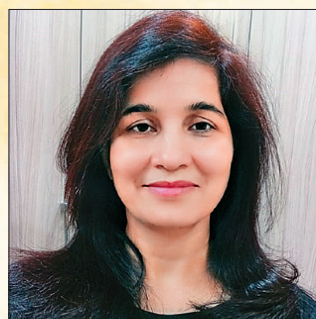


Outlook

Initiative



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BY CHOCKO VALLIAPPA*

pen this on a day when the entire country feted the launch of Chandrayaan-3 by ISRO's scientists. This will establish the supremacy of India's engineering talent in indigenizing ISRO's pathbreaking missions joining the elite list of just USA, Russia and China landing on the moon.

Set up in 1969, ISRO, in just five decades has perfected its 'rocket science', set new benchmarks in frugal innovation by engaging young researchers in academia, including SonaSPEED, and the private sector. To be sure, India's latest annual space budget at Rs 12,500 is one twentieth billion budget for FY 2023-24.

ISRO's founding was an act of envisioning the future of India to leapfrog in the comity of nations. In the 75th year of India's independence, aptly christened Amrit Mahotsav, what trailblazing steps can India take to help the world accrue benefits beyond India? What new benchmarks can scientists meet in meeting new challenges?

Grand challenge for green energy

India has pledged to generate 50 per cent of its electricity from non-fossil fuel and to achieve net zero emissions by 2070.

To reach the net zero emission goals, India needs to think out of the box and go beyond the current environment depleting power generation options. The government needs to float a competition by taking a leaf out of the USA based non-profit X-PRIZE to solve this grand challenge.

India is going to land on the moon and Pragyan Rover will soon explore the moon. But we have not explored our own Earth. The Geological Survey of India has estimated a potential to generate over 10,000 MW of electricity. If we dig 10,000 meters below, we can harness the Earth's heat. The potential of this power is 50000



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Driving India's Ambition For The Next 50 Years!

**India needs to reimagine
its education landscape for
the world driven by artificial
intelligence**

times more than the combined oil& gas reserves of the world.

Scientists, higher education institutions, energy startups could compete for Rs 10,000 crore prize money to be shared by the top 10 most promising finalists. The Govt can get a share of equity. This can be a new version of PPP (Public-Private Partnership).

Engineering skills for Gen.AI

India needs to reimagine its education landscape for the world driven by artificial intelligence. We need to reinvent standards for literacy, especially for those coming into higher education, I now identify as Gen.AI. A Gen.AI literate Indian must go beyond the three basic skills taught in schools: reading, writing and arithmetic to embrace technology. The technology skills in India of the coming decades will need to go beyond appreciation and use of technology to creation of smarter technologies that will embrace AI for Good. India needs to train its under 18 population, estimated to be nearly 50 crore, at its higher education portals. This calls

for a cost-effective plan where the existing higher education institutions can double the output of engineers by running classes in two shifts. Shared infrastructure can help achieve lower fees while seeding research mindset among students.

The idea to double enrollment at the existing engineering education infrastructure, R&D labs by attracting ace faculty needs support of UGC, AICTE and the Union Ministry of Education to achieve this goal. Education being in the concurrent list is caught between the State and the Center. The second shift can be under the UGC/AICTE directly and provide for total autonomy as envisaged by the NEP (New Education Policy)

These pathbreaking steps will help meet the aspirations of young India well beyond Amrit Mahotsav.