly benefit local communities.

Finally, China's experience in green finance offers another valuable lesson. It has mobilized additional funding for conservation by linking ecological assets with financial instruments such as mortgages, green bonds, and ecosystem-based loans. In Sri Lanka, where funding for environmental projects is often limited, ecological loans secured by mangroves or forest-use rights could create innovative financing mechanisms to support both conservation and livelihoods.



What Sri Lanka Should Do Next?



For Sri Lanka, the first step must be to measure what we treasure. It would be the right time to introduce GEP accounting in biodiversity-rich districts like Ratnapura or Puttalam to reveal the hidden economic value of ecosystems, so that the value of nature is adequately represented in the national statistics. At the same time, our legal framework requires reform. Clarifying ownership of natural resources and recognizing ecological products in law will lay the groundwork for trading and fair distribution of benefits.

It is also important to have systems of compensation in place. Urban centres that are reliant on water, flood control or other ecological services should pay upstream or rural communities that conserve these ecosystems. These horizontal structures would dampen the tensions and create a feeling of collective responsibility. In addition to this, Sri Lanka has to consider the way it can capture ecological premiums in the international markets. Eco-labeling and certification schemes that emphasize environmental stewardship might provide enhanced competitiveness of the Sri Lankan exports in the international market and reward sustainable behavior within the local market.

Finance will be a key enabler. By collaborating with local banks to create ecological loans, bonds or insurance programs, guaranteed by international climate funds, new conservation resources would be opened. And to enable high participation levels, Sri Lanka would implement new community-based models such as the Chinese “carbon coins” which reward ordinary citizens for their eco-friendly behavior like recycling, planting trees or taking public transport. These rewards may be coupled with any material rewards such as lower bills or service vouchers, and sustainability will not be an obligation, but a way of life.

A Green Road Ahead

Sri Lanka stands at a crossroads. We can continue to regard nature as mere scenery, or we can begin to recognize it as a foundation of prosperity. The Chinese experience shows that green can indeed be turned into gold through appropriate institutions, fair compensation systems, and innovative financing.

By taking this path, Sri Lanka can protect its breathtaking natural heritage while ensuring that the benefits of ecological wealth are shared equitably among all its people. After all, our future prosperity is inseparable from the health of the ecosystems that sustain us.



Why Emotional Maturity Matters in Leadership



By
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In many organizations, leadership positions are filled by individuals with strong technical expertise, ambition, and years of experience. However, one critical capability is often overlooked: emotional maturity. Without it, even highly competent leaders can unintentionally weaken trust, lower morale, and slow organizational progress (Goleman, 1998).

Emotional immaturity in leadership is not a minor limitation. It shapes how decisions are made, how power is exercised, and how people experience their work each day. When leaders struggle to regulate their emotions or understand others' emotional needs, the effects ripple throughout the entire organization (Boyatzis & McKee, 2005).

Experience Does Not Always Equal Maturity

A common assumption in organizations is that seniority, age, or long service naturally lead to wisdom. Research suggests otherwise. Emotional growth is not automatic; it requires reflection, feedback, and intentional development (Day et al., 2014).

Leaders who lack emotional maturity often struggle under pressure, communicate poorly in uncertain situations, and respond defensively to feedback. Rather than learning from criticism, they may deny problems or react emotionally when their authority is challenged. In high-stakes or rapidly changing environments, such responses can place organizations at risk (Yukl, 2013).

Unequal Standards in Leadership Judgement

One of the most complex dimensions of emotional maturity in leadership is how unevenly it is assessed and tolerated. Studies show that behaviors perceived as “strong” or “decisive” in some leaders are judged more harshly when displayed by women or leaders from marginalized backgrounds (Eagly & Karau, 2002).

Women who express authority may be negatively labeled, while leaders from diverse backgrounds often face heightened scrutiny for emotional expression or assertiveness. These double standards create invisible barriers to advancement, limit leadership diversity, and deprive organizations of a broader range of perspectives and capabilities (Ibarra, Ely, & Kolb, 2013).

The organizational outcomes are clear: disengaged employees, higher turnover, reduced innovation, and leadership pipelines that fail to reflect the workforce’s diversity.

When Power Is Used Without Responsibility

Emotionally immature leaders may misuse power, sometimes unintentionally. This can take the form of coercion, manipulation, avoidance of accountability, or resistance to new ideas. Such behaviors often stem from insecurity rather than intent, yet they have a significant impact (Kellerman, 2004).

Over time, trust erodes, psychological safety declines, and employees become reluctant to speak up. Creativity and initiative suffer, and a culture of silence replaces collaboration and learning (Edmondson, 2018).

Recognizing the Warning Signs

Organizations can identify emotionally immature leadership through common indicators, including:

- Limited empathy toward employees
- Difficulty accepting constructive feedback
- Poor conflict management, either through escalation or avoidance

When these behaviors go unaddressed, they can become normalized, embedding unhealthy leadership patterns into organizational culture.

Building Emotionally Intelligent Leaders

The encouraging reality is that emotional intelligence is developable, not fixed. Research consistently shows that leaders can strengthen self-awareness, emotional regulation, empathy, and relational skills through structured development interventions (Cherniss & Goleman, 2001).

Organizations can support this growth by investing in:

- Targeted leadership development and emotional intelligence training
- Regular, high-quality feedback mechanisms
- Executive coaching and reflective learning opportunities

When emotional intelligence becomes a leadership priority, the benefits extend beyond individuals to teams, culture, and performance outcomes.

Leading with Maturity for a Sustainable Future

Emotionally mature leadership is no longer optional. In complex, diverse, and people-centered workplaces, organizations need leaders who balance authority with empathy and decisiveness with self-awareness.

By investing in emotional maturity at the leadership level, organizations foster healthier workplaces, stronger teams, and more sustainable performance. Ultimately, leadership success is not defined by title or power, but by the capacity to lead people with understanding, responsibility, and respect.

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சிறிய மற்றும் நடுத்தர தொழில் முயற்சிகளை (SMEs) வலுப்படுத்துவதில்லுள்ள
சவால்களும், வாய்ப்புக்களும்



மரியநாயகம் கேசவன்
முகாமைத்துவ சேவை உத்தியோகத்தர்
இலங்கை அபிவிருத்தி நிருவாக நிறுவகம்

அறிமுகம்

அபிவிருத்தியடைந்து வரும் ஒரு நாடான இலங்கையானது சுதந்திரமடைந்த காலத்திலிருந்தே உயர் பொருளாதார வளர்ச்சி வீதத்தை அடைவதற்காக பல்வேறு வகையான உபாயங்கள் மற்றும் அணுகுமுறைகள் என்பவற்றின் ஊடாக உறுதியான முயற்சிகளை மேற்கொண்டு வந்துள்ளது. எனினும் குறைந்தளவிலான மூலதன உருவாக்கமானது எதிர்பார்க்கப்பட்ட குறிக்கோள்களை அடைவதற்கான செயற்பாடுகளை குறைந்தளவே எட்டியுள்ளது எனலாம். கைத் தொழில் அபிவிருத்தி விடயத்துறையில் இலங்கையை விடக் குறைவான அல்லது சமமான சாத்திய வளங்கள் நிலவிய நாடுகள் தமது மொத்த உள்நாட்டு உற்பத்திகளை தொடர்ச்சியாக வளர்த்தெடுத்து உலக பண்டங்கள் மற்றும் சேவைகள் சந்தையில் கணிசமான பங்கினை அடைந்து கொள்வதில் வெற்றி பெற்றுள்ளன. வெற்றிபெற்ற பெரும்பாலான பொருளாதாரங்கள் பாரிய, சிறிய மற்றும் நடுத்தர நிறுவனங்கள் என அனைத்தையும் உள்ளடக்கிய ஆரோக்கியமான கலப்பான தன்மையொன்றினை கொண்டதாகவுள்ளன. பாரிய நிறுவனங்கள் ஒப்பீட்டளவில் கூடியளவு உற்பத்தித்திறன் கொண்டனவாகவும், மூலதனச் செறிவினைக் கொண்ட செயற்திட்டங்களில் முதலீடு செய்வதற்கான இயலாற்றலைக் கொண்டனவாகவும், பாரியளவில் ஆராய்ச்சி மற்றும் அபிவிருத்திக்கு வசதியளிப்பதாகவும் காணப்படுகின்ற அதே வேளை, சிறிய மற்றும் நடுத்தர தொழில் முயற்சிகள் அத்தகைய பாரிய நிறுவனங்கள் வளர்வதற்கான ஏதுக்களாக தொழிற்படுவதன் மூலமாக முக்கிய பங்கொன்றினை ஆற்றுவதனுடிக் வழங்கல் சங்கிலியை விரிவுபடுத்துவதன் ஊடாக மேம்படுத்தப்படுகின்றன.

சிறிய மற்றும் நடுத்தர தொழில் முயற்சிகளின் முக்கியத்துவம்

சிறிய மற்றும் நடுத்தரத் தொழில் முயற்சிகள் எப்பொருளாதாரத்தினதும் முக்கிய பகுதியாக இருப்பதுடன், இதற்கு இலங்கையும் விதிவிலக்கல்ல. சிறிய மற்றும் நடுத்தரத் தொழிற்துறையின் மொத்த உள்நாட்டு உற்பத்திக்கான ஒப்பீட்டு ரீதியான பங்களிப்பிற்கு அல்லது அதன் முறைசாராத் தன்மை மற்றும் வகைப்படுத்தலில் உள்ள பிரச்சினைகள் என்பவற்றின் நிமித்தம், வேலைவாய்ப்புக்குத் தகுதி பெறுவதில் காணப்படும் இயற்கூறான சிக்கலான நிலைக்கு மத்தியிலும் சிறிய மற்றும் நடுத்தரத் தொழிற்துறையின் வளர்ச்சியால் ஒட்டுமொத்தப் பொருளாதார வளர்ச்சிக்குப் பெருமளவு பங்களிப்புச் செய்ய முடியும் எனவும், பிரதேச ரீதியான பொருளாதார வளர்ச்சி ஏற்றத் தாழ்வுகளைக் குறைப்பதில் அது முக்கியமானதொரு வகிபாகத்தைக் கொண்டுள்ளது எனவும் பரவலாக ஏற்றுக்கொள்ளப்பட்டுள்ளது. அரசாங்கம், தனியார் துறை மற்றும் சர்வதேச அபிவிருத்தி நிறுவனங்கள் என்பவற்றால் குறிப்பிட்ட நோக்கத்திற்காக ஏராளமான நடவடிக்கைகள் மேற்கொள்ளப்பட்டு வந்துள்ளபோதும், சிறிய மற்றும் நடுத்தரத் தொழிற்துறையானது இன்றும் மனங்கொள்ளத்தக்க மற்றும் தெளிவான கொள்கை ரீதியான கவனத்தைப் பெறவில்லை என்பதே உண்மை. இச்சூழலில், சிறிய மற்றும் நடுத்தர தொழிற்துறையைப் பலப்படுத்தி அதனை அபிவிருத்தி செய்வதற்கான அரசின் கொள்கை ரீதியான நடவடிக்கைகள், முன்னெடுப்புக்கள் ஆதரவளிப்பதாக அமையவேண்டியது அவசியமானதாகும்.

குறிப்பாக பொருளாதார நெருக்கடிக்குப் பின்னரான இலங்கையானது புதியதோர் அபிவிருத்திக் கட்டத்தினுள் நுழைந்துள்ளதுடன், பொருளாதார வளர்ச்சியில் புவியியல் ரீதியாக பரந்தளவிலான பிரதேசங்களை உள்ளடக்குவதை உறுதிப்படுத்தும் பொருட்டு, பின்தங்கியுள்ள பிரதேசங்களில் வேலைவாய்ப்புக்களை உருவாக்குவதற்கு அதிகளவான முக்கியத்துவத்தை கொடுக்கும் வகையில், புதிய பொருளாதார வாய்ப்புக்களை நாடு முழுவதிலும் தோற்றுவிக்க வேண்டியுள்ளது. இதை அடைவதற்கான ஒரு வேலைவாய்ப்பு உருவாக்க வழிமுறையாக நாடு முழுவதிலும் தொழில் முயற்சி வளர்ச்சியை ஊக்குவிப்பதில் முக்கிய கவனம் செலுத்தப்பட வேண்டியுள்ளது.

சிறிய மற்றும் நடுத்தர தொழில் முயற்சிகளின் முன்னாலுள்ள சவால்கள்



சிறிய மற்றும் நடுத்தர நிறுவனங்கள் எதிர்கொள்ளும் சவால்கள் தொடர்பாக ஆராய்மிடத்து நிதியீட்ட மூலங்களை கண்டறிந்து, அவற்றை அணுகுவதில் காணப்படும் வரையறைகள் இத்தகைய சிறிய மற்றும் நடுத்தரளவு தொழில் முயற்சிகளின் வளர்ச்சிக்கு முக்கிய தடையாகக் காணப்படுகின்றது. கடன்களைப் பெற்றுக் கொள்வதில் உள்ள இடர்கள், பல இடங்களிலும்

பரந்துள்ளதும் செலவிற்கு ஈடுகொடுக்கத்தக்க நிலையில் உள்ளதுமான வியாபார அபிவிருத்திச் சேவைகள் போதுமானளவு காணப்படாமை, இதனால் எழும் மூலதனப்பிரச்சினை, சந்தைப்படுத்தல் பிரச்சினை, உற்பத்தி மற்றும் களஞ்சியப்படுத்தல் தொடர்பான மட்டுப்பாடுகளே சிறிய, நடுத்தர வணிகங்கள் தோல்வியடைவதற்கு ஏதுக்களாகின்றன. கூடவே, நாட்டிலுள்ள பெரும்பாலான சிறிய, நடுத்தர வணிக நிறுவனங்கள் முறையான வணிகத் திட்டமிடல் இன்றியே இயங்குகின்றன. மட்டுப்படுத்தப்பட்ட வியாபார தேர்ச்சியுடன் இங்கு முகாமைத்துவம் தொடர்பாகக் குறைந்தளவான அக்கறையே செலுத்தப்படுகின்றது. உற்பத்தி இயலுமையை முன்னேற்றிக்கொள்ள முறையான திட்டமின்மையும் உலகில் வேகமாக முன்னேற்றமடையும் தொழில்நுட்பத்தை பின்பற்றுவதிலுள்ள இடர்பாடுகளுடன், முகாமைத் தொழில்நுட்பம் தொடர்பான போதிய அறிவின்மையும் மட்டுப்படுத்தப்பட்ட இணையவழிப் பிரசன்னம் மற்றும் புதிய தொழில்நுட்பத்தை உள்ளீர்த்தல் மற்றும் பின்பற்றுவதிலுள்ள பலவீனங்கள் உள்நாடு மற்றும் வெளிநாடு இரண்டுமனுமான பெறுமதிச் சங்கிலியின் மட்டுப்படுத்தப்பட்ட இணைப்புக்களுக்கு இட்டுச்செல்கின்றன. பெரும்பாலான சிறிய, நடுத்தர வணிகங்கள் கிராமங்களில் அல்லது குறைநகர் மட்டத்தில் ஓரிடப்படுத்தப்பட்டுள்ளன. அத்தகைய பிரதேசங்களில் ஒப்பீட்டளவில் போதியளவு உட்கட்டமைப்பு வசதிகள் விருத்தியடையவில்லை. உட்கட்டமைப்பு வசதிகளின் குறைபாடு காரணமாக உற்பத்திக் கிரயங்களும் இதர கிரயங்களும் உயர்வான மட்டத்தில் காணப்படுகின்றன. ஆகவே, உற்பத்தி வெளியீடுகளின் விலை உயர்வாக இருப்பதனால் இத்தகைய வணிக நிறுவனங்கள் சந்தைப்படுத்தலில் சவால்களை சந்திக்க நேரிடுகின்றது. அவ்வாறே, சந்தைப் பங்குகள் மற்றும் சந்தைகளை அணுகுகின்ற தன்மைகள் குறைவாக இருப்பதன் காரணமாக சிறிய, நடுத்தர தொழில் நிறுவனங்கள் வருமானமளிக்கும் வழிகளைப் பேணுவதில் இடர்பாடுகளை எதிர்நோக்குகின்றன. இந்நிலையில், வர்த்தகத் துறையில் பெரிதும் கவனிக்கப்படாதவர்களாகவும், சலுகைகள் குறைந்தவர்களாகவும் தமது வர்த்தக முயற்சியை தொடர்ச்சியாக முன்னெடுத்துச் செல்ல தினமும் போராடுகிறவர்களாகவும் உரிய ஆலோசனைகள் கிடைக்காதவர்களாகவும் சிறிய, நடுத்தர அளவிலான வர்த்தக முயற்சியாளர்கள் உள்ளனர் என்பது இங்கு கவனிக்கப்பட வேண்டிய விடயமாகும்.

சிறிய மற்றும் நடுத்தர தொழில் முயற்சிகளது விருத்திக்கான வாய்ப்புக்கள்

சிறு மற்றும் நடுத்தர தொழில் முயற்சிகளின் மேம்பாட்டிற்கும், நீடித்த நிலைத்திருப்பிற்கும் மேற் கொள்ளக்கூடிய உபாயங்கள் தொடர்பாக ஆராய்மிடத்து, இலங்கை இன்றளவில் முகங்கொடுத்துள்ள பொருளாதார நெருக்கடியிலிருந்து மீட்புப்பெற வேண்டுமாயின் உள்நாட்டு உற்பத்தியைப் பலப்படுத்தி ஏற்றுமதியை முதன்மையாகக் கொண்ட உற்பத்திப் பொருளாதாரமொன்றை நோக்கி நகர வேண்டியுள்ளது. அதன் பொருட்டு, நலிவடைந்துள்ள உள்நாட்டு உற்பத்திக் கைத்தொழில்களை புத்துயிரளித்தல், ஏற்றுமதியை மையமாகக் கொண்ட கைத்தொழில்களில் போட்டியை அதிகரித்தல், சிறிய மற்றும் நடுத்தர வணிகங்களால் போசிக்கப்படும் கைத்தொழில்களின் மேம்பாடு, புதிய சாத்திய வளங்கள் மூலம் உலக சந்தையைக் கைப்பற்றுதல், பல்வேறு துறைகளிலும் வெளிநாட்டு நேரடி முதலீடுகளுக்கு அழைப்பு விடுத்தல், புதிய முதலீடுகளுக்கு ஏற்புடையதாக தகுந்த சூழலை உருவாக்குதல், குறைந்த செலவின உட்கட்டமைப்பு வசதிகளின் கிடைப்பனவை உறுதிசெய்தல் மற்றும் உள்ளீடுகளை விநியோகித்தல் ஊடாக அவற்றை நிலைபேறான அபிவிருத்திப் பாதைக்கு இட்டுச்செல்ல முடியும்.

இத்தகைய தொழில்முயற்சிகள் குறைந்த வருமான குடும்பங்களின் வருமான மட்டங்களை அதிகரிப்பதற்குப் பங்களிப்பதுடன் இது வருமானப் பங்கீட்டில் காணப்படும் ஏற்றத்தாழ்வுகள் குறைவடையவும் பங்காற்றுகின்றன. மேலும், அவற்றின் சிறிய அளவின் காரணமாகவும் வாடிக்கையாளரின் செறிவுமிருந்த வியாபார மாதிரியாகவும் விளங்குவதனால், சிறிய வியாபாரங்கள் மிக நெகிழ்ச்சித்தன்மை வாய்ந்தனவாகவும் சூழலில் ஏற்படும் மாற்றங்களுக்கு வளைந்து கொடுக்கும் தன்மையைக் கொண்டிருப்பதன் மூலம் பொருளாதாரத் தோற்றப்பாட்டில் ஏற்படும் மாற்றங்களுக்குச் சிறந்த முறையில் தகவமைப்பதில் ஆற்றலைக் கொண்டிருப்பதனை எடுத்துக்காட்டுவனவாக உள்ளன. கூடவே, பொருளாதாரமொன்றின் தாக்குப்பிடிக்கும் தன்மையினை குறிப்பிட்டளவிற்கு மேம்படுத்தும் என்பதுடன் வளர்ச்சிக்கும் வழிவகுக்கும். அத்துடன் ஆரோக்கியமான சிறிய, நடுத்தர தொழில் முயற்சித் துறையொன்று நாட்டின் பொதுமக்களிடையே தொழில் முயற்சியாண்மைத் தேர்ச்சியை மேம்படுத்தப் பங்களிக்க முடியும். இதன்மூலம் நீடித்து நிலைத்திருக்கக்கூடிய அபிவிருத்திக்கு முற் தேவைப்பாடாக காணப்படும் மனித மூலதனத்தினைப் பெருக்க முடியும்.



சிறிய, நடுத்தர வணிகங்களை வலுப்படுத்துவதன் மூலமாக இதுவரை பயன்படுத்தப்பெறாதிருந்த பிரதேச வளங்களை பயன்பாட்டிற்குக் கொண்டுவர முடியும். வேலை வாய்ப்புக்களைத் தாராளமாக்குதல், உள்ளூர் வளங்களிலிருந்து உச்சப்பயனைப் பெற்றுக்கொள்ள இயலுதல், உள்நாட்டு உற்பத்திக்கான பங்களிப்பில் பிராந்தியங்களுக்கிடையில் நிலவும் ஏற்றத்தாழ்வுகளை குறைத்தல், தனியாள் வருமான மட்டத்தை உயர்த்துதல் போன்ற செயற்பாடுகள் மூலமாக வறுமையைக் குறைந்த மட்டத்திற்குக் கொண்டுவர முடியும். பிரதேச ரீதியாக சிறிய, நடுத்தர வணிகங்களின் செறிவு அதிகரிக்குமாயின் இளந்தொழிற்படையினர் நகர்நோக்கிப் பெயர்தலை குறைக்க முடியும். வேலைதேடி நகர்நோக்கித் தள்ளப்படும் சனத்தொகை காரணமாக நகரில் ஏற்படுத்தப்படும் வதிவிட நெருக்கீடு, சுற்றாடல் மாசடைதல், சனநெருக்கடி போன்ற வெளிவாரி விளைவுகளை இழிவாக்க முடியும்.

சிறிய, நடுத்தர வணிகங்களை வலுப்படுத்துவதன் மூலமாக இதுவரை பயன்படுத்தப்பெறாதிருந்த பிரதேச வளங்களை பயன்பாட்டிற்குக் கொண்டுவர முடியும். வேலை வாய்ப்புக்களைத் தாராளமாக்குதல், உள்ளூர் வளங்களிலிருந்து உச்சப்பயனைப் பெற்றுக்கொள்ள இயலுதல், உள்நாட்டு உற்பத்திக்கான பங்களிப்பில் பிராந்தியங்களுக்கிடையில் நிலவும் ஏற்றத்தாழ்வுகளை குறைத்தல், தனியாள் வருமான மட்டத்தை உயர்த்துதல் போன்ற செயற்பாடுகள் மூலமாக வறுமையைக் குறைந்த மட்டத்திற்குக் கொண்டுவர முடியும். பிரதேச ரீதியாக சிறிய, நடுத்தர வணிகங்களின் செறிவு அதிகரிக்குமாயின் இளந்தொழிற்படையினர் நகர்நோக்கிப் பெயர்தலை குறைக்க முடியும். வேலைதேடி நகர்நோக்கித் தள்ளப்படும் சனத்தொகை காரணமாக நகரில் ஏற்படுத்தப்படும் வதிவிட நெருக்கீடு, சுற்றாடல் மாசடைதல், சனநெருக்கடி போன்ற வெளிவாரி விளைவுகளை இழிவாக்க முடியும்.

சிறிய மற்றும் நடுத்தர தொழில் விருத்திக்கான இறைசார் ஊக்குவிப்புகள்



சிறிய மற்றும் நடுத்தர நிறுவனங்களை பலப்படுத்தி ஆதரவளிப்பதில் உள்நாட்டுப் பெறுமதிச் சேர்க்கையை அதிகரிப்பதில் சிறப்புக் கவனம் செலுத்தப்பட வேண்டியுள்ளதுடன், சிறிய மற்றும் நடுத்தர தொழிற்துறைக்கு ஊக்குவிப்பு வழங்குவதை நோக்கமாகக் கொண்ட வரவுசெலவுத் திட்ட முன்மொழிவுகள் வகுக்கப்படல் வேண்டும். அந்தவகையில், சிறிய மற்றும் நடுத்தர தொழில் முயற்சிகளைப் பலப்படுத்துவதில் வரிச் சலுகைகள் மிகமுக்கியமான பங்கினை வகிக்கின்றன. இவ் வரிச்சலுகைகள், விலக்களிப்புக்கள் சிறிய, நடுத்தர தொழில் முயற்சிகள் மீதான

வரிச்சுமையை குறைப்பதாக மாத்திரம் அமையாது பெறுமதி வாய்ந்த இறை ஊக்குவிப்பு உதவிகள் அதிகபட்ச தாக்க விளைவுகளை அந் நிறுவனங்களின் பொருட்டு ஏற்படுத்த வேண்டும். சிறிய, நடுத்தர தொழில் முயற்சிகளின் துறையானது சிறப்புக் கவனத்துக்கு உட்படுத்தப்பட வேண்டிய பரப்பொன்றாக அடையாளப்படுத்தப்பட்டு அவற்றின் விருத்திக்கும் தொடர்ந்திருப்பிற்கும் அரசினால் மேற்கொள்ளக்கூடிய நடவடிக்கைகள் தொடர்பாக நோக்குகையில் சிறிய, நடுத்தர முயற்சிகளை உப ஒப்பந்தத்தில் விடும்போதான பொருளாதார சேவைக் கட்டணங்களிலிருந்து விலக்களித்தல்,

தெரிவுசெய்யப்பட்ட உற்பத்தி இறக்குமதிகள் மீது குறைந்த சுங்கத் தீர்வையினை விதித்தல், சிறிய நடுத்தர முயற்சிகள் மற்றும் திறம்படச் செயற்படாத தொழில் முயற்சிகள், தம்மை மீள் அமைத்துக் கொள்வதற்கு ஒத்துழைப்புக்களை வழங்குதல். மற்றும் புதிதாக ஆரம்பிக்கப்படவுள்ள தொழில் முயற்சிகளுக்கான விசேட ஊக்குவிப்பு வசதிகள் அதாவது புதிய தொழில் முயற்சிகளை ஆரம்பிப்பதற்கான செலவுச் சுமையைக் குறைத்தல், வரி விலக்குகளுக்கு இடமளிக்கும் வகையில் வரிச் சட்டங்களைத் திருத்துதல். புதிய தொழில் முயற்சிகளுக்கான வருமானவரிசார் ஊக்குவிப்பு உதவிகள் மற்றும், குறைந்தளவான மொத்த விற்பனைப் பெறுமானத்தை கொண்டுள்ள சிறிய, நடுத்தர தொழில் முயற்சிகளுக்கு பொருளாதார சேவைக்கட்டணத்திலிருந்து குறிப்பிட்ட எல்லைவரை விலக்களிப்பினை வழங்குதல். ஆராய்ச்சி - அபிவிருத்திச் செலவீனமாக அரசாங்க நிறுவனங்களுக்குக் கட்டணங்களைச் செலுத்தும் தொழில் முயற்சிகளுக்கு கழிவுகளை வழங்குதல் உட்பட உள்ளூரில் தயாரிக்கப்படும் தெரிவுசெய்யப்பட்ட உற்பத்திப் பொருட்களுக்கான ஊக்குவிப்பு உதவிகள் மற்றும் சலுகைகளை வழங்குதல் ஆகியவற்றை குறிப்பிடலாம். இலங்கையின் சிறிய மற்றும் நடுத்தர தொழில் முயற்சிகள் வெற்றி பெறுவதற்கான கடின முயற்சிகளுக்கான ஒரு சர்வரோக நிவாரணியாக இவ்வாறான வரிசார் சலுகைகளை அடையாளப்படுத்திவிட முடியாது. மாறாக இத்தொழில் முயற்சிகள் எதிர்கொள்ளும் வரி சாராத பிரச்சினைகள் கூட இதேயளவு மட்டுப்பாடுகளைக் கொண்டவையாக இருப்பதுடன், அத்தகைய சவால்கள் தொடர்பிலும் நாம் தொடர்ந்தும் விழிப்புடன் இருக்க வேண்டியுள்ளது.

முடிவுரை



சிறிய மற்றும் நடுத்தர அளவிலான வர்த்தக முயற்சியாளர்களைப் பொறுத்தவரை நாட்டின் பொருளாதாரத்தை தாங்கிப்பிடிக்கும் தூண்கள் என்றே கூறமுடியும். பெரும்பாலான நாடுகளின் வேலைவாய்ப்பில் இவை மூன்றிலிரண்டு பங்கிற்கு வகைகூறுவதுடன் மொத்த உள்நாட்டு உற்பத்தியில் 50 சதவீதத்திற்கும் அதிகமான பங்களிப்பினை வழங்குகின்றன. பொருளாதார வெளியீட்டிற்கு சிறிய, நடுத்தரளவு தொழில் முயற்சிகள் துறையின் பங்களிப்பினது உள்ளார்ந்த ஆற்றல் அபிவிருத்தியடைந்து வரும் நாடுகளில் தெளிவாக எடுத்துக்காட்டப்படுகிறது. அவ்வாறே சிறிய நடுத்தரளவு தொழில் முயற்சிகளின் முக்கியத்துவத்திற்கும் நாடொன்றின் ஒட்டுமொத்த பொருளாதார வளர்ச்சிக்குமிடையே நேர்க்கணியத் தொடர்பு காணப்படுவது கணிசமான புள்ளிவிபரச் சான்றுகளினூடு நிரூபிக்கப்பட்டுள்ளது. குறிப்பாக வறுமை மற்றும் வேலையின்மை வீதங்களை குறைப்பதற்கும் தேசிய உற்பத்தியை அதிகரிப்பதற்கும், பொதுமக்களின் செலவிடல் சக்தியை அதிகரித்து, நுகர்வினைத் தூண்டி, ஒட்டுமொத்த பொருளாதார வளர்ச்சியையும் உத்வேகப்படுத்துவதில் இத்தகைய தொழில் முயற்சிகளின் பங்களிப்பு அளப்பரியது. இலங்கையைப் பொறுத்தவரை பெரும்பாலான சிறிய, நடுத்தர வணிகங்கள் பாரம்பரிய நுட்பங்களைப் பயன்படுத்துவனவாகும். பாரம்பரிய தொழில் நுட்பத்தை நவீன தொழில்நுட்பத்துடன் இணைத்து உற்பத்திகளின் தரத்தை உயர்த்த முடிவது போல உற்பத்திக் கிரயத்தைக் குறைக்க முடியும். அத்தகைய உற்பத்திகளுக்காக வெளிநாட்டுச் சந்தையைக் கவர்ந்து கொள்ளும் வாய்ப்புக்கள் திறந்தே உள்ளன. அவ்வாறு செய்வதனுடாக இலங்கையில் சிறு, நடுத்தரளவு வணிகங்கள் உயர்வான இலாபத் தன்மையை உரிமையாக்கிக் கொள்ள முடியுமென்பதில் இரு வேறு கருத்துக்களுக்கு இடமில்லை.

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From Many to Mighty: Rethinking Growth for a Competitive Industrial Sector of Sri Lanka



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For decades, Sri Lanka's small and medium enterprise (SME) development strategy has followed a predictable formula: a short training program, a modest loan, perhaps a machinery grant, and a motivational speech. It's a package that checks the boxes ² inclusive, visible, and politically palatable. But it is also tragically ineffective.

Despite its good intentions, this model has fostered a culture of fragmentation and fragility. It prioritizes volume over value, visibility over viability. The inevitable outcome is a landscape crowded with micro-enterprises ² too small to innovate, too weak to compete internationally, and too isolated to scale. We haven't built a foundation for growth; we've simply multiplied enterprises while diluting their impact.

The Illusion of Inclusive Growth



Policy success is still too often measured by how many businesses are registered, how many entrepreneurs are trained, or how many regions are "covered." These metrics create the illusion of inclusion and progress. But the numbers hide a silent crisis.

Let's take the ceramic sector as example. Sri Lanka has over 8,000 registered ceramic units, most of them potters making craft items for local fairs and souvenir shops.

Meanwhile, less than 1% of our exports come from this entire sector. Why? These micro-enterprises are structurally incapable of meeting international standards, achieving cost competitiveness, or driving innovation.

Even worse, their proliferation actively weakens the sector. They consume limited raw materials such as clay and feldspar, drive up prices, and absorb skilled labour — all while contributing little to export revenue. Large, globally competitive firms like Noritake and Dankotuwa face rising input costs and labour shortages, in part due to this uncontrolled fragmentation.

When Giants Lead, Ecosystems Grow

Contrast this with Sri Lanka's apparel industry — our most successful export story. Giants like MAS and Brandix did not emerge from the "train-and-fund-everyone" model. They grew because they received focused support: industrial zones, global partnerships, logistics infrastructure, and a policy environment tailored to scale.



Once these firms became globally competitive, they spawned a dense network of suppliers, subcontractors, and service providers. That's how real ecosystems form — not from spreading fertilizer evenly over barren land, but by first growing strong roots.

Unfortunately, policy is now drifting back toward spreading limited resources across too many players. It feels fair and inclusive, but it is economically disastrous. When you try to support everyone a little, you end up supporting no one enough.

The Case for Monopolistic Incubation

It's time for a bold pivot: Sri Lanka must embrace a strategy of monopolistic incubation. This means deliberately selecting high-potential SMEs — regionally and sectorally — and nurturing them into large-scale national champions.

Yes, this means temporarily favouring a few. Yes, it may resemble state-sanctioned monopolies. But no, this is not cronyism — if done transparently and on merit. This approach has precedent: Japan's MITI era, South Korea's chaebol formation, and Germany's Mittelstand network all followed similar logic.

Monopolistic incubation focuses limited national resources — finance, land, training, policy, and infrastructure — on a few well-chosen firms or clusters, and pushes them to scale globally. Once these firms become competitive, they can pull up thousands of others through supply chains, partnerships, and demand creation.

Quality over Quantity, Strength over Spread

Critics consider this approach to be elitist or exclusionary. But the real exclusion lies in trapping millions in marginal, low-wage enterprises with no growth path. Building a few giants doesn't kill small businesses — it breathes life into them by anchoring stable demand and fostering ecosystems.

Imagine if Sri Lanka had ten Dankotuwas, twenty MAS-level firms, and a dozen global IT service providers. Our export profile, job market, and wage levels would look radically different. But getting there means ending our addiction to enterprise headcounts and focusing instead on enterprise depth.

We need to reimagine our development approach: not as charity for the many, but as strategic investment in the mighty. This is not about choosing winners — it is about creating them.



A Final Call

Sri Lanka cannot afford another decade of building small for the sake of numbers. The global race is accelerating, and we're still stuck at the starting line, congratulating ourselves for participation. If we want real exports, real wages, and real transformation, we must replace the politics of quantity with the economics of quality.

Let us build fewer, stronger enterprises. Let us embrace scale, even if it means temporary concentration. Let us trust that the path to inclusion lies not in equal distribution of crumbs, but in baking a much bigger pie.

Support strength. Build scale. Compete globally. Or accept being a nation of small shops while the world races ahead.



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ශ්‍රී ලංකා සංවර්ධන පරිපාලන ආයතනය

සාරාංශය

ගෝලීයකරණය, තාක්ෂණික ප්‍රගතිය හා සමාජ-ආර්ථික වෙනස්වීම් හේතුවෙන් නූතන රැකියා වෙළඳපොළ සංකීර්ණ හා තරඟකාරී ස්වභාවයක් දරයි. මෙම පසුබිම තුළ පුද්ගලයෙකුගේ වෘත්තීය ජීවිතය සාර්ථකව පවත්වාගෙන යාම සඳහා නිවැරදි වෘත්තීය තීරණ අත්‍යවශ්‍ය වේ. එවැනි තීරණ ගනු ලබන ක්‍රියාවලියට වෘත්තීය උපදේශනය මූලික දායකත්වයක් සපයයි. මෙම පර්යේෂණාත්මක ලිපියේ අරමුණ වන්නේ වෘත්තීය උපදේශනය යන සංකල්පය ශාස්ත්‍රීයව නිර්වචනය කිරීමත්, එය පුද්ගලයෙකුට තම රාජකාරි කටයුතු කාර්යක්ෂමව ඉටු කිරීමට කෙතරම් දුරට ඉවහල් වන්නේද යන්න විශ්ලේෂණය කිරීමත්, රැකියාවක් තෝරාගැනීමේදී එහි වැදගත්කම ශ්‍රී ලංකා දේශීය සන්දර්භයට ගැළපෙන උදාහරණ සහ සාහිත්‍ය මත පදනම්ව විමර්ශනය කිරීමත් වේ. මෙම අධ්‍යයනය සඳහා ගුණාත්මක පර්යේෂණ ක්‍රමවේදයක් භාවිතා කර ඇති අතර, දේශීය හා ජාත්‍යන්තර සාහිත්‍ය සමාලෝචනයක් මත පදනම්ව වෘත්තීය උපදේශනය රැකියා තෘප්තිය, කාර්ය සාධනය සහ වෘත්තීය ස්ථාවරත්වය ඉහළ නැංවීමට බලපාන මූලික සාධකයක් බව පෙන්වා දෙයි.

මූල පද: වෘත්තීය උපදේශනය, රාජකාරි කාර්ය සාධනය, රැකියා තෘප්තිය, වෘත්තීය හේරීම, ශ්‍රී ලංකාව

හැඳින්වීම

වර්තමානයේ ශ්‍රී ලංකාව ඇතුළු බොහෝ රටවල්වල රැකියා වෙළඳපොළ තාක්ෂණික නවීකරණය, ගෝලීය තරඟකාරීත්වය සහ ආර්ථික අස්ථාවරතාව හේතුවෙන් වේගයෙන් වෙනස් වෙමින් පවතී. මෙම තත්ත්වය තුළ පුද්ගලයන්ට තම වෘත්තීය මාවත පිළිබඳ නිවැරදි හා දීර්ඝකාලීන තීරණ ගනු ,ලැබීම අත්‍යවශ්‍ය වේ. එහෙත් දේශීය සන්දර්භය තුළ පාසල් මට්ටමේ සිටම වෘත්තීය මගපෙන්වීම ප්‍රමාණවත් නොවීම හේතුවෙන් බොහෝ සිසුන් සහ තරුණයන් තම හැකියාවන්ට හා රුචිකත්වයන්ට නොගැළපෙන අධ්‍යාපන හා රැකියා මාර්ග තෝරාගැනීම දැකගත හැක. මෙවැනි තත්ත්වයන් රැකියා අසතුට, අඩු කාර්ය සාධනය සහ වෘත්තීය අස්ථාවරතාවයට හේතු වේ. එබැවින් වෘත්තීය උපදේශනය නූතන ශ්‍රී ලංකා සමාජයේ වැදගත් සමාජ-අධ්‍යාපනික අවශ්‍යතාවයක් ලෙස සැලකේ.

පර්යේෂණ ක්‍රමවේදය (Methodology)

මෙම අධ්‍යයනය සඳහා ගුණාත්මක පර්යේෂණ ක්‍රමවේදයක් භාවිතා කර ඇත. ද්විතීය දත්ත මත පදනම් වූ සාහිත්‍ය සමාලෝචන ක්‍රමය මෙම පර්යේෂණයේ ප්‍රධාන දත්ත රැස්කිරීමේ ක්‍රමය ලෙස යොදාගෙන ඇත. ජාත්‍යන්තර හා දේශීය පර්යේෂණ ලිපි, ග්‍රන්ථ, රාජ්‍ය වාර්තා සහ වෘත්තීය උපදේශනයට අදාළ න්‍යායන් මෙම සමාලෝචනය සඳහා භාවිතා කර ඇත.

රැස් කරන ලද දත්ත තේමාත්මක විශ්ලේෂණ ක්‍රමය (Thematic Analysis) මගින් විශ්ලේෂණය කර ඇති අතර, වෘත්තීය උපදේශනය, රාජකාරි කාර්ය සාධනය, රැකියා තෘප්තිය සහ වෘත්තීය ස්ථාවරත්වය යන ප්‍රධාන තේමාවන් හඳුනාගෙන ඇත. මෙම ක්‍රමවේදය වෘත්තීය උපදේශනයේ භූමිකාව ගැඹුරු ලෙස විග්‍රහ කිරීමට සුදුසු බව සැලකේ.

වෘත්තීය උපදේශනයේ සංකල්පය සහ ශාස්ත්‍රීය පදනම

වෘත්තීය උපදේශනය යනු පුද්ගලයෙකුගේ රුචිකත්වයන්, හැකියාවන්, පෞරුෂ ලක්ෂණ, වටිනාකම් සහ ජීවන අරමුණු හඳුනාගෙන ඒවාට ගැළපෙන වෘත්තීය තීරණ ගැනීම සඳහා විධිමත් මගපෙන්වීමක් සපයන ක්‍රියාවලියකි. 1990 දී ඩොනල්ඩ් සුපර් විසින් ඉදිරිපත් කළ ජීවිත-අවධි වෘත්තීය සංවර්ධන න්‍යාය (Donald Super's Career Development Theory) අනුව, වෘත්තීය සංවර්ධනය යනු ජීවිතය පුරා පවතින ක්‍රියාවලියක් වන අතර එහි සාර්ථකත්වය නිවැරදි උපදේශනය මත රඳා පවතී. එබැවින් වෘත්තීය උපදේශනය රැකියාවක් තෝරාගැනීම පමණක් නොව, වෘත්තීය සංවර්ධනය, වෘත්තීය වෙනස්කම් සහ දිගුකාලීන වෘත්තීය සැලසුම් සඳහා ද අත්‍යවශ්‍ය වේ.



වෘත්තීය උපදේශනය සම්බන්ධ සාහිත්‍ය අධ්‍යයනයේදී දේශීය හා ජාත්‍යන්තර සාහිත්‍ය අනුව වෘත්තීය උපදේශනය සහ කාර්ය සාධනය අතර බහුමාන සම්බන්ධතාවයක් පවතින බව පැහැදිලි වේ (Brown, 2002; Perera, 2017). විශේෂයෙන්ම ශ්‍රී ලංකා සන්දර්භය තුළ පාසල්, උසස් අධ්‍යාපන හා රාජ්‍ය සේවා මට්ටමින් වෘත්තීය උපදේශන සේවාවන් ශක්තිමත් කිරීම මගින් වෘත්තීය අසමතුලිතතා අවම කළ හැකි බව මෙම සාහිත්‍යයෙන් අවධාරණය කෙරේ.

රාජකාරි කාර්ය සාධනය සහ වෘත්තීය උපදේශනය

● කාර්ය සාධනය වැඩිදියුණු කිරීම

පුද්ගලයෙකුගේ හැකියාවන්ට හා රුචිකත්වයන්ට ගැළපෙන රැකියාවක් තෝරාගැනීමෙන් ඔහු හෝ ඇය තම රාජකාරි කටයුතු වැඩි උනන්දුවකින් හා කැපවීමකින් ඉටු කරයි. ශ්‍රී ලංකා රාජ්‍ය සේවයේ ඇතැම් නිලධාරීන් තම හැකියාවන්ට නොගැළපෙන තනතුරු වල නිරත වීම හේතුවෙන් අඩු කාර්ය සාධනයක් පෙන්වන බව දේශීය පර්යේෂණ පෙන්වා දෙයි. වෘත්තීය උපදේශන වැඩසටහන් හරහා නිලධාරීන්ගේ හැකියාවන් හඳුනාගෙන, ඒවාට ගැළපෙන වගකීම් පැවරීම මගින් සේවා කාර්යක්ෂමතාව වැඩි කළ හැකි බව ද සඳහන් වේ. (Jayawardena, 2016).

● රැකියා තෘප්තිය සහ මානසික සුවතාව

රැකියා තෘප්තිය සේවක ඵලදායීතාවයට හා ආයතනික සාර්ථකත්වයට සෘජු බලපෑමක් ඇති කරයි. දේශීය අධ්‍යයන අනුව, වෘත්තීය උපදේශනය ලබාගත් තරුණයන් අතර රැකියා තෘප්තිය සහ මානසික සුවතාව ඉහළ මට්ටමක පවතින බව පෙන්වා දී ඇත (Perera, 2017). නිවැරදි වෘත්තීය තේරීමක් මගින් වෘත්තීය වෙහෙස (burnout) සහ රැකියා අසතුට අවම කළ හැකි බව මෙහිදී පැහැදිලි වේ.



රැකියාවක් තෝරාගැනීමේදී වෘත්තීය උපදේශනයේ වැදගත්කම: දේශීය උදාහරණ

ශ්‍රී ලංකාවේ බොහෝ රජයේ පාසල්වල උසස් පෙළ අවසානයේ සිසුන් වෘත්තීය උපදේශනය ප්‍රමාණවත් ලෙස නොලැබීම හේතුවෙන් තම රැකියාවක් සොයාගැනීමට නොහැකිවීමට නොගැළපෙන උසස් අධ්‍යාපන මාර්ග තෝරාගැනීම දැකගත හැක. උදාහරණයක් ලෙස, විද්‍යා අංශයෙන් උසස් පෙළ සමත් වූ සිසුන් බොහෝ දෙනා වෛද්‍ය හෝ ඉංජිනේරු වෘත්තීයවලට පමණක් අවධානය යොමු කරන අතර, ICT, තාක්ෂණික හා වෘත්තීය අධ්‍යාපන ක්ෂේත්‍ර පිළිබඳ අවබෝධය සීමිත වේ. අධ්‍යාපන අමාත්‍යාංශය සහ ජාතික අධ්‍යාපන ආයතනය මගින් සිදු කළ වාර්තා අනුව, පාසල් මට්ටමේ වෘත්තීය මගපෙන්වීම ශක්තිමත් කිරීම මගින් සිසුන්ගේ වෘත්තීය තේරුම් වඩාත් යථාර්ථවාදී විය හැකි බව පෙන්වා දී ඇත (අධ්‍යාපන අමාත්‍යාංශය, 2019).

තවද තාක්ෂණික හා වෘත්තීය අධ්‍යාපන කොමිෂම යටතේ ක්‍රියාත්මක වෘත්තීය පුහුණු ආයතනවල වෘත්තීය උපදේශන ඒකක මගින් සිසුන්ට නිවැරදි වෘත්තීය මාර්ග හඳුනාගැනීමට උපකාරී වන බව දේශීය වාර්තා පෙන්වා දෙයි. එම උපදේශන සේවා ලබාගත් සිසුන් අතර රැකියා ලබා ගැනීමේ අනුපාතය සාපේක්ෂව ඉහළ බව නිරීක්ෂණය වේ (TVEC, 2020).

නිගමනය

මෙම පර්යේෂණාත්මක ලිපිය මගින් පැහැදිලි වන්නේ එදිනෙදා පුද්ගලයෙකුගේ රාජකාරි කාර්ය සාධනය, රැකියා තෘප්තිය සහ දිගුකාලීන වෘත්තීය සාර්ථකත්වය සඳහා වෘත්තීය උපදේශනය අත්‍යවශ්‍ය සාධකයක් බවයි. එබැවින් ශ්‍රී ලංකාවේ අධ්‍යාපන හා වෘත්තීය ප්‍රතිපත්ති තුළ වෘත්තීය උපදේශනයට වැඩි අවධානයක් යොමු කිරීම සහ එය ක්‍රියාත්මක කිරීම අත්‍යවශ්‍ය වේ.



ආශ්‍රිත ග්‍රන්ථ

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Directive Principles for Good Governance



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This article explores the Directive Principles of State Policy in Chapter VI of the Constitution of Sri Lanka and their importance for good governance. Although these principles are not legally enforceable, they offer valuable guidance for building a fair, inclusive, and accountable system of governance. The article reflects on how they can influence public policies, support balanced regional development, and encourage a more people-centered approach within state institutions. It suggests that giving greater practical attention to these principles can help strengthen democratic practices and promote more sustainable and inclusive national development. This article explores the Directive Principles of State Policy in Chapter VI of the Constitution of Sri Lanka and their importance for good governance. Although these principles are not legally enforceable, they offer valuable guidance for building a fair, inclusive, and accountable system of governance. The article reflects on how they can influence public policies, support balanced regional development, and encourage a more people-centered approach within state institutions. It suggests that giving greater practical attention to these principles can help strengthen democratic practices and promote more sustainable and inclusive national development.



Keeping trust in election manifestos, the people transfer their sovereignty to a political movement of their choice and elect a government. It is the duty of the government to keep its promises and work to fulfill the needs of the people through state policies. Chapter VI of the Constitution emphasizes this duty and begins with Article 27(1), setting the direction for the government in the policy making process. It provides clear guidance to Parliament, the President, and the Cabinet of Ministers and emphasizes that they shall enact laws and conduct the government in order to build a just and free society.

Article 27(2) to Article 27(15) provide a detailed explanation of the initial direction stated in Article 27(1), covering a wide spectrum as it expands the focus of the state policy making process from the fundamental rights of the people and national sovereignty to the preservation of the environment.

Article 27(3) mandates the state to safeguard the independence, sovereignty, unity, and territorial integrity of the country, which are fundamental to its existence as an independent state. This provision is crucial and directly linked with the first three Articles of the Constitution. Article 27(4) directs the state to strengthen and broaden the democratic structure and democratic rights of the people in order to expand opportunities for them to participate in government through decentralized administration. These two provisions are based on important democratic values and constitutional principles that emphasize the duty of the state to protect the fundamental structure of the state and the sovereignty of the people.

The fundamental rights of the people are another key constitutional principle that reflects democratic values. In adherence to these important aspects, Article 27(2)(a) highlights that the state is pledged to protect the fundamental rights and freedoms of citizens. Article 27(2)(b) to Article 27(2)(f) emphasize the duty of the state in promoting social order, uplifting the living conditions of the people, and ensuring the equitable distribution of resources for development. Article 27(2)(g) directs the state



to ensure moral and cultural standards that enable people to develop their human personality and rise as a proud nation. Article 27(2)(h) ensures opportunities for universal education, which is also included in the Sustainable Development Goals.¹



Article 27(6) states that the state shall ensure equality of opportunity to all citizens without discrimination. Article 27(7) provides clear direction to the state to eliminate economic and social disparities, and Article 27(8) directs the state to uplift the economic system. These provisions highlight the role of the government in regulating the economy to ensure equal and balanced development. Article 27(9) emphasizes the duty of the state to establish social security systems and welfare programs to reduce

poverty and uplift the living conditions of all people without leaving anyone behind. Articles 27(10) and 27(11) guide the state to ensure the cultural and religious rights of the people. Article 27(12) recognizes the family as the basic unit of society. Article 27(13) directs the state to ensure the welfare and development of children and youth, as they are the future leaders of the country.

Many of the above provisions are related to the fundamental rights provided in Chapter III of the Constitution. Accordingly, Article 27 of Chapter VI reaffirms the binding responsibility of the state in ensuring the fundamental rights of the people. It has formed a strong framework to ensure that people’s rights are protected through state policies.



Another significant directive in this chapter,Article 27(14), emphasizes the responsibility of the state to protect, preserve, and enhance the environment for the benefit of the community. This is good evidence

that the lawmakers have not only focused on people and society but also on nature. Accordingly, the Directive Principles of State Policy in the current Constitution include social, economic, and environmental aspects, which are the three main components of sustainable development. Although enacted in 1978, the Constitution reflects the foresight of lawmakers in emphasizing state policies that support sustainable development.



One of the critical weaknesses of these provisions is the absence of a clear mechanism to implement them in practice. For example, without strong mechanisms, conducting elections on time, protecting workers’ rights, and ensuring a fair economy often conflict with economic pressures, budget limitations, and political challenges, as seen during the recent economic crisis.

Reciprocal duty is an important concept in law. Since society is a unit composed of many individuals, each and every person should contribute to protecting the law and maintaining social harmony. Thus, while enjoying the rights and freedoms protected by the Constitution, every citizen of the country should also

¹ United Nations, Sustainable Development Goals

fulfill their duties. Article 28 of Chapter VI is very important as it emphasizes the concept of reciprocal duty by presenting the fundamental duties of every person in Sri Lanka. Accordingly, it is the duty of every person to uphold and defend the Constitution and the law, to further the national interest and foster national unity, to work conscientiously in their chosen occupation, to preserve and protect public property and combat misuse and waste of public property, to respect the rights and freedoms of others, and to protect nature and conserve its resources. These provisions create a balance between rights and duties and open avenues for regulatory autonomy for the state to enact appropriate laws, rules, and regulations to protect public property while making policies to enhance national unity.



Article 29 of Chapter VI has undermined the importance of Article 27 and Article 28 by clearly stating that the Directive Principles and fundamental duties are non justiciable. This means that individuals cannot approach the courts to directly enforce these principles. Therefore, the government's adherence to these principles is based on political and moral commitments rather than legal obligation. This is a limitation because it makes it more difficult for citizens to hold the government accountable if it fails to implement policies in line with these principles. While the principles guide policy decisions, they do not have the legal force to compel action.



A Return to Stability: The Sri Lankan Economy on the Rise



By
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After navigating one of the most challenging periods in its modern history, Sri Lanka's economy is now on a clear path to recovery. Supported by strong performances in key sectors, improving macroeconomic stability, and renewed investor confidence, the island nation is demonstrating resilience and renewed promise for the future.

Key Economic Highlights



The economy has emerged from two years of contraction, recording a notable 4.8 percent GDP growth in the first quarter of 2025. This positive momentum is expected to continue, with the Central Bank of Sri Lanka forecasting full year growth of 4.5 percent.

Foreign reserves have risen significantly, reaching 6.5 billion dollars in March 2025. This dramatic improvement has helped stabilize the Sri Lankan

rupee and ease import restrictions. Inflation, which reached record levels during the crisis, is now under control. The year-on-year Colombo Consumer Price Index stood at a modest 1.2 percent in August 2025, reflecting the success of fiscal and monetary tightening measures.

The Pillars of Recovery: Key Sectors

Several sectors are leading the charge in Sri Lanka's economic comeback, acting as crucial engines of foreign exchange and growth.

- **Tourism**

Tourism has rebounded impressively, reclaiming its role as a central pillar of the economy. During the first eight months of 2025, Sri Lanka welcomed over 1.56 million visitors, representing a 15 percent increase compared to the previous year. Tourism earnings reached 2.29 billion dollars during the same period, marking a 5.7 percent rise from 2024.

Despite these strong figures, the industry faces a slight decline in average spending per visitor. The government's ambitious target of 5 billion dollars in annual tourism revenue will depend on attracting higher spending travelers and diversifying offerings beyond traditional leisure tourism.



• Foreign Remittances



Remittances from Sri Lankans working abroad have remained a crucial lifeline, providing a steady and reliable source of foreign exchange. In the first eight months of 2025, remittances exceeded 5 billion dollars, reflecting a 19.3 percent increase from the previous year.

This sustained inflow has played a critical role in strengthening foreign reserves, stabilizing the

exchange rate, and reducing pressure on the balance of payments.

• Apparel and Textiles

As one of Sri Lanka's leading export industries, the apparel and textile sector continues to demonstrate resilience and adaptability. In the first half of 2025, total exports from this sector increased by 8.95 percent to 2.6 billion dollars.

Growth was particularly strong in the European Union and the United Kingdom, which helped offset a slight decline in exports to the United States. This performance highlights the industry's ability to respond to shifting global market dynamics and capitalize on emerging opportunities.



• Information Technology (IT) and Business Process Management (BPM)



Sri Lanka's Information Technology and Business Process Management sector is gaining international recognition for its skilled workforce and innovative solutions. The industry continues to expand its export presence, targeting an ambitious goal of 5 billion dollars in annual digital exports by 2030.

Collaborations such as the partnership with the Japan International Cooperation Agency are supporting growth, especially among small and medium enterprises. These initiatives are strengthening the sector's competitiveness and long-term potential.

• Foreign Direct Investment (FDI)

Foreign investment is gradually returning, signaling renewed confidence in Sri Lanka's economic stability. Realized foreign direct investment in the first quarter of 2025 amounted to 203 million dollars, representing a significant 90 percent increase compared to the same period in 2024.

Although these inflows are encouraging, they remain below the government's annual target of 1.8 billion dollars. Large scale projects, including the Sinopec oil refinery and investments in the port sector, are expected to play a vital role in attracting the capital necessary for sustained growth.

Fiscal and Policy Developments



The government has implemented what the World Bank described as a remarkable fiscal adjustment. The primary balance has improved by nearly 8 percent of GDP since 2021. This progress was achieved through comprehensive tax reforms, including increases in the Value Added Tax rate and the removal of certain exemptions.

Significant headway has also been made in external debt restructuring, with agreements reached with key bilateral creditors and private bondholders. This development is essential for restoring investor confidence and regaining access to international financial markets.

Sri Lanka continues to operate under a 3 billion dollars program supported by the International Monetary Fund, with the third review completed in early 2025. Continued adherence to program targets remains critical for maintaining macroeconomic stability and attracting further foreign investment.

Looking Ahead

While the current economic outlook is encouraging, challenges remain. The heavy reliance on indirect taxation has placed considerable pressure on vulnerable households, as noted by the World Bank. In addition, debt servicing continues to weigh heavily on public finances.

Nevertheless, the progress achieved over the past year is significant. By strengthening its key sectors, maintaining fiscal discipline, and advancing structural reforms, Sri Lanka is laying the foundation for a more resilient and stable economy.



The journey toward sustained prosperity will require continued commitment and careful management. Yet, the signs of recovery are clear, and the groundwork for a stronger economic future has firmly been established.



The Digital Economy in China: Inclusion or Illusion?



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In the dazzling realm of China's digital economy, promises of prosperity and progress echo loudly. Yet, beneath the glittering facade lies a sobering truth: Does China's digital economy truly pave the path towards inclusive development or merely an illusion?

China, a digital powerhouse rivalling the United States, exhibits remarkable growth in its digital economy, valued at 60 trillion yuan, according to China Academy of Information and Communications Technology 2024 reports. Notwithstanding COVID-19 challenges, this exponential expansion saw the digital economy doubling in size from 2016 to 2021, constituting 40% of GDP by 2024's end. The fusion of digital and real economies has accelerated turnover efficiency, decreased transaction costs, and forged oligopolistic market structures dominated by Internet platforms. However, as the UN's 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development Goal 10 emphasises reducing inequality, the digital economy's promise of inclusive growth and widespread prosperity has not materialised uniformly. While it permeates all facets of life, it fails to distribute benefits universally. Urban-rural disparities and ethnic minority and gender inequalities persist, posing complex realities beneath China's glossy digital transformation. Bridging the gap between aspiration and reality is paramount as China navigates its digital journey toward inclusive development, where opportunities abound, but challenges loom.

Low-income Households: A Tale of Two Realities

While China's digital economy boasts impressive growth figures, its impact on low-income households tells a different story. Research reveals a troubling reality: the digital revolution exacerbates the economic struggles of the most vulnerable segments of society. Low-income households face heightened unemployment, income volatility, and wealth deprivation as traditional industries succumb to digital disruption. Monopolistic market structures further compound these challenges, widening the gap between the affluent and the impoverished. Despite optimistic narratives of inclusive growth, the digital economy fails to deliver tangible benefits to those with limited capital endowments. It becomes evident that the promise of inclusion remains elusive for millions of low-income families in China's rapidly evolving digital landscape.

Urban-Rural Chasms: The Digital Dilemma

China's urban-rural income gap persists as a significant challenge, underscored by statistics revealing a stark divide. In 2020, the disposable income of urban residents in China was 2.56 times that of rural residents, exceeding the international average. Disparities persist regardless of the efforts, such as the Outline of the Digital Village Development Strategy. While rural network infrastructure coverage has expanded, the scale of e-commerce and smart agriculture has expanded, and challenges remain.

Furthermore, with a low overall education level and limited digital literacy in rural regions, the digital divide widens. The prevalence of smart city technologies, while promising, may inadvertently deepen disparities. As China grapples with these complexities, critical questions emerge: Is the digital economy a tool for dividends or a divide in bridging the urban-rural income gap?

Echoes of Exclusion: Ethnic Minorities in the Digital Age

Despite efforts to promote digital development and bridge the digital divide, ethnic minorities in China face significant hurdles in accessing and benefiting from the digital economy. Existing policies lack specificity and actionable programs tailored to their needs, perpetuating economic marginalisation. Language barriers further impede their access to digital resources and opportunities. Moreover, institutional deficiencies in labour protection leave ethnic minority employees vulnerable to exploitation and discrimination, confining them to low-skilled jobs with limited prospects for advancement. While some initiatives have been introduced, such as improving digital skills and supporting speech technology for minority languages, these efforts remain insufficient and fail to address the unique challenges faced by ethnic minorities.

Shattering Glass Ceilings: Women in the Digital Workforce



Despite promising increased female employment, particularly among vulnerable groups, China's digital economy has fallen short in addressing gender disparities in the workforce. While some women have experienced gains in job satisfaction and occupational status, digitalisation has also exacerbated challenges such as longer working hours and unequal treatment. Women with parenting responsibilities continue to face barriers to equal opportunities, highlighting ongoing gender

discrimination. Moreover, self-employed women have not reaped the benefits of digitalisation, emphasising disparities across different employment types. Regardless of the efforts to promote inclusivity, the digital economy's dividends remain skewed, disproportionately favouring certain segments of the female workforce while leaving others behind.

Skill Disparities: The Divide Deepens

As China embraces digitalisation, the widening wage gap between high- and low-skilled workers emerges as a significant consequence. Research reveals that as the digital economy advances, so does the wage disparity between these two groups. This inequality is fueled by labour misallocation and a growing mismatch between technology demands and workforce skills.

Automation and digital technologies displace workers, particularly those with lower skills, exacerbating income inequality and hindering job opportunities for the less skilled. Moreover, the evolving demands of the digital economy place greater emphasis on high-level skills, leaving low-skilled workers struggling to adapt. This widening skill gap not only perpetuates existing inequalities but also challenges income distribution within society. The benefits accrue disproportionately to larger firms and skilled workers as digitalisation progresses. In contrast, smaller enterprises and low-skilled workers should be included.



Forging a Path to Inclusive Prosperity



In response to the challenges highlighted across various dimensions of China's digital economy, urgent action is imperative. The government must prioritise regulation to ensure fair competition and mitigate monopolistic tendencies, alongside increased transfer payments to safeguard the basic needs of low-income households. Efforts to minimise labour substitution effects and promote employment opportunities are essential, coupled with investments in education to enhance human capital accumulation, particularly in underdeveloped areas.

Moreover, a broader policy agenda of "predistribution" must be embraced to foster inclusive growth, ensuring that the benefits of technological advancements are shared

equitably across society. Bridging the digital divide, promoting gender equality, and addressing widening wage gaps are critical components of this agenda. By redoubling efforts to invest in digital infrastructure, enhance digital literacy, and promote equal access to opportunities, China can realise its vision of inclusive and sustainable growth in the digital age.

Acknowledging Contradictions



While this article has highlighted significant challenges and disparities across various dimensions, it's crucial to recognise that the digital economy is not solely a force for exclusion. It has also brought about positive changes, including increased connectivity, access to information, and economic opportunities for many individuals and communities. Moreover, China has undertaken various initiatives to promote inclusivity and bridge the digital divide, albeit with varying degrees of success. For instance, the government has invested heavily in digital infrastructure development, education, and skills training programs to narrow socioeconomic disparities. Technological advancements such as e-commerce and digital finance have also empowered entrepreneurs and small businesses, contributing to economic growth and job creation. Therefore, while acknowledging the challenges and contradictions inherent in China's digital transformation, it's essential to adopt a nuanced perspective that recognises both the opportunities and the complexities involved in striving for inclusive development in the digital age.

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