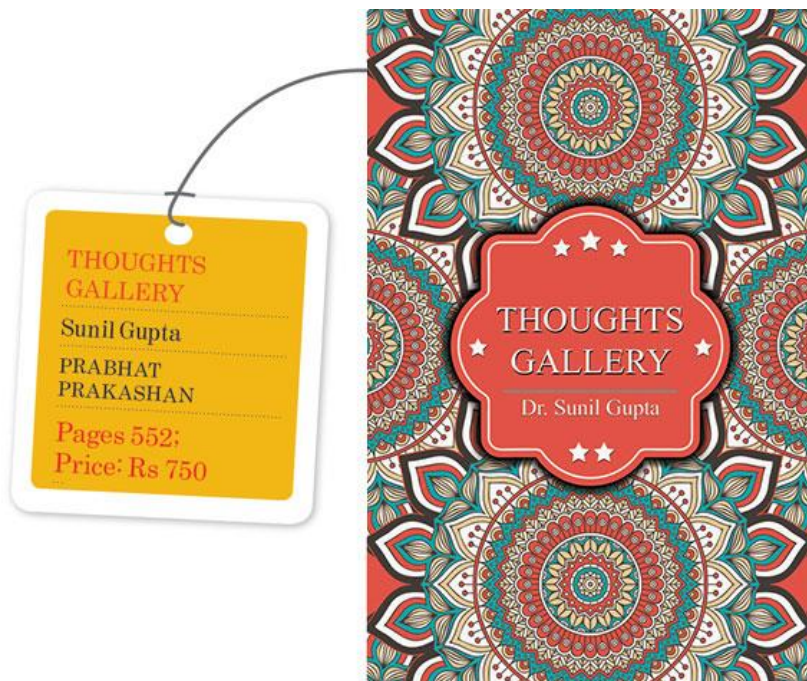


The India Way

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March, 2016 by Ahindra Chakrabarti



Sunil Gupta, author of Thoughts Gallery, sets out to analyse the changes in various walks of life in India during and after the 2014 general elections. He explores the

underlying factors driving these changes and how the country is looking up to Prime Minister Narendra Modi after he emerged as the undisputed leader to fulfil the aspirations of the people of the country.

The write-ups are essentially blog posts over 2014-15, around 125 in all (a few of them have also been published earlier), and bundled into a book chronicling a few current and thematic topics. His writings have a continuum: the distinctive decision making style of the prime minister, his visionary capabilities for achieving the grand ambition for the country, narration of the past happenings that have influenced Indian economy and the political arena, suggestions for corrective actions for some ailments of the economic institutions, and finally, suggestions for improvement in the governance system.

On the style of leadership, the author stresses the prime minister's decisiveness in quickly comprehending the economic problems and immediately addressing them. Handling of crucial issues like one rank one pension on one hand and on the other his attempts to end the impasse over the Land Acquisition Rehabilitation and Resettlement Act, 2013, so as to foster investment for faster industrialization and job creation while duly protecting the interest of all stakeholders. The new government has proposed to "...work together to usher our economy to a high growth path, rein in inflation, reignite investment cycle, accelerate job creation and restore the confidence of the domestic as well as international community in to our economy".

In the industry segment, Gupta feels that Prime Minister Modi's dream project Make in India is likely to stop the slide in the 'Doing Business Index' of the World Bank. If reforms are carried out in the labour laws, the manufacturing sector will get a boost, industrial production will go up and new jobs would be created.

The author feels that the MSME sector could be made vibrant if the challenges of this sector such as inadequate availability of finance and credit is addressed along with technological upgradation and marketing support.

In one of the essays on Section 370 of the Indian Constitution, the author brings a new point of view to an old question: whether the special status for Jammu & Kashmir and its people has caused permanent damage to the economic well-being of the state.

The northern state has remained secluded from the mainstream and could rarely achieve economies of scale from the industrial development perspective. The author urges the political leaders of the country to revisit this issue, since conflicts and terrorism have hardly helped the people of the state.

In the essay article on 'Secularism at Crossroads...', the author strongly talks about the resilient nature of the Hindu belief system, despite being exposed to forced and state-supported conversions, deception, inquisition and persecution of Hinduism and other native faiths for centuries. The Congress, Communists and other opposition parties

have proved adept at playing vote bank politics and the reservation card among Dalits, OBCs and other socially and economically weaker sections among the Hindus in their pursuit of divisive politics. This divisive politics has continued for long. What is required in the country is flawless secularism and a non-partisan doctrine which does not provoke bitterness among communities.

The author has suggested a very proactive and constructive approach regarding how the government should work to deliver the best for the people. Gupta also suggests that along with economic institutions the governance system also needs to improve in the areas of health and education.

The author has chosen to come up with this book keeping in view the socio-political and economic context of India. One may not agree with all of his arguments. But the book's wide analysis of issues related to administration, economy, society, politics, religion and the Constitution will provoke the readers to think.

Overall, the book is a good read as it seamlessly moves from one topic to another with all the issues raised being topical, well written and presented at one place.

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