

Musings on the fifth anniversary of GST and more by Anantha Nageswaran

I was an avid blogger although I never got into the social media. Blog gives me the time to think through the issues. I do not have to feel that I have to say something on a topic instantaneously. I can think about it and I can then write about it from all angles. Thus, it gives me the space to express myself comprehensively. So, I used to maintain two blogs, one on financial, economics and politics, although that did not stop me from writing from time to time on cricket and tennis, two games that I follow (or, used to follow?) closely and keenly with some modicum of knowledge. The second blog was on spiritual matters – reflective, philosophical, personal development angles, etc.

These were apart from my weekly columns in Mint that I wrote for fifteen years.

In the last five months, all blogging has ceased. Weekly columns too but I do write occasionally for Mint. For example, I had a column **today** in Mint on the fifth anniversary of GST. You can access it via this link: <https://www.livemint.com/opinion/online-views/goods-and-services-tax-at-five-the-new-regime-s-journey-so-far/amp-11656520388411.html>

FWIIW, I am attaching it too.

I am also pleased to share with you a good article (<https://www.livemint.com/opinion/columns/indias-economic-constraints-and-an-energy-holdback-to-be-eased-11656433524371.html>) that Niranjan Rajadhyaksha, my first editor in Mint, wrote for Mint **yesterday**. Of course, he is no longer with Mint. He is a good friend and a thoughtful economist. He is not given to extreme views nor does he make his points forcefully but lightly trusting the wisdom and sobriety of the readers to draw their own conclusions.

What is very good about this article is that it gives you a perspective on how India's four fundamental issues were largely successfully addressed: savings, food and two external sector constraints. That gives you a historical overview of how public policy has indeed succeeded in tackling some issues that might have appeared quite permanent and daunting at the same time.

Bank nationalisation, in particular, did help achieve inclusion for the first three decades. In the next two decades, as the economy opened up, challenges emerged and PSBs are yet to fully overcome them. But, that is a topic for a different occasion. To read a riveting account of bank nationalisation and more, I very strongly recommend reading Shankkar Aiyar's 'Accidental India'. For those of you born after the 1980s, it is a great book to understand India's post-independence economic journey told with journalistic flair and great story-telling skills. It is told through some key 'accidental' developments. To be fair to India, that could be true of many countries as well.

Public policy and, why, even our own lives, is nothing but a series of accidental turns. That is again for reflection.

This is good enough for my first (of, hopefully, many) post. I strongly urge you to read and also write. It is a great de-stresser. Reading and writing cannot be fully substituted by artificial intelligence. Maybe, it is a hope masquerading as a forecast and maybe, it is also self-interest driven but I think the ability to connect dots – which reading eclectically and writing helps us develop – cannot so easily be aped by Artificial Intelligence.

Pl. feel free to comment. With intellectual responses and roles, there is no need to be overly conscious of hierarchy. You need not fear any retribution if you comment critically of my posts.

I am attaching my column in Mint and Niranjan's column in Mint from **yesterday**.