

WHO

Anand
Teltumbde,
rights activist

Academic and columnist Anand Teltumbde is not only one of India's foremost public intellectuals, he is also someone known for speaking truth to power. In his column 'Margin Speak' in the *Economic and Political Weekly*, he has been scathing in his criticism of the Narendra Modi government, especially over issues of social welfare, communal harmony, and the persecution of social activists.

Why was he arrested?

On August 29 last year, Mr. Teltumbde himself became the target of state action when law enforcement officials raided his home in Goa, where he is a faculty member of the Goa Institute of Management. The raid was reportedly in connection with his alleged links to the Bhima Koregaon violence of January 1, 2018. The Maharashtra police also claimed that he was involved in a Maoist plot to assassinate Prime Minister Narendra Modi. It booked him under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, a

law that makes it extremely difficult for the accused to obtain bail. Mr. Teltumbde has rubbished these allegations. He approached the Supreme Court to have the First Information Report (FIR) against him quashed. On January 14 this year, the Supreme Court refused to quash the FIR, but gave him four weeks to apply for anticipatory bail. On February 1, a Pune court rejected his application for anticipatory bail, with the additional sessions judge K.D. Vadane observing that "there is sufficient material collected by the investigating officer to show the involvement of the present accused in the commission of the offence."

Mr. Teltumbde then appealed to the Bombay High Court, and it was while he was travelling to Mumbai to meet his lawyer that the Pune police arrested him at the airport at 3.30 a.m. on February 3. The arrest sparked immediate outrage on social media as the Supreme Court's pro-

tection against arrest was in force till February 11. When he was produced in court later that day, the same judge who had rejected his bail application ordered his immediate release, noting that the Supreme Court's order "is an

umbrella protection for four weeks and [Mr.] Teltumbde can avail himself of all options available to him within this period."

Where does he hail from?

Mr. Teltumbde was born in a small village called Rajur in Maharashtra's Yavatmal district. After a degree in Mechanical Engineering and a Ph.D. in cybernetic modelling, he enjoyed a successful career as a management professional. But alongside that, Mr. Teltumbde was a civil rights activist. In his writings, he combines an Ambedkarite perspective with a Marxist understanding of political economy. His books, most notably *Khairlanji: A Strange and Bitter Crop and Republic of Caste*, are a searing indictment of the Indian republic's failure to seriously confront the challenges of caste violence and injustice.

Where does he stand?

On January 1, 2018, when

laks of Dalits gathered at the Bhima Koregaon war memorial to celebrate the 200th anniversary of the 1818 Battle of Koregaon, violence broke out, and one person was killed. The police said the violence was incited by participants of the Elgaar Parishad, held by 260 non-profit groups on December 31, 2017 in Pune's Shaniwar wada. Ten activists and intellectuals were arrested on the charges of having Maoist links, instigating the Bhima Koregaon violence and plotting to assassinate the Prime Minister. The police want to add Mr. Teltumbde to the list of arrested suspects.

What lies in store?

On February 11, the Bombay High Court extended Mr. Teltumbde's interim protection against arrest till February 22. Mr. Teltumbde has maintained that the charges are fabricated, and represent nothing but an attempt to clamp down on dissent.

G. SAMPATH

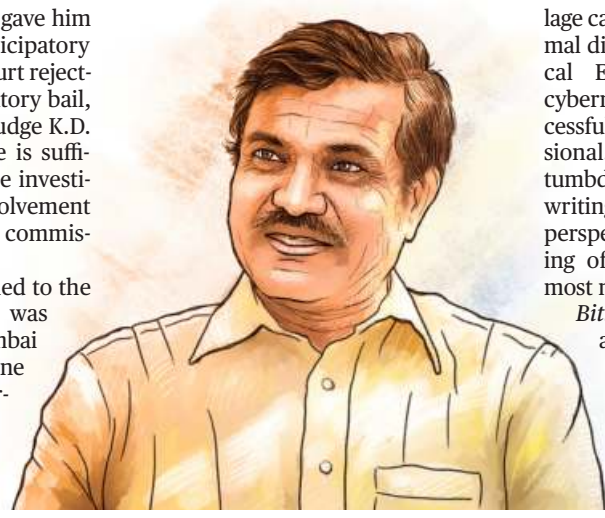


ILLUSTRATION: J.A. PREMKUMAR

WHAT

The lowdown
on National
Security Act

WHAT IS IT? On February 8, the Congress-led government in Madhya Pradesh invoked the National Security Act (NSA) against three men accused of killing a cow near Kharkhali village. This and a spate of recent cases, in which different State governments have invoked the stringent provisions of the NSA to detain citizens for questionable offences, have brought the focus back

on the potential abuse of the controversial law. Put simply, the NSA empowers the Centre or a State government to detain a person to prevent him from acting in any manner prejudicial to national security. The government can also detain a person to prevent him from disrupting public order or for maintenance of supplies and services essential to the community. The maximum period for which one may be detained is 12 months. But the term can be extended if the government finds fresh evidence.

HOW DID IT COME ABOUT? Preventive detention laws in India date back to early days of the colonial era when the Bengal Regulation III of 1818 was enacted to empower the government to arrest anyone for defence or maintenance of public order without giving the person recourse to judicial proceedings. A century later, the British government enacted the Rowlatt Acts of 1919 that allowed con-

finement of a suspect without trial. Post-independence India got its first preventive detention rule when the government of Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru enacted the Preventive Detention Act of 1950. The NSA is a close iteration of the 1950 Act. After the Preventive Detention Act expired on December 31, 1969, the then Prime Minister, Indira Gandhi, brought in the controversial Maintenance of Internal Security Act (MISA) in 1971 giving similar powers to the government. Though the MISA was repealed in 1977 after the Janata Party came to power, the successive government, led by Mrs. Gandhi, brought in the NSA.

WHY DOES IT MATTER? In the normal course, if a person is arrested, he or she is guaranteed certain basic rights. These include the right to be informed of the reason for the arrest. Section 50 of the Criminal Procedure Code (Cr.PC) man-

dates that the person arrested has to be informed of the grounds of arrest, and the right to bail. Sections 56 and 76 of the Cr. PC also provides that a person has to be produced before a court within 24 hours of arrest. Additionally, Article 22(i) of the Constitution says an arrested person cannot be denied the right to consult, and to be defended by, a legal practitioner of his choice. But none of these rights are available to a person detained under the NSA. A person could be kept in the dark about the reasons for his arrest for up to five days, and in exceptional circumstances not later than 10 days. Even when providing the grounds for arrest, the government can withhold information which it considers to be against public interest to disclose. The arrested person is also not entitled to the aid of any legal practitioner in any matter connected with the proceedings before an advisory board, which is constituted by the government for dealing with NSA cases.

WHAT LIES AHEAD?

The National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB), which collects and analyses crime data in the country, does not include cases under the NSA in its data as no FIRs are registered. Hence, no figures are available for the exact number of detentions under the NSA. In January, the BJP government in Uttar Pradesh arrested three persons under the NSA in connection with an alleged cow-slaughter incident in Bulandshahr. In December last year, a Manipur journalist, who had posted an alleged offensive Facebook post on the Chief Minister, was detained for 12 months under the NSA. Experts say these cases point to the fact that governments sometimes use it as an extra-judicial power. It is time to reconsider the law, they argue, because in four decades of its existence, the NSA has been in the news for all the wrong reasons.

SOIBAM ROCKY SINGH

WHY

farm sop will
be hard to
implement?

What does the scheme offer?

■ The Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi scheme, announced in the Budget earlier this month, aims to give ₹6,000 a year to 12 crore farmer families who own up to two hectares of cultivable land.

What are the challenges?

■ The number of beneficiaries comes from the number of land holdings of two hectares or less, according to the last agricultural land census. However, the guidelines say a single family may hold multiple land parcels, which will be pooled to determine their eligibility for the benefit. Similarly, even landholdings bigger than two hectares, if owned by multiple families, will make them eligible for the scheme. For example, if five brothers jointly own a single 10 hectare holding, each of them will be eligible for the scheme. However, if the members of a single family unit each own three one-hectare holdings, they will not be eligible. "This is a mess," says

Vikas Rawal, a professor at JNU's Centre for Economic Studies and Planning, who specialises in agriculture economics. He says it will be difficult to use existing land records to determine beneficiaries. "Land records are held individually. How do you know which family holds how much land?" For the purposes of this scheme, family units are being defined as a husband, wife and minor children. Local administrations are more familiar with the unit of the household – which is used by most other government surveys and schemes – defined as a group living together and eating meals from a common kitchen.

What is the status of land records?

■ States have been implementing the Digital India Land Records Modernisation Programme for more than a decade. While several States claim to have completed computerisation of their land records, others have not even begun the process. However, digitisation does not mean the data have been up-



dated. Experts say many land records are updated only when the land is sold and only if the transaction is legally registered. Inherited land may still be registered in a parent or grandparent's name. Multiple government departments hold the documents required to establish land ownership – the Registration Department maintains sale deeds, but maps are kept by the Survey Department, while the Revenue Department keeps property tax receipts. Verifying ownership claims is thus a daunting task. States have been asked to overhaul their land databases immediately in

preparation for the scheme, which aims to pay out its first instalment of ₹2,000 by March 31, before the Lok Sabha election.

What happened in Telangana?

■ However, the example of Telangana shows this may be an unrealistic time line. Despite an advanced state of progress in digitisation, the State took over three months to update its databases before implementing its own farmer income support scheme before its Assembly election last year. Since its payout was given per acre owned, rather than per family unit, it was a simpler process to identify beneficiaries on the basis of land records. Yet, researchers say almost 10 lakh beneficiaries – of a total 54 lakh – were left out of the initial instalment, as the State scrambled to update records.

What about community farmers?

■ The scheme notes that land ownership rights are community-based in ma-

ny northeastern States and promises that an alternative method of beneficiary identification will be developed. However, many Adivasi communities in other States also cultivate land without individual rights, and may be left out of the scheme, although they are among the most vulnerable. Tenant farmers are also not included in the scheme, as they do not own the land they cultivate. With tenancy being as high as 60% in some areas, this could lead to resentment if absentee landlords receive benefits under the scheme.

Is payment infrastructure in place?

■ The government intends to pay beneficiaries through a direct transfer to their bank accounts. From the second instalment, Aadhaar numbers will be compulsory to access benefits. Previous welfare schemes requiring Aadhaar verification have faced significant hurdles in some rural areas.

PRISCILLA JEBARAJ

WHEN

14
February
2019

Terror strikes: At least 40 Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) personnel were killed on Thursday when a convoy in which they were travelling was attacked near Awantipora on the Srinagar-Jammu Highway. A suicide bomber of the Jaish-e-Mohammed (JeM) rammed an explosives-laden vehicle into one of the convoy's buses. It was the deadliest attack in terms of casualties in three decades of militancy in Jammu and Kashmir. About 2,500 personnel of the 92, 17 and 54 battalions of the CRPF were travelling to the Valley at the time of the ambush. Home Minister Rajnath Singh blamed the "Pakistan-based, Pakistan-backed" elements for the "dastardly" attack. On Friday, the Indian government withdrew the Most Favoured Nation status given to Pakistan in 1996. Agencies said this move would hurt Pakistan's exports to India which stood at \$488.5 million in 2017-18. Pictures show the damaged CRPF bus at the site of the attack in Pulwama district, and the injured being carried to hospital. ■ NISSAR AHMAD



WHERE

In Maharashtra,
protecting a
sanctuary

An environment clearance to the Mumbai-Ahmedabad high-speed train corridor has put the spotlight on the Thane Creek Flamingo Sanctuary (TCFS) in Mumbai.

What happened?

A committee, chaired by Union Environment Minister Harsh Vardhan, has accorded wildlife clearance to the project which will encroach upon the TCFS and the Sanjay Gandhi National Park, home to leopards, in Mumbai. The pro-

posal involves diverting 3.2 hectares of forestland from the TCFS and 97.5 hectares of land close to the boundary of the forest's protected area. The high-speed train corridor or 'bullet train project' was inaugurated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his Japanese counterpart Shinzo Abe in Ahmedabad in September, 2017. It is expected to be ready by 2022. Ever since the project was conceived, there have been concerns about the impact of the construction, which will create enormous debris, on the sanctuary and the national park. The drilling of underground tunnels will lead to sound pollution which will disturb the tranquillity of the sanctuary. The project will entail cutting down several mangrove trees, a natural flood barrier. In the aftermath of the 2005 floods, environmentalists spoke out against the declining mangrove cover for land reclamation projects.

How big is the sanctuary?

The TCFS consists of 896 hectares of



mangrove forests and 794 hectares of waterbodies. It is on the western bank of the creek, between the Airoli and the Vashi bridges connecting Mumbai and Navi Mumbai. It came into being in August 2015 and is Maharashtra's second marine sanctuary, after Malvan.

The TCFS has been attracting flamingos in large numbers since 1994. By November every year, over 30,000 flamingos, along with their chicks, occupy the mudflats and the bordering mangroves. They stay till May, after which most of them migrate to Bhuj in Gujarat for breeding, leaving a small resident population. Besides supporting a large con-

gregation of flamingos, the area is a refuge for many resident and migratory birds. In all, 200 species have been reported, even globally threatened species such as the greater spotted eagle and others such as osprey. Other birds found here are the Pied avocet, western reef heron, black-headed ibis, common redshank, marsh sandpiper, common greenshank, curlew sandpiper, brown-headed gull, whiskered, gull-billed, Caspian and little terns. The white-bellied sea eagle and Eurasian marsh harrier have been spotted too.

Are there any remedial measures?

While according permission, the National Board for Wildlife has laid several conditions. The project developers should provide an alternate site and funds for penal plantation of at least five times the number of mangrove plants anticipated to be lost. Because the project also encroaches upon the Sanjay Gandhi National Park in Borivili, developers have to construct under-passes

to enable smooth movement of wild animals. An existing quarry would have to be closed and a natural stormwater drainage stream, passing through the culvert system, would have to be restored and kept free of any obstruction.

Are these steps adequate?

In general, any foray into wildlife sanctuaries is pernicious. The project plan of the corridor involves drilling a 7-km-long undersea tunnel to avoid damaging the forest and several of the mitigating measures could go a long way to encourage flamingos and other birds to continue visiting the sanctuary. However environmentalists say they aren't confident that mitigation work will be taken seriously. The ongoing Mumbai Metro Project has adversely impacted the Aarey Forest and destroyed mangroves and wetlands in Uran and the Sion-Panvel Highway, according to ecologists.

JACOB KOSHY

The need to go beyond anglophone models

The main point of a democracy is to enable the maximum number of citizens to be and feel represented



THE CONTROVERSIAL INDIAN

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The controversy rages in intellectual and society circles of India: do we need to replace the model of democracy that we have with the presidential model? It is a sad controversy, because it underlines the fact that the Indian thinking classes can seldom think beyond the U.K. and U.S. models. The fact remains that neither the U.K.-inspired prime ministerial model nor the U.S.-inspired presidential model pass muster. They both fail for the same reason: they do not allow the majority to have a voice. This, by definition, is a fault that any democracy cannot overlook.

Lack of representation

In India, some people opposed to the

BJP have started promoting the idea of a U.S.-based presidential system. One of the reasons is that the U.K.-inspired winner-takes-all model basically ensures that the majority of votes is lost. These reformers are motivated by the fact that even though the BJP won only 31% of the votes in the 2014 general election, it obtained a clear majority in the Lok Sabha. The NDA won 38.5% of the votes. This indicates that 61.5% of the votes that were cast were for parties that were not part of the NDA. The 38.5% figure appears even lower when one realises that the overall turnout in the election was 66.38%.

But this was nothing unusual. In 2009, the Congress-led UPA came to power with the Congress winning only 28.55% of the votes against the BJP's 18.80%. If we consider the alliances, then too the majority of voters had voted for other parties than the UPA that came to power.

What this means is that the majority of votes cast in the last two general elections in India have been cast against the coalition or the party that came to power. This is worrying. And it has to do



with the British model of 'winner takes all'. While this model might or might not work in Britain, it is particularly problematic in India, which is a much larger nation with far more variety and differences. The fact that more than 60% of the votes cast in India in recent years are habitually disregarded is a very serious problem. It adds to feelings of resentment and lack of representation in many regions and sections of society. To this extent, critique of the prime ministerial system is justified. But is the

U.S.-inspired presidential system the solution? Let us look at the last presidential election in the U.S. It is widely known that Hillary Clinton won 48.2% of the votes cast, while Donald Trump won only 46.1%. But Mr. Trump is today the U.S. President. If you factor in the election of senators, once again you have a scenario where the majority of voters do not find appropriate representation.

Obviously, the problem of a majority of votes being lost is bigger under the

U.K.-style winner-takes-all prime ministerial system, but the U.S.-style presidential system does not resolve the issue. Once again, the majority is not represented – and democracy is all about representation of the majority.

I think this problem of the majority of votes being wasted is more of an issue in a country like India, which has far more economic, cultural and ethnic diversity than either the U.K. or the U.S. To feel largely unrepresented in India is a greater problem than to feel largely unrepresented in those countries where economic, regional and even cultural gaps are smaller. But in any case, it is a major problem in any democracy.

Proportional representation

Which means we return to my original complaint: that the Indian thinking classes cannot think beyond the U.K. and U.S. models. Surely, there are other options? For example, many developed European nations work with very different models, most of which ensure proportional representation. Here you do not have a winner-takes-all U.K. model or a slanted U.S. electoral college mo-

del. Instead, political parties, with a given cut-off limit, are represented in Parliament largely on the basis of the percentage of votes that they win. (Or, as in France's more problematic presidential model, there is at least a narrowing down of the choice over successive rounds of voting.)

It is not that difficult to allot a number of seats to a percentage of votes. For instance, 3% of the votes won can mean 5 or 10 or 12 seats. And this multiplies with every 3%. The only thing it requires is a graded list of politicians published by a political party in advance, so that when a party wins, say, five seats, the first five candidates listed by the party enter Parliament.

One advantage of this system is a reduction of the 'celebrity' factor, though countries like Denmark also allow for the personal popularity of individual politicians to be rewarded. I don't see why a reworking of such options would not be far better than either the U.K.- or U.S.-inspired 'anglophone' models. After all, the main point of a democracy is to enable the maximum number of citizens to be and feel represented.

Let them eat JAM

Who said food, jobs, and money matter? This is the age of Digital India



ALLEGEDLY

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I know a lot of people are disturbed by a report alleging that India's unemployment rate is at a 45-year high. My message to them: Relax! It's nonsense.

The only thing anyone can logically infer from this SSO-called survey is that the government doesn't have the data to show that India's unemployment rate has been declining steadily since May 2014, before plunging in December 2018 to its lowest ever since the time of Chandragupta Maurya. In other words, this is a data problem, not an employment problem.

The Indian ocean of employment

Just because we don't have data to show 0% unemployment doesn't mean that India's unemployment is not 0%. It only means that the government has been creating so many jobs so quickly that data generation hasn't kept pace with employment generation. Only an idiot will complain if his government is more focussed on job creation than in recording data about the trillions of jobs that it is creating on a daily basis.

Also, the first sign of high unemployment is social unrest. When was the last time you saw someone protesting, or even waving a black flag at the Prime Minister? On the contrary, people are so happy with the government that they are voluntarily handing over their black underwear, black hankies, and black socks to the police every time they come in proximity to a ministerial convoy.

Look around. Do you see anyone sitting idle? I don't. Everywhere I look, people are busy on Facebook, Twitter, WhatsApp, PayTM, Snapchat, Snap-



deal, or Snapdragon, toiling 24x7 to make India the world's largest producer of data.

Add to this the billions of Indians working as Transportation Managers for Ola and Uber, and the billion more working as Senior Delivery Executives for Swiggy, Zomato, Amazon, and Flipkart. You are practically looking at negative unemployment: meaning, not only does every Indian have a job, they actually have two or three jobs each. So, if the NSSO survey was any good, it would have shown India's unemployment rate to be around minus 200%.

Take someone like me. I already have a day job. But even I do a second shift at night for Netflix, manufacturing trillions of bytes of user-generated data without even taking a salary. Why do I do that? Because I am a hard-working Indian who knows that data is oil and every bit of data that I produce will reduce global oil prices by increasing the supply so that aggregate demand is reduced, thereby enabling our government to help the poor by hiking fuel prices only once a day.

But I am a modest drop in the Indian ocean of employment, though not a drop to be ignored. I am sorry to go public with this but I am really astonished that no one from the NSSO contacted me to ask me if I was employed or not, which goes to show how flawed its methodology is. In my entire working life, I have never been included in any NSSO survey, ever. Isn't that odd? Not just me, no one in my entire extended family has ever been a part

of an NSSO survey. In fact, I know nobody – not one person – who has been asked to fill out a questionnaire by an NSSO team. Now, I am not suggesting that NSSO, like the Abominable Snowman, doesn't really exist. But clearly, there are enough reasons to view its numbers with suspicion, before dismissing them outright.

Had the NSSO been a truly neutral institution, its unemployment survey would have reached out to the employed as well, to get their side of the story. But it did not. No wonder its report was not approved by the approved approvers.

What truly matters

Also, a major point that's gotten lost in all the controversy is that job creation is a very minor matter. Any Tom, Dick or Rahul can do that. What's much more important, and also the biggest achievement of this government, is ensuring that every single Indian has a unique identity, and not just a unique identity, but also a Jan Dhan bank account and mobile number linked to that identity. This innovative focus on the holy trinity of Jan Dhan-Aadhaar-Mobile (JAM) has been praised by Marketing Vishwaguru Sri Kotler-ji as the 'Not Jobs but JAM' approach to development.

Contrary to what common sense might tell you, it doesn't matter whether people have food, jobs, or money. These obsessions are so analog they are practically 19th century. We are in Digital India now. What people need in Digital India are the bare digital necessities for survival in the digital economy: a digital ID, a bank account to digitally convert government cash transfers into insurance premiums and channel them into equity markets, and an Internet connection accessible via mobile phone. This is the JAM that India's starving millions need today. How can anyone not be grateful to a government that has done more than any of its predecessors to deliver JAM to India's 99%?

In the Chishti shrine in Ajmer

Khwaja Moinuddin Chishti attracted kings and peasants alike to his discourses



WHERE STONES SPEAK

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The name Ajmer immediately conjures up a vision of Khwaja Garib Nawaz and his dargah. It reminds me of the saint Moinuddin Hasan Chishti, who was generous like the sea and hospitable like the earth. Today, his dargah, with its saintly white dome and golden crown, hosts millions of devotees who soak in the generosity of his blessings. It was this affection and love for all of humanity that earned Moinuddin Hasan Chishti the name Khwaja Garib Nawaz, or cherisher of the poor.

Devotees from far and wide

Moinuddin Hasan Chishti was born in Sijistan (modern-day Sistan) in Iran in 1141-42 CE. After receiving Khilafat at the age of 52 from Sheikh Usman Harawani, he went on Hajj to Mecca and Medina. While he was praying in the Prophet's mosque in Medina, the Khwaja is said to have heard the Prophet telling him to go to Hindustan and to the city of Ajmer.

At that time, he had no idea where Ajmer was. However, he proceeded via Baghdad and Herat to Lahore and thence to Delhi and Ajmer. Muizzuddin Muhammad bin Sam of Ghor had already defeated Prithviraj Chauhan and established his rule in Delhi. Khwaja Moinuddin Chishti started living and preaching in Ajmer. His instructive discourses, full of spiritual insights, soon drew the local populace as well as kings and nobles and peasants and the poor from far and wide.

The shrine has been visited by Muhammad bin Tughlaq, Sher Shah Suri, Akbar, Jahangir, Shah Jahan, Dara Shu-



koh, Jahanara Begum and Aurangzeb, among many others. Even today, film-stars and heads of states, both the rich and the poor make a pilgrimage to the shrine.

Construction and additions

The original dargah was made of wood, write Carl W. Ernst and Bruce B. Lawrence in *Sufi Martyrs of Love*. A stone canopy was built over it later. When Mahmud Khilji, the Sultan of Malwa, conquered Ajmer in 1455, no concrete structure had been built over the grave of Khwaja Moinuddin Chishti.

The first concrete evidence we get of construction in the dargah complex is the cupola of the shrine that was embellished in 1532, as indicated in an inscription written in golden letters in the northern wall of the tomb. This is the beautiful dome we see today. In keeping with Indo-Islamic architecture, a lotus adorns the dome and a golden crown offered by Nawab Haidar Ali Khan of Rampur sits on top of it. Most of the additions made to the shrine were done during the reign of Akbar, by the emperor himself. Akbar first visited the shrine in 1562 after he heard wandering minstrels singing the praise of Khwaja Moinuddin Chishti as he was returning from a hunt. He decided to proceed to Ajmer immediately. Thus began his annual pilgrimage.

In 1568, Akbar offered a degh, or brass cauldron, for cooking of langar. This was ensconced at the entrance.

Another cauldron was offered by Jahangir in 1614. It is placed opposite the first cauldron. Both cauldrons are in use today. Devotees offer sacks of rice and wheat for the gruel that is cooked here. Only vegetarian food is cooked in this dargah.

Akbar gave instructions to build mosques and khanqahs in Ajmer in 1569. The Akbari mosque of red sandstone is probably a result of those orders. An elegant mosque was also built by Shah Jahan in 1637 and is to the west of the shrine, along with the Shah Jahan Darwaza.

A sense of peace

I walked into the dargah through the dargah bazaar and through the well-decorated Nizami Gate, which is yellow with floral designs. This was built in 1911 by British engineers at the behest of the Nizam of Hyderabad. The Naqqar Khana, or drum house, is next to it. It is from here that ensembles would have once played music to greet visitors to the Khwaja's threshold. A huge silver chandelier hangs here. This was presented by the Golden Temple committee to the dargah.

From here I walked through the courtyards into the Ihaata Noorani, or Quarter of Light, where the main shrine is located. The smell of incense and flowers greeted me.

A railing around the main shrine was offered by Jahanara Begum, the Sufi princess and daughter of Shah Jahan. Jahanara Begum also built a small platform in front of the other door that is known as Begumi Chabutra after her title of Padshah Begum.

There are two doors that go into the main sanctum. Devotees enter it with baskets of flowers, chadors to be offered to the Khwaja. As we wait our turn to enter the dargah, a sense of peace prevails. This is one dargah where women are allowed. A silver and mother of pearl canopy offered by Jahangir can be seen on four silver posts above the cenotaph. The rest of it is covered in flowers and chadors.

Should the state leave religion alone?

There is no simple yes or no answer to this question. Much depends on what we mean by the term religion



THE PUBLIC EYE

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The Sabarimala judgment and its aftermath have brought the issue of state intervention in religion back to the table: should governments leave religion alone, instead of interfering in it? Much depends on what one means by religion.

In one sense, religion refers to that aspect of human life where we relate to the transcendent, through personal belief or collective practice. This transcendent entity can be seen either as existing within human persons or outside them, in the highest possible realm. Religion then largely consists of spiritual exercises by which one digs deeper or goes higher. A mind-boggling variety of ways to carry out these exercises exist – god-dependent, gods and goddesses-dependent, or entirely independent of god. Let us just call this religion faith. To the question, should governments leave faith alone, the answer simply has to be

a resounding yes. Not that the government's interference is always unwarranted. For example, if collective rituals involve human sacrifice, then states should intervene. The point is that there must be a general presumption that governments must not interfere in faith.

Intervening in organised religion

However, it is commonplace that as faith communities become large, they feel the need to be rule-bound; in order to become stable and self-sustaining, they institutionalise themselves. But institutionalisation often involves the introduction of hierarchical relations of power and status. Some people in this relation have more power and status, are 'more equal' than others. They systematise beliefs surrounding spiritual exercises into explicit doctrines. They insist on doctrinal purity and lay down strict but spurious rules that split followers into the normal and the deviant. They fix violent and exclusionary penalties for the 'deviants' and thereby manufacture gated communities with robust notions of who is inside and who is outside. Concepts of heresy and infidelity are generated and a whole society infested with persecution comes into being. In this second sense, religion refers to institutionalised faith communities, such as the those headed by a church,



math or sangha. Now, spiritual exercises cannot be undertaken without belonging to such strongly institutionalised religion. Should the state allow discrimination, exclusion, marginalisation, humiliation, oppression, or persecution by elite-controlled religious institutions, or instead ensure that those within the faith community lead a free, dignified life? My view on this is crystal clear. A government must, albeit with great care and sensitivity, intervene in organised religion to prevent any practices of domination within it. It should also inhibit any attempt on its part to dominate members of other religious

communities.

There is, however, a third sense in which the term religion is used, one that refers neither only to faith, nor to powerful institutions that order and control it, but instead to historically transmitted traditions, indeed to an entire way of life. Thus, people frequently say that Hinduism is not a religion in the conventional sense but is rather a way of life. But if religion is a whole way of life and if this entails the breakdown of the very distinction between religion and society or religion and culture, then all relations of hierarchy and domination that are found in society are also

subsumed under 'religion'. In this conception of Hinduism as a way of life, caste or gender hierarchies are as religious as they are social. Caste domination or gender violence then become integral to Hinduism. How can a state that has accepted freedom and equality as one of its founding principles turn a blind eye to these oppressive practices within the Hindu way of life? In short, if religion is conceived as a way of life, then the state is duty-bound to intervene in religion. Here, the answer to the question, should the government leave religion alone, must be an even more categorical no.

Keeping a principled distance

It is because religion is a complex and morally ambivalent phenomenon that there cannot be a single, emphatic yes or no answer to the question raised above. In my own work over decades, I have consistently maintained that a strict separation between state and religion is not desirable. The state can neither take the view that it will control all aspects of religion, nor that it will have nothing to do with it; that no matter what happens, it will always keep religion at an arm's length. The state must keep, what I have called, a principled distance from all religions.

What does it entail for law and public

policy in relation to religion? On the principled distance view, there is absolutely no need for a state to have any law or public policy pertaining to matters of faith untainted by control, hierarchy or exclusion. A state must not interfere in what faith we have and how it is practised. Faith in god, gods and goddesses or in god-independent human qualities such as reason must remain free from interference. But equally, a just, egalitarian, and freedom-sensitive state cannot abandon its obligation to remove the residue of intra- or inter-religious domination from its society. This is why laws that prohibit triple talaq or lift restrictions on women to enter temples such as Sabarimala must be enacted. Customs that demean or humiliate women must go.

I have consistently argued that this is precisely how secularism is conceived in India: not as a political perspective that permits authoritarian control of religion by the state; nor one that encourages a libertarian hands-off approach towards it; but as one that promotes a nuanced and flexible policy of value-based political or legal decision on whether or not to intervene in religion. This principled distance variety of secularism is the unique ethical stance of the Indian Constitution, a gift from India to the rest of the world.

Opinion

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 17, 2019

THE RAFALE DEAL is unravelling faster than the BJP expected. If the government and the ruling party thought that they could keep the lid on the most opaque defence purchase in recent times, they were wrong, and they were rudely dragged out of their comfort zone. The credit goes, largely, to *The Hindu* and Mr N Ram, chairman of The Hindu Group's publishing company. However, there were — and are — other important players who deserve to be complimented for standing up to the enormous pressure of the government and its leaders.

New and Flawed Deal

First, the facts that have tumbled out of the closet.

1. It is now confirmed that the Rafale deal was a one-man show of Prime Minister Modi. Mr Modi was the choreographer, it was carefully orchestrated, and all important decisions were taken by the Prime Minister's Office (PMO).

2. The decision to scrap the UPA-era memorandum of understanding (MoU) was not taken first for cogent reasons. The decision to enter into a new deal was taken first and, since the earlier MoU was standing in the way, the MoU was scrapped.

3. Key players were kept out of the loop: the defence minister, the external affairs minister, the finance minister, the Air Force, the Defence Acquisition Council (DAC) and the Cabinet Committee on Security (CCS).

4. On April 8, 2015, in Paris, the foreign secretary told the media that the Rafale negotiations were at an advanced stage among the two governments, Dassault and Hindustan Aeronautics Ltd (HAL), and Rafale was not on the agenda of talks between the prime minister of India and the president of France. Two days later, on April 10, after a one-on-one meeting between Mr Modi and Mr Hollande, the new deal was announced!

5. The new deal was indeed a new deal. Not 126 aircraft, but only 36 aircraft. Not at the earlier negotiated price, but a new price. Not the previously identified offset partner (HAL), but a new offset partner (a private company with no experience of manufacturing aircraft or aircraft parts). These decisions were taken at the meeting between the two leaders on April 10, not after negotiations between the two negotiating teams.

Waivers and Omissions Galore

6. 'Payment security mechanism' for the ₹60,000 crore that India would pay to the two suppliers, Dassault and MBDA, was thrown to the winds. There will be no sovereign guarantee, no bank guarantee, and not even an escrow account. All these waivers were directed by the PMO.

7. The mandatory anti-corruption clauses were omitted. There will be no clause against paying commissions, no clause against engaging agents, no pact on integrity, and no access to the account books of the suppliers. These decisions too were taken by the PMO.

8. There was a powerful note of dissent by the three domain experts on the Indian Negotiating Team (INT) —

ACROSS THE AISLE

P Chidambaram



A government running for cover



People hold placards protesting against the Rafale deal at a Congress rally in Dharampur, Valsad, Gujarat, earlier this week AP

Mr MP Singh, Adviser (Cost); Mr AR Sule, FM (Air); and Mr Rajeev Velma, JS & AM (Air). The eight-page dissent challenged the recommendations proposed by the other four members of the INT and tore into the numerous deviations and waivers that were being pushed by them.

Compromised 'Supreme' Audit

As each fact tumbled out, the government scrambled for cover. At first, the government tried to take refuge under the judgment of the Supreme Court but that gambit failed because the judgment itself made it clear that the Supreme Court had declined to examine the issues of pricing and the reduction in the number of aircraft. When Parliament protested, the government tried to silence Parliament — through its brute majority in the Lok Sabha and

through encouraging peremptory adjournments of the Rajya Sabha.

The government may have hoped that the CAG's report will bail it out. The report was presented on the last day of the session of Parliament. Far from saving the government, the report exposed the fact that the government had tried and succeeded in muzzling the independent voice of the CAG, the supreme audit body of the country. The report also debunked the government's claims on cheaper price and quicker delivery schedule.

The CAG seems to have initially resisted the demand for redaction — there was no precedent, the CAG said — of the commercial details, but its feeble resistance dissolved following a stern letter from the government. The result is tables that make no sense and a report that is as opaque as the deal that the CAG was supposed to examine. The report is noteworthy not for what it said but for what it has not said. The

CAG did not comment

- on the undue monetary gain to the suppliers due to amortisation on a smaller number of aircraft (36 against 126);

- on the monetary risk to India because of the absence of any payment security mechanism;

- on the probability of Dassault and MBDA adhering to the delivery schedule given the huge backlog of unexecuted contracts for Rafale aircraft;

- on the perils of omitting the anti-corruption clauses, especially the non-access to the account books of the suppliers;

- on the impact on the operational capability of the Air Force which will get fewer aircraft; and

- on the powerful dissent note recorded by three members of the INT.

In the mist that envelops the Rafale deal, one thing is clear: the last word has not been said on the subject.

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INSIDE TRACK

COOMI KAPOOR

Fortitude under fire

Arun Jaitley is set to officially resume his duties as finance minister and head the BJP's publicity committee for the 2019 campaign. This, despite the fact that he had two serious illnesses last year. He underwent a kidney transplant after a renal failure and, within a few months, was diagnosed with sarcoma, a rare cancer of the connective tissue. Even opposition politicians are impressed with the fortitude and stoicism with which Jaitley has taken his ill-health in stride. Except for walking with a brace, he is almost back to normal, though he doesn't move around in crowded spaces. In the Sloan Kettering hospital in New York, he remained in touch with his duties from afar. Contrary to speculation, there was no need for either chemotherapy or radiation for his tumour since it was detected in the early stages. The malignant tissue near the knee was scooped out and tissue from the hip transplanted. The cancer probably predated the kidney surgery and it was, in fact, Jaitley himself who realised something was amiss when he noticed the skin bloating every time oil was rubbed on his leg.

Disunited front

Mulayam Singh Yadav's speech in Parliament expressing the hope that Narendra Modi would return as Prime Minister stunned the Opposition. The Samajwadi Party founder appeared somewhat disoriented after his speech and remarked in awe to a journalist that the PM had twice mentioned him in his address to the House. There were other indications last week that the Opposition has yet to put up a united front. A furious Mamata Banerjee accosted Sonia Gandhi in Parliament's Central Hall, saying she would not forget that Congress MP Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury in his speech earlier that day accused her of involvement in the chit fund scams in West Bengal. Akhilesh Yadav is annoyed with the Congress for abstaining when the SP, joined by the TMC, BSP and TDP, protested in Parliament against the Yogi Adityanath government preventing Akhilesh from boarding a flight to Allahabad. The Congress asked its RJD ally Tejashwi Yadav to boycott the function of an English TV news channel, which, it feels, has a pronounced BJP slant, but the NCP's Praful Patel went anyway. He says he never lets political differences come in the way of social contacts. For instance, he went for BJD rebel Jay Panda's book release in the morning and had drinks with Naveen Patnaik the

same night.

Keeping BJP guessing

The BJP is faring no better with its allies. The Shiv Sena's Sanjay Raut attended Chandrababu Naidu's Opposition unity rally in which Modi was the target of attack. The BJP remains hopeful of an eventual patch-up. Prakash Javadekar quoted a proverb — "You can't live with us and you can't live without us" — to describe the on-off-on relationship between the allies. The crux of the dispute is that the Sena wants to play the senior partner in an alliance for the Assembly and insists that this be linked with seat-sharing on the Lok Sabha seats. The BJP hopes the Sena will come around if Uddhav Thackeray's son Aditya is promised the deputy chief minister's post.

Family togetherness

Last Tuesday, a portrait of Atal Bihari Vajpayee by Krishn Kanhai was installed in Parliament's Central Hall. The majestic room is now so crowded with portraits that there is little space for additions. To make place for Vajpayee, Lala Lajpat Rai had to be moved to one side. Someone pointed out that the Jawaharlal Nehru portrait is a misfit alongside Rajendra Prasad, Ram Manohar Lohia and Lal Bahadur Shastri. A panel on the opposite side has four portraits, Motilal Nehru, Rajiv Gandhi, Indira Gandhi and Sardar Patel. It makes sense to swap the positions of Nehru and Patel, the person said.

Star-struck

The photogenic, blue-blooded Gandhis have a fan following even among journalists. A TV news channel assigned a star-struck young woman reporter on a full-time Rahul Gandhi beat. A smart move since, thanks to the regular interaction, the scribe now has a distinct advantage in persuading the Congress president to give a sound bite to her channel. Seeing her proximity, other channels and photographers follow her doggedly in Parliament since she seems to know in advance from which entrance Rahul will emerge and at what time. Another TV channel now seems keen to build a Priyanka Gandhi arrangement. A journalist from the group followed Priyanka Gandhi's movements in Lucknow so conscientiously that she was tweeting non-stop for 14 hours, though Priyanka spent most of her time in meetings in the Lucknow Congress office. At 4 am, Priyanka emerged to give an exclusive sound bite to the journalist, that she was coming to grips with the Uttar Pradesh party organisation.

That sinking feeling

The Premier League's Chelsea Football Club seems to be regressing towards the mid-table mediocrity of the pre-Roman Abramovich era

RINGSIDE VIEW

Shamik Chakrabarty



IT'S NOT KNOWN if Roman Abramovich had watched the very public dismantling of the Sarri-ball at the Etihad last Sunday. Chelsea's absentee owner doesn't turn up for his club's matches these days. Rarely does he drop in at Cobham, Chelsea's training base. Ever since the British government tightened up the investor visas following the Salisbury poisoning incident last year, Abramovich has chosen recluse, football-wise.

Gone are the days when managers received texts from the club owner after defeats. In Carlo Ancelotti's case, as Sky Italy journalist Fabio Caressa revealed, it used to be a simple question mark. Ancelotti managed Chelsea for two seasons, from 2009 to 2011, and won a Premier League title and an FA

Cup. He did a double, in fact, in his first season at the Bridge. A year later, the Italian was gone, with his team still second in the league table. But Chelsea had lost the title race to Manchester United and that was enough for Abramovich to wield the axe.

Abramovich has never befriended patience. Then again, his hire-and-fire policy has worked wonders. Chelsea have won five Premier League titles, a Champions League and nine other trophies since Abramovich took the club ownership in 2003 and changed the English game. The Russian oligarch was the reason why football in England went into a costly makeover. All said and done, Abramovich cared for Chelsea, although he always kept long-term vision at arm's length.

Not that Abramovich has deserted Chelsea. He okayed goalkeeper Kepa Arrizabalaga's signing from Athletic Bilbao for a world record fee of £71 million at the start of the season. In January, he opened his chequebook to bring Gonzalo Higuain on loan from Juventus. At the same time, though, Abramovich has allowed the likes of Nemanja Matic and



Chelsea owner Roman Abramovich

Thibaut Courtois to leave. Matic was sold to United, a direct rival. And now, Eden Hazard's departure to Real Madrid looks imminent. Also, Abramovich has put his £1-billion Stamford Bridge extension plans on hold. From Chelsea's perspective, though, the most concerning factor is that the club owner has all but stopped

communicating with the manager.

The current Chelsea manager Maurizio Sarri said as much after his side received a grand 6-0 hiding against Manchester City. "If the president calls, I will be happy, seeing as I never hear from him. To be honest, I don't know what to expect," Sarri told Sky Italia. It was

Chelsea's worst-ever defeat in the Premier League era, which came on the heels of a 4-0 away defeat to Bournemouth.

Sarri's appointment at the start of the season had raised eyebrows. Antonio Conte won the Premier League and the FA Cup during his two seasons as Chelsea manager. Conte fell out with some of the stars, notably Diego Costa (he was offloaded), Hazard and Willian, but he had to make way for Sarri because Abramovich wanted Chelsea to play passing football a la Barcelona. The Sarri-ball was making waves in Italy. The Chelsea owner fell for it.

At the Bridge, though, player power rules the dressing room and it proved to be Sarri's biggest obstacle with regard to installing his philosophy at the club. He played Hazard and N'Golo Kante — the team's MVP and the world's best holding midfielder, respectively — out of position. In fact, it was a tad surprising that the dressing room took this long to dismiss Sarri-ball. The manager didn't help his cause either by publicly questioning his players' motivation. Sarri's relationship with Hazard reportedly has reached boiling point, which is bad news for the former.

Luiz Felipe Scolari and Andre Villas-Boas were handed pink slips in very similar circumstances, seven and nine months into their respective first terms. At the moment, it feels like Sarri is just one more defeat away from get-

ting the sack. It's apparently the easier option for Abramovich who has presided over 13 managerial changes so far. But will another change augur well for Chelsea?

Their Premier League rivals, Manchester City, Liverpool and Tottenham Hotspur, have been reaping the rewards of stability. Also, it's becoming increasingly difficult for Abramovich to bankroll success — he can no longer match the spending power of City and United. Chelsea seem to be regressing towards the mid-table mediocrity of the pre-Abramovich era. They need long-term vision. They need to give their academy graduates first-team football. For a change, Abramovich needs to give the deadwoods and the troublemakers in the squad the boot instead of parting ways with the manager. The Premier League needs a strong Chelsea.

"People don't understand how difficult the first year can be. People need time; only depends on the owners. The people in charge need to believe," Pep Guardiola had said last week. Not that Sarri is ticking all the boxes. Far from it... To paraphrase Sir Matt Busby, the Chelsea manager is not a man of grass and boots. He likes to present himself as a football intellectual. He is also very stubborn. A little bit of flexibility will do Sarri no harm. In the meantime, Abramovich should hang fire.

Idea Exchange

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 17, 2019

When we call ourselves a national organisation, we should have works from every state. So we are thinking of opening branches in Chandigarh, Odisha, the north-east. We intend to collect works of local artists"

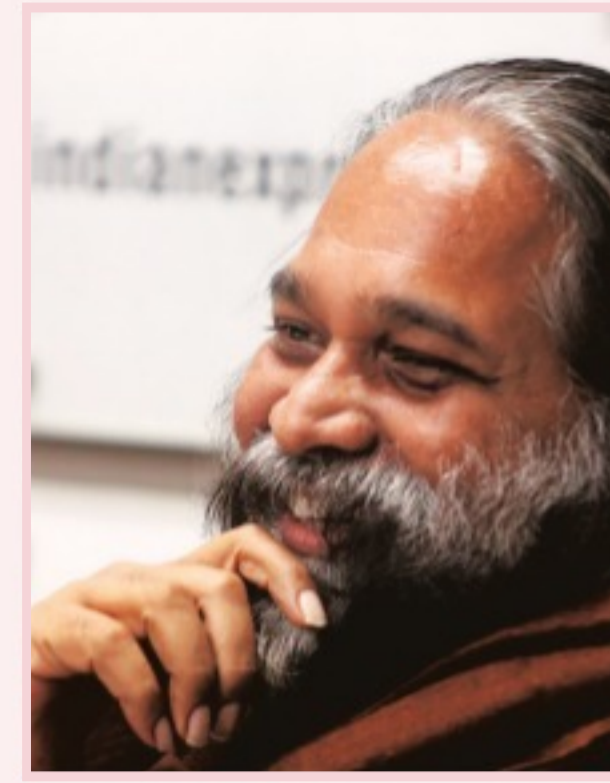


WHY ADWAITA GADANAYAK

BEFORE HE TOOK over as the director-general of NGMA in December 2016, Adwaita Gadanayak headed School of Sculpture at Kalinga Institute in Bhubaneswar. Winner of the Lalit Kala Akademi National Award for Sculpture in 1993, his notable works include the Dandi March at Raj Ghat, a granite sculpture in London called Meditation,

and the centrepiece at the National Police Memorial in Delhi. Gadanayak has started several new initiatives at NGMA to connect masses with art under his tenure, and is overseeing a major facelift of the institution. Recently, NGMA was accused of censorship as actor Amol Palekar's speech at opening of an exhibition was cut short

"It is sad but today the market makes an artist. Whose works sell becomes an artist. That is why no one from the north-east comes here... The system gets together, presents an artist... Everything is a business"



NGMA is a space for artists, they should be allowed to say what they have to say

The NGMA director general says Amol Palekar had every right to say what he wanted but he was misinformed, denies any move to curtail space to independent artists, explains why the gallery has not added new works, and talks about bringing art to children

DIVYAA: Wasn't the disruption of actor and filmmaker Amol Palekar's speech at the National Gallery of Modern Art (NGMA), Mumbai, where he criticised the ministry of culture over 'disbanding of advisory committees' at the gallery's centres in Mumbai and Bengaluru, censorship? Had you been there, would you have handled it differently?

The particular event where it all happened, the NGMA had just given the space. The curators were external and the guest was also invited by them. Certainly, the NGMA has not done any kind of censorship. However, if I was in the situation, I would have allowed him to finish what he was saying and then explained the facts to him. After all, the NGMA is a space for artists, they should be allowed to say what they have to say.

DIVYA A: What is the role of these advisory committees and have they been disbanded?

The advisory committees have a three-year term. In Mumbai and Bengaluru, their terms ended on November 15, 2018, and in Delhi, on January 17. To appoint members to the advisory committee, we ask for recommendations from all over the country. The process takes time. People who claim that the advisory committees have been disbanded are not aware of this procedure. We cannot disband the committees. There is no such system because when an advisory committee's term comes to an end, the process to form a new one begins.

The curator of Prabhakar Barweji's show (who interrupted Palekar) is not from the NGMA. There was also a controversy about the space available for exhibitions. The NGMA has about 18,000 artworks in its collection—the country's best works, acquired since the NGMA came into existence in 1954. We want people living in Mumbai and Bengaluru to see these artworks. Many artists say that the NGMA exhibits these paintings only in Delhi. As a result, other centres don't get opportunities to showcase them. So, after consultations with the ministry, we have decided to dedicate some space at the NGMA for permanent display and another area for outside artists.

DIVYAA: What explains the delay in setting up the new advisory committees?

The term of the Delhi centre's advisory committee was the last to get over—on January 17. We were planning to appoint all the bodies together. Hence, the delay. But it has only been a month since the term has ended. We are collecting names of people and working towards forming the bodies.

DIVYA A: What about the charge that space allotted to independent artists to showcase their works at the NGMA is being curtailed?

In Mumbai, we had thought of giving space in the dome area to outside artists. But many of them suggested that aged people might find it difficult to climb the stairs. So we have not taken any decision regarding what needs to be done. But when the issue of curtailing allotted space was raised, we clarified that there was no such intention because the NGMA is for artists. Being an artist myself, I understand the hard work that we put in and when we don't get proper space and facilities to showcase our work, it is painful. Whenever I travel to Mumbai or other places, I talk to artists before taking any decision.

I have been extremely busy for the past six-seven months with the restoration of our building in Delhi. So I couldn't travel to Mumbai. But I want to first hold a meeting and then take decisions. The NGMA belongs to artists... So whatever decisions artists take will be carried out accordingly.

VANDANA KALRA: Artists often complain that the NGMA has not added any



National Gallery of Modern Art director general Adwaita Gadanayak with Divya A of *The Indian Express*

ABHINAV SAHA

new works to its permanent collection. Has any new artwork been acquired during your tenure?

The storage facility at the NGMA is not very good. So I am upgrading that first. I want the public to see how we store artworks. But because of the ongoing restoration work, artworks have been moved. Once the storage system is ready, we will form a purchase committee similar to the advisory committee. There hasn't been a purchase committee in the two years of my tenure. When the purchase committee is set up, I plan to buy works, mostly of young artists, worth at least ₹15-20 crore. And it's not about my two years at the NGMA. I have noticed that not many artworks have been acquired in the last 15 years. However, Subodh Gupta's work was added to the collection. I have seen how most of the works go to private and international galleries. So we have to fill up the gap quickly. In the next two to three months, the system will be ready.

VANDANA KALRA: Will the works of outside artists be exhibited in Delhi as the Mumbai centre has less space? Last year, Manu Parekh and Jitish Kallat had showcased their work here.

We will have a lot of space in Delhi as we are opening up the old building. Last year, we did fewer shows because the space was limited... Artists from across the country want to showcase their works in Delhi. It was former president S Radhakrishnan who had conceived a space like the NGMA. He planned it with artists such as DP Roy Choudhury, Dhanraj Bhagat, Ramkinkar Baij and Sankho Chaudhuri... After independence, our artists were working all over the country and they thought if exhibitions could be held in Delhi, a national movement could be started. At that same time, Guruji (Rabindranath Tagore) was planning something similar in Shantiniketan. Prominent artists of the Swadeshi movement, Abanindranath Tagore and Nandalal Bose, thought that if a platform could be set up in Delhi, the world would get to know about Indian artists and their works and thoughts. But there was no such platform then. Even now, artists think that showcasing their works in Delhi is the ultimate achievement.

DIVYAA: At a time that the NGMA is planning to expand its influence to Kolkata and the north-east, how are you trying to bring regional artists into the fold?

Ever since I joined the NGMA, I have been planning an outreach policy because it is mostly works of artists from Mumbai and Delhi that are collected. I belong to Odisha and I don't have artworks from the state. We also lack works of artists from the north-east and Jammu & Kashmir. When we call ourselves a national organisation, we should have works from every state. So we are thinking of opening small branches in Chandigarh, Odisha and the north-east. We intend to collect works of local artists and showcase them in the respective states and later move them to Delhi. But for this, we have to go to them because artists have high self-respect. The NGMA will visit these places, talk to local artists and acquire a space to host shows to exhibit these artworks. Slowly but steadily, there will be a system in place. If you visit any other country, you will find there are thousands of museums and galleries.

DEVYANI ONIAL: You spoke of galleries and museums abroad. But they have a lot to offer to people. Visitors can buy artworks from their shops. Do you think we can borrow something from their model?

I really like their style of functioning. Running (an art) museum is not a 10 am-to-5 pm job. The curator is like the mother of the institution. The curator should oversee everything—what is kept where and how. When we visit foreign galleries, we see how perfectly they func-

tion—display, lighting, security and modern technology. The building itself looks like a work of art. We are now working on our own building. To match them, we have to work hard and it will take us 10-20 years. We are also going to start a souvenir shop in Delhi where replicas of important works in our collection—such as of Ramkinkar Baij and Dhanraj Bhagat—will be stocked.

PAROMITA CHAKRABARTI: Art education in schools is very limited. Are you planning something for children?

When students visit the National Museum in Delhi, their teachers show them works related to their syllabus like the Harappan civilisation. There is nothing like that at the NGMA. So I have planned a space where about 30 to 40 kids can come and have a dialogue with paintings, make drawings, sketches and even paint there. We have a variety of portraits at the NGMA. We can tell kids about them and the artists who painted them.

At schools, the art teacher is considered a grade above the peon. I want to change that environment. We had done a workshop with art teachers, where we asked them to meet the bigger artists and once in a while do a show with them... We are also in talks with the NCERT and HRD Ministry to organise summer workshops. We are building a gurukul-like space at the NGMA, similar to Shantiniketan, where senior artists will deliver lectures. When I was a student in London, I didn't even know for the first six months that what I was doing was a part of the course. We were visiting the Tate or the British Museum and I thought our teachers were taking us

out for sightseeing. It was only later that I got to know that these were classes.

Here we teach inside a classroom. The biggest teacher is nature.

PAROMITA CHAKRABARTI: Many private galleries are bringing out art books for children. Does the NGMA have similar plans?

There was an old bus at our Jaipur House building in Delhi, which I have turned into a library. We are bringing out small art books. Some artists like A Ramachandranji have come on board. We will display all these books on the bus. The children will also like the experience of sitting in a bus and reading.

DIVYA A: You have a strong stand on differentiating between Indian art and Indian craft. You believe that craft is actually art.

We talk about stone carvings in the Ajanta and Ellora caves and the Konark temple. But when they were being carved, they were contemporary art. Now we have classified them differently. We find out how long these took to build and that's how we determine the worth.

When there is a wedding in a village in Odisha, everyone participates. They make artworks in clay, wood and cloth for the family of the bride and groom. But today, when we talk of art, we speak in monetary terms... Craftspeople in Odisha paint tribal art on their walls. I have seen helicopters in their work. What they see around them is reflected in their work. So it should be classified as contemporary.

We recently organised a show of aboriginal art from Australia. If I present works of local artists at the NGMA, other artists will ask why we have such shows. The current system is taking us away from our roots... When the British came and established art schools, they set the pattern and style for art education. There were rebellions in places like Shantiniketan where artists said they won't practise oil painting but do miniatures instead. But that assertion never spread. I think we need to bring them forward, and not relegate them to a side-craft status.

DIVYA A: How have commerce and market forces affected art in India?

It is sad but today the market makes an artist. Whose works sell becomes an artist. And that is the reason why no artists from the north-east come here. We now have art houses which hold auctions. The whole system gets together and presents an artist whose works sell at a very high price. This has been happening for the past 10-15 years... Everything is a business and many have benefited from it.

SURBHI GUPTA: There is a huge gap between art and the common man, and the dominant perspective is that art is difficult to comprehend. How do we bridge it?

Before joining the NGMA, I was at Kalinga University in Bhubaneswar. I made a sculpture, which was round. I asked my co-workers, who worked with cement and stone, what they thought of it. One remarked that it was a *roti*. A young artist student said that it looked like the moon. When I asked some professors, they said it was related to philosophy and lifecycle. A simple circle says many things. We often give a title to our artworks. All works at the NGMA have a title. The common man first reads the title. When one looks at an art, one should be stunned for a minute... The response to art should be instinctive. We have not ingrained this system in the common public. In our schools, we don't teach children how to visualise or feel art.

I think people from rural areas understand art better. Children from the rural areas first look at the art and then the title. I think urban people don't think much. That's why we organise art addas, where people and artists come together.

We can't tell the public how an artist was created. For that we need to organise workshops and seminars. Earlier we had a bus which used to go around and share artworks with people. But now we need more avenues of interaction. This will take time.

DIVYAA: Before joining, you wanted to turn Delhi into a global art hub. You wrote to the ministry as well in your vision statement. How often do you hold meetings with ministry officials regarding this matter?

We are in the planning stage. We have to bring craftspeople forward. But they don't have the technology or vision. I wish to provide exposure to craftspeople. We did this with tribal artists from Jharkhand. We built government studios, supplied material and even suggested designs to them. But after two-three months, they left. When I asked them why, they said, 'Here we can't use our thread for the dhokra craft (an ancient craft of non-ferrous metal casting) we do. In Jharkhand, we knew the trees, waterfall and the atmosphere. We are learning new things here but we are not able to create what we do.' We might ask the National Institute of Design or the National Institute of Fashion Technology to help these artists to develop their designs. But till they don't want it themselves, it won't happen.

DIVYAA: Is there any political or bureaucratic intervention at the NGMA?

The minister has given us a free rein. However, I don't understand the budget as I am an artist. This renovation has cost us a lot. And many things are in the pipeline. By next year, we will have a lot many new things.

VANDANA KALRA: There is talk that India will be officially participating at the Venice Biennale. Is the NGMA curating works for it?

We are in talks with the government, but nothing has been finalised. In fact, I attended a meeting on February 13. The NGMA is not curating, we are the commissioners. Kiran Nadar is curating it. Works from the NGMA and some artists will be sent. We are planning the budget. We are hoping that some businessmen would help us out. We will need about ₹6-8 crore as the exhibition goes on for six months.

DIVYA A: You were planning to get Air India's art collection to the NGMA. Have the artworks started coming in?

There are some problems. We are trying to figure out if the artworks are original or duplicate. We need to authenticate them. If I am asserting that this is a Ramkinkar Baij work, I need an expert who would say the same. We need to test it in the laboratory as well and I had presented the idea to Air India. But they also have a system in place. The collection is huge and expensive, it will take time.



"In schools, the art teacher is considered a grade above the peon. I want to change that environment. We are also in talks with NCERT and the HRD ministry to organise summer workshops"

When we call ourselves a national organisation, we should have works from every state. So we are thinking of opening branches in Chandigarh, Odisha, Northeast. We intend to collect works of local artists"



WHY ADWAITA GADANAYAK

Before he took over as the Director-General of NGMA in December 2016, Adwaita Gadnayak headed School of Sculpture at Kalinga Institute in Bhubaneswar. Winner of the Lalit Kala Akademi National Award for Sculpture in 1993, his notable works include the Dandi March at Raj Ghat, a granite sculpture in London called Meditation,

and the centrepiece at the National Police Memorial in Delhi. Gadnayak has started several new initiatives at NGMA to connect masses with art under his tenure, and is overseeing a major facelift of the institution. Recently, NGMA was accused of censorship as actor Amol Palekar's speech at opening of an exhibition was cut short



"It is sad but today the market makes an artist. Whose works sell becomes an artist. That is why no one from the Northeast comes here... The system gets together presents an artist... Everything is a business

DIVYA A: Wasn't the disruption of actor and filmmaker Amol Palekar's speech at the National Gallery of Modern Art (NGMA), Mumbai, where he criticised the Ministry of Culture over 'disbanding of advisory committees' at the gallery's centres in Mumbai and Bengaluru, censorship? Had you been there, would you have handled it differently?

The particular event where it all happened, the NGMA had just given the space. The curators were external and the guest was also invited by them. Certainly, the NGMA has not done any kind of censorship. However, if I was in the situation, I would have allowed him to finish what he was saying and then explained the facts to him. After all, the NGMA is a space for artists, they should be allowed to say what they have to say.

DIVYA A: What is the role of these advisory committees and have they been disbanded?

The advisory committees have a three-year term. In Mumbai and Bengaluru, their terms ended on November 15, 2018, and in Delhi, on January 17. To appoint members to the advisory committee, we ask for recommendations from all over the country. The process takes time. People who claim that the advisory committees have been disbanded are not aware of this procedure. We cannot disband the committees. There is no such system because when an advisory committee's term comes to an end, the process to form a new one begins.

The curator of Prabhakar Barweji's show (who interrupted Palekar) is not from the NGMA. There was also a controversy about the space available for exhibitions. The NGMA has about 18,000 artworks in its collection—the country's best works, acquired since the NGMA came into existence in 1954. We want people living in Mumbai and Bengaluru to see these artworks. Many artists say that the NGMA exhibits these paintings only in Delhi. As a result, other centres don't get opportunities to showcase them. So, after consultations with the ministry, we have decided to dedicate some space at the NGMA for permanent display and another area for outside artists.

DIVYA A: What explains the delay in setting up the new advisory committees?

The term of the Delhi centre's advisory committee was the last to get over — on January 17. We were planning to appoint all the bodies together. Hence, the delay. But it has only been a month since the term has ended. We are collecting names of people and working towards forming the bodies.

DIVYA A: What about the charge that space allotted to independent artists to showcase their works at the NGMA is being curtailed?

In Mumbai, we had thought of giving space in the dome area to outside artists. But many of them suggested that aged people might find it difficult to climb the stairs. So we have not taken any decision regarding what needs to be done. But when the issue of curtailing allotted space was raised, we clarified that there was no such intention because the NGMA is for artists. Being an artist myself, I understand the hard work that we put in and when we don't get proper space and facilities to showcase our work, it is painful. Whenever I travel to Mumbai or other places, I talk to artists before taking any decision.

I have been extremely busy for the past six-seven months with the restoration of our building in Delhi. So I couldn't travel to Mumbai. But I want to first hold a meeting and then take decisions. The NGMA belongs to artists... So whatever decisions artists take will be carried out accordingly.

VANDANA KALRA: Artists often complain that the NGMA has not added any new works to its permanent collection. Has any new artwork been acquired during your tenure?

The storage facility at the NGMA is not very good. So I am upgrading that first. I want the public to see how we store artworks. But because of the ongoing restoration work, artworks have been moved. Once the storage system is ready, we will form a purchase committee similar to the advisory committee. There hasn't been a purchase committee in the two years of my tenure. When the purchase committee is set up, I plan to buy

'NGMA is a space for artists, they should be allowed to say what they have to say'

The NGMA Director General says Amol Palekar had every right to say what he wanted but he was misinformed, denies any move to curtail space to independent artists, explains why the gallery has not added new works, and talks about bringing art to children



National Gallery of Modern Art Director General Adwaita Gadnayak with Senior Assistant Editor Divya A in *The Indian Express* newsroom. Abhinav Saha

works, mostly of young artists, worth at least Rs 15-20 crore. And it's not about my two years at the NGMA. I have noticed that not many artworks have been acquired in the last 15 years. However, Subodh Gupta's work was added to the collection. I have seen how most of the works go to private and international galleries. So we have to fill up the gap quickly. In the next two to three months, the system will be ready.

VANDANA KALRA: Will the works of outside artists be exhibited in Delhi as the Mumbai centre has less space? Last year, Manu Parekh and Jitish Kalat had showcased their work there.

We will have a lot of space in Delhi as we are opening up the old building. Last year, we did fewer shows because the space was limited... Artists from across the country want to showcase their works in Delhi. It was former president S Radhakrishnan who had conceived a space like the NGMA. He planned it with artists such as D P Roy Choudhury, Dhanraj Bhagat, Ramkinkar Baij and Sankho Chaudhuri... After independence, our artists were working all over the country and they thought if exhibitions could be held in Delhi, a national movement could be started. At that same time, Guruji (Rabindranath Tagore) was planning something similar in the Shantiniketan. Prominent artists of the Swadeshi movement, Abanindranath Tagore and Nandalal Bose, thought that if a platform could be set up in Delhi, the world would get to know about Indian artists and their works and thoughts. But there was no such platform then. Even now, artists think that showcasing their works in Delhi is the ultimate achievement.

DIVYA A: At a time that the NGMA is planning to expand its influence to Kolkata and the Northeast, how are you trying to bring regional artists into the fold?

Ever since I joined the NGMA, I have been planning an outreach policy because it is mostly works of artists from Mumbai and Delhi that are collected. I belong to Odisha and I don't have artworks from the state. We also lack works of artists from the Northeast and Jammu & Kashmir. When we call ourselves a national organisation, we should have works from every state. So we are think-

ing of opening small branches in Chandigarh, Odisha and the Northeast. We intend to collect works of local artists and showcase them in the respective states and later move them to Delhi. But for this, we have to go to them because artists have high self-respect. The NGMA will visit these places, talk to local artists and acquire a space to host shows to exhibit these artworks. Slowly but steadily, there will be a system in place. If you visit any other country, you will find there are thousands of museums and galleries.

DEVYANI ONIAL: You spoke of galleries and museums abroad. But they have a lot to offer to people. Visitors can buy artworks from their shops. Do you think we can borrow something from their model?

I really like their style of functioning. Running (an art) museum is not a 10 am-to-5 pm job. The curator is like the mother of the institution. The curator should oversee everything — what is kept where and how. When we visit foreign galleries, we see how perfectly they function — display, lighting, security and modern technology. The building itself looks like a work of art. We are now working on our own building. To match them, we have to work hard and it will take us 10-20 years. We are also going to start a souvenir shop in Delhi where replicas of important works in our collection — such as of Ramkinkar Baij and Dhanraj Bhagat — will be stocked.

PAROMITA CHAKRABARTI: Art education in schools is very limited. Are you planning something for

children?

When students visit the National Museum in Delhi, their teachers show them works related to their syllabus like the Harappan civilisation. There is nothing like that at the NGMA. So I have planned a space where about 30 to 40 kids can come and have a dialogue with paintings, make drawings, sketches and even paint there. We have a variety of portraits at the NGMA. We can tell kids about them and the artists who painted them.

At schools, the art teacher is considered a grade above the peon. I want to change that environment. We had done a workshop with art teachers, where we asked them to meet the bigger artists and once in a while do a show with them... We are also in talks with the NCERT and HRD Ministry to organise summer workshops. We are building a *gurukul*-like space at the NGMA, similar to Shantiniketan, where senior artists will deliver lectures. When I was a student in London, I didn't even know for the first six months that what I was doing was a part of the course. We were visiting the Tate or the British Museum and I thought our teachers were taking us out for sight-seeing. It was only later that I got to know that these were classes.

Here we teach inside a classroom. The biggest teacher is nature.

PAROMITA CHAKRABARTI: Many private galleries are bringing out art books for children. Does the NGMA have similar plans?

There was an old bus at our Jaipur House building in Delhi, which I have

turned into a library. We are bringing out small art books. Some artists like A Ramachandranji have come on board. We will display all these books on the bus. The children will also like the experience of sitting in a bus and reading.

DIVYA A: You have a strong stand on differentiating between Indian art and Indian craft. You believe that craft is actually art.

We talk about stone carvings in the Ajanta and Ellora caves and the Konark temple. But when they were being carved, they were contemporary art. Now we have classified them differently. We find out how long these took to build and that's how we determine the worth.

When there is a wedding in a village in Odisha, everyone participates. They make artworks in clay, wood and cloth for the family of the bride and groom. But today, when we talk of art, we speak in monetary terms... Craftspeople in Odisha paint tribal art on their walls. I have seen helicopters in their work. What they see around them is reflected in their work. So it should be classified as contemporary.

We recently organised a show of aboriginal art from Australia. If I present works of local artists at the NGMA, other artists will ask why we have such shows. The current system is taking us away from our roots... When the British came and established art schools, they set the pattern and style for art education. There were rebellions in places like Shantiniketan where artists said they won't practise oil painting but do miniatures instead. But that assertion never spread. I think we need to bring them forward, and not relegate them to a side-craft status.

DIVYA A: How have commerce and market forces affected art in India?

It is sad but today the market makes an artist. Whose works sell becomes an artist. And that is the reason why no artists from the Northeast come here. We now have art houses which hold auctions. The whole system gets together and presents an artist whose works sell at a very high price. This has been happening for the past 10-15 years... Everything is a business and many have benefited from it.

SURBHI GUPTA: There is a huge gap between art and the common man,

and the dominant perspective is that art is difficult to comprehend. How do we bridge it?

Before joining the NGMA, I was at Kalinga University in Bhubaneswar. I made a sculpture, which was round. I asked my co-workers, who worked with cement and stone, what they thought of it. One remarked that it was a *roti*. A young artist student said that it looked like the moon. When I asked some professors, they said it was related to philosophy and lifecycle. A simple circle says many things. We often give a title to our artworks. All works at the NGMA have a title. The common man first reads the title. When one looks at an art, one should be stunned for a minute... The response to art should be instinctive. We have not ingrained this system in the common public. In our schools, we don't teach children how to visualise or feel art.

I think people from rural areas understand art better. Children from the rural areas first look at the art and then the title. I think urban people don't think much. That's why we organise art *addas*, where people and artists come together.

We can't tell the public how an artist was created. For that we need to organise workshops and seminars. Earlier we had a bus which used to go around and share artworks with people. But now we need more avenues of interaction. This will take time.

DIVYA A: Before joining, you wanted to turn Delhi into a global art hub. You wrote to the ministry as well in your vision statement. How often do you hold meetings with ministry officials regarding this matter?

We are in the planning stage. We have to bring craftspeople forward. But they don't have the technology or vision. I wish to provide exposure to craftspeople. We did this with tribal artists from Jharkhand. We built government studios, supplied material and even suggested designs to them. But after two-three months, they left. When I asked them why, they said, 'Here we can't use our thread for the *dhokra* craft (an ancient craft of non-ferrous metal casting) we do. In Jharkhand, we knew the trees, waterfall and the atmosphere. We are learning new things here but we are not able to create what we do.' We might ask the National Institute of Design or the National Institute of Fashion Technology to help these artists to develop their designs. But till they don't want it themselves, it won't happen.

DIVYA A: Is there any political or bureaucratic intervention at the NGMA?

The minister has given us a free rein. However, I don't understand the budget as I am an artist. This renovation has cost us a lot. And many things are in the pipeline. By next year, we will have a lot many new things.

VANDANA KALRA: There is talk that India will be officially participating at the Venice Biennale. Is the NGMA curating works for it?

We are in talks with the government, but nothing has been finalised. In fact, I attended a meeting on February 13. The NGMA is not curating, we are the commissioners. Kiran Nadar is curating it. Works from the NGMA and some artists will be sent. We are planning the budget. We are hoping that some businessmen would help us out. We will need about Rs 6-8 crore as the exhibition goes on for six months.

DIVYA A: You were planning to get Air India's art collection to the NGMA. Have the artworks started coming in?

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ACROSS THE AISLE



P CHIDAMBARAM

The CAG seems to have initially resisted the demand for redaction — there was no precedent, the CAG said — of the commercial details in the Rafale deal, but its feeble resistance dissolved following a stern letter from the government. The result is tables that make no sense and a report that is as opaque as the deal that the CAG was supposed to examine. The report is noteworthy not for what it said but for what it has not said

A government running for cover

THE RAFALE deal is unravelling faster than the BJP expected. If the government and the ruling party thought that they could keep the lid on the most opaque defence purchase in recent times, they were wrong, and they were rudely dragged out of their comfort zone. The credit goes, largely, to *The Hindu* and Mr N Ram, chairman of The Hindu Group's publishing company. However, there were — and are — other important players who deserve to be complimented for standing up to the enormous pressure of the government and its leaders.

NEW AND FLAWED DEAL

First, the facts that have tumbled out of the closet. It is now confirmed that the Rafale deal was a one-man show of Prime Minister Modi. Mr Modi was the choreographer, it was carefully orchestrated, and all important decisions were taken by the Prime Minister's Office (PMO).
2. The decision to scrap the UPA-era memorandum of understanding (MoU) was not taken first for cogent reasons. The decision to enter into a new deal was taken first and, since the earlier MoU was standing in the way, the MoU was scrapped.
3. Key players were kept out of the loop: the defence minister, the external affairs minister, the finance minister, the Air Force, the Defence Acquisition Council (DAC) and the Cabinet Committee on

Security (CCS).

4. On April 8, 2015, in Paris, the foreign secretary told the media that the Rafale negotiations were at an advanced stage among the two governments, Dassault and Hindustan Aeronautics Ltd (HAL), and Rafale was not on the agenda of talks between the prime minister of India and the president of France. Two days later, on April 10, after a one-on-one meeting between Mr Modi and Mr Hollande, the new deal was announced!

5. The new deal was indeed a new deal. Not 126 aircraft, but only 36 aircraft. Not at the earlier negotiated price, but a new price. Not the previously identified offset partner (HAL), but a new offset partner (a private company with no experience of manufacturing aircraft or aircraft parts). These decisions were taken at the meeting between the two leaders on April 10, not after negotiations between the two negotiating teams.

WAIVERS AND OMISSIONS GALORE

6. 'Payment security mechanism' for the Rs 60,000 crore that India would pay to the two suppliers, Dassault and MBDA, was thrown to the winds. There will be no sovereign guarantee, no bank guarantee, and not even an escrow account. All these waivers were directed by the PMO.

7. The mandatory anti-corruption clauses were omitted. There will be no clause against paying commissions, no clause against engaging agents, no pact on

integrity, and no access to the account books of the suppliers. These decisions too were taken by the PMO.

8. There was a powerful note of dissent by the three domain experts on the Indian Negotiating Team (INT) — Mr M P Singh, Adviser (Cost); Mr A R Sule, FM (Air); and Mr Rajeev Velma, JS & AM (Air). The eight-page dissent challenged the recommendations proposed by the other four members of the INT and tore into the numerous deviations and waivers that were being pushed by them.

COMPROMISED 'SUPREME' AUDIT

As each fact tumbled out, the government scrambled for cover. At first, the government tried to take refuge under the judgment of the Supreme Court but that gambit failed because the judgment itself made it clear that the Supreme Court had declined to examine the issues of pricing and the reduction in the number of aircraft. When Parliament protested, the government tried to silence Parliament — through its brute majority in the Lok Sabha and through encouraging peremptory adjournments of the Rajya Sabha.

The government may have hoped that the CAG's report will bail it out. The report was presented on the last day of the session of Parliament. Far from saving the government, the report exposed the fact that the government had tried and succeeded in muzzling the independent voice of the CAG, the supreme audit body

of the country. The report also debunked the government's claims on cheaper price and quicker delivery schedule.

The CAG seems to have initially resisted the demand for redaction — there was no precedent, the CAG said — of the commercial details, but its feeble resistance dissolved following a stern letter from the government. The result is tables that make no sense and a report that is as opaque as the deal that the CAG was supposed to examine. The report is noteworthy not for what it said but for what it has not said. The CAG did not comment

■ on the undue monetary gain to the suppliers due to amortisation on a smaller number of aircraft (36 against 126);

■ on the monetary risk to India because of the absence of any payment security mechanism;

■ on the probability of Dassault and MBDA adhering to the delivery schedule given the huge backlog of unexecuted contracts for Rafale aircraft;

■ on the perils of omitting the anti-corruption clauses, especially the non-access to the account books of the suppliers;

■ on the impact on the operational capability of the Air Force which will get fewer aircraft; and

■ on the powerful dissent note recorded by three members of the INT.

In the mist that envelops the Rafale deal, one thing is clear: the last word has not been said on the subject.

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FIFTH COLUMN



TAVLEEN SINGH

This is war, not terrorism

A QUESTION that has troubled me ever since Maulana Masood Azhar became one of the jihadist fiends we released in Kandahar 20 years ago is why he is still alive. Why was he along with the other monsters released in exchange for the passengers of IC 814 not killed immediately after they sped across the border into Pakistan? The military men who rule the Islamic Republic have never hesitated to admit that the jihadi groups they created were 'assets' in their unending war against India, so they would have no right to complain if we started destroying these assets by covert means. So why have we never done this? Could it be because we do not have the ability to do this? If not, why not?

When Narendra Modi became prime minister, he promised not to be as much of a wimp as the prime ministers before him. He used strong language to condemn their wimpy behaviour. After the attack on the military camp in Uri three years ago, there was that famous surgical strike. It was a tough immediate response. But, surely since then, there should have been time to build enough covert assets to conduct exactly the sort of war inside Pakistan that the Islamic Republic's military rulers have been conducting on Indian soil for far too long? It is because India has not yet learned to fight this new kind of war that evil men like Hafiz Saeed and Masood Azhar are still able to do what Jaish-e-Mohammad did last week in Pulwama.

These Pakistani 'assets' are religious fanatics who have a hatred for India that is visceral. In a memoir Masood Azhar wrote soon after being freed, he wrote of how the Indian Minister of External Affairs, Jaswant Singh, had offered him food and water on the flight that took him to Kandahar and how he had refused. "I did not want to sip even a drop of Indian water," he wrote. He drank plenty of it when he spent years in Indian jails and to this day it makes no sense why nobody quietly poisoned that water while he was a guest of the Government of India. The other man who we should have been dealt with similarly was Omar Sheikh who was released in the same exchange. He also spent years in Indian jails.

If we can have special courts to try rapists, why do we not have special military courts to try jihadists? In 'secular' Congress times, this was not a question anyone could have asked without being labelled a hawk because senior Congress leaders were not even prepared to accept that the 26/11 attack was a Pakistani military operation. A former chief minister released a book whose title said that the RSS was behind the attack on Mumbai. And, the man who is now Congress president told an American ambassador he was more worried about Hindu terrorism than the jihadist kind.

So we learned to live with what we continue to wrongly call 'Pakistani terrorism'.

It is not. It is war. When the surgical strike in 2016 was Modi's response to the Uri attack, there was hope that Modi understood the need to fight back hard. Surgical strikes have their place but why are we not using the same tactics that the Pakistani army is using against India? If it is because we have not created the assets to do this, then shame on us. We need these assets more than we need Rafale fighter jets because there is unlikely to be another old-style war on our benighted subcontinent. There will not be that kind of war because the Pakistani military has proven that it is unnecessary when they can continue to deploy 'assets' like Masood Azhar.

So what happens now? With India on the verge of a general election, there is little time to do more than pour the kind of platitudes we heard from senior political leaders after the Pulwama attack. 'The sacrifices of our brave security personnel shall not go in vain,' tweeted the Prime Minister and the Home Minister echoed this sentiment. The Governor of Jammu & Kashmir accepted that there had been a major intelligence failure.

But is there nothing more we can do? Since we are in a state of undeclared war with Pakistan, surely we can, at the very least, break diplomatic relations. Is there any point in having an embassy in Islamabad when Pakistan has made it so clear that it has no intention of calling off its cowardly, shameful war?

What must be done even more urgently is to prepare our soldiers and para-military forces to fight the kind of war that is being fought against us. Attacks like the one that killed 40 CRPF men last week are not acts of terrorism; they are acts of war.

Follow Tavleen Singh on Twitter @tavleen_singh

INSIDE TRACK



COOMI KAPOOR

FORTITUDE UNDER FIRE

ARUN JAITLEY is set to officially resume his duties as finance minister and head the BJP's publicity committee for the 2019 campaign. This, despite the fact that he had two serious illnesses last year. He underwent a kidney transplant after a renal failure and, within a few months, was diagnosed with sarcoma, a rare cancer of the connective tissue. Even opposition politicians are impressed with the fortitude and stoicism with which Jaitley has taken his ill-health in stride. Except for walking with a brace, he is almost back to normal, though he doesn't move around in crowded spaces. In the Sloan Kettering hospital in New York, he remained in touch with his duties from afar. Contrary to speculation, there was no need for either chemotherapy or radiation for his tumour since it was detected in the early stages. The malignant tissue near the knee was scooped out and tissue from the hip transplanted. The cancer probably predated the kidney surgery and it was, in fact, Jaitley himself who realised something was amiss when he noticed the skin bloating every time oil was rubbed on his leg.

DISUNITED FRONT

Mulayam Singh Yadav's speech in Parliament expressing the hope that Narendra Modi would return as Prime Minister stunned the Opposition. The Samajwadi Party founder appeared somewhat disoriented after his speech and remarked in awe to a journalist that the PM had twice mentioned him in his address to the House. There were other indications last week that the Opposition has yet to put up a united front. A furious Mamata Banerjee accosted Sonia Gandhi in Parliament's Central Hall, saying she would not forget that Congress MP Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury in his speech earlier that day accused her of involvement in the chit fund scams in West Bengal. Akhilesh Yadav is annoyed with the Congress for abstaining when the SP, joined by the TMC, BSP and TDP, protested in Parliament against the Yogi Adityanath government preventing Akhilesh from boarding a flight to Allahabad. The Congress asked its RJD ally Tejashwi Yadav to boycott the function of an English TV news channel, which, it feels, has a pronounced BJP slant, but the NCP's Praful Patel went anyway. He says he never

OUT OF MY MIND



MEGHNAD DESAI

THE PULWAMA episode is the endpoint of a certain basis for hope in repairing India-Pakistan relations. It was of course a terrorist attack which has all hallmarks of a standard tactic. Simple explosive devices detonated in crowded places inflict the maximum damage. This was the principle behind the 9/11 attack on the World Trade Center, in attacks on Brussels airport and in Paris during a music concert.

HISTORY HEADLINE

What happened in Panipat, 1761?



LAKSHMI SUBRAMANIAN

THE PLAINS of Panipat, well known as a site of decisive military action in India's recorded history, are back in the news. This time, preparations are afoot for a different battle. There is the blistering call for a sustained crusade against the enemy, and to reverse the slide to enslavement — alluding to the fact, as some historians have maintained, that it was after 1761 when the Marathas, one of the contenders in the Third Battle of Panipat, became a spent force, that the English East India Company emerged from the margins, drawing strength from the treasures of Bengal, to emerge as the masters of Hindustan.

So who was the enemy in 1761? Was there an enemy in the singular? Can we find parallels in the 18th century for the times we live in? What was the battle all about? And what were its immediate consequences?

The 18th century was a period of profound change in the Indian subcontinent as the Mughal Empire gave way to regional powers, many of whom, like the Marathas, aspired to, and almost achieved, imperial status. The century saw an array of social movements, organised around religion, community articulations, and agrarian expansion, often crystallising into coherent political entities. It was a period made for political adventurism, with shifting alliances making any political calculation virtually impossible.

In this cauldron was a heady mix of religious invocation that did not always correspond to the cleavages that we assume to exist between Hindus and Muslims. In terms of realpolitik, what mattered was the steady growth of Maratha power northward, in the form of both territorial control as well as mediation in matters of deciding succession in regional states. Maratha operations were not especially well received — for example, by Jat ruler Surajmal.

The Maratha push to the north encountered the equally resolute push from the Afghan Durrani chief into the Punjab and North India, the result being a bloody campaign fought on the plains of Panipat. The Durrani chief was able to enlist the support of several malcontents (the Rohilla chief, the Nawab of Awadh) and



Haryana CM M L Khattar with Maharashtra CM Devendra Fadnis at an event, where he called Third Battle of Panipat biggest link between their states. Express

most impressively, of the warrior ascetics, the Naga sanyasis and Gosains, whose insane gallantry and casual nakedness threw the Afghan soldiers off-kilter!

The events leading to the final encounter between the Afghan and Marathas make for compelling reading. One thing was certain though: the fragility of alliances and the overriding greed for immediate gain undercut possibilities of any long-term balancing of imperial aspirations with those of local powerholders.

The Durrani Afghan chief was barely interested in the crown of Hindustan and wanted above all to keep the Punjab as his milch cow, while the Marathas were keen to control Delhi affairs as well as to restrain other contenders — being prepared for untenable agreements, and remaining impervious to any sort of counsel.

What distinguished Maratha politics was its fragmentation and the overriding rivalry between various sardars, the case of Malhar Rao Holkar and his reliance on Rohilla leader Najib Khan being an instance in point. The precarity of hastily conceived alliances, the extreme cynicism that accompanied all political and diplomatic engagements, blurred distinctions between friend and foe. Therefore, when the two contenders finally met in Panipat, the stage was set for confusion, extraordinary feats of courage, and equally despairing episodes of sheer opportunism.

The final act in the drama, however, was not predictable. With gifted commanders like Sadashiv Rao Bhau, with the select forces of Vishwas Rao, the Peshwa's son, marching towards North India with Ibrahim Gardi, a French-trained Muslim general who had worked for the Nizam of Hyderabad, it seemed the Marathas would take the honours. Only a last-

minute constellation of adverse weather conditions, diplomatic isolation, want of provisions, and the disagreement between the Maratha sardars strained the Maratha forces.

Abdali moved in stealthily, squeezing the line of supplies for the Marathas, and outwitting them in what was essentially a battle of attrition. Neither side could goad the other into firing the first salvo until the starving Maratha camp finally responded, abandoning well thought-out military plans. The struggle and carnage that followed lasted seven hours — by which time some of the great commanders had died, leaving the Peshwa in Poona to decode what remains in history a rare epistle carried by a banker: "two pearls dissolved, twenty-five gold mohurs have been lost, and of the silver and the copper the total cannot be cast up".

It is, of course, tempting to read parallels and prophesies, especially when the contemporary political scene seems to have resemblances to cynical power politics. What was certain then was that the Battle of Panipat temporarily halted the Maratha advance, and enabled the East India Company to maintain a low profile for a while, consolidate its early gains in Bengal, and subsequently make a strong bid for supremacy in the subcontinent.

What is certain now is that the stakes are high, the narrative overcharged with religious symbols, while on the ground, all contenders have to grapple with the realities of power and go beyond the equations of caste, community, and the bazaar.

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Another chapter in a perennial war

That said, what are the options for India? Pakistan is not a normal State. It has a civilian government which off and on during its history has been ostensibly elected on democratic principles. There is an army establishment which has been the backbone of stability in Pakistan for longer than it has been a democracy. Ever since the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan created, with American financial and military help, the Islamist terrorist movement, Pakistan has had a third pillar of authority, the Islamist terrorist armies.

Terrorism is something very difficult to counter and to eliminate. This is not just India's problem. Across the world, developed and emerging countries have failed to eliminate it forever. The US has

been engaged in a futile war for 15 years in Afghanistan and is now withdrawing defeated though not openly admitting it. Muslim-majority countries as much as non-Muslim ones have been subjected to Islamist terrorism. Algeria, Bangladesh, Malaysia have been hit. Boko Haram has terrorised Nigeria for decades now and is spreading to Sudan. No other ideological movement, neither Bolshevism nor Anarchism, has had the global reach which Islamist terrorism has, but like the older ideological movements, it is a global movement and powered by cybernetics and modern weaponry extremely deadly.

India has been at the forefront of the fight against terrorism but its own inter-

ests are not well served by the world at large. The UN system is crippled by the veto enjoyed by the five permanent members. China is not interested in fighting terrorism except at home. Russia is also aiding terrorism in Syria so is hopelessly compromised. Words of support from these two are worthless. India has to treat the partners in the fight against terrorism as fair-weather friends who will be no help at all.

So what is to be done? It is not a case of repeating the Uri surgical strike. That was a skirmish between two armies. Terrorist movements exist outside that domain. For India to cross the border and attack guerrilla groups will be a violation of international law. That may not seem so bad to

most Indians. But if such an attack across the border is carried out, India will have to be ready for a war of some duration with Pakistan.

India has won three out of four wars against Pakistan. The 1948 war can be called unfinished. But the major difference now is that both are nuclear powers. Thus any military engagement has to have a strictly limited aim which can be realised and then India can unilaterally end the war. This is tricky and cannot be done in a hurry and certainly not while Indian blood is boiling. This time the strike has not only to be surgical but it has to be key-hole surgery, precise, subtle and effective.

There should be no haste. Success is vital.

Twitter before Parliament

It should have proactively engaged with Indian lawmakers

The summoning of Twitter Chief Executive Officer Jack Dorsey by the Parliamentary Committee on Information Technology to discuss the "safeguarding of citizens' rights on the social media platform" has interesting ramifications. At one level, it is de facto acknowledgement of the importance of social media as a key channel for political messaging. At the same time, it is also an example of the elected representatives of a democratic nation emphasising the sovereignty of local laws while dealing with a multinational corporation (MNC). There is no doubt that social media is a force multiplier during contemporary political campaigns. Twitter is a

remarkable platform for publicly showcasing political ideologies. It is used by all sorts of political formations for the dissemination of news, fake news, and opinions favouring their respective causes, making it an arena for deploying argument and counter-argument.

In that sense, social media platforms are open pulpits and there must indeed be a level playing field in terms of allowing the free expression of different points of view, subject to basic limits being placed on violent threats and hate speech. So, the right wing complaining about possible bias in the moderation of Twitter accounts has to be taken seriously. However, it may well also be true that Twitter is responding even-

handedly, as it insists it is, in removing bots and abusive posters, and that the right wing simply has a numeric preponderance in terms of abusive posters.

The paradox arises in that social media platform such as Twitter are public spaces that happen to be privately-owned. They are curated by their owners who happen to be MNCs driven by the profit motive, rather than by altruism or any specific political ideology. Twitter, like Facebook and Google, operates in India in the hope of gaining traction and garnering revenues in one of the world's largest internet markets. And, like other multinationals, social media corporations must abide by local laws in every nation where they operate.

It is especially important for the Indian Parliament to assert its sovereignty in this instance since there is extreme sensitivity about this subject because of the country's colonial history. The British East India

Company was, after all, a private company that entered the subcontinent looking for profits. There have been countless instances through the colonial period and even later when MNCs have manipulated political systems across the world in the hope of maximising profit. Indeed, MNCs have provoked coups and backed dictatorships in Africa and Latin America to safeguard their commercial interests. Given the direct impact of social media on politics, it is understandable that there is a great deal of nervousness about possible bias on the part of Twitter.

A third, and so far unstated, strand in this narrative is the enormous investment of resources by all sides, which makes it difficult to contemplate drastic action. The political establishment cannot afford to simply eschew social media and ban Twitter. Every political party has a social media wing with a substantial budget and every party relies on its social media strategy to energise the

base and to deliver votes.

For its part, while Twitter doesn't disclose national numbers, its India base is estimated to be 30-50 million active users. This makes it a potentially huge market and, indeed, Twitter admits it hopes to generate significant revenue from political advertisements as the election campaign heats up. Of course, Facebook and Google are also hoping to pick up slices of the campaign pie.

This creates an uneasy situation of mutual dependency. Twitter would be loath to abandon India and the politicians would also be unhappy if it does leave. That is why it is all the more surprising that Twitter would delay participating in the Parliamentary Committee's process. It is also quite surprising that none of its India-based officials is empowered to answer for it before the Parliamentary Committee. To that extent, it has been a public relations fiasco on Twitter's part.

Putting the EVM controversy to rest

Doubts about the reliability of electronic voting machines will continue unless election results obtained through EVMs and voter-verified paper trails are matched through statistically rigorous tests



Election staff check electronic voting machines at a distribution centre. Boosting the voter's confidence in the safety of EVMs is as important as making the machines tamper-proof

ATANU BISWAS

The 2006 Emmy-nominated documentary *Hacking Democracy* investigated anomalies and irregularities in electronic voting systems, particularly those made by Diebold Election Systems, during the years 2000-04 in the United States, especially in Florida. However, Diebold President David Byrd suggested that the documentary was "replete with material examples of inaccurate reporting".

Most voters, like me, are technologically not knowledgeable enough to understand the security of electronic voting machines (EVMs), and would depend either on institutions or political parties to make up their minds in such a delicate issue. The Election Commission of India (ECI) has consistently maintained that EVMs in India are standalone devices not connected to any network, that the software is written onto a one-time programmable chip, and that these EVMs cannot be tampered with. The courts also have ruled in favour of the machines quite a few times. However, most major political parties have raised their voice against EVMs at some point or the other.

The EVM Hackathon Challenge organised by the ECI in June 2017 was, in fact, a litmus test for EVMs, but no expert from any political party could hack the machine. However, such allegations are not good advertisements for democracy. And the "common man" remains utterly confused. Can this be stopped by using scientific evidence?

Now that we are almost into the era of 100 per cent Voter Verifiable Paper Audit Trails (VVPATs) in all elections, VVPATs can be used for macro-level verification as well. Some statistical application, specifically efficient sampling and probability calculations, might be enough to prove that EVMs have not been tampered with. In a Press Note dated May 20, 2017, the ECI stated: "The Commission will count VVPAT slips up to a definite percentage, which will be determined by the Commission."

In the past, there was speculation about the possibility

of a five per cent ceiling on counting VVPAT trails, and also mandatory counting of 5-14 polling stations in each constituency. There has even been speculation to the effect that 10-25 per cent of VVPAT slips would be counted manually. But, that is a huge proportion. Statistically, we really do not need such a large number of paper trails to be counted and tallied with EVM results. A much smaller number of VVPAT slips would be more than enough to ensure that EVMs have not been tampered with.

Statistical applications such as efficient sampling and probability calculations may be enough to prove that EVMs have not been tampered with

design and techniques are followed in selecting the sample.

For example, if only two per cent of EVMs are tampered with, such a small sample size with proper sampling methodology will be able to identify a tampered EVM with 97.5 per cent probability. Let us try to understand how such a small sample size would work.

About 18 lakh EVMs are used all over India across 543 Lok Sabha constituencies. To check whether rice is properly boiled while cooking, we use a spoon to make the grains homogeneous in the rice pot, and then test only a few grains. That is sampling, enough to judge whether the rice is nicely boiled, and the technique can be used to identify possible tampering in the case of EVMs as well. However, "random" selection of EVMs should be executed by eminent experts in sampling, who could be appointed *a priori* for this job by an appropriate authority.

Some technical issues, such as the possibility of stratified sampling, selection of strata and determination of sample size within each stratum, should also be fixed *a priori*. For example, assuming that only 0.1 per cent of EVMs are tampered with, a sampling of one per cent will almost certainly identify at least one mismatch. If, instead, only 0.3 per cent of EVMs are sampled in this case, a mismatch can be identified with a probability more than 99.5 per cent.

Alternatively, we may prefer to assess the EVMs of each constituency separately, depending on its political and social nature. On average, a little over 3,300 EVMs per constituency are used in India, and the number of EVMs for which VVPATs are tallied should depend on the level of vulnerability and level of precision we need. For example, if we want to identify a "20 per cent EVM tampering" scenario in a constituency with 95 per cent probability, we would need to count VVPATs in 14 machines. On the other hand, a "three per cent tampering" scenario can be detected with 99 per cent probability with a sample size of 99 per constituency.

In both cases, nearly three EVMs that have been tampered with are expected to be found in each constituency. In any case, we would count the VVPATs of a very small proportion of EVMs, and yet that would provide enough scientific evidence. Also, there might be different levels of allegations of EVM tampering in different parts of the country, which might be an additional input for the formation of strata.

A "no mismatch" in the sampled EVMs in such a set-up might be very strong scientific evidence against the possibility of EVM tampering. Voters may also find it helpful to keep their faith in EVMs. Unless EVMs are put through such a clear scientific *agni pariksha*, grumbling about them will continue. Bolstering the common man's confidence in the safety of the EVMs is no less important than making the EVMs themselves safe, if not more important.

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Why Chinese tourists matter

GAUTAM BAMBAWALE

India's large and growing trade deficit with China has agitated our policymakers over the past decade. All efforts to bridge the trade gap or even reduce it have so far come to naught. Our efforts to export more basmati and non-basmati rice, sugar, cotton, mangoes, grapes, pomegranate and sapota have not dented the ballooning deficit. Our attempts to sell software and pharmaceuticals to the Middle Kingdom have run into elaborate Chinese non-tariff barriers. Our deficit with China constitutes the bulk of our global trade deficit.

India's expanding trade deficit is dictated by the composition of our trade with China. When we import every kind of finished, value-added product — including iron and steel, electronics, electricals, power equipment and mobile handsets — no amount of pro-active effort by our exporting community to boost the sales of primary produce to China will narrow the deficit. This is dictated by the nature of our imports and exports.

The key to balancing our deficit with China is not to look at the balance of trade, but instead to focus on the Invisibles part of our bilateral balance of payments. India needs to boost the number of inbound Chinese tourists to our country. We need to do this quickly. We need to do this on a large scale. We need to do this with a game plan in mind.

In 2018, Chinese tourists made 150 million trips abroad. In that same year, India received just 250,000 tourists from China. India needs to work on attracting a sizeable chunk of the large numbers of Chinese nationals who travel outside their country. Even one per cent of this number works out to a whopping 1.5 million Chinese visitors to India. This enhanced tourist inflow would help balance our payments with China on the current account. This is where India needs to focus its efforts.

We must make a herculean effort in the coming two years on this score. It needs to be a public-private effort, where the central government, the state governments and our privately-owned-and-run tourism industry pool all their resources and work in tandem.

An excellent start in this direction was made in August 2018, when Tourism Minister KJ Alphonse conducted a series of tourism road

shows in four major Chinese cities. Our efforts cannot end there. India must expand the size of the India Tourist Office in Beijing and put more resources at its disposal. We need to appoint a top-of-the-line strategic consultant in China to aid us in drawing up a comprehensive tourism development plan. This should be backed up by hiring an excellent PR firm to help us get our message of "Incredible India" out to the Chinese audience.

This message needs to be taken down from the metropolitan cities of China to the tier-2 and tier-3 cities too, since many of the potential tourists live there. Advertising campaigns, bus-wrap projects as well as on-line blitzes will be necessary.

While we already have tourism material in the Chinese language and India Tourism also boasts a Chinese language website, surely we can make some incredible advertising with a well-known Chinese film or sports star as the face of our campaign in China. Perhaps, Aamir Khan (whose films are loved by Chinese audiences) and Jackie Chan could be made brand ambassadors for India.

It is critical for our promotion efforts to be intense, ongoing and continuous, focused on our end goal and credible. If we are able to bring such single-mindedness to bear, we can achieve the objective of attracting significant Chinese tourism to India.

Many Chinese tourists, but not all, prefer to travel in groups, and special catering may be necessary in terms of accommodation, food and local transportation. India's Buddhist trail is sure to be especially attractive, but so will our beaches, our mountains, our forests, and our historical sites. We have the capacity to entertain many more tourists from across our northern borders. What is required is a concerted push and a special effort to get our message across to them. Such an effort could see up to 1.5 million Chinese tourists visiting India by 2020.

Not merely will this help us achieve all our targets for the tourism sector, but it will also provide gainful employment to many of our countrymen and women, while at the same time balancing out our trade deficit with China.

The writer is a former Indian Ambassador to China. He is currently Distinguished Professor at Symbiosis International (Deemed University). The views are personal

▶ OTHER VIEWS

CAG report does not allay all doubts about Rafale deal

Clearly, defence acquisition processes require reforms and streamlining

The price-redacted audit report on the process to acquire 36 Rafale fighter jets is unlikely to bring closure to the controversy over the deal. The Modi government can draw comfort from the fact that the CAG report concludes that the 2016 agreement is slightly better in terms of both pricing and delivery than what was under negotiation in 2007 during the UPA regime. However, the report does not allay all doubts. Pegged at 2.86 per cent, the price advantage in the contract over the 2007 offer is marginal. It is a far cry from the nine per cent saving claimed by the government. The delivery schedule is only one month sooner than the estimated outer limit in the earlier process.

The original issue of bringing down the total acquisition from 126 to 36 aircraft does not draw much comment. Also, the huge outgo on the India-Specific Enhancements (ISEs), despite the final figure being projected as a 17 per cent saving on the aligned offer, is something that requires deeper examination. Dassault was not the lowest bidder in the earlier process, and its technical bid had been rejected. Perhaps, this presented an opportunity to the present regime to reopen the entire process to buy Medium Multi-Role Combat Aircraft



(MMRCA) and invite fresh bids. The CAG identifies as a major problem the fact that the technical requirements are too narrowly defined for most vendors to comply with. The message from the report is that defence acquisition processes require reforms and streamlining.

The Hindu, February 15

The nation mourns

This moment calls for wisdom, foresight

The vehicle-bomb suicide attack on a CRPF convoy near Awantipora on Thursday is the deadliest ever terror strike against security forces in three decades of militancy in Kashmir. The loss of so many security personnel while on duty will be mourned across the country. Jaish-e-Mohammed, which works out of Pakistan under the leadership of Masood Azhar, has claimed responsibility for the attack. The route taken by the 78 vehicles with more than 2,500 jawans on Thursday is used by troop convoys travelling up from Jammu to camps in Srinagar. As it is the only highway, their movement is no secret. But as Thursday's attack has revealed, a bomber in a vehicle loaded with explosives

just has to wait for his opportunity.

Whether Jaish had advance information, and how the bomber slipped through road opening parties that must clear and secure the route, is now a question for investigators to probe. For now, however, this moment calls for sobriety and wisdom. With parliamentary elections only weeks away, the timing of the attack is a fraught one. But the nation would be better served if the BJP-led NDA government at the Centre, and all political parties, including those in the Valley, pause and reflect on the grave juncture in Kashmir in which this devastating attack has come.

The Indian Express, February 15

SBI chief revives an old idea

But little progress on unified regulator

Rajnish Kumar, the chairman of State Bank of India, has tried to stir a debate on that old chestnut: The need for a unified regulator in the financial services industry. On the face of it, the concept of a unified regulator appears to be very seductive. The United Kingdom experimented with a single regulator, the Financial Services Authority, between 2001 and 2013. It has since been split into two agencies.

Regulators in India have balked at the idea, fearing invasion of their turf and the loss of independence to a super regulator. In 2013, the BN Srikrishna committee, which had been asked to suggest financial-sector legislative reforms, had examined the idea closely. The commit-

tee had proposed the formation of a super regulator with the merger of four regulators: The Securities and Exchange Board of India, Forward Markets Commission, Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority, and the Pension Fund Regulatory and Development Authority. While the oldest regulator, the Reserve Bank of India, would continue to operate independently, the committee suggested that its role ought to be modified to initially cover the three areas of monetary policy, banking supervision and payment systems. Mr Kumar's latest push for a debate on the issue opens up the scope of tearing down the walls of regulation.

The Telegraph, February 15

How to fix a school? By fixing the leader

Indian School Leaders Institute, a Mumbai-based initiative, aims to motivate leaders to transform a failing institution into a successful one

ANJULI BHARGAVA
New Delhi, 16 February

The fate of 100 young girls hung by a thread when the head of the Telangana Welfare Society in the state's Ranga Reddy district felt that the residential school which it ran may as well be shut down.

Not only were the results abysmal — the students were failing most of the external examinations — the school itself was in a decrepit condition. Poor hygiene and the infestation of mosquitoes on the grounds meant that students were often sick. The problems of the Telangana Social Welfare Residential School, Gowlidoddi, looked insurmountable.

Still, the head of the Society made one last attempt to revive the school. He brought in a new school leader and sought the assistance of the Indian School Leaders Institute (ISLI), a Mumbai-based initiative. ISLI began a two-year School Improvement Development Plan with the new head. The Society also agreed to pump in more resources to improve the school's basic infra-

structure.

The new principal, assisted by ISLI, adopted a painstakingly detailed data-driven reform plan — class by class and lesson by lesson. For example, if in a class, 17 students got something right and 3 did not, the teacher was asked to focus on the three who erred. But if in a class of 20, 17 got an answer wrong and 3 got it right, the principal was to focus on the teacher.

Two years later, the change was dramatic. In 2017-18, the school's pass rate for the Class 12 board examinations rose to 98 per cent — up from 65 per cent before the reform. As many as 55 girls joined the MBBS/BBS programme, 14 joined ayurveda and homeopathy courses, and 10 enrolled in chartered accountancy or other finance courses.

Two girls made it to the Azim Premji University in Bengaluru and three to the Delhi University — both game changers for students who were mostly first-generation learners.

Thanks to the efforts of ISLI and the new principal, the Telangana Social Welfare Residential School had been saved



Gray Matters India (GMI), which assesses low-cost private schools in India, has found that ISLI schools have seen a 20.5 per cent improvement in the number of students performing better than the GMI Average

from closure.

Not far away, R Prashanthi, a principal in a school in Telangana's Siddipet district, was yet another cog in the public-education wheel until she underwent ISLI's City Fellowship programme in 2015.

Prashanthi learnt how to develop school improvement plans, design academic calendars, and expand the scope of activities for a more holistic development of students. She also learnt how to train teachers in "flipped pedagogy",

where students are the active participants and the teachers are the facilitators.

The personal transformation of Prashanthi is a story in itself. She trained her own teachers so successfully that she was entrusted with the training of teachers in six other schools. Today, she is the controller of examinations and training for 267 schools in the district — a star of sorts.

The two examples above — one where a failing institution was turned around, and the other

where a star was identified in a system that consistently fails to recognise merit — illustrate why ISLI came into being and what can be achieved if the school leader is motivated.

Set up in 2013, ISLI is the brainchild of three key people in India's education space. Shaheen Mistry (Teach for India), Vandana Goyal, (then CEO of Akanksha Foundation) and Ashish Dhawan (founder, Central Square Foundation) came together when they spotted the gap in the system

and realised a motivated school leader can transform a failing school into a successful one.

"At that time, there was a lot of conversation about teacher quality, but conversations about school leadership quality were limited. It was to bridge this gap that we decided to set up ISLI," explains Dhawan.

Moreover, global research has found that school leadership accounts for a quarter of the school's impact on student learning. The National Centre for School Leadership (NCSL) was set up in 2012 to focus on this need in the public education system, but there was no one addressing this in the case of private schools.

ISLI has two main interventions: the City Fellowship and a programme to work with state governments. The City Fellowship, which is an urban initiative, is one where ISLI staff work closely with a school leader for two years.

Currently operating in Mumbai, Pune, Hyderabad and Bengaluru, the programme involves ISLI running workshops every 4 to 6 weeks, where the principal is trained to raise their expectations from students (instead of writing them off), develop a vision for the school, and motivate teachers.

Leaders learn to make academic calendars, train teachers and maximise what the school

offers. ISLI is medium- and board-agnostic. Typically, training is customised depending on the region and the school. And there is every indication that ISLI's efforts are paying off.

Gray Matters India (GMI), which assesses low-cost private schools in India, have found that ISLI schools have seen a 20.5 per cent improvement in the number of students performing better than the GMI Average.

ISLI has also started working with state governments. A pilot project was recently launched in Tamil Nadu, where it is working with 1,400 school principals in the educationally backward district of Krishnagiri. In 2019, it will work with 117 government schools in Pune's Pimpri Chinchwad district over a period of three years.

Gayatri Lobo, CEO of ISLI, who quit a career in consulting, moved into education in 2009, and then joined the body in 2017, is focused on expanding its reach.

Plans are afoot to reach 16,000 government school leaders by 2020. A model is being developed to "virtually" reach 40,000 school leaders.

With over 400,000 low-cost private schools and private-aided schools and over a million government schools across the country, ISLI clearly has its work cut out.

Air Force shows off strike power at Vayu Shakti



Firepower demonstration of an Indian Air Force fighter plane during the 'Vayu Shakti-2019' at Pokhran, Rajasthan, on Saturday

PHOTO: PTI

AJAI SHUKLA
Pokhran, (Rajasthan), 16 February

On Saturday, two days after the Pakistan-based Jaish-e-Mohammad (JeM) terrorist group orchestrated a deadly suicide car bombing in Kashmir that killed some 40 troopers from the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF), 137 aircraft from the Indian Air Force (IAF) struck ground targets 200 kilometres due south of Bahawalpur, the headquarters of the JeM.

This was not retaliation. The targets struck were well inside India, in the Pokhran Field Firing Range. This was a pre-planned exercise called Vayu Shakti, which the IAF carries out once every three years, to demonstrate it is equipped, rehearsed and ready for action. It has been rehearsing Exercise Vayu Shakti for almost a month.

"Today we will display the way we would influence events on the ground (in a war). We are showcasing our ability to hit hard, hit fast and hit with precision, hit during day, hit during night and hit under adverse weather conditions through our autonomous bombing capability," said IAF chief, Air Chief Marshal B S Dhanoa, while inaugurating the demonstration.

Like every year, dozens of diplomats, mostly foreign military officers posted in embassies in New Delhi, were flown out to Pokhran in an IAF aircraft and shown the display. There were no diplomats from Pakistan or China — the two countries to whom New Delhi would most like to send out messages of operational readiness.

Business Standard learnt diplomats from these two countries were not issued invitations to the demonstration.

Exercise Vayu Shakti was mostly about displaying the IAF's ability to strike targets on the

ground — such as enemy convoys and tanks, radar stations, railway yards and military headquarters. The other important dimension of air power, air-to-air combat, had been practiced a few months ago in a large IAF exercise called Gagan Shakti.

Dhanoa did not miss the opportunity to correlate Vayu Shakti with the recent events in Kashmir.

"While wars are few and far between, we have an ever present sub-conventional threat as the enemy knows he cannot defeat us in a conventional conflict. So today we showcase our ability to punish, our ability to insert and extricate our troops from hostile territories," he said.

This was demonstrated in spectacular fashion, with Dhanoa himself arriving in a C-130 special forces aircraft that landed right in front of the spectators on a makeshift airstrip barely 800 metres long. The C-130 is built for inserting commandoes into enemy territory using makeshift airstrips.

Thereafter, the Pokhran Ranges resonated with explosions as each of the IAF's fighter aircraft struck a variety of simulated targets with unerring accuracy. For the first time, the MiG-29UPG — an air-to-air fighter that has now been upgraded to a multi-role aircraft — showcased its new ground strike capability.

Also featuring for the first time was the swing role capability of the Tejas fighter, which fired a missile at an enemy aircraft and also struck a ground target in the same mission. The indigenous Akash missile also engaged and directly hit a simulated aircraft target by night.

Exercise Vayu Shakti is conducted once every three years. This firepower demonstration was earlier conducted at the Tilpat Ranges outside Delhi. But, after 1989, it was shifted to Pokhran Ranges where more land is available.

'New India' won't spare those who target our soldiers, says PM Modi

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
Dhule (Maharashtra)/Jagdalpur (Chhattisgarh), 16 February

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday said the grief caused by the Pulwama terror attack would be avenged. He said this was a "new India" that would not tolerate those who provide guns and bombs to target security personnel.

Addressing a public meeting after inaugurating several development projects in north Maharashtra, he said anger over the assault in Jammu and Kashmir that claimed the lives of 40 CRPF jawans was palpable in the country.

"I have come here at a time when there is anger and eyes are moist. I salute the brave soldiers and the mothers who gave birth to them," he said. "Apart from the government, as citizens of the country, it is our responsibility to stand by the families. This is the time for mourning. "I want to assure each family who lost their loved one that each drop of tear will be avenged (aasu ka pura pura jawab liya jayega)."

The PM also said, "Ours is a new India with new methods and policies, and the world will experience this now. Those who spray bullets or those who provide guns and bombs to target our soldiers, will not be spared. We will not allow them to sleep in peace," Modi asserted.

The prime minister said his government has worked tirelessly for the welfare of farmers and pointed to the recent announcement of providing ₹6,000 annually directly into the bank accounts of agriculturalists having less than five acres of land.

Rahul rakes up Ambani, Mallya

Congress president Rahul Gandhi on Saturday hit out at the Modi government, saying that while it waived loans worth



(From left) Prime Minister Narendra Modi hands over a key to a beneficiary of the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana, in Yavatmal, Maharashtra, on Saturday, along with Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnis. Congress President Rahul Gandhi, Chhattisgarh Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel and other senior Congress leaders during a rally in Bastar, Chhattisgarh, on Saturday

PHOTOS: PTI

Bolton calls Doval, China also condemns attack

US National Security Advisor John Bolton telephoned Indian counterpart Ajit Doval on Friday night to express his outrage over the terrorist attack by a Pakistan-based group of Islamic extremists on Thursday in Kashmir, according to a statement from India's foreign ministry. The statement said the two vowed to work together to ensure Pakistan ceases to be a safe

haven for terrorist organisations. Chinese State Councilor and Foreign Minister Wang Yi on Saturday also condemned the suicide attack in which at least 40 CRPF personnel were killed, saying Beijing "resolutely opposes" all forms of terrorism and countries in the region should enhance cooperation and jointly address the threat of posed by it. PTI

"Lakhs and crores of rupees have been given to the people like Anil Ambani, Nirav Modi, Mehul Choksi, Vijay Mallya and Lalit Modi, but farmers will get just ₹3.50 per day," he said, referring to the Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi Scheme, under which farmers cultivating up to two hectares (five acres) will get direct cash support of ₹6,000 annually.

"When the announcement of ₹6,000 for farmers was made in the Union Budget, BJP MPs were thumping their desks in Lok Sabha... Is this a joke?" he asked.

He promised that if the Congress was voted to power after the 2019 Lok Sabha polls, a minimum income guarantee would be provided to the poor and the money would be deposited directly into their bank accounts.

NGT hits out at TN govt for failing to clean water bodies

AASHISH ARYAN
New Delhi, 16 February

The principal Bench of the National Green Tribunal (NGT) has come down heavily on the Tamil Nadu government for failing to clean its water bodies, particularly the Cooum and Adayar rivers, and the Buckingham canal, despite repeated reminders.

The increasing pollution in

these three water bodies has been owing to "repeated failure of the state of Tamil Nadu in its duties," said a three-member Bench led by Chairman Justice Adarsh Goel.

The Bench said it was tentatively inclined to fining the state government ₹100 crore for not being able to act on its assurances about cleaning the water bodies. But, it would wait for a report from an expert committee to assess the exact quantum of damage.

"Before taking a final view, a joint committee comprising representatives of the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB), Indian Institute of Sciences-Bangalore, Madras School of Economics, National Environmental Engineering Research Institute (NEERI), and the State Pollution Control Board

may assess the causes and quantum of damage to the environment as well as further steps required for restoration of the environment which are not covered in the action plan," the Bench said.

The NGT has also directed the chief secretary of the state to be present on the next date of hearing on April 23. "We direct the chief secretary to be ready with the progress report

in the present matter as well which is impacting a large number of inhabitants living in the catchments of these river systems," the NGT said.

On the last date of hearing in the matter, the NGT had said it was not satisfied by the action taken report submitted by the state and asked Tamil Nadu as to why it should not be asked to submit a performance guarantee of ₹10 crore.

In a trend reversal, jewellers shift to handcrafted designs



Fewer options and inability to correct design errors are some of the major drawbacks of machine-made jewellery

DILIP KUMAR JHA
Mumbai, 16 February

Machines replaced human hands in the manufacturing of gold jewellery a few decades back. The need, back then, was to cut costs, and cater to the rising popularity of machine designs in chains, earrings and bangles. Handcrafted designs were blended with machine-made ones. And soon, machine-made ornaments expanded their share in the overall jewellery sales to 25-30 per cent, from less than 5 per cent.

However, after revolutionising the jewellery industry through machine-made designs, jewellers are going back to their roots of traditional handcrafted manufac-

ing of gold and diamond ornaments to appease customers for premiums.

This move can be seen as a result of combination of factors. One, most jewellers are voluntarily opting for hallmark jewellery. Second, the retail gold price is in sync with the indicative price announced daily by the Indian Bullion and Jewellers Association for retailers.

Therefore, the major differentiation is the design. And without designs, the brand value, which otherwise is a guarantee for purity, is diminishing.

Adding to this, the shift from hand-crafted to machine-made ornaments did not serve the purpose. Neither the cost of machine-made jewellery declined, nor did

the jewellers find innovative designs.

"The industry is going back to 'hand-crafted' ornaments for both domestic and overseas buyers. Thus, such jewellery will be the future in India," said N Anantha Padmanaban, managing director, NAC Jewellers, a leading jewellery manufacturer in Chennai, and chairman of the All India Gems & Jewellery Domestic Council (GJC).

In fact, the GJC plans to re-introduce 'Lucky Lakshmi' — its famous marketing campaign — to encourage jewellery manufacturers to work with intricate hand-crafted designs.

"Installation of a machine calls for a massive investment. Hence, small jewellery orders cannot be fulfilled using machines.

For every small order, a dye needs to be made, which costs a lot to jewellers. Since the consumers' mindset in India keeps changing, the machine-made ornaments become outdated after a small period. In case of handcrafted ones, the consumers hold onto the ornaments for long because of their emotional attachments," said Shaankar Sen, chairman and managing director, Senco Gold, a Kolkata-based jewellery manufacturer.

Availability of options and flexibility with errors and omissions are some of the major drawbacks of machine-made jewellery. Also, machine-made jewellery tends to break during the finishing process. They are then connected using laser technology, which has short durability and further adds onto the woes.

The Tribune

ESTABLISHED IN 1881

Pulwama terror attack

J&K needs governance beyond rhetoric

A SHROUD of sadness descended on the country as the news came in of the death of 40 CRPF men in a suicide bomb attack. The nation as one joins the shattered families in their hour of grief. But repeated rhetoric of a muscular kind has now been shown to be inadequate in addressing national security concerns. The daily kill count in the Kashmir valley and the extended political celebration of the surgical strikes, recently made into a testosterone-laden blockbuster movie, were insufficient to neutralise the consequences of a disastrous coalition experimentation, repeated governance failures and the sidelining of alternative political voices in the Valley.

The unrelenting security operations with no political solution on the horizon may well have given way to complacency in the Kashmir's security infrastructure, leading to a grave intelligence lapse that permitted the accumulation of several hundred kilograms of explosives used in the attack. Pakistan is, of course, behind this attack. But we cannot forget that it was a local youth who rammed the car into the CRPF convoy. Continuing counter-insurgency strikes in the Valley are creating a contrarian conflict, which can only be addressed through a political process. The government and people of India cannot win this battle without winning the hearts and minds of the local population.

If the huge cache of explosives establishes the scale of intelligence failure, we need to ask how could 2,500 security personnel be ferried without following the standard operating procedure? We cannot afford to shed more blood in vain. If choppers are the answer, let the government bring in a more expensive alternative. The maximum losses of security forces have happened on the Anantnag-Bijbehara-Pampore axis, yet there has not been sufficient surveillance to deter this murderous mayhem that reduced the CRPF bus to a mangled heap. Pakistan's deep state will try every dirty trick in its book but we should be militarily prepared to stop, expose and hit at its resources like Masood Azhar. Simultaneously, we should create an atmosphere of political engagement to address the angst of the Valley's youth.

Superstition echoes in House

Punjab MLAs trade barbs over black magic, dera culture

A RESOLUTION moved by BJP MLA Som Parkash, seeking the enactment of a law in Punjab on the pattern of Maharashtra to prevent exploitation of the masses due to superstition and black magic, opened a can of worms during the ongoing Budget session in the Punjab Assembly on Thursday. Cutting across party lines, the Vidhan Sabha members agreed that tough action should be taken against the charlatans who were propagating irrational beliefs and fooling mostly illiterate and poor people. However, they could not resist the temptation of revealing each other's secrets in the House.

An Akali MLA took potshots at a minister for changing the direction of his houses on the advice of astrologers; he targeted another minister for holding *havans*. The ruling Congress, in turn, accused the rivals' top brass of wearing rings studded with special stones for good luck. There was another verbal duel between legislators of the two parties over wearing amulets and consulting priests. The slanging match nipped in the bud what could have been a meaningful discussion on social evils. The urgency of formulating an action plan to deal with the menace was lost in the din.

It is common knowledge that the state's politicians frequent deras, especially during election time, as these are perceived as major vote banks. The sect heads largely owe their clout to political patronage, even though their electoral influence has waxed and waned over the years. In 2017, Akal Takht had handed out *tankha* (religious punishment) to about 40 Sikh leaders of the SAD, the Congress and the Aam Aadmi Party for seeking the support of Sirsa-based Dera Sacha Sauda ahead of the Assembly elections. With another election coming up, it won't be a surprise if desperate attempts are made again to woo various deras, though this might be done more discreetly than before. It's unfortunate that some elected representatives have no qualms about going the superstitious way. They are sending out a wrong message by shunning a rational and progressive approach. There is no room for scientific temper under these circumstances, unless the leaders act responsibly and show the way to the masses.

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY

Violence sends deep roots into the heart; it has no seasons. It is always ripe evergreen. — Pat Conroy

ON THIS DAY...100 YEARS AGO

The Tribune.

LAHORE, SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 16, 1919

The Failure of Coercion.

AS for the failure of coercion, we will quote one or two more. A more honest man than John Bright never lived. And this is what he said of the first Coercion Act: "I think the legislation of 1881 was unfortunately a great mistake, though I was myself a member of the Government concerned in it." How many similar admissions should we have if all statesmen were as honest as Bright or as courageous as Gladstone! Let us quote another authority, an authority not as high, where statesmanship is concerned, as that of Gladstone or Bright, but one even more significant owing to the political creed and the high executive office held by the personage concerned. He had been looking through Coercion Acts, said Lord Carnarvon, who had become Lord Lieutenant of Ireland after the fall of the Gladstone Ministry in 1885, and had been astonished to find that ever since 1847, with some very short intervals hardly worth mentioning, Ireland had lived under exceptional and coercive legislation.

Samples of Moderation.

THE Anglo-Indian Press so often set up as mentors of the Indian both as regards the virtue of moderation and the heinousness of using strong language that the following samples of moderation which we cull from one single article in one of the most widely read of these papers, the Englishman of Calcutta, may prove of interest: "Weakness of this kind (the concession of time limit made in the case of the Emergency Powers Bill) brings the Government into deserved contempt." Again: "We detest this shilly-shallying. It is time the Government of India had the courage of its convictions. Until it does show some vestiges of backbone it cannot expect to inspire confidence in its friends or respect in its opponents."

Clueless in Kashmir

The Pulwama strike throws up pertinent questions, challenges



PRAVIN SAWHNEY
STRATEGIC AFFAIRS EXPERT

THE detestable Pulwama blast is not about intelligence failure or the inability of security forces to act upon it, as the government would want us to believe. It is about India lacking capability, capacity and political will for war escalation. And Pakistan being aware of it.

Things were made worse by the 2016 so-called surgical strikes, where India (a) clandestinely hit terrorists' temporary launchpads rather than Pakistan army posts, and (b) immediately informed Pakistan that it would not escalate matters — an acknowledgment of defunct political will. Instead of furtively building war-withal for strengthening border management, Indian Generals, notwithstanding incessant terror attacks and loss of lives, continue with counter-terror operations and hollow bravado.

Moreover, the Modi government's iron-fist Kashmir policy, with no political balm, helped Pakistan declare its innocence. It was a local Jaish militant and not a Pakistani operative who orchestrated the mayhem. What would be lost in this big picture that Pakistan would tom-tom are the following: the 300-kg explosives came from Pakistan, though their fabrication into an IED would have been done in the Valley (the expert may still be ensconced somewhere enjoying local shelter and hospitality); and the Jaish-released video clip shows the lone perpetrator with M-4 carbine, which is not in the inventory of the Indian Army and paramilitary forces. It came from Pakistan.

Given all this, when government spokespersons talk about revenge,



ALIENATION: Local support has grown overwhelmingly. The ground situation in the Kashmir Valley is far worse than is admitted.

Our Generals must realise that military objectives cannot, and should not, be similar to political objectives.

they do not make sense. What exactly are Delhi's options? Another surgical strike is ruled out since (a) Pakistan would be on better watch, (b) India is still unprepared for an escalation whose dynamics are unpredictable, and (c) with the General Election looming, an escalation would spell political suicide. Yet, expect the Generals to inform the nation that they would strike at a time and place of own choosing, whatever that means.

With military options closed, the Modi government could plug the border's porosity — the closure of Poonch-Rawalpote and Srinagar-Muzaffarabad bus routes and the foot crossings at Chakothi-Uri, Rawalkot-Poonch, Chihana-Tithwal and Tattapani-Mendhar could be on the cards. Even reduction of Pakistan High Commission staff, if not outright closure of the mission, might happen. Perhaps, the Kartarpur corridor project could be a casualty of the events. Within the Valley, the security forces led by the Army would intensify further hammering by its iron fist.

Such optics, however, would not hide the truth behind the Pulwama attack,

which can be summed up in eight crisp points. One, the Indian Army cannot win this war which is fully supported by the Pakistan army. Two, it is time that our Generals realise that military objectives cannot, and should not, be similar to political objectives. Three, the Army should go back to building conventional war-withal — starting with strengthening border management — which is the only way to browbeat Pakistan. Four, internal security should progressively be handed over to the paramilitary and police forces. Five, there is little point in blaming China for its support to Pakistan; Beijing would do exactly what is in its national interest. Five, since the locals' support has grown overwhelmingly, the ground situation within the Valley is far worse than is admitted. Six, given the increased interoperability between China and Pakistan and the aggressiveness of their foreign policy, external military threats on India's unsettled borders are rising rapidly. This does not mean that China will start a war with India; what it means is that it would support Pakistan to the hilt politically, with war

material and its own non-contact war capabilities. Seven, Delhi should start talks with all Kashmiri stakeholders, including Hurriyat and Shah Faisal, who is trying to harness youth power. And eight, India should talk with Pakistan, not on confidence-building measures, but on conflict resolution.

Consideration of these issues matters because while the Indian Army can perhaps hold the land indefinitely, the same cannot be said about the people. And this is where India has reached the tipping point: the people are no longer afraid of dying. Hence, they appear to be reaching out to Pakistan, instead of the other way around, to fight the Indian state.

Much of the blame for this should go to the Army leadership which misled the political leadership into believing that fencing of borders was good enough protection against a determined adversary. For example, when I asked the then Army Chief, Gen Dalbir Singh, in his customary media interaction in January 2015, how long the Army would continue with internal stability operations, his response was shocking: "You should ask the Home Ministry." The Chief had aligned his objectives with that of the political leadership. No wonder, he led the 2016 surgical strikes, which sought political rather than military gains; and he handed over the baton to his successor, who, given his vast experience in counter-terror operations, has lifted local tactical operations to the level of operational art. Pulwama is a consequence of all this.

The problem, to be sure, is not the undiminished number of terrorists or militants in the Valley. The problem is the Pakistan army, which does not think much about Indian Army's war-fighting capabilities. This needs to be reversed if another Pulwama is to be avoided. This will not be easy since the Generals, unwillingly to give up their risen status, would desist from going back to the barracks. Surely, the Army Chief would not advise the Prime Minister that his force should go back to its primary task.

Is it the end of humanity?

VISHAL KUMAR

ALTHOUGH it was a beautiful sunny morning at my native town, I had to cancel my morning walk, as I was supposed to board a train to Delhi. The preceding night, I could not catch a wink of sleep because of the heartrending piece of news from Pulwama. A dastardly and gruesome act by the enemies of humanity spelled doom, snuffing out many innocent lives. My heart was not only shaken, but shattered. My mind was overloaded with a volley of questions which pushed me into the deep ocean of painful contemplation.

Why are people murdering one another with such mindless frenzy? I was reminded of Swami Vivekananda's words: 'I wonder

why people hate, when life is too short to love!' Today, unfortunately, the wicked emotion of hatred is spreading its stench in every nook and corner of the world, whereas the kindred emotion of love is getting weaker day by day. Are men morphing into monsters? Another unsettling question raised its ugliest head. My eyes were clouded with forcibly held back tears. Where had compassion, kindness and sympathy vanished? Head heavy, heart bloated, eyes groggy, I reached the railway station.

As the train chugged forward, I was eyeball to eyeball with pristine nature in all its myriad captivating colours: lush fields, quiescent scarecrows, birds perching on branches of various trees, loth to give up their languid-

ness. Farmers were already up and moving towards their fields. Such a salubrious spectacle tried to soothe my frayed spirits, but my heart remained dipped in the sorrow of the ghastly carnage. Mist hung heavy all around and trees were mere silhouettes, searching for lost identity.

Soon, we were at the next junction. By now, the young couple sitting on the next berth had finished a boxful of sweets and an elderly couple sitting across the aisle was savouring homemade delicacies. But I had lost my appetite. No thought of having breakfast occurred to me; my stomach, like my heart, was sufficiently filled with sorrow.

When the train crossed the dense maze of wild greenery, my ache was

relieved to an extent by the sight of fashion-conscious scarecrows. All of them flaunting their multicoloured attires. A momentary diversion that brought a smile to my sombre face, as did the sight of the luxuriously green fields, dotted with white egrets.

As the train headed towards its destination, an image embossed itself on my mind. On the periphery of the fields were some trees, spreading their skeletal branches towards the sky. I imagined this was a picture of lost humanity extending its arms towards the heavens, beseeching and pleading God for peace. Praying for humanity! Was it too difficult to love and be human?

Here's hoping that humanity regains its lost image before it is too late.... *Dilli abhi bhi door hai.*

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Intelligence failure

We were caught unawares in 1947 when Pakistan-sponsored tribals almost reached Srinagar. We got a bloody face when we failed to comprehend China's intentions in 1962. Pakistan's armour reached Akhnor and we were sleeping in 1965. Bhindranwale could take on tanks from his hideout in the Golden Temple in 1984. Till we lost two aircraft in 1999, we didn't know that Pakistanis were in our territory. And now we have 300 kg explosives, used in the Pulwama attack, assembled into an IED, recce was carried out, rehearsed and we didn't know that it was coming. There is a big difference between sacrificing your soldiers for the nation and getting your jawans butchered because of incompetence for want of actionable intelligence. Salute to the bravehearts who got no time to display their bravery.

COL HP SINGH (RETD), CHANDIGARH

Nation grieves with kin

Apropos the report '42 CRPF jawans killed in Pulwama blast' (Feb 15), the attack has shaken the whole nation. Pakistan, infamous for providing shelter to terrorist organisations, must be condemned harshly. It is time to reciprocate these ghastly attacks. Every

SHREYANS JAIN, NEW DELHI

Indian salutes the bravehearts who lost their lives. The nation mourns the incalculable loss of these martyrs and stands shoulder to shoulder with their families in their time of grief.

TUSHAR ANAND, PATNA

What happened to NCTC?

In an attempt to radicalise the anaemic internal security mechanism, the National Counter-Terrorism Centre (NCTC) was envisaged by the government in the aftermath of the 26/11 Mumbai attack. The NCTC, it was proposed, would have access to counter-terrorism intelligence generated by India's covert services, as well as authority over the NSG and the NIA. Newly-created electronic databases would make up the NCTC backbone, providing it with vast access to real-time information. It is time the lawmakers wriggled out of the political quagmire and addressed the lack of institutional arrangement for the management of India's counter-terrorism response. While procurement and indigenous manufacturing of arms are welcome, it is imperative to remove system-wide deficiencies in skills and capabilities. The country can ill afford repeated embarrassments and loss of precious lives at the hands of a few extremist forces.

SHREYANS JAIN, NEW DELHI

Either way, India's loss

The sad part is that a 21-year-old bomber was responsible for the massive killings. The worst part is that the bomber was an Indian himself. What is drawing these young people to terrorism? On the one hand, there were young jawans who died for their nation, and on the other, there is another young Indian who killed himself against his nation. Either way, it is the loss of our motherland.

VAISHALI PANDA, AMBALA CITY

Calls for a tough lesson

Refer to the Pulwama attack, the involvement of overground workers leaking information and supporting terrorists cannot be ruled out. The government should act decisively while taking the international community into confidence. Television channels must desist from inviting those people for debate who provide indirect support to anti-India organisations. The time has now come to teach a tough lesson to Pakistan.

PRAVEEN KHANNA, PATIALA

Politics of blame game

The deadly Pulwama attack has shaken the country. This cowardly act by terror organisations is condemnable. But what is our country doing? Why is

Indian politics based on blame game? Will our martyred soldiers get justice or will their sacrifice go in vain?

MUSKAAAN GULATI, AMBALA

Pak a nation of cowards

Our political bosses, as usual, have a one-liner for media: "The sacrifice of our brave security personnel shall not go in vain". Does this statement suffice considering the great loss that the country and the families of the victims have incurred? Has not the time come to give a fitting reply to Pakistan? That country has a dwarf ideology. It is not a nation, but a congregation of cowards. It is not fit to be treated as a country.

PANKAJ KAPOOR, BY MAIL

Rooting out drugs

Refer to 'Bhola drug racket verdict' (Feb 15); the conviction of Bhola and his accomplices is the tip of the iceberg, given the scale of involvement of people of all hues in the business of intoxicants. Extradition of proclaimed offenders would be a real check on prospective offenders, because going abroad is considered the safest way out against conviction. The anti-drug campaign must be taken to its conclusion; convictions being the first step.

JAGVINDER SINGH BRAR, PATIALA

Contempt of court a new low for CBI



RAJEEV DHAVAN
SENIOR ADVOCATE, SUPREME COURT

THE CBI has recently been in the news mostly for the wrong reasons, with the allegations embroiling not only its Directors, but also the Central Vigilance Commission and the Union government. In the latest embarrassment, two of the premier investigating agency's high-ranking officers, former interim Director K Nageswara Rao and additional legal division incharge of prosecution Bhasuran S were punished for contempt of court by the Supreme Court.

The case pertained to the alleged sexual abuse of inmates of a children's shelter home in Muzaffarnagar. Dissatisfied with the Bihar Police's investigation, the apex court had transferred the case to the CBI on November 27, 2018. The next day, following the earlier orders of August 29, 31 and September 18, the Supreme Court affirmed that the CBI's probe officer in this case "will not be transferred without the leave of the court".

However, on January 17, after the approval of the Appointments Committee of the Cabinet (ACC), investigating officer AK Sharma (Joint Director) was transferred as Additional Director General of the CRPF. This was in violation of the court's order. No permission was taken from the court, which was informed of the development in a status report on January 31. The file had a note (dated January 18) by Bhasuran that since AK Sharma had been 'beneficially' promoted to the rank of DGP, "there was no legal impediment to relieve the officer", but these facts be brought to the 'notice' of the Supreme Court for approval. Rao issued the relieving order the same day. How can prior permission of the SC be substituted with ex post facto approval after the



CONTROVERSIAL: The transfer of the CBI's investigating officer in the Muzaffarnagar shelter home case kicked up a row.

event? The whole purpose of the SC's order was defeated. Contempt notices were issued. The officers apologised and admitted to contempt of court. The Attorney General emphasised that since this was civil contempt, it suggested that there was no wilful default.

An unconditional apology is a time-honoured escape route, sharpened by Section 12 of the Contempt of Courts Act, 1971, which says that a conditional apology may be accept-

able if it's bona fide. It could not be said that the transgression was not wilful or they knew of the order because it was in the file with the note. So, it was a case of 'mercy'. It follows that the apology was not bona fide. This was incorporated in the sentence — to remain in the court till its rising and a fine of Rs 1 lakh (which the officers could afford).

Due process is needed with regard to the 'rising of the court' sentence. Some High Courts have put the con-

temnors in custody without handcuffs or sent them to sit in the Registrar's room with implied access to rest rooms, water, tea, refreshments etc. In this case, they were asked to sit in a corner. I saw that they did not have food. They just sat there in public obloquy. When the Attorney General asked the court after lunch if they could go home, the Chief Justice of India said the court hadn't risen, so they must stay.

There are some cases of constructive

contempt by the media or by way of comment which is criminal contempt, raising issues of free speech. But this was a civil contempt case of wilfully disobeying an order of the court. If a court cannot enforce its orders, then its writs and orders will be futile. It is not enough that all civil and judicial authorities must "act in aid" of the Supreme Court (Article 144). In its expansive version, this might embolden policemen, magistrates or ministers to take matters into their own hands. Hence, the contempt proceedings. But in civil contempt, there is the yes/no answer, apart from the three defences of not knowing, not wilful and bona fide apology. These usually work, with or without strictures against the disobedient person. I don't think this was civil contempt (disobeying an order addressed to you), because it was not addressed to a particular officer. It could be one of abetment or criminal contempt for obstructing justice.

Since the draft order was prepared by the Department of Personnel and Training (DoPT) and affirmed by the ACC, were the DoPT officers and those servicing them or the committee not abettors? After all, the contemptuous officers were obeying their respondent superiors. The court should have ordered a high-level investigation into who was responsible for ordering the officer's transfer by drafting the order eventually passed, with the paper trail leading to the Cabinet Committee.

Officers obey the courts because strictures or punishment by the judiciary could ruin their career. That is why officers do not want such a blot on their file. In some cases, simple strictures are enough. Perhaps, that may have been enough in this case also.

Officers obey the courts because strictures or punishment by the judiciary could ruin their career. That is why officers do not want such a blot on their file. In some cases, simple strictures are enough. Perhaps, that may have been enough in this case also. The court should have ordered a high-level investigation into who was responsible for ordering the officer's transfer by drafting the order that was eventually passed.

Warts and all, dynastic politics stays relevant



RANAJOY SEN
COLUMNIST

IN the run-up to the parliamentary elections, several political parties opposed to the NDA have begun efforts to stitch up an alliance to prevent the split of anti-BJP votes. The Congress is making a clarion call for unity of disparate parties, but it is yet to clarify its own position regarding being a constituent of any such alliance. The party appears busy reinforcing its presence in the political arena.

Ever since Priyanka Gandhi Vadra took charge as the Congress general secretary, the party's rank and file appear enthused. Regarded as politically astute, Priyanka was the cynosure of all eyes during her debut rally in Lucknow. There is a buzz that the Congress, which has been repeatedly beaten by the BJP and some regional parties in recent years, can do a turnaround in the General Election. Under the leadership of Sonia Gandhi and Rahul Gandhi, there was an impression, backed by ground reality, that the Congress' influence was steadily ebbing. There were murmurs about bringing more competent leaders into the party fold. However, it could not be done due to an overweening dependence of the party's members on those who indisputably control the Congress: the Nehru-Gandhi family.

When the country's first Prime Minister, Jawaharlal Nehru, passed away in 1964, his successor was not his daughter, Indira Gandhi (whose husband, Feroze Gandhi, was no relation of Mahatma Gandhi). It was



MISSION 2019: Rahul and Priyanka face the uphill task of bringing about a turnaround for the Congress in the upcoming General Election.

the homespun, popular Congress leader and a former minister in the Nehru government, Lal Bahadur Shastri. When Shastri died less than two years later, senior leaders of then undivided Congress faced a dilemma over selecting a Prime Minister who had a pan-India appeal. They found none except Nehru's daughter.

Notwithstanding her tremendous

popularity and political stature, Indira Gandhi increasingly concentrated power in her own hands and displayed a penchant for sidelining leaders of some stature who had a mass base of their own. She, therefore, could think of nobody to succeed her than those of her immediate family. Her approach to political succession in the Congress — by then renamed after her as Congress (I) —

was determined by a "dynasty above all" aspect, eclipsing other factors. When her politically inclined younger son, Sanjay Gandhi, died in a plane crash, her inevitable choice was the elder one, Rajiv Gandhi.

After Indira's assassination in 1984, Rajiv took over as the Prime Minister. After he was killed in 1991, the Congress, within seven years, found it a pressing requirement to make his wife, Sonia Gandhi, agree to be the party's unquestioned leader. Thereafter, with the passage of time, the question within the Congress was less of whether and more of when her son, Rahul Gandhi, and daughter, Priyanka Gandhi Vadra, would join the party.

Rahul Gandhi contested and won a Lok Sabha seat for the first time in 2004; from then on, he is wholly engaged in Congress affairs. In December 2017, he took over as the party president. His sister has just entered active politics. There has been criticism all along that the Congress has become a dynasty-controlled political party.

The supreme leadership of the party has rested with successive generations of the Nehru-Gandhi family for the past about 40 years. Hence, the party has probably not been able to tap the potential of seemingly more suitable candidates. Some observers claim that the Congress has lost potentially competent individuals who might have joined the party, but for the unquestioned dominance of

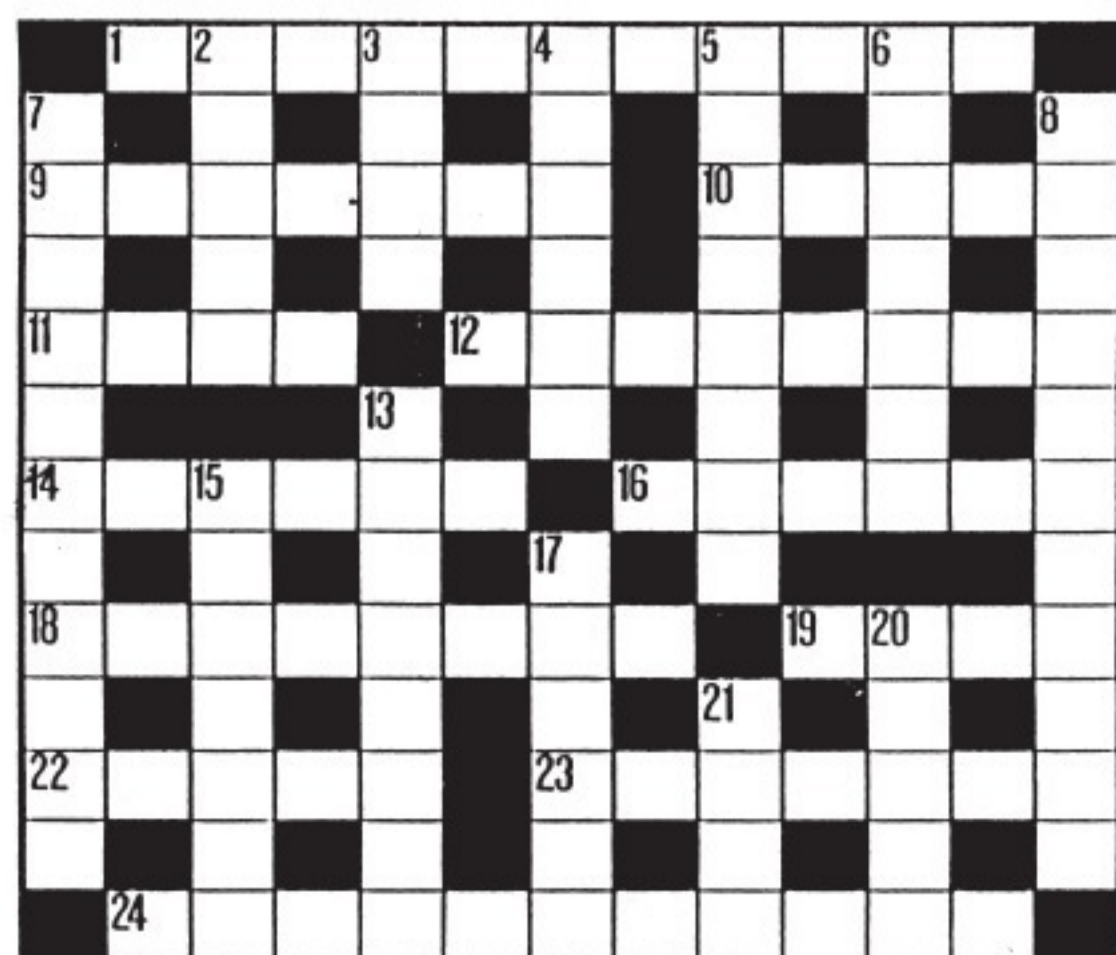
the Nehru-Gandhi family.

All said and done, successful dynastic succession in political parties can occur if the electorate endorses it. In India and across the subcontinent, the electorate, in large measure, has perennially done exactly that — for better or for worse. Even today, despite trenchant criticism, for a sizeable number of voters, there is something distinctive, dazzling and overpowering about the Nehru-Gandhi dynasty. But, it is not the only one on the Indian political scene. The continuing relevance of the Abdullaha and the Muftis of Jammu and Kashmir, the Karunanidhis of Tamil Nadu, the Yadavs of Uttar Pradesh, the Thackerays of Maharashtra and the Badals of Punjab indicates that dynastic politics is still a crucial component of the Indian political scenario.

There is an anecdote about the dreaded ruler, Taimur the 'Lame', enquiring from illustrious scholar Ibn Khaldun about the fate of political dynasties. Khaldun opined that the glory of a political dynasty usually started fading from the fourth generation, unless diligent efforts were made by those concerned to prevent it.

Rahul and Priyanka belong to the fourth generation of the family. While attacking the Modi government and working with other political parties to try and prevent the return of the BJP to power, they would have to work wisely and conscientiously, if they are keen to script a successful narrative of their political careers.

QUICK CROSSWORD



- ACROSS**
- Facing a hard struggle (2,7,2)
 - Speak to (7)
 - Very steep rock face (5)
 - Cloudy (4)
 - Perturb (8)
 - Silver-white metal (6)
 - Hackneyed phrase (6)
 - Time of celebration (8)
 - The chances (4)
 - Fast (5)
 - Careful watch (7)
 - Inhospitable (11)

- DOWN**
- Ride a bicycle (5)
 - Exultant joy (4)
 - Mad (6)
 - Surprisingly (8)
 - Foolish (7)
 - Rigidly laid down (4-3-4)
 - Unavoidably (2,9)
 - Disparage (8)
 - Soften effects of (7)
 - Pungent bulbous herb (6)
 - Inundate (5)
 - Sharp rise in value (4)

YESTERDAY'S SOLUTION

Across: 1 Mobile, 4 Contract, 9 Relish, 10 Ideology, 12 Dash, 13 Tonic, 14 Barn, 17 Ways and means, 20 Registration, 23 Aunt, 24 Adult, 25 Loch, 28 Headlong, 29 Mildew, 30 Minstrel, 31 Betray.

Down: 1 Mark down, 2 Bull's eye, 3 Lush, 5 Old wives' tale, 6 Tool, 7 Avowal, 8 Trying, 11 Good riddance, 15 Raven, 16 Knead, 18 Disorder, 19 In the way, 21 Fathom, 22 In vain, 26 Glut, 27 Cite.

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EASY

CALENDAR

FEBRUARY 16, 2019 SATURDAY

- Vikrami Samvat 2075
- Shaka Samvat 1940
- Magh Shaka 27
- Phalgun Purnimasi 4
- Hijari 1440
- Shukla Paksh Tithi 11, up to 11:02 am
- Priti Yoga up to 12:00 am
- Aardra Nakshatra up to 7.05 pm
- Moon in Gemini sign
- Ekadshi Vart

YESTERDAY'S SOLUTION

3	5	1	8	4	6	9	7	2
2	6	4	7	9	1	8	5	3
7	8	9	5	3	2	1	6	4
5	4	7	1	8	9	2	3	6
9	1	3	2	6	5	4	8	7
6	2	8	3	7	4	5	1	9
8	7	2	4	1	3	6	9	5
1	9	5	6	2	7	3	4	8
4	3	6	9	5	8	7	2	1

FORECAST

SUNSET:	SATURDAY	18:10 HRS
SUNRISE:	SUNDAY	07:02 HRS
CITY	MAX	MIN
Chandigarh	20	10
New Delhi	23	10
PUNJAB		
Amritsar	20	06
Bathinda	23	09
Jalandhar	20	10
Ludhiana	20	09
HARYANA		
Bhiwani	23	10
Hisar	23	10
Sirsa	23	09
HIMACHAL PRADESH		
Dharamsala	15	03
Manali	08	-02
Shimla	12	04
JAMMU & KASHMIR		
Jammu	20	10
Leh	06	-06
Srinagar	09	-02
UTTARAKHAND		
Dehradun	22	09
Mussoorie	12	03

TEMPERATURE IN °C

दैनिक जागरण

सपने और लक्ष्य में सिर्फ योजना का फर्क होता है

एकजुटता का प्रदर्शन

पुलवामा में भीषण आतंकी हमले के बाद केंद्र सरकार की ओर से बुलाई गई सर्वदलीय बैठक में सभी राजनीतिक दलों की ओर से जो एकजुटता दिखाई गई वह समय की मांग थी। यह अच्छा हुआ कि इस सर्वदलीय बैठक में आतंकवाद को नष्ट करने की प्रतिबद्धता व्यक्त करने के साथ ही सीमा पार आतंकवाद की कड़े स्वर में निंदा भी की गई, लेकिन यह समझ नहीं आया कि पाकिस्तान का नाम लेने से क्यों बचा गया? आखिर जब पुलवामा हमले के बाद विदेश मंत्रालय की ओर से आधिकारिक रूप से यह कहा गया कि पाकिस्तान इस हमले के लिए जिम्मेदार आतंकी संगठन जैश ए मोहम्मद पर लगाया जाएगा तब फिर सर्वदलीय बैठक में पाकिस्तान का जिक्रू क्यों नहीं हो सका? यह ठीक नहीं कि पुलवामा हमले के बाद जब अमेरिका तक साफ तौर पर कहा रहा है कि पाकिस्तान अपने यहाँ के आतंकी संगठनों को सुरक्षित ठिकाना उपलब्ध कराने से बाज आए तब भारत के राजनीतिक दल ऐसा कोई प्रस्ताव पारित नहीं कर सके जिसमें पाकिस्तान का साफ-साफ नाम लिया गया होता। यह एक तर्क हो सकता है कि पाकिस्तान का नाम लेने या न लेने से कोई खास फर्क नहीं पड़ने वाला, क्योंकि दुनिया जान रही है कि भारत का यही पड़ोसी देश है जो किस्म-किस्म के आतंकी संगठनों को पालने-पोसने का काम कर रहा है। बावजूद इसके यह सवाल तो उठता ही है कि आखिर सर्वदलीय बैठक में पारित प्रस्ताव की भाषा यह क्यों नहीं कहती कि भारत को अपने जिस पड़ोसी देश की शत्रुतापूर्ण हकतों से निपटने की जरूरत है वह पाकिस्तान है? हमारे राजनीतिक नेतृत्व को यह समझने की जरूरत है कि पुराने तौर-तरिकों से काम चलने वाला नहीं है। तौर-तरिकों के साथ हमारी भाषा भी बदलनी चाहिए, क्योंकि इससे ही मानसिकता बदलती है। क्या यह बेहतर नहीं होता कि सर्वदलीय बैठक में पारित प्रस्ताव में देश की संकल्पशक्ति को स्पष्ट जलक मिलती?

सर्वदलीय बैठक में जहाँ सरकार ने यह भरोसा दिलाया कि वह वह पुलवामा हमले का मुंहतोड़ जवाब देगी वहीं विभिन्न राजनीतिक दलों ने भी यह कहा कि वे सरकार के साथ हैं। यह महज औपचारिकता नहीं होनी चाहिए। इस समय राजनीतिक नेतृत्व को देश के साथ दुनिया को यह दिखाने और साफ-साफ बताने की जरूरत है कि संकट के समय वह पूरी तौर पर एकजुट है। दुनिया को यह भी संदेश जाना चाहिए कि इस बार भारत तब तक चैन से नहीं बैठेगा जब तक आतंकवाद को खाद-पानी दे रही ताकतों को सबक नहीं सिखाता। ऐसे प्रस्ताव जमीन पर भी उतरने चाहिए। ध्यान रहे कि एक समय संसद ने यह प्रस्ताव पारित किया था कि पाकिस्तान के कब्जे वाले भारतीय भू-भाग को वापस लिया जाएगा। सवाल यह है कि क्या कभी इस प्रस्ताव के अनुरूप कदम उठाए गए? यह अच्छा हुआ कि सर्वदलीय बैठक में केंद्रीय गृहमंत्री राजनाथ सिंह ने सांप्रदायिक सदभाव बनाए रखने की जरूरत बताई। यह भी समय की मांग है और इसकी पूर्ति हो, इसे देश के आम लोगों को सुनिश्चित करना चाहिए। वास्तव में आज जितनी जरूरत राजनीतिक एकजुटता की है उतनी ही सामाजिक एकजुटता की भी। यही एकजुटता हर चुनौती से लड़ने में सहायक बनेगी।

प्रदूषण पर सिर्फ चिंता

वायु प्रदूषण के मामले में दिल्ली के बाद कोलकाता का स्थान आता है। शुक्रवार को बजट पेश करते हुए कोलकाता नगर निगम के मेयर फिख्द हकीम ने भी स्वीकार किया कि महानगर की हवा लगातार प्रदूषित हो रही है। बावजूद इसके नगर निगम के बजट में वायु प्रदूषण को रोकने पर पर्यावरण संरक्षण को लेकर कोई आवंटन नहीं दिखा। प्रदूषण को लेकर सिर्फ कोरी चिंता ही जाहिर हुई। केंद्रीय पर्यावरण मंत्रालय से लेकर कोलकाता की हवा में प्रदूषण की मात्रा को लेकर समीक्षा करने वाले अन्य संगठनों की रिपोर्ट में बताया गया है कि सड़क, निर्माण स्थलों से निकलने वाली धूल समेत कई और कारण हैं जिससे कोलकाता की हवा प्रदूषित हो रही है। इसे लेकर काफी हो-हल्ला भी हुआ था। बावजूद इसके कोलकाता नगर निगम के 2019-20 के बजट में इस समस्या से निपटने के लिए एक शब्द का उल्लेख नहीं है। जलापूर्ति, सड़क, बस्ती, वाणिज्यिक परियोजना, कचरा सफाई समेत कुल छह विभागों में बजट आवंटन की गिंश बढ़ाने का उल्लेख किया गया, लेकिन पर्यावरण संरक्षण पर प्रदूषण नियंत्रण को लेकर एक भी रुपये खर्च किए जाने का उल्लेख नहीं किया गया। प्रश्न उठता है कि क्या कोलकाता नगर निगम महानगर को प्रदूषण मुक्त रखने के लिए गंभीर नहीं है। फिख्द हकीम कुछ माह पहले मेयर बने हैं और उनका यह पहला बजट था, लेकिन शहर को प्रदूषण मुक्त रखने की जिम्मेदारी भी तो उन्हीं की है। हालांकि, नगर निगम के अधिकारियों का तर्क है कि पर्यावरण पर प्रदूषण को लेकर अलग से बजट नहीं, लेकिन ग्रीन हाउस व शहरी हरियाली योजना का उल्लेख है। हरियाली से ही प्रदूषण को कम किया जा सकता है, परंतु यहाँ सवाल यह उठ रहा है कि पौधा लगाने से तत्काल वायु प्रदूषण पर लगातार लग जाएगा? क्योंकि, जब तक पेड़-पौधे बढ़े नहीं होंगे तब तक स्थिति नहीं बदलेगी। इसके लिए आवश्यक है कि तत्काल ठोस पहल की जाए। इसके लिए एक समग्र रणनीति बनानी होगी तभी स्थिति में सुधार होगा।

धारा 370 खत्म करने का सही समय



संजय गुप्त

यह धारा 370 का ही दुष्परिणाम है कि तमाम कश्मीरी यह मानने लगे हैं कि वे भारत से अलग हैं। वे कश्मीरियत की बात तो करते हैं, लेकिन उसे भारतीयता से अलग मानते हैं

आम चुनाव के ठीक पहले कश्मीर में वीथिस हमले ने पूरे देश को रोष और आक्रोश से भर दिया है। यह हमला जैश ए मोहम्मद के एक कश्मीरी मूल के आतंकी ने अंजाम दिया, जो पहले पथरबाज था। इस हमले में सीआरपीएफ के 40 जवान शहीद हो गए और कई अन्य गुरी तरह घायल भी हुए। इस हमले ने मोदी सरकार पर यह दबाव बढ़ा दिया है कि वह पाकिस्तान को जवाब दे। ऐसी अपेक्षा इसलिए अधिक है कि बीते दो दशकों से पाकिस्तान आधारित आतंकी संगठनों ने भारत की नाक में दम कर रखा है। अभी तक भारत ने पाकिस्तान के खिलाफ जो भी कदम उठाए हैं वे नाकामी सिद्ध हुए हैं। उड़ी हमले के बाद सीमा पार सर्जिकल स्ट्राइक का पाकिस्तान पर कोई खास असर नहीं हुआ। इसके पहले पाकिस्तान पोषित आतंकी संगठनों ने जब-जब भारतीय ठिकानों पर हमला किया तब-तब भारतीय नेतृत्व देर-सबेर पाकिस्तान से बातचीत करने पर सहमत हो गया। मुंबई में होस्टल ताज और अन्य स्थानों पर हुए भीषण आतंकी हमले में करीब एक सौ सतर निर्दोष-निहत्थे लोग मारे गए थे। देश तब भी आक्रोश से उबल पड़ा था और हर तरफ से यह आवाज उठी थी कि पाकिस्तान से बदला लिया जाए, लेकिन कुछ नहीं हुआ। पाकिस्तान ने देश-दुनिया को हिला देने वाले इस हमले की साजिश रचने वालों के खिलाफ कुछ नहीं किया और फिर भी कुछ समय बाद भारत पाकिस्तान से बातचीत करने लग गया। ऐसा ही गुदासपुर, पटानकोट आदि में आतंकी हमले के बाद किया

गया। इससे पाकिस्तान का मनोबल बढ़ा और उसने भारत को परेशान करना जारी रखा। देखना है कि पुलवामा हमले के बाद क्या होता है? पुलवामा की घटना के बाद भारत ने पाकिस्तान को दिया हुआ सर्वाधिक अनुकूल राष्ट्र का दर्जा अवश्य छीन लिया है, लेकिन यह काम तो बहुत पहले हो जाना चाहिए था। पुलवामा में इतना बड़ा हमला स्थानीय लोगों की मदद के बिना नहीं हो सकता। चिंता की बात यह है कि आने वाले समय में इस तरह के हमले बढ़ने की आशंका है, क्योंकि अफगानिस्तान में अमेरिका तालिबान से समझौता करने की कोशिश में है। यह समझौता तालिबान और ऐसे ही अन्य आतंकीयों के साथ पाकिस्तान का भी मनोबल बढ़ाएगा। इसके चलते कश्मीर में आतंकीयों की आमद और उनकी गतिविधियां बढ़ सकती हैं। इसका अंदेशा इसलिए है, क्योंकि कश्मीर में जैश, लश्कर और हिजबुल मुजाहिदीन सरीखे संगठन अपनी पैठ बनाए हुए हैं। ऐसे संगठनों की सक्रियता के चलते ही कश्मीरी अपनी सुफ्री संस्कृति को भूलकर चरमपंथ के रास्ते पर जा रहे हैं। इसी कारण पाकिस्तान को कश्मीर में दखल देने में आसानी हो रही है। पुलवामा हमले की जिम्मेदारी जिस जैश ए मोहम्मद ने अपने फिर ली वह वही आतंकी संगठन है जिसने पटानकोट एयरबेस पर हमला किया था। इसके सरगना कश्मीर के दल हैं। वहाँ अलगाववादी संगठनों के साथ बुद्धिजीवियों और मजहबी नेताओं की एक ऐसी जमात भी तैयार हो गई है जो सदैव कश्मीरी जनता को भड़काने की ताक में रहती है।



अवधेश राजपूत

हो पा रहे, क्योंकि चीन अड़ंगा लगाए हुए है। वह जिस तरह संयुक्त राष्ट्र सुरक्षा परिषद में मसूदा अजहर पर पाबंदी नहीं लगने दे रहा उससे यह साफ है कि वह भारत को नीचा दिखाने के लिए ऐसा कर रहा है।

देश का राजनीतिक नेतृत्व इससे अपरिचित नहीं हो सकता कि कश्मीरी जनता का एक वर्ग किस तरह कश्मीर गए भारतीयों की विदेशियों की तरह देखा है। इसी कारण घाटी में तैनात सुरक्षा बलों के परिजन सदैव उनकी सुरक्षा को लेकर चिंतित रहते हैं। घाटी के लोग भारत विरोधी मानसिकता से तब प्ररत है जब वहाँ केंद्र सरकारों ने पानी की तरह पैसा बहाया है। यह पैसा नेताओं की जेबों में अधिक गया है। वहाँ की औसत जनता को लगता है कि दिल्ली उनकी अनदेखी कर रही है, जबकि इस अनदेखी की जड़ में कश्मीर के दल हैं। वहाँ अलगाववादी संगठनों के साथ बुद्धिजीवियों और मजहबी नेताओं की एक ऐसी जमात भी तैयार हो गई है जो सदैव कश्मीरी जनता को भड़काने की ताक में रहती है।

इस पर हैरानी नहीं कि पुलवामा हमले के बाद पाकिस्तान से बदला लेने की मांग तेज हुई है। लोग गुस्से में हैं और वे यह चाहते हैं कि पाकिस्तान को करारा जवाब दिया जाए। यह गुस्सा स्वाभाविक है। पाकिस्तान को यह संदेश देना जरूरी है कि वह इसी तरह कश्मीर में खून-खराबा नहीं कर सकता, लेकिन क्या पाकिस्तान के खिलाफ एक और सर्जिकल स्ट्राइक जैसी कार्रवाई से कश्मीर में शांति आ जाएगी? दिल्ली में बैठे नीति-निर्वाताओं को कश्मीर घाटी के प्रति अपना नजरिया बदलना होगा। कश्मीर में जो ऐतिहासिक भूले हुए हैं उन सबको ठीक नहीं किया जा सकता, लेकिन कुछ का प्रतिकार अवश्य किया जा सकता है, जैसे धारा 370 को समाप्त करना। यह धारा कश्मीर में अलगाववाद की भावना को बढ़ाने का काम कर रही है। यह सही समय है जब केंद्र सरकार संसद का एक असाधारणकालीन विशेष सत्र केवल कश्मीर के विधानसभा में बुलाई जाए ताकि इस अलगाववादी

कैंसर से लड़ाई की एक बड़ी पहल



डॉ. आरए उपाध्ये

वाराणसी में बन रहे नए कैंसर केयर सेंटर से लगभग 20 करोड़ लोगों तक उपचार की सुविधा पहुंचेगी

उत्तर प्रदेश और बिहार आबादी के लिहाज से देश के दो सबसे बड़े राज्य हैं। कैंसर के सबसे ज्यादा मरीज भी इन दो राज्यों में ही हैं। भारतीय चिकित्सा अनुसंधान परिषद यानी आईसीएमआर के आंकड़ों से भी इसकी पुष्टि होती है। इन आंकड़ों के अनुसार कैंसर में कैंसर के कारण सबसे ज्यादा मौतें अकेले उत्तर प्रदेश में होती हैं। राज्य में इस बीमारी की व्यापकता और भयावृता के बावजूद यहाँ उसके उपचार के लिए सुविधाओं के अभाव ने स्थिति को और बिगाड़ा, क्योंकि यहाँ कुछ ही अस्पतालों में विशेष सुविधाएँ हैं। यहाँ तक कि बीएचयू स्थित अति विशिष्ट संस्थान माने जाने वाले इंस्टीट्यूट ऑफ मेडिकल साइंसेज में भी कैंसर के उचित इलाज के लिए आवश्यक बुनियादी ढांचे का अभाव रहा है। ऐसा अनुमान है कि केवल वाराणसी क्षेत्र में कैंसर निदान की सुविधाओं से करीब 1.83 लाख रोगी उपचार का लाभ उठाएँगे। इसी को ध्यान में रखते हुए प्रधानमंत्री नरेंद्र मोदी ने वाराणसी पर ध्यान केंद्रित करने का फैसला किया ताकि यहाँ पर ये सुविधाएँ बेहतर हो सकें। यहाँ बनाए जा रहे इस नए कैंसर केयर सेंटर से लगभग 20 करोड़ लोगों तक उपचार की सुविधा पहुंचेगी। इससे उत्तर प्रदेश, उत्तराखंड, बिहार और झारखंड जैसे राज्यों के अलावा पड़ोसी देश नेपाल के लोग भी लाभान्वित होंगे। यहाँ लोगों को उपचार मिलने से देश के अन्य कैंसर उपचार केंद्रों पर दबाव भी कम होगा।

बीमारी को अगर पनपने ही न दिया जाए तो उससे बेहतर कुछ हो ही नहीं सकता। ऐसे में उसकी रोकथाम और शुरुआती स्तर पर ही पहचान कर इलाज करने के लिए जागरूकता का भी प्रसार किया जाएगा। इसके लिए मध्य भारत में स्पेशियलिटी कैंसर सेंटर और यूनिट्स के विकास एवं मार्गदर्शन के लिए एक केंद्र विकसित होगा। यह सेंटर नेशनल कैंसर ग्रिड के लिए एक नोडल के रूप में कार्य

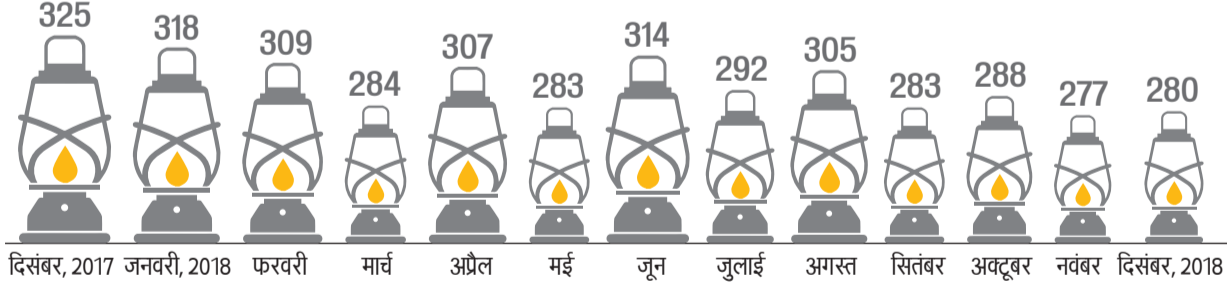
करेगा। इस मिशन के लिए पहले कदम के रूप में टाटा मेमोरियल सेंटर यानी टीएमसी द्वारा जून 2017 में जनसंख्या आधारित रजिस्ट्री शुरू की गई ताकि बीमारी का विस्तार और प्रकृति को समझा जा सके। इसमें वाराणसी की कुल अनुमानित 36.77 लाख आबादी को शामिल किया गया। रजिस्ट्री की अंतिम रिपोर्ट में कैंसर के 1,002 मामले दर्ज हुए जिनमें से 501 मरीजों की मौत हो गई। पुरुषों में मुंह का कैंसर, जीभ, फेफड़ों, गले और प्रोस्टेट कैंसर मुख्य रूप से होता है। वहीं महिलाओं में मुख्य रूप से स्तन कैंसर, गर्भाशय, गाल ब्लैडर, ओवेरी और फेफड़ों के कैंसर से जुड़े मामले ही मुख्य रूप से दिखते हैं। रिपोर्ट के अनुसार कैंसर से जुड़े अधिकांश मामले देरी से सामने आए और उनमें अक्सर बीच में ही इलाज छोड़ दिया जाता है। ऐसे में दो संस्थानों पर काम करने का फैसला किया गया। एक इंडियन रेलवेज कैंसर इंस्टीट्यूट एंड रिसर्च सेंटर यानी आईआरसीआई जिसका विस्तार कर बाद में उसका हस्तंतरण टीएमसी को किया जाना है। 180 बेड वाले आईआरसीआई का नाम होमी भाभा कैंसर अस्पताल (एचबीसीएच) रखा गया है। इसी तरह टीएमसी

द्वारा बीएचयू परिसर में 350 बेड का नया महामना पंडित मदनमोहन मालवीय कैंसर सेंटर यानी एमपीएमएमसीसी भी शुरू किया जा रहा है। एमपीएमएमसीसी के निर्माण और एचबीसीएच के कायाकल्प दोनों कामों से टाटा ट्रस्ट जुड़ा रहेगा। इन दोनों इकाइयों में कुल 530 बेड होंगे जहाँ अत्याधुनिक उपकरणों के साथ नई तकनीक वाला बेहतर इलाज संभव हो सकेगा। फिलहाल दोनों परियोजनाओं का काम द्रुत गति से आगे बढ़ रहा है जिसमें एचबीसीएच का छह माह में कायाकल्प हो जाएगा तो एमपीएमएमसीसी में भी दस महीनों में सेवाएँ शुरू हो जाएंगी। इन केंद्रों के विकास में प्रधानमंत्री की व्यक्तिगत रुचि ने भी अहम भूमिका निभाई जिन्होंने इसमें हर्ससंबंध सहयोग किया।

टाटा ट्रस्ट की एक कारपोरेट प्रबंधन टीम ने इस प्रोजेक्ट को संभाला। टीम के सदस्यों को प्रोजेक्ट के साझेदारों के के साथ कार्यस्थल पर तैनात किया गया ताकि कि वे काम की गतिगति पर ध्यान दें और फेफड़ों के कैंसर से जुड़े मामले को पूरा करने में बचाए गए प्रत्येक वर्ष का अर्थ होगा दस हजार से अधिक मरीजों को अत्याधुनिक उपचार प्रदान करना। टाटा मेमोरियल ट्रस्ट ने उत्तर प्रदेश और बिहार के साथ आसपास के इलाकों में कैंसर पर चौराफा हमला करने की योजना बनाई है। पहला लक्ष्य, 70 प्रतिशत रोकें जा सकने वाले कैंसर को रोकना। दूसरा, पूरी तरह ठीक किए जा सकने वाले कैंसर का इलाज। तीसरा, आम कैंसर का उपचार और साथ ही उनके होने के कारणों को उजागर करना। ऐसा मानव संसाधन तैयार करने का भी लक्ष्य है जिसमें कैंसर से निपटने के लिए सेवा-संस्कृति की भावना विकसित हो और उपलब्ध शोध को और बेहतर बनाने में मदद मिल सके। (लेखक टाटा मेमोरियल सेंटर, मुंबई के निदेशक हैं)

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तथ्य-कथ्य | लगातार कम होती केरोसिन की खपत (हजार टन में)



स्रोत: तेल एवं प्राकृतिक गैस मंत्रालय

धरती के हिलने का लंबा सिलसिला

मुकुल व्यास

उत्तर-पश्चिमी तुर्की में 2016 की गर्मियों में एक भूकंप आया था जो 50 दिनों तक चला। रिक्टर स्केल पर उसकी तीव्रता 5.8 आंकी गई थी। इस भूकंप की खास बात यह थी कि इनने दिनों तक चलने के बावजूद किसी ने भी इसे महसूस नहीं किया। इस क्षेत्र में भूकंप का आना कोई असामान्य बात नहीं है, क्योंकि यह पूरा क्षेत्र बहुत ही सक्रिय दरार (फाल्ट लाइन) पर स्थित है जहाँ अतीत में शक्तिशाली भूकंप आ चुके हैं। विनाशकारी भूकंप तब उत्पन्न होते हैं जब जमीन के नीचे फाल्ट लाइन पर विपरीत दिशाओं में खिसकने वाली दो टेक्टोनिक प्लेटें मिल जाती हैं और अचानक फिसल जाती हैं। इस प्रक्रिया में सारी ऊर्जा एकदम बाहर आती है। पृथ्वी के बाहरी कवच को लिथोस्फीयर कहते हैं जिसमें पपड़ी और ठोस चट्टानें शामिल होती हैं। इसके नीचे एस्थेनोस्फीयर (पृथ्वी के मैटल की ऊपरी परत) होता है जो एक तरल पदार्थ की तरह प्रवाहित होता है। पृथ्वी का लिथोस्फीयर टेक्टोनिक प्लेटों में बंटा हुआ है। ये प्लेटें अनियमित आकार की विशाल ठोस चट्टानें हैं। अनुमान है कि एक प्लेट 113 किमी चौड़ी होती

कई दिनों तक चलने वाले भूकंप महसूस भी नहीं होते। इनकी पड़ताल से भूकंप की प्रकृति समझने में मदद मिल सकती है

है। महाद्वीपों और सागरों के नीचे सात बड़ी प्लेटें और कई छोटी प्लेटें हैं। ये प्लेटें एस्थेनोस्फीयर के ऊपर तैरती रहती हैं। तुर्की में 2016 में आया भूकंप दरअसल एक 'धीमा भूकंप' था। उससे निकलने वाली ऊर्जा की मात्रा सामान्य भूकंप के बराबर हो सकती है, लेकिन लंबी अवधि तक चलने के कारण इनका प्रभाव महसूस नहीं होता। धीमे भूकंप में टेक्टोनिक प्लेटें फाल्ट लाइन पर धीरे-धीरे आगे सरकती हैं। ऐसे भूकंपों में सामान्य भूकंपों जैसी तरंगें उत्पन्न नहीं होतीं। यानी ये कंपन नहीं पैदा करते, लेकिन इससे मिट्टी की ऊपरी परत में गड़बड़ी पैदा होती है जिसका अध्ययन किया जा सकता है। वर्ष 2016 में तुर्की के मरमारा समुद्र के नीचे जीएफजेड जर्मन रिसर्च सेंटर की शोधकर्ता पैट्रिशिया मार्टिनेज-गर्जोन और उनकी टीम ने

मरमारा समुद्र में किए गए बोरहोल का इस्तेमाल किया। इन बोरहोल में स्ट्रेन मीटर लगे हुए थे जिन्होंने सतह पर हुई गड़बड़ी को दर्ज किया। स्ट्रेन मीटरों ने अपने आसपास की चट्टानों की धीमी विकृति को नापा। फ्रांसीसी भूकंप भौतिकविद लूसिल ब्रूट्टे थीं जो कि धीमे भूकंप की घटनाएँ बहुत सामान्य हैं। दुनिया में सबसे लंबा धीमा भूकंप अलास्का में रिकॉर्ड किया गया था जो नौ वर्ष तक चला। रिक्टर स्केल पर इसकी तीव्रता 7.8 दर्ज की गई थी। इस तरह की भूकंपीय घटनाओं से भीषण में होने वाले नुकसानव्ययक भूकंपों का पूर्वानुमान लगाया जा सकता है। धीमा भूकंप उसी क्षेत्र में एक बड़े भूकंप की शुरुआत कर सकता है। 2011 में जापान में सबसे बड़ा भूकंप आया था जिसके बाद सुनामी भी आई थी। इस बड़े भूकंप से पहले इसी क्षेत्र में एक धीमे भूकंप की शुरुआत हुई थी। विशेषज्ञों का इसका है कि संभवतः इसी भूकंपीय घटना से बड़े भूकंप की शुरुआत हुई होगी। फिलहाल वैज्ञानिकों के पास धीमे भूकंपों के बारे में बहुत कम जानकारी है। वैज्ञानिक अभी बनीने तौर पर यह नहीं कह सकते कि धीमे भूकंपों के आधार पर बड़े भूकंपों की भविष्यवाणी की जा सकती है। (लेखक स्वतंत्र टिप्पणीकार हैं)

सीएम भी और संपादक भी

पश्चिम बंगाल की मुख्यमंत्री ममता बनर्जी दिल्ली के प्रेस क्लब ऑफ इंडिया की सदस्यता लेना चाहती हैं। दरअसल उनकी पार्टी तृणमूल कांग्रेस का एक अखबार है 'जागो बंगाल'। उसकी संपादक के तौर पर ममता कोलकाता के प्रेस क्लब की सदस्य हैं। हाल में जब भाजपा सरकार के खिलाफ एकजुटता दिखाने वह दिल्ली पहुंचीं तो एक शाम प्रेस क्लब भी आ गईं और वहीं खुलासा किया कि वह दिल्ली स्थित प्रेस क्लब ऑफ इंडिया की सदस्यता भी ले सकती हैं। वह आमतौर पर दिल्ली के लिए जानी जाती हैं और इसका उदाहरण उस वकत भी देखने को मिला जब उन्हें पता चला कि साबुदाने का बड़ा बना है। उन्होंने तत्काल अपने लिए दो बड़े पैक करवा लिए और घर की ओर जाते हुए कार में ही उसका जायका लिया।

वैकों के आगे वावू भी हुए वेबस

सरकार के तंत्र में नौकरशाही उसका एक ताकतवर हिस्सा है। सरकार को चलाने की इसी जिम्मेदारी नौकरशाही की है। कोई काम कैसे होना है इसका रस्ता भी राजनेताओं के लिए नौकरशाह ही खोजते रहे हैं। लेकिन आज की तारीख में अर्थव्यवस्था का एक ऐसा पैसा भी है जिसके आगे नौकरशाही भी नतमस्तक है। वह है सरकारी बैंक। उद्योग जागत बैंकों से मिलने वाले कर्ज में हुई कमी से परेशान है। ऐसे में एक

राजराज

उद्योगपति ने सरकार के महत्वपूर्ण आर्थिक मंत्रालय के सचिव से दोस्ताना लहजे में पूछ ही लिया कि आखिर क्या सजह है कि सरकार बैंकों को कर्ज की रफ्तार बढ़ाने को नहीं कह रही? बताते हैं सचिव ने बड़ी मासूमियत से जवाब दिया कि क्या किया जाए, सरकारी बैंक है कि सुनने को राजी नहीं। लिहाजा अब सरकारी बैंकों को अधिकारियों ने कहना ही बंद कर दिया है।

अधूरी तैयारी ने कराई जगहसाईं

महकमे में मातहतों पर गुस्सा होना या झल्ला पड़ना वैसे तो आम बात है, लेकिन मामला यदि राज्यसभा जैसे उच्च सदन का हो तो थोड़ा हैरान कर सकता है। हुआ भी कुछ ऐसा ही। बजट सत्र के अंतिम दिन राज्यसभा में अंतरिम बजट पारित होना था। विभागे के जूनियर मंत्री को इस काम के लिए लगाया गया था। इस बीच जैसे ही उनकी बारी आई और वह बोलने के लिए खड़े हुए तो पता चला कि वह कागज ही उनके पास नहीं है। आखिर में उन्होंने फाइलों को हड़बड़ी में तेजी से पलटते हुए अफसरों पर तेज-तेज चिल्लाना शुरू कर दिया। यह सब जब हो रहा था, उस समय माइक और कैमरा दोनों ही ऑन थे। ऐसे में वह जो भी बोल रहे थे, उनकी पूरबी तबतें सदन में गुंज रही थीं। देखते ही देखते सदन में टहलके गुंजने लगे। आखिर में पास बैठे खाद्यी मंत्री ने जब उन्हें रोका, तब वह भी समझ पाए और चुप हुए। हालांकि मौके की नज्वाकत को समझ सभापति ने सदन की कार्यवाही को आगे बढ़ा दिया। इसके बाद ही मंत्री ने शहत की सांस ली।

सब कुछ बदल गया

आम चुनाव से चार-पांच महीने पहले का समय विदेश मंत्रालय के लिए काफी आराम और सुकून वाला माना जाता है। इसकी भी अपनी तमाम वजहें होती हैं। इस दौरान न कोई खास उच्चस्तरीय दौरा होता है और न ही कोई बारी मेहमान ही दौरा पर आते हैं, क्योंकि सरकार की वरीयता में कूटनीति थोड़ी नीचे होती है। अधिकारियों को छुट्टियां भी आसानी से मिलती हैं और वह अधिकारी नहीं सरकार का इंतजार करते हैं। इस बार भी कुछ ऐसा ही मौलिक बन रहा था, लेकिन पुलवामा हमले ने सब कुछ बदल दिया। विदेश मंत्रालय में जो सक्रियता दिखी वैसी कभी कभार ही देखने को मिलती है। हमले के दिन ही विदेश मंत्रालय में देर रात तक अधिकारियों के बीच विमर्श होता रहा और कई बैठकों का दौर चला। पाकिस्तान से लेकर जापान तक के 25 देशों के राजनयिकों से कुछ ही घंटों में मुलाकात का न केवल एजेंडा तैयार हुआ, बल्कि उस पर अमल भी हुआ। इस तरह देखा जाए तो राज के कार्यकाल में विदेश मंत्रालय की व्यस्तता शुरू से लेकर आखिर तक बनी हुई है।



शंभुनाथ पांडेय

भारतीय सेना को इतना मजबूत बनाएं कि दुश्मनों में दहशत हो

पुलवामा में हुए कायराना फिदायीन हमले में देश के 40 से अधिक जवान शहीद हो गये. इस घटना ने देश को स्तब्ध कर दिया है. दुखी और आक्रोशित कर दिया है. जरूरी हो गया है कि अब सुरक्षा नीतियों की समीक्षा की जाये, सैन्य बलों को मजबूत किया जाये और आतंकियों को उनकी भाषा में जवाब मिले. इसके अलावा, इस बात पर भी गौर किया जाये कि बदले की कार्रवाई व युद्धोन्माद के बीच शांति बहाली की राजनीतिक प्रक्रिया के रास्ते भी कैसे निकाले जा सकते हैं. इन्हीं बातों के मद्देनजर आज की विशेष प्रस्तुति...



रामेश कुमार
लेखिका एवं विश्लेषक

सरकार से इतनी उम्मीद तो कर ही सकते हैं कि सुरक्षाबलों को मजबूत वाहन दें व उन्नत श्रेणी के सुरक्षा कवच प्रदान करें.

सुरक्षा प्रोटोकॉल को सख्ती से लागू कराएं

कश्मीर के पिछले पंद्रह-बीस सालों के इतिहास पर नजर डालें, तो छिटपुट आतंकी हमले होते रहे थे. लेकिन, धीरे-धीरे ऐसे हमले घटते गये थे. बड़े हमले भी हुए, लेकिन कुछ वर्षों का अंतराल बना रहा. साल 2007-08 के बाद सेना पर बड़े हमले सामने आये, खासकर साल 2009 से लेकर 2013 तक केजुअल्टीज कम हुई. साल 2014 के बाद से एक बार फिर से ये आंकड़े बढ़ना शुरू हुए. सेना पर छोटे हमले बढ़े, आम नागरिकों की मौतें ज्यादा होने लगीं. इन बातों को ध्यान से देखने की जरूरत है. पुलवामा में जो हुआ है, वह भयानक है. इतनी बड़ी मात्रा में विस्फोटक सामग्री गाड़ी के साथ काफिले के बीच में पहुंच गयी और किसी को भनक नहीं लगी. खबर है कि इसे स्थानीय स्तर पर बनाया गया था. पुलवामा के इलाके फौज और पुलिस की बहुत सारी टुकड़ियां हमेशा रहती हैं और सक्रिय रहती हैं. फिर क्यों नहीं इसका पता चल सका पहले, यह सवाल है. राज्यपाल ने खुद स्वीकार किया है कि हमसे गलती हुई है. पुलिस ने एक हफ्ते पहले ही आतंकी हमले की चेतावनी दी थी. इस चेतावनी को सीआरपीएफ और राज्यपाल ने क्यों संज्ञान में नहीं लिया? इस समय सिक्योरिटी हेड खुद राज्यपाल ही हैं. फिर इतनी बड़ी गलती कैसे हो गयी? नागरिक वाहनों को क्यों इजाजत दी गयी काफिले के गुजरने के दौरान? आंकड़े बताते हैं कि जब शांति प्रक्रिया जारी थी और बातचीत चल रही थी, सेना पर हमले भी घटते गये और लोग भी कम हताहत हुए थे. लेकिन, बातचीत खत्म कर दी गयी और अब फिर से वही खूनी मंजर जारी है. सबसे बड़ी त्रासदी यही है कि सरकार बातचीत ही नहीं करना चाहती, जिसका परिणाम हिंसक और वीभत्स रूप में हमारे सामने है, हमारे इतने सुरक्षाबलों की जानें जा रही हैं, आम नागरिक मारे जा रहे हैं. इंसानी जान की इतनी सख्ती कीमत कभी नहीं होनी चाहिए. सरकार को अपनी राजनीति के लिए सेना के जवानों को तबाह नहीं करना चाहिए. देश की जनता को खड़े होकर कहना चाहिए, आपको एक भी जान के साथ खिलवाड़ करने का हक नहीं है. देश में कोई ऐसा विपक्ष भी मौजूद नहीं है, जो शांति कायम करने के लिए प्रयास करे और बातचीत शुरू करे. बदले की बात करने से किसी का फायदा नहीं होने वाला. खैर, सरकार से इतनी उम्मीद तो कर ही सकते हैं कि सुरक्षाबलों को मजबूत वाहन दें, उन्नत श्रेणी के सुरक्षा कवच प्रदान करें और सुरक्षा प्रोटोकॉल को सख्ती से लागू करावें.

इंटेलिजेंस की नाकामी का परिणाम यह हादसा

यह आतंकी घटना सुरक्षा एजेंसियों की चूक का परिणाम है और निसंदेह इस गतिविधि में पाकिस्तान का हाथ भी शामिल है. बहुत सौची-समझी साजिश के तहत इस शांति ढंग से इस घटना को अंजाम दिया गया है. यह देश की सुरक्षा पर सवाल खड़े करने वाली घटना है. इंटेलिजेंस के लोगों ने कैसे उस वाहन को काफिले के बीच में आने दिया, यह बड़ा सवाल है. ऐसे कैसे कोई कार 100 किलो विस्फोटक सामग्री लेकर चली गयी और उसके कोई चेक करनेवाला भी नहीं था. गवर्नर साहब ने खुद स्वीकार किया है कि वह आतंकी घटना खुफिया एजेंसियों की नाकामी का परिणाम है. मुझे आश्चर्य इस बात की भी है कि जिस तरह अमेरिका में 9/11 की घटना हुई थी जिस पर बात होती रहती है, कहीं अमेरिका ने दूसरा 9/11 तो नहीं होने दिया था. यहां हमें सावधान होने की जरूरत है. हर बार जब भी हम इन एजेंसियों या सरकार में बैठे लोगों से बात करते हैं, तो वे कहते हैं कि हमने बहुत सी घटनाएं होने से रोकी हैं, यह एक चूक हुई है बस. ऐसा हो सकता है कि वे सही ही हैं, लेकिन उनकी इस बात से कोई प्रभावित नहीं होता है.



प्रो एसडी मून
सदस्य, कार्यकारी काउंसिल, आईडीएसए

अगर सरकार को कुछ करना है, तो उसे तुरंत करना चाहिए. अगर दो दिन और निकल गये, तो उस गतिविधि का महत्व नहीं रह जायेगा.

यह आतंकी घटना देश के लिए झटका है. अगर सरकार को कुछ करना है, तो उन्हें तुरंत करना चाहिए. अगर दो दिन और निकल गये, तो उस गतिविधि का महत्व नहीं रह जायेगा. कश्मीर घाटी में जैश-ए-मोहम्मद की सक्रियता का पता सबको है और सबको यह भी पता है कि पाकिस्तान उसका पूरा सहयोग कर रहा है. जैश-ए-मोहम्मद का कश्मीर में नेटवर्क बहुत तगड़ा है, सब जानते हैं. यह सब कोई नयी बात नहीं है. कश्मीर में राज्यपाल शासन लागू करने का मतलब ही था कि सरकार यह मानकर चल रही थी कि खबरात कर देंगे, लेकिन फिर भी यह घटना हुई. जबसे हमने यह ज्यादा कहना शुरू किया है कि पाकिस्तानियों को हम ठीक कर देंगे, कश्मीरियों को ठीक कर देंगे, तबसे ज्यादा समस्या शुरू हुई है. सुरक्षा मसले पर केवल सैन्य कार्रवाई से कुछ सुधर नहीं रहा है. हम अपनी नीतियों से केवल यह दिखा रहे हैं कि हम दोनों जगहों पर सबको बराबर कर देंगे और हम किसी की परवाह नहीं करते हैं. लेकिन, इसका कोई असर नहीं हो रहा है. चाहे फौज के जनरल कश्मीर जाकर बोलें या हमारे राजनेता, स्थिति सुधरी नहीं है और खराब ज्यादा हो गयी है. अब चुनाव नजदीक है, तो चुनाव तक कोई शांति प्रक्रिया भी देखने को नहीं मिलेगी. चारों तरफ प्रचार होगा कि हमने थपड़ का जवाब मुक्के से दिया है.

सख्ती से दिया जाए जवाब

पाकिस्तान की नीतियों में कोई परिवर्तन नहीं आ रहा है और आतंकवादी संगठनों को वह खुला समर्थन अभी भी दे रहा है. इसी का वीभत्स रूप पुलवामा में देखने को मिला है. कश्मीर और पाकिस्तान को लेकर हमें अपनी नीतियों की समीक्षा करनी होगी कि आखिर कमी कहाँ रह गयी. कहीं तो कमजोरी रह गयी है, जिसका फायदा उन्होंने उठाया है. लोग शांति की बात करते हैं और इतने जवान मारे जा रहे हैं. अब अगर इसका सख्ती से जवाब नहीं दिया गया, तो देश में संदेश जायेगा कि यह कमजोर सरकार है. चूँकि चुनाव भी नजदीक हैं, इसलिए सरकार जरूर सख्त कदम उठायेगी. अब पाकिस्तान को उसकी ही भाषा में जवाब देना पड़ेगा.



प्रकाश सिंह
पूर्व डीजीपी, बीएसएफ

सेना को जरूरी सैन्य-संसाधन दिये जाएं

जब भी इस तरह का कोई बड़ा हमला होता है, तो इसमें कहीं न कहीं चूक जरूर होती है. यह चूक अब एक इन्कॉयगरी (जांच) का मुद्दा है. मोटे तौर पर देखें, तो जब भी सेना के जवानों का इस तरह कोई कॉन्वॉय (काफिला) होता है, तो जहां से चलना है और जहां जाना है, वहां तक चाकचौबंद सड़क व्यवस्था के साथ संचिद गतिविधियों पर सेना की नजर रहती है, ताकि कोई चूक न होने पाये. यह एक लंबी प्रक्रिया है. जाहिर है, इस प्रक्रिया को पूरा नहीं किया गया होगा, तभी चूक की स्थिति बनी होगी. यह सब एक बड़ी चूक का विषय है, क्योंकि आम तौर पर इतनी बड़ी कॉन्वॉय को नहीं चलाया जाता. ऐसे हादसों पर मीडिया में यह फैलने लगता है कि इसमें खुफिया सक्रियता में कमी थी, क्योंकि अगर खुफिया तंत्र मजबूत होता, तो हादसा होता ही नहीं. एक हद तक यह बात ठीक है, लेकिन इस बात से कोई निष्कर्ष नहीं निकाला जा सकता. यह एक फिदायीन (सुसाइड बम्बिंग) हमला है, जिसे रोकना बहुत ही मुश्किल होता है. अफगानिस्तान में न जाने कितने हजार करोड़ डॉलर दिये गये, अमेरिका ने बड़े-बड़े हथियारों-उपकरणों का इस्तेमाल किया, लेकिन वहां फिदायीन हमले नहीं रुके. हालांकि, ऐसा नहीं है कि भारत में फिदायीन हमले के खिलाफ कुछ नहीं किया जा सकता. मगर, इसके लिए जरूरी यह है कि सैन्य-क्षमता का विस्तार हो.



अजय साहनी
आंतरिक सुरक्षा विशेषज्ञ

क्या सरकार ने भारतीय सेना को इतना मजबूत बनाया है कि जवान पाकिस्तान में घुस कर लड़ाई लड़ सकें? नहीं! सरकार ने सेना को कमजोर बनाया है. इस देश में तमाम सरकारें झूठ के आधार पर नीतियां बनाती रही हैं. बीते तीस साल से यही हो रहा है.

लड़ाई लड़ सकें? नहीं! सरकार ने सेना को कमजोर बनाया है. इस देश में तमाम सरकारें झूठ के आधार पर नीतियां बनाती रही हैं. बीते तीस साल से यही हो रहा है. हर हमले के बाद झूठे नेता बयानवादी बन जाते हैं और कहते हैं कि अब ऐसा आगे कभी नहीं होगा. हमले पर हमले होते जा रहे हैं, लेकिन ये सरकारें सेना के नाम पर वोट बैंक की राजनीति कर रही हैं. इस तरह से राष्ट्रनिर्माण संभव नहीं है और न ही इस तरह देश सशक्त बन पायेगा.

(बातचीत : वसीम अकरम)

इस मॉड्यूल का पर्दाफाश जरूरी

कुछ तो जो चूक थी, वह स्वाभाविक थी. चूँकि, एक एमपीवी हाईवे से काफिला जा रहा था, जो हद से ज्यादा बड़ा था और बहुत धीमी गति से चल रहा था. नियमानुसार, जब ऐसा काफिला जा रहा होता है, तो किसी भी अन्य वाहन को बीच में आने नहीं दिया जाता. लेकिन, लंबे समय से ऐसे खतरे का कोई अंदाजा नहीं था, और हालात सामान्य चल रहे थे. ऐसी स्थिति में अक्सर ऐसा देखा गया है कि निजी वाहन धीमी गति से चल रहे काफिले से आगे निकल जाते हैं और कोई उन्हें नहीं रोकता. इस दृष्टि से देखा जाये, तो चूक तो हुई है. नब्बे के दशक में जब फौज और पैरामिलिट्री जवानों के काफिले चलते थे, तो उनके बीच में आने की किसी को इजाजत नहीं मिलती थी और सबको सख्ती से रोक लिया जाता था. इस सख्ती को दोबारा लागू करना पड़ेगा, अगर ऐसे हालात जारी रहें. नब्बे के दशक में और साल 2000 के दशक के शुरुआती सालों में फौज और सुरक्षा बल के लोग काफिलों के बीच घुसने वाले के खिलाफ कड़ी कार्रवाई करते थे. लेकिन, पिछले चंद सालों में ये होना शुरू हो गया है कि अगर आपने कड़ी कार्रवाई की, तो कार्रवाई करने वाले को ही लटका दिया जाता था. इसलिए, भी अब ढील देखी जाने लगी थी. और अंततः यह चूक साबित हुई. अब इन चीजों को भी बदलना पड़ेगा.



सुशांत सरिन
रक्षा विशेषज्ञ

नब्बे के दशक में जब फौज और पैरामिलिट्री जवानों के काफिले चलते थे, तो उनके बीच में आने की किसी को इजाजत नहीं मिलती थी और सबको सख्ती से रोक लिया जाता था. इस सख्ती को दोबारा लागू करना पड़ेगा, अगर ऐसे हालात जारी रहें.

दूसरी चूक खुफिया एजेंसियों के फेल होने के रूप में हुई है. जब भी इस तरह का बड़ा हमला होता है, बहुत सारी चीजें शामिल होती हैं, उन्हें सक्रियता से सफल बनाने में, कहीं से बारूद आता है, कहीं पर उपकरण रखा जाता है, कोई वाहन की व्यवस्था करता है, फिर कोई बारूद से बम बनाता है और वाहन में प्लांट करता है. सुसाइड बॉम्बर को ट्रेनिंग दी जाती है, उस पर निगरानी रखी जाती है, उसे लगातार इस कृत्य के लिए प्रेरित किया जाता है. फिर एक आदमी सारी जानकारी जुटाता है, रेकी होती है, कहीं से अंजाम पूरा करने के लिए पैसा आता है. ये तमाम बातें आतंकी घटना को अंजाम देने से पहले होती हैं. ये मान लेना कि अचानक किसी

(बातचीत : देवेश)



डॉ ध्रुवज्योति भट्टाचार्य
रिसर्च फेलो, इंडियन काउंसिल ऑफ बर्ड्स अफेयर्स, दिल्ली

पाकिस्तान को कड़ा संदेश देना अब जरूरी हो गया है

जम्मू-कश्मीर के पुलवामा जिले में हुए फिदायीन हमले से एक बार फिर यह बात साबित हो गयी है कि पाकिस्तान एक ऐसा देश है, जो आतंकवाद और आतंकवादी समूहों का समर्थन करता है. पाकिस्तान स्थिति संगठन जैश-ए-मुहम्मद के आतंकी आदिल अहमद डार ने इस आत्मघाती हमले को अंजाम दिया. इससे यह बात साफ हो जाती है कि पाकिस्तान में खुलेआम घूम रहे आतंकी भारत के खिलाफ साजिश रच रहे हैं. यह हमला भारत के खुफिया विभाग के लिए भी एक बड़ी विफलता है, क्योंकि वह इतने बड़े हमले के बारे में पहले से कुछ भी खबर नहीं दे पाया. अब यह देखना जरूरी है कि इस बार भारत सरकार किस तरह इस हमले को अंतरराष्ट्रीय स्तर पर पेश करती है. भारत के पास यही मौका है कि वह पाकिस्तान को एक जबरदस्त संदेश दे, ताकि पाकिस्तान सरकार को यह मानना पड़े कि ऐसे मानव-

विरोधी संगठनों का उसे समर्थन नहीं करना चाहिए. मेरा मानना है कि सिर्फ पाकिस्तान को 'भोस्ट फेवर्ड नेशन' की सूची से हटा देना ही पर्याप्त नहीं है. इस मुद्दे को सारे सबूतों के साथ, संयुक्त राष्ट्र परिषद और अंतरराष्ट्रीय संस्थाओं में भी ले जाना जरूरी है. हाफिज सईद के साथ-साथ सारे आतंकी संगठनों के खिलाफ कड़ी से कड़ी सजा की मांग करके भारत सरकार पाकिस्तान को कड़ा सबक सिखा सकती है. जब तक पाकिस्तान निरंतर भारत के खिलाफ ऐसे आतंकियों को समर्थन करता रहेगा, तब तक भारत के नौजवान शहीद रहेंगे. इसलिए हमें इसे हर हाल में रोकना ही होगा. यह तत्काल आवश्यकता है कि आतंकवाद के मुद्दे पर दुनिया के सभी देश मिलकर पाकिस्तान को पृथक करें. पाकिस्तानी मीडिया इस हमले को एक छोटी घटना मान रहा है. वहां यह दर्शाया जा रहा है कि यह हमला भारत की ही

साजिश है, जो आनेवाले चुनाव में प्रभाव डालेगा. ऐसा कहकर ही पाकिस्तान सरकार अपनी जिम्मेदारी से पीछे हट रहा है. जम्मू-कश्मीर, पंजाब और राजस्थान में सुरक्षा और भी बढ़ानी होगी, ताकि आतंकियों ऐसे हमले न होने पावें. सुरक्षा बलों और खुफिया संगठनों के बीच बढ़िया सामंजस्य की आवश्यकता है. ऐसे संकेत में एक-दूसरे पर दोषारोपण की बजाय हमें अपनी कमियों को ढूँढना चाहिए और उन्हें ठीक करना चाहिए. आनेवाले दिनों में, भारत सरकार को ऐसे आतंकवादी संगठनों द्वारा बवाल फेंक के हस्तगत की जान करनी है. इसलिए, भारत को सारे अंतरराष्ट्रीय आर्थिक संगठन और खुफिया संगठनों के साथ मिलकर काम करना होगा. उन्नत तक इन आतंकी संगठनों को आर्थिक सहायता मिलती रहेगी, ऐसे हमलों को रोक पाना मुश्किल होगा. हमें सतर्कता बढ़ा देनी चाहिए.



ट्रंप जैसा कर रहे हैं वैसा कभी नहीं हुआ



चार्ली सावेज

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मैक्सिको से लगती सीमा पर दीवार बनाने के अपने फैसले को सही ठहराने के लिए डोनाल्ड ट्रंप ने पिछले राष्ट्रपतियों द्वारा लगाए गए आपातकाल का जिक्र किया। लेकिन ट्रंप यह तथ्य छिपा रहे हैं कि कांग्रेस द्वारा दीवार बनाने पर असहमति जताने के बाद उन्होंने आपातकालीन शक्तियों के इस्तेमाल का फैसला लिया है। ऐसा अमेरिका में पहले कभी नहीं हुआ।

अमेरिकी राष्ट्रपति डोनाल्ड ट्रंप ने शुक्रवार को मैक्सिको से लगती सीमा पर दीवार बनाने के लिए असाधारण शक्तियों के अपने आह्वान का औचित्य ठहराने के लिए लगभग पांच दर्जन पिछले उदाहरणों को गिनाया, जब अतीत में दोनों ही दलों के राष्ट्रपतियों ने आपातकाल की घोषणा की थी। इसके बावजूद ट्रंप ने अभी जो किया है, उसकी कोई मिसाल नहीं है।

वर्ष 1976 से (जिस वर्ष संसद ने राष्ट्रीय आपात कानून बनाया) कभी भी आपातकालीन शक्तियों को लागू नहीं किया गया, जिसमें राष्ट्रपति को भी शामिल किया गया था कि वह सांसदों को किसी परियोजना पर पैसा खर्च करने के लिए दबाव नहीं बना सकते, जिसके वित्तपोषण के खिलाफ उन्होंने फैसला लिया है। इसके विपरीत ट्रंप ने उस मूल सिद्धांत को चुनौती दी है कि सरकारी खजाने पर विधायी शाखा का नियंत्रण होता है।

एक अमेरिकी विश्वविद्यालय के सरकारी प्रोफेसर और इमरजेंसी प्रेसिडेंशियल पावर : फ्रॉम द ड्राफ्टिंग ऑफ द कंस्टीट्यूशन टू द वार ऑन टेरर नामक पुस्तक के लेखक क्रिस एडवल्सन कहते हैं, 'ऐसा अन्य राष्ट्रपतियों ने भी किया है, इसलिए यह भी तर्कसंगत लगता है।

लेकिन ऐसा कोई उदाहरण नहीं है कि राष्ट्रपति ने कांग्रेस से किसी परियोजना के वित्तपोषण के लिए कहा हो और कांग्रेस ने मना कर दिया हो, फिर राष्ट्रपति ने कहा हो कि किसी भी तरह से ऐसा करने के लिए मैं अपनी आपातकालीन शक्तियों का इस्तेमाल करूंगा।

न्यूयॉर्क विश्वविद्यालय के स्कूल ऑफ लॉ के ब्रेनन सेंटर फॉर जस्टिस द्वारा राष्ट्रपतियों की आपातकालीन शक्तियों पर किए गए अध्ययन में दिखाया गया है कि जिमी कार्टर प्रशासन से लेकर अब तक 59 बार आपातकाल की घोषणा में किसी ने भी ट्रंप की तरह महत्वपूर्ण मामले में ऐसा नहीं किया है।

ज्यादातर राष्ट्रपतियों ने मानवाधिकारों के उल्लंघन, आतंकवाद या अंतरराष्ट्रीय नशीले पदार्थों की तस्करी जैसे गलत कामों के चलते विभिन्न देशों के अधिकारियों और समूहों पर प्रतिबंध लगाने के लिए (उनकी संपत्ति को फ्रीज कर दिया गया और अमेरिकियों के लिए उनके साथ व्यवसाय करने को अवैध घोषित किया गया) ऐसा कदम उठाया था। उनके साथ कोई विवाद नहीं जुड़ा था, क्योंकि कांग्रेस चाहती थी कि कार्यकारी शाखा उस तरह से काम करे।



कांग्रेस (संसद) ने एक कानून भी बनाया है, जो घोषित आपातकाल में राष्ट्रपति को यह अधिकार देता है कि वह सैन्य उपयोग से संबंधित परियोजनाओं के निर्माण के लिए सैन्य निर्माण निधि को पुनर्निर्देशित करे। यही वह कानून है, जिस पर ट्रंप निर्भर हैं और उनके प्रशासन का तर्क है कि इसका मतलब है कि वह कार्यकारी अधिकारी हैं, जो सांसद चाहते थे कि वह उसे हासिल करने में सक्षम हों।

लेकिन ब्रेनन अध्ययन केंद्र की देखभाल करने वाली एलिजाबेथ गोंड्रिन व्यापक विवाद की ओर इशारा करते हुए कहती है कि क्या

मैक्सिको से सटी सीमा पर आपातकाल जैसी स्थिति है, जिसे एक दीवार बनाकर हल किया जाएगा? इसके साथ-साथ तथ्य यह भी है कि कांग्रेस ने पहले ही स्पष्ट कर दिया है कि ट्रंप की दीवार पर अतिरिक्त अरबों डॉलर खर्च करने का उसका इरादा नहीं है। उन्होंने कहा कि 'इस स्थिति में आपातकाल जैसा कुछ भी नहीं है, चाहे आप कितनी भी ढीली परिभाषा का उपयोग करें। और संसद ने यह स्पष्ट कर दिया है कि वह यह चाहती है कि राष्ट्रपति इस उद्देश्य के लिए धन का उपयोग न करें, इसलिए वह संसद की इच्छा को विफल करने के लिए आपातकालीन शक्तियों का उपयोग करने वाले राष्ट्रपति हैं। अतीत में आपातकालीन शक्तियों का जिस तरह उपयोग किया गया, यह बिल्कुल उससे अलग है।'

प्रेस वार्ता में एवाइट हाउस ने अतीत के केवल दो मामलों की पहचान की, जिसमें संसद द्वारा निर्धारित उद्देश्य से अलग मद में धन खर्च करने के लिए राष्ट्रपति ने आपातकालीन शक्तियों का इस्तेमाल किया। दोनों युद्ध से जुड़े सैन्य निर्माण से संबंधित थे। एक खाड़ी युद्ध के दौरान राष्ट्रपति जॉर्ज बुश के काल का था और दूसरा 11 सितंबर के

हमले के बाद जॉर्ज डब्ल्यू बुश द्वारा आपातकाल की घोषणा से संबंधित था। इसमें कोई भी वित्तपोषित परियोजना नहीं थी, जिसे संसद ने पहले आकलन किया और खारिज किया था।

आपातकालीन शक्तियों के कानूनों के पीछे का विचार यह है कि कांग्रेस चाहती थी कि राष्ट्रपति के पास संकट में सक्रिय होकर के लिए अतिरिक्त प्राधिकरण हों, जब सरकार को तुरंत जवाब देना चाहिए। ब्रेनन सेंटर के अध्ययन ने ऐसे 123 कानूनों की पहचान की है।

टेक्सस विश्वविद्यालय, ऑस्टिन के एक कानून के प्रोफेसर स्टीफन आई व्लाडेक का कहना है कि सांसद ट्रंप के कदमों की प्रतिक्रिया में उन कानूनों में आमूलचूल परिवर्तन ला सकते हैं, जिसके राष्ट्रपति द्वारा उपयोग किए जाने पर कड़े प्रतिबंध लग सकते हैं। और फिर चिंता इस बात की है कि संसद एक भावी राष्ट्रपति को उन सभी साधनों को रखने से रोक सकती है, जिन्हें भविष्य के आपातकाल के बारे में प्रतिक्रिया देने की आवश्यकता हो सकती है। इसलिए ट्रंप की अल्पकालिक जीत राष्ट्रपति पद के लिए दीर्घकालिक नुकसान बन सकती है।



अजय साहनी

रणनीतिक विश्लेषक

सतत रणनीतिक तैयारी की जरूरत

कैंग ने राफेल पर अपनी रिपोर्ट सत्र के आखिरी दिन पेश की। यह रिपोर्ट उसकी कही बातों के कारण ही नहीं, बल्कि उसकी चुप्पी के कारण भी ध्यान देने लायक है। अस्पष्टता से घिरे राफेल सौदे के बारे में एक बात स्पष्ट है : वह यह कि इस मुद्दे पर आखिरी बात अभी नहीं कही गई है।

नया और त्रुटिपूर्ण सौदा

पहले उन तथ्यों पर बात करें, जो बंद कमरे से बाहर निकलकर आई हैं।

- अब इस बात की पुष्टि हो चुकी है कि राफेल सौदा प्रधानमंत्री मोदी का वन मैन शो था। श्री मोदी इसके निर्देशक थे, बेहद सावधानी से इसकी पटकथा तैयार की गई, और सभी महत्वपूर्ण निर्णय प्रधानमंत्री कार्यालय (पीएमओ) द्वारा लिए गए।
- यूपीए के दौर के सहमति पत्र (एमओयू) को रद्द करने के बारे में पहले फैसला नहीं लिया गया, तो उसके दोस कारण थे। पहले एक नया सौदा करने का फैसला लिया गया, और चूंकि पहले का सहमति पत्र इन नए सौदे के आड़े आ रहा था, इसलिए उसे रद्द किया गया।
- महत्वपूर्ण लोगों को फैसले से बाहर रखा गया : जैसे कि रक्षा मंत्री, विदेश मंत्री, वित्त मंत्री, वायुसेना, डिफेंस एक्विजिशन कार्डिसिल (डीएससी) और सुरक्षा मामले पर कैबिनेट कमेटी (सीसीएस)।
- आठ अप्रैल, 2015 को विदेश सचिव ने पेरिस में मीडिया से कहा कि राफेल सौदे पर दोनों देशों की सरकारों तथा दस एलॉट और हिंदुस्तान एयरोनॉटिक्स लिमिटेड (एचएएल) के बीच बातचीत आखिरी दौर में पहुंच चुकी है। उन्होंने यह भी कहा कि भारतीय प्रधानमंत्री तथा फ्रेंच राष्ट्रपति की बातचीत के एजेंडे में राफेल नहीं है। दो दिन बाद 10 अप्रैल को नरेंद्र मोदी और ओलांद के बीच बातचीत के बाद नए सौदे की घोषणा हुई।
- यह नया सौदा सचमुच में नया सौदा था। क्योंकि सौदा 126 लड़ाकू विमानों के लिए नहीं, बल्कि मात्र 36 लड़ाकू विमानों के लिए हुआ। विमानों की कीमत वह नहीं थी, जो यूपीए के दौर में तय हुई थी, बल्कि सौदा नई कीमत पर तय हुआ। पहले जो ऑफसेट पार्टनर (एचएएल) तय हुआ था, उसकी जगह नया ऑफसेट पार्टनर चुना गया (यह एक निजी कंपनी थी, जिसका विमान या उसके पुर्जे बनाने का कोई अनुभव नहीं था)।



पी चिदंबरम

पूर्व केंद्रीय मंत्री

निभाएगी), बैंक गारंटी (बैंक द्वारा दी गई गारंटी कि कांटेक्ट की शर्तें पूरी न होने पर वह देनदार की देनदारियां पूरी करेगा) और यहां तक कि एस्कॉ अकाउंट (दो पार्टियों द्वारा लेन-देन पूर्ण करने के लिए बैंक खाते के संरक्षक या ट्रस्टी के रूप में तीसरी पार्टी को शामिल किया जाता है। लेन-देन का धन इस खाते में रखा जाता है और ट्रस्टी की सहमति के बाद ही किसी पार्टी के लिए जारी किया जाता है) तक के प्रावधान नहीं थे। सौदे में ये सारी छूटें प्रधानमंत्री कार्यालय के निर्देशों के बाद दी गईं।

- अनिवार्य भ्रष्टाचार-निरोधी धारा हाटा दी गई। नए सौदे में दलाली देने के खिलाफ धारा नहीं होगी, एजेंटों को जोड़ने के खिलाफ कोई धारा नहीं होगी, इसमें ईमानदारी और पारदर्शिता पर कोई समझौता नहीं होगा, और आपूर्तिकर्ताओं के खातों तक किसी तरह की पहुंच नहीं होगी। ये निर्णय भी प्रधानमंत्री कार्यालय द्वारा लिए गए।
- भारत की ओर से सौदे पर बातचीत के लिए जो टीम (आईएनटी) बनी थी, उसके तीन विशेषज्ञों, एम पी सिंह, सलाहकार (मूल्य), ए आर सुले, फाइनेंशियल मैनेजर (एयर) और राजीव वर्मा, संयुक्त सचिव और एक्विजिशन मैनेजर (एयर) ने असहमति में तीखी टिप्पणी लिखी। आठ पृष्ठों की इन टिप्पणियों में इन्होंने टीम के दूसरे चार सदस्यों द्वारा की गई सिफारिशों को चुनौती दी है और शर्तों से बार-बार हटाने और तरह-तरह की छूट देने की धमकियां उड़ा दी हैं।

सुप्रीम ऑडिट से समझौता

जैसे ही एक एकर तथ्य बाहर आने लगे, सरकार ने बचने की आड़ तलाशनी शुरू की। पहले उसने सर्वोच्च न्यायालय के फैसले की आड़ लेने की कोशिश की। लेकिन उसकी यह कोशिश विफल हो गई, क्योंकि शीर्ष अदालत ने अपने फैसले में राफेल की कीमत और तरह-तरह की छूट देने की धमकियां उड़ा दी हैं।

माफ़ी और छूटें भी माफ़ी

- भारत द्वारा दो आपूर्तिकर्ताओं दसॉल्ट और एमबीडीए को 60,000 करोड़ रुपये देने के एवज में जिस पेमेंट सेक्युरिटी मैकेनिज्म का प्रावधान था, उसे बेहद लापरवाही से हटा दिया गया। नए सौदे में सोवरेन गारंटी (यह एक रूढ़िवादी कि कंपनी के दिवालिया होने की स्थिति में उसकी जिम्मेदारी संबंधित सरकार



रूस के प्रतिद्वंद्वी अमेरिका की सैली राइड 20 साल बाद यानी 1983 में पहली बार अंतरिक्ष यात्रा पर गईं। जहां तक पुरुष और स्त्री के बीच अंतरिक्ष यात्रा के अंतराल का संबंध है, रूस ने पुरुष यात्री को भेजने के दो वर्ष बाद ही पहली बार महिला को अंतरिक्ष में भेजा, जबकि अमेरिका ने इस खाई को पाटने में 22 वर्ष लगा दिए। अब तक सोवियत संघ/ रूस की चार महिलाएं अंतरिक्ष यात्रा पर गई हैं, जबकि अमेरिका की 45 महिलाएं अंतरिक्ष में जा चुकी हैं। ईरान का पहला अंतरिक्ष यात्री कोई पुरुष नहीं, बल्कि महिला थी। इसी तरह का एक रिकॉर्ड भारत में जन्मी सुनीता विलियम्स का भी है - जिनमें साठ (ग्यारह फीसदी) स्त्रियां थीं। जहां तक अंतरिक्ष अनुसंधान में महिलाओं की भागीदारी का प्रश्न है, तथ्य यह है कि अमेरिकी संगठन नासा के प्लेनेटरी मिशन में पंद्रह फीसदी महिला वैज्ञानिक हैं। इसरो में अनेक बड़े और जिम्मेदार पदों पर महिला वैज्ञानिक आसिन हैं, पर कुल मिलाकर महिला वैज्ञानिकों की हिस्सेदारी पांचवें हिस्से से भी कम है। भारत के प्रस्तावित मानव अंतरिक्ष अभियान का दायित्व डॉ वी आर ललितांबिका को दिया गया है, जिन्होंने देश के रॉकेट कार्यक्रम में अहम भूमिका निभाई है। सोवियत संघ की वेलेंटीना तेरेश्कोवा 1963 में दुनिया की पहली महिला अंतरिक्ष यात्री थीं, और



यादवेंद्र

विज्ञान चिंतक



पुलवामा में हुए आतंकी हमले के बाद देश में आक्रोश स्वाभाविक ही है और जवाबी कार्रवाई की मांग की जा रही है। अलबत्ता हमें पता होना चाहिए कि पाक अधिकृत कश्मीर से आतंकी हमले का पैटर्न बदल चुका है और पाकिस्तान के पास आतंकवाद की ताकत भी है।

अंतरिक्ष में महिलाओं की चुनौतियां

अध्ययन बताते हैं कि लचीली होने के कारण स्त्रियां अंतरिक्ष में विकिरण की बौछार झेलते हुए पुरुषों की तुलना में बेहतर काम पाएंगी। लेकिन अब तक लगभग साढ़े पांच सौ अंतरिक्ष यात्रियों में सिर्फ साठ ही महिलाएं थी।

प्रधानमंत्री ने पिछले साल घोषणा की थी कि 2022 से पहले गगनयात्रा अभियान के अंतर्गत देश का कोई 'बेटा या बेटों' अंतरिक्ष यात्रा पर जाएगा। यह एक राजनीतिक वक्तव्य था, लेकिन बाद में इसरो के प्रमुख डॉ के सिवन ने आधिकारिक घोषणा की कि हम ऐसा अंतरिक्ष यान बना रहे हैं, जिसमें सात दिनों तक तीन यात्री अंतरिक्ष की यात्रा कर सकते हैं। यात्रियों को अंतरिक्ष में भेजने के लिए दिसंबर 2021 का समय तय किया गया है, उससे पहले दो मानवरहित अभियान भी प्रस्तावित हैं। अब तक पूरी दुनिया में लगभग साढ़े पांच सौ यात्री अंतरिक्ष यात्रा पर जा चुके हैं, जिनमें साठ (ग्यारह फीसदी) स्त्रियां थीं। जहां तक अंतरिक्ष अनुसंधान में महिलाओं की भागीदारी का प्रश्न है, तथ्य यह है कि अमेरिकी संगठन नासा के प्लेनेटरी मिशन में पंद्रह फीसदी महिला वैज्ञानिक हैं। इसरो में अनेक बड़े और जिम्मेदार पदों पर महिला वैज्ञानिक आसिन हैं, पर कुल मिलाकर महिला वैज्ञानिकों की हिस्सेदारी पांचवें हिस्से से भी कम है। भारत के प्रस्तावित मानव अंतरिक्ष अभियान का दायित्व डॉ वी आर ललितांबिका को दिया गया है, जिन्होंने देश के रॉकेट कार्यक्रम में अहम भूमिका निभाई है। सोवियत संघ की वेलेंटीना तेरेश्कोवा 1963 में दुनिया की पहली महिला अंतरिक्ष यात्री थीं, और

रूस के प्रतिद्वंद्वी अमेरिका की सैली राइड 20 साल बाद यानी 1983 में पहली बार अंतरिक्ष यात्रा पर गईं। जहां तक पुरुष और स्त्री के बीच अंतरिक्ष यात्रा के अंतराल का संबंध है, रूस ने पुरुष यात्री को भेजने के दो वर्ष बाद ही पहली बार महिला को अंतरिक्ष में भेजा, जबकि अमेरिका ने इस खाई को पाटने में 22 वर्ष लगा दिए। अब तक सोवियत संघ/ रूस की चार महिलाएं अंतरिक्ष यात्रा पर गई हैं, जबकि अमेरिका की 45 महिलाएं अंतरिक्ष में जा चुकी हैं। ईरान का पहला अंतरिक्ष यात्री कोई पुरुष नहीं, बल्कि महिला थी। इसी तरह का एक रिकॉर्ड भारत में जन्मी सुनीता विलियम्स का भी है - जिनमें साठ (ग्यारह फीसदी) स्त्रियां थीं। जहां तक अंतरिक्ष अनुसंधान में महिलाओं की भागीदारी का प्रश्न है, तथ्य यह है कि अमेरिकी संगठन नासा के प्लेनेटरी मिशन में पंद्रह फीसदी महिला वैज्ञानिक हैं। इसरो में अनेक बड़े और जिम्मेदार पदों पर महिला वैज्ञानिक आसिन हैं, पर कुल मिलाकर महिला वैज्ञानिकों की हिस्सेदारी पांचवें हिस्से से भी कम है। भारत के प्रस्तावित मानव अंतरिक्ष अभियान का दायित्व डॉ वी आर ललितांबिका को दिया गया है, जिन्होंने देश के रॉकेट कार्यक्रम में अहम भूमिका निभाई है। सोवियत संघ की वेलेंटीना तेरेश्कोवा 1963 में दुनिया की पहली महिला अंतरिक्ष यात्री थीं, और



दे पाएं, जो पुरुषों के मुकाबले स्त्रियों को ध्यान में रखकर उछाले जाते हैं... हमारे बाद आने वाली महिला अंतरिक्ष यात्रियों के लिए एक सुदृढ़ मार्ग बनाकर छोड़ जाएं। पहले माना जाता था कि अंतरिक्ष में जाने वाले पुरुषों में महिला यात्रियों की तुलना में विकिरण बर्दाश्त कर सकने की क्षमता 30 फीसदी ज्यादा होती है-इसका मतलब हुआ कि पुरुष यात्री महिलाओं की तुलना में ज्यादा बार और ज्यादा अवधि तक अंतरिक्ष में जा सकते हैं, यह आर्थिक प्रश्न भी था। स्त्रियों को अंतरिक्ष यात्रा से अलग रखने का यह एक प्रमुख कारण बताया जाता था, पर कुछ दिनों पहले नासा के सहयोग से किया गया एक अध्ययन ब्रेन, बिहेवियर ऐंड इम्पैक्टिटी पुस्तक में प्रकाशित हुआ, जिसमें नर और मादा चूहों के

ऊपर कॉस्मिक विकिरण के एक्सपोजर और प्रभाव के बारे में बताया गया है। इस प्रयोग के जो नतीजे सामने आए हैं, वे बताते हैं कि विकिरण के कारण नर चूहों में संज्ञानात्मक क्षरण (कॉग्निटिव इंपैयरमेंट) जल्दी देखा गया और मादा चूहे विकिरण की बौछार को ज्यादा देर तक बर्दाश्त कर सकती हैं। इससे यह निष्कर्ष निकाला जा सकता है कि स्त्रियां अधिक विकिरण और मानसिक रूप से लचीली प्रकृति की होती हैं और अंतरिक्ष में जाने पर विकिरण की बौछार झेलते हुए पुरुषों की तुलना में बेहतर काम कर पाएंगी, ज्यादा लंबी अवधि तक काम कर पाएंगी। वर्ष 1978 में नासा द्वारा अंतरिक्ष यात्रा के लिए चुनी जाने वाली रिया सेडान के संस्मरण में उन बारीकियों का वर्णन है, जो शुरू-शुरू में स्त्रियों को लेकर सामने आती थीं-उनके कपड़े, खास तौर पर उनके अंतर्वस्त्र का डिजाइन उस समय बहुत क्रिटिकल माना जाता था, क्योंकि उनकी शारीरिक बनावट और जरूरत एकदम अलग होती थी। उन्हें ढीले वस्त्र पहनने पड़ते थे। अब तो महिला अंतरिक्ष यात्रियों के लिए माहवारी रोककर रखने के कई हानिरहित उपाय भी उपलब्ध हो गए हैं। गर्व की बात है कि इस दिशा में काम करने वाली भारतीय मूल की स्पेस गायनकॉलॉजिस्ट डॉ वार्न जैन अग्रणी वैज्ञानिक हैं। पुरुष प्रधान दुनिया में ये बारीकियां उपहास का विषय भी बनती थीं और स्त्रियों को अंतरिक्ष यात्रा से दूर रखने का ताकिक आधार भी। इस विवाद पर अंतरिक्ष अंतरिक्ष यात्री सैली राइड कहती हैं, 'प्रथम अंतरिक्ष में पुरुष और स्त्री को एकदम समान काम करना होता है...भारताना दोनों के बीच के अंतर को पाटने का महान आधार है।'



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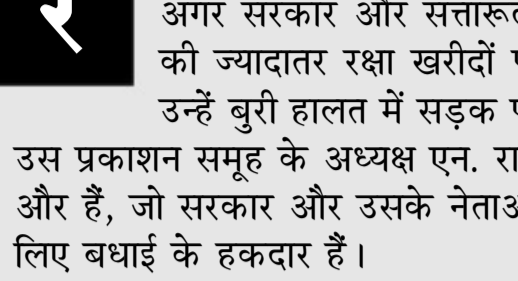
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दूसरी नज़र

- पी चिदंबरम**



फाल सौदे की गुल्थी भाजपा की उम्मीदों से कहीं ज्यादा तेजी से सुलझती जा रही है। अगर सरकार और सत्तारूढ़ पार्टी ने यह सोचा हो कि बिना पारदर्शिता के हुई हाल

की ज्यादातर रक्षा खरीदों पर परदा डाला जा सकता है, तो वह गलत थी। अब तो उन्हें बुरी हालत में सड़क पर खड़ा कर दिया गया है। इसका बड़ा श्रेय 'द हिंदू' और

उस प्रकाशन समूह के अध्यक्ष एन. राम को जाता है। हालांकि कुछ और महत्त्वपूर्ण लोग भी थे, और हैं, जो सरकार और उसके नेताओं के भारी दबाव के बावजूद पूरी ताकत से खड़े रहने के लिए बधाई के हकदार हैं।

नया और दोषपूर्ण सौदा

सबसे पहले तो उन तथ्यों पर गौर करें जिनका खुलासा हो चुका है। 1- अब यह साफ हो चुका है कि रफाल सौदा अकेले प्रधानमंत्री मोदी का किया हुआ है। मोदी ही इसके कर्ताधर्ता थे, इसे बड़ी ही चतुराई और सावधानी से अंजाम दिया गया, और सारे महत्त्वपूर्ण फैसले प्रधानमंत्री कार्यालय (पीएमओ) ने ही किए। 2- कुछ निश्चित कारणों की वजह से यूपीए के वक्त वाले सहमति पत्र को पहले खारिज न करने का फैसला किया गया था। पहले नया सौदा शुरू करने का फैसला हुआ, और चूंकि पूर्व का सहमति पत्र प्रभावी था, इसलिए उसे बाद में रद्द कर दिया गया। 3- फैसला करने वाले प्रमुख पक्षों- रक्षामंत्री, विदेश मंत्री, वायु सेना, रक्षा खरीद परिषद (डीएससी) और सुरक्षा मामलों की कैबिनेट समिति (सीसीएस) को बाहर रखा गया। 4-आठ अप्रैल, 2015 को पेरिस में विदेश सचिव ने मीडिया को बताया कि रफाल को लेकर दोनों सरकारों, दासो और हिंदुस्तान एरोनॉटिक्स लिमिटेड (एचएएल) के बीच बातचीत काफी आगे बढ़ चुकी थी और भारत के प्रधानमंत्री तथा फ्रांस के राष्ट्रपति के बीच होने वाली वार्ता के एजेंडे में रफाल का मुद्दा शामिल नहीं था। दो दिन बाद, दस अप्रैल को मोदी और ओलांद की



बैठक में नए सौदे का एलान हो गया!

5- यह नया करार वास्तव में नया था। एक सौ छब्बीस विमानों का नहीं, सिर्फ छत्तीस विमानों का सौदा, जो पूर्व में निर्धारित कीमत पर नहीं बल्कि नए दामों पर था। इसमें ऑफसेट भागीदार अब एचएएल नहीं रह गई थी, बल्कि नई ऑफसेट भागीदार आ गई थी (एक निजी कंपनी जिसे लड़ाकू विमान या विमानों के कल-पुर्जे बनाने का कोई अनुभव नहीं था)। ये फैसले दस अप्रैल को दोनों नेताओं के बीच हुई बातचीत में किए गए, न कि दो वार्ताकार दलों के बीच बातचीत के बाद।

छूट और चूक की भरमार

6- साठ हजार करोड़ रुपए की ‘भुगतान सुरक्षा प्रक्रिया’ में भारत दो आपूर्तिकर्ताओं- दासो और एमबीडीए को भुगतान करेगा, और यह एक तरह से सीधा-सीधा पैसे लुटाने जैसा है। कोई संप्रभुता की गारंटी नहीं होगी, बैंक गारंटी नहीं होगी और यहां तक कि एस्करो अकाउंट भी नहीं होगा। यह सारी छूट पीएमओ के निर्देश पर दी गई।

7- भ्रष्टाचार-विरोधी जरूरी धाराएं हटा ली गईं। कमीशन भुगतान मामलों में कार्रवाई का कोई प्रावधान नहीं है, एजेंटों की नियुक्ति के खिलाफ भी कोई धारा नहीं है, ईमानदारी को लेकर कोई बात नहीं है, और आपूर्तिकर्ताओं के लेखा-खातों तक कोई पहुंच नहीं होगी। ये सारे फैसले भी पीएमओ ने किए।

8- भारतीय वार्ताकारों के दल (आइएनटी) में तीन विशेषज्ञ सदस्यों- एमपी सिंह, सलाहकार (मूल्य), एआर सुले, एफएम (एआर) और राजीव वेलमा, जेएस एंड एएम (एआर) ने असहमति का एक तराड़ा नोट तैयार किया था। आठ पेज के इस नोट में आइएनटी के बाकी चार सदस्यों द्वारा की गई सिफारिशों को चुनौती दी गई थी।

दिखावटी ‘सुप्रीम’ ऑडिट

जैसे ही किसी नए तथ्य का खुलासा होता है, सरकार बचाव के लिए तोड़ निकालने में जुट जाती है। सबसे पहले तो सरकार ने सुप्रीम कोर्ट के फैसले में बचाव का रास्ता खोजा, लेकिन उसकी यह चाल इसलिए धरी रह गई, क्योंकि फैसले में यह स्वतः स्पष्ट है कि सुप्रीम कोर्ट ने विमानों की कीमत

किसानी की दुश्वारियां

दीपक गिरकर

नीति आयोग ने छोटे और सीमांत किसानों को प्रति हेक्टेयर पंद्रह हजार रुपए प्रतिवर्ष प्रत्यक्ष आय समर्थन के रूप में देने की अनुशंसा की थी। पर अंतरिम बजट में सरकार ने इन्हें छह हजार रुपए सालाना की सहायता प्रत्यक्ष लाभ अंतरण के जरिए और असंगठित क्षेत्र के श्रमिकों को तीन हजार रुपए प्रतिमाह पेंशन देने का प्रावधान किया गया है। मनरेगा के लिए आबंटन में वृद्धि, प्राकृतिक आपदा से प्रभावित किसानों को फसल ऋण पर दो फीसद ब्याज सब्सिडी और फसल ऋण का समय से भुगतान करने पर अतिरिक्त तीन फीसद ब्याज सब्सिडी की घोषणा की गई है। देश में ऐसी योजनाएं कुछ राज्यों में पहले से मौजूद हैं। तेलंगाना में छोटे और सीमांत किसानों को चालीस हजार रुपए वार्षिक मिल रहे हैं। ओडिशा में सभी किसानों को पांच हजार रुपए सालाना मिल रहे हैं। इसके अलावा ओडिशा में फसल युवाई के लिए पच्चीस हजार रुपए और भूमिहीन परिवारों को साढ़े बारह हजार रुपए प्रतिवर्ष के हिसाब से मिल रहे हैं। झारखंड में भी मुख्यमंत्री कृषि आशीर्वाद योजना के तहत छोटे और सीमांत किसानों को प्रति एकड़ पांच हजार रुपए प्रतिवर्ष उपलब्ध करार एा रहे हैं। अंतरिम बजट में घोषित प्रधानमंत्री किसान सम्मान निधि छह हजार रुपए बहुत कम है। तेलंगाना, ओडिशा और झारखंड के अलावा अन्य राज्य सरकारों को भी छोटे, सीमांत किसानों और भूमिहीन श्रमिकों को प्रत्यक्ष आय समर्थन योजना लागू करनी चाहिए।

देश में पचासी फीसद छोटे और सीमांत किसान हैं। इन किसानों की छोटी जोत होने के कारण इनकी उत्पादन लागत औसत लागत से काफी अधिक आती है। पीढ़ी-दर-पीढ़ी खेती के विभाजित होने से जोत का आकार घटता जा रहा है। खेतों का आकार छोटा होने से कृषि उत्पादन और फसलों से होने वाली बचत में कमी आ रही है। छोटे और सीमांत किसान खेती के लिए कृषि उपकरण और कृषि मशीनरी किराए पर लेते हैं। सिर्फ दस फीसद बड़े किसान न्यूनतम समर्थन मूल्यों का फायदा उठाते हैं। छोटे और सीमांत किसान फसल आते ही अपनी उपज कम कीमत पर बेचने को मजबूर होते हैं, क्योंकि वे कर्ज के बोझ से दबे रहते हैं। साल भर ये अपने गुजारे के लिए कृषि उत्पाद बाजार से खरीदते रहते हैं, जो इन्हें समर्थन मूल्य में वृद्धि की वजह से महंगे मिलते हैं।

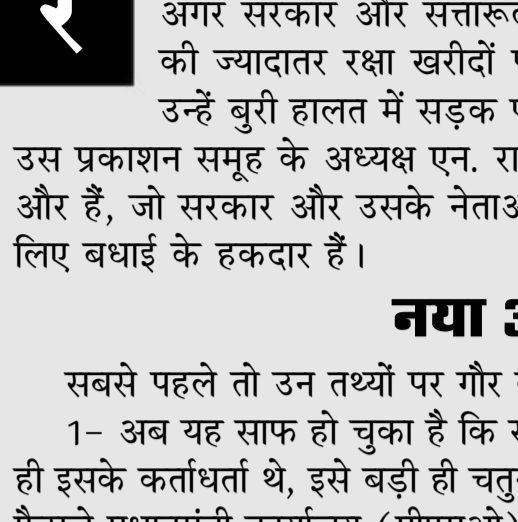
छोटी जोत वाले किसानों के पास खेती के पर्याप्त साधन, सिंचाई की व्यवस्था आदि का अभाव होता है और इस सबके लिए उन्हें बड़े किसानों पर निर्भर रहना पड़ता है। छोटे किसानों के लिए खेती के साधन जुटाना बेहद मुश्किल होता जा रहा है। ऐसे में जैसे-जैसे खेतों का आकार छोटा होता जा रहा है, किसानों को होने वाला फायदा भी कम हो रहा है। हर पांच साल में कृषि क्षेत्र में एक करोड़ छोटे किसान जुड़ रहे हैं। अगर यह दर बरकरार रही तो आने वाले समय में कृषि क्षेत्र के हालात बेकाबू हो सकते हैं।

लघु किसानों की सबसे बड़ी परेशानी है पूंजी की कमी। अपनी घरेलू जरूरतों से लेकर कृषि की लागत तक उन्हें पैसा चाहिए और इसके लिए वे साहूकार और किसान क्रेडिट कार्ड पर निर्भर रहते हैं। किसान क्रेडिट कार्ड से चूंकि सरलता से पैसा मिल जाता है, इसलिए इसका उपयोग वे कृषि की जगह अपने सामाजिक और घरेलू जरूरतों की पूर्ति में लगा देता है। पैसा खर्च होने के बाद किसानी की लागत के लिए साहूकारों के चुंगल में फंस जाता है। आज भी अधिकतर खेती मानसून के सहारे चलती है। मानसून के रूठ जाने पर सूखा, कीमती में वृद्धि, कर्ज का अप्रत्याशित बोझ, बैंकों के चक्कर, बिचौलियों और साहूकारों के घेरें में फंस कर छोटा किसान या तो जमीन बेचने पर मजबूर है या आत्महत्या पर।

इस तरह छोटे और सीमांत किसान अपनी

दूसरी नज़र

- पी चिदंबरम**



फाल सौदे की गुल्थी भाजपा की उम्मीदों से कहीं ज्यादा तेजी से सुलझती जा रही है। अगर

सरकार और सत्तारूढ़ पार्टी ने यह सोचा हो कि बिना पारदर्शिता के हुई हाल

की ज्यादातर रक्षा खरीदों पर परदा डाला जा सकता है, तो वह गलत थी। अब तो उन्हें बुरी

हालत में सड़क पर खड़ा कर दिया गया है। इसका बड़ा श्रेय 'द हिंदू' और

उस प्रकाशन समूह के अध्यक्ष एन. राम को जाता है। हालांकि कुछ और महत्त्वपूर्ण लोग भी थे,

और हैं, जो सरकार और उसके नेताओं के भारी दबाव के बावजूद पूरी ताकत से खड़े रहने के लिए

बधाई के हकदार हैं।

नया और दोषपूर्ण सौदा

सबसे पहले तो उन तथ्यों पर गौर करें जिनका खुलासा हो चुका है। 1- अब यह साफ हो चुका है कि रफाल सौदा अकेले प्रधानमंत्री मोदी का किया हुआ है। मोदी ही इसके कर्ताधर्ता थे, इसे बड़ी ही चतुराई और सावधानी से अंजाम दिया गया, और सारे महत्त्वपूर्ण फैसले प्रधानमंत्री कार्यालय (पीएमओ) ने ही किए। 2- कुछ निश्चित कारणों की वजह से यूपीए के वक्त वाले सहमति पत्र को पहले खारिज न करने का फैसला किया गया था। पहले नया सौदा शुरू करने का फैसला हुआ, और चूंकि पूर्व का सहमति पत्र प्रभावी था, इसलिए उसे बाद में रद्द कर दिया गया। 3- फैसला करने वाले प्रमुख पक्षों- रक्षामंत्री, विदेश मंत्री, वायु सेना, रक्षा खरीद परिषद (डीएससी) और सुरक्षा मामलों की कैबिनेट समिति (सीसीएस) को बाहर रखा गया। 4-आठ अप्रैल, 2015 को पेरिस में विदेश सचिव ने मीडिया को बताया कि रफाल को लेकर दोनों सरकारों, दासो और हिंदुस्तान एरोनॉटिक्स लिमिटेड (एचएएल) के बीच बातचीत काफी आगे बढ़ चुकी थी और भारत के प्रधानमंत्री तथा फ्रांस के राष्ट्रपति के बीच होने वाली वार्ता के एजेंडे में रफाल का मुद्दा शामिल नहीं था। दो दिन बाद, दस अप्रैल को मोदी और ओलांद की

दूसरी नज़र

दीपक गिरकर

नीति आयोग ने छोटे और सीमांत किसानों को प्रति हेक्टेयर पंद्रह हजार रुपए प्रतिवर्ष प्रत्यक्ष आय समर्थन के रूप में देने की अनुशंसा की थी। पर अंतरिम बजट में सरकार ने इन्हें छह हजार रुपए सालाना की सहायता प्रत्यक्ष लाभ अंतरण के जरिए और असंगठित क्षेत्र के श्रमिकों को तीन हजार रुपए प्रतिमाह पेंशन देने का प्रावधान किया गया है। मनरेगा के लिए आबंटन में वृद्धि, प्राकृतिक आपदा से प्रभावित किसानों को फसल ऋण पर दो फीसद ब्याज सब्सिडी और फसल ऋण का समय से भुगतान करने पर अतिरिक्त तीन फीसद ब्याज सब्सिडी की घोषणा की गई है। देश में ऐसी योजनाएं कुछ राज्यों में पहले से मौजूद हैं। तेलंगाना में छोटे और सीमांत किसानों को चालीस हजार रुपए वार्षिक मिल रहे हैं। ओडिशा में सभी किसानों को पांच हजार रुपए सालाना मिल रहे हैं। इसके अलावा ओडिशा में फसल युवाई के लिए पच्चीस हजार रुपए और भूमिहीन परिवारों को साढ़े बारह हजार रुपए प्रतिवर्ष के हिसाब से मिल रहे हैं। झारखंड में भी मुख्यमंत्री कृषि आशीर्वाद योजना के तहत छोटे और सीमांत किसानों को प्रति एकड़ पांच हजार रुपए प्रतिवर्ष उपलब्ध करार एा रहे हैं। अंतरिम बजट में घोषित प्रधानमंत्री किसान सम्मान निधि छह हजार रुपए बहुत कम है। तेलंगाना, ओडिशा और झारखंड के अलावा अन्य राज्य सरकारों को भी छोटे, सीमांत किसानों और भूमिहीन श्रमिकों को प्रत्यक्ष आय समर्थन योजना लागू करनी चाहिए।

देश में पचासी फीसद छोटे और सीमांत किसान हैं। इन किसानों की छोटी जोत होने के कारण इनकी उत्पादन लागत औसत लागत से काफी अधिक आती है। पीढ़ी-दर-पीढ़ी खेती के विभाजित होने से जोत का आकार घटता जा रहा है। खेतों का आकार छोटा होने से कृषि उत्पादन और फसलों से होने वाली बचत में कमी आ रही है। छोटे और सीमांत किसान खेती के लिए कृषि उपकरण और कृषि मशीनरी किराए पर लेते हैं। सिर्फ दस फीसद बड़े किसान न्यूनतम समर्थन मूल्यों का फायदा उठाते हैं। छोटे और सीमांत किसान फसल आते ही अपनी उपज कम कीमत पर बेचने को मजबूर होते हैं, क्योंकि वे कर्ज के बोझ से दबे रहते हैं। साल भर ये अपने गुजारे के लिए कृषि उत्पाद बाजार से खरीदते रहते हैं, जो इन्हें समर्थन मूल्य में वृद्धि की वजह से महंगे मिलते हैं।

छोटी जोत वाले किसानों के पास खेती के पर्याप्त साधन, सिंचाई की व्यवस्था आदि का अभाव होता है और इस सबके लिए उन्हें बड़े किसानों पर निर्भर रहना पड़ता है। छोटे किसानों के लिए खेती के साधन जुटाना बेहद मुश्किल होता जा रहा है। ऐसे में जैसे-जैसे खेतों का आकार छोटा होता जा रहा है, किसानों को होने वाला फायदा भी कम हो रहा है। हर पांच साल में कृषि क्षेत्र में एक करोड़ छोटे किसान जुड़ रहे हैं। अगर यह दर बरकरार रही तो आने वाले समय में कृषि क्षेत्र के हालात बेकाबू हो सकते हैं।

लघु किसानों की सबसे बड़ी परेशानी है पूंजी की कमी। अपनी घरेलू जरूरतों से लेकर कृषि की लागत तक उन्हें पैसा चाहिए और इसके लिए वे साहूकार और किसान क्रेडिट कार्ड पर निर्भर रहते हैं। किसान क्रेडिट कार्ड से चूंकि सरलता से पैसा मिल जाता है, इसलिए इसका उपयोग वे कृषि की जगह अपने सामाजिक और घरेलू जरूरतों की पूर्ति में लगा देता है। पैसा खर्च होने के बाद किसानी की लागत के लिए साहूकारों के चुंगल में फंस जाता है। आज भी अधिकतर खेती मानसून के सहारे चलती है। मानसून के रूठ जाने पर सूखा, कीमती में वृद्धि, कर्ज का अप्रत्याशित बोझ, बैंकों के चक्कर, बिचौलियों और साहूकारों के घेरें में फंस कर छोटा किसान या तो जमीन बेचने पर मजबूर है या आत्महत्या पर।

इस तरह छोटे और सीमांत किसान अपनी

यह आतंकवाद नहीं, युद्ध है

जब तक हमारे शासक स्वीकार नहीं करते कि पुलवामा जैसे हमले आतंकवाद नहीं, युद्ध का हिस्सा हैं, तब तक हमारे बहादुर जवान शहीद होते रहेंगे। जिन चौवालीस सीआरपीएफ जवानों को उस कायर फिदाई ने मारा पिछले हफ्ते वे शायद न मरते

अगर जानते कि युद्ध के मैदान में खड़े हैं और दुश्मनों के चार के लिए हमेशा तैयार रहना जरूरी है। हमले के बाद सुनने को मिलीं हमें वही बातें, जो अक्सर सुनने को मिलती हैं ऐसे हमलों के बाद। प्रधानमंत्री ने दवीट करके कहा कि जवानों की शहादत जाया नहीं जाएगी। यही बात गुहमंत्री ने कही। सिर्फ जम्मू कश्मीर के राज्यपाल ने कबूल किया कि खुफिया संस्थाओं की गलती थी कि एक गाड़ी, जिसमें इतना असला था, आसानी से पहुंच पाई सीआरपीएफ के इतने बड़े काफिले के पास।

अब भी लेकिन हम इसको आतंकवाद ही कह रहे हैं, युद्ध नहीं। अब भी हमारे शासक मान कर चल रहे हैं कि युद्ध होता है सीमाओं पर, शहरों में नहीं। सो, जब उड़ी में सैनिक शिविर पर इसी जैश-ए-मोहम्मद ने हमला किया था 2016 में तो प्रधानमंत्री ने सर्जिकल स्ट्राइक करवाई। हम सब खुश हुए यह सोच कर कि नरेंद्र मोदी नए किस्म के राजनेता हैं और पाकिस्तान की ईंट का जवाब हमेशा पत्थर से देंगे। लेकिन उस सर्जिकल स्ट्राइक के बाद कभी स्पष्ट नहीं किया मोदी ने कि उनकी पाकिस्तान को लेकर नीति क्या है। हां, इतना जरूर कहते हैं बार-बार कि बातचीत तभी शुरू होगी दोनों देशों के बीच, जब भारत की भूमि पर आतंकवादी हमले रुक जाएंगे। पर अभी तक स्वीकार नहीं किया है उन्होंने कि यह आतंकवाद नहीं युद्ध है। ऐसा युद्ध, जिसकी तैयारी हम अभी तक कर नहीं पाए हैं, क्योंकि अब भी हम इसको आतंकवाद ही समझ रहे हैं।

सच तो यह है कि पाकिस्तान बहुत पहले जान गया था कि पुराने किस्म के युद्ध अब नहीं हो सकते हैं दोनों देशों के बीच, क्योंकि परमाणु युद्ध हो जाने का खतरा है। सो, पाकिस्तानी सेना ने बहुत पहले से तैयार किए हैं मौलाना मसूद अजहर और



सच तो यह है कि पाकिस्तान बहुत पहले जान गया था कि पुराने किस्म के युद्ध अब नहीं हो सकते हैं दोनों देशों के बीच, क्योंकि परमाणु युद्ध हो जाने का खतरा है। सो, पाकिस्तानी सेना ने बहुत पहले से तैयार किए हैं मौलाना मसूद अजहर और हाफिज सईद जैसे जिहादी जनरल, जो हैं तो पूरी तरह असली सैनिक, लेकिन इनको जिहादी कहा जाता है।

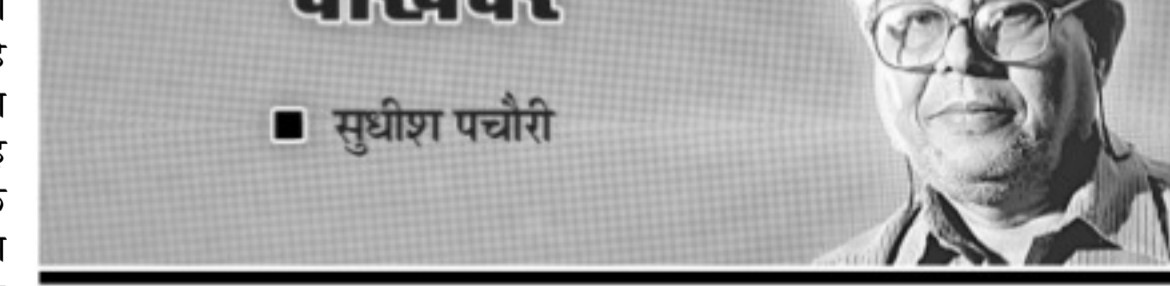
में। तैयार होते हम, तो मौलाना मसूद अजहर को क्या पांच साल कैद रखते भारत में बिना दंडित किए? जब आइसी 814 जहाज हाइजैक हुआ था 1999 के आखिरी दिनों में और हाइजैक करने वालों ने मौलाना मसूद और उमर शेख की रिहाई मांगी यात्रियों के बदले, तब याद आया कि पाकिस्तान का सबसे बड़ा जिहादी सरगना हमारे पास है। रिहा होने के फौरन बाद इसको हमने क्यों नहीं मारा? क्या इसलिए कि हमारे पास ऐसा करने की ताकत नहीं है? हमारी सेना ने नहीं तैयार की हैं ऐसी संस्थाएं, जो जैश-ए-मोहमद जैसी संस्थाओं का सामना कर सकती हों? यह जिहादी मौलाना रिहा होने के बाद इतने आगम से रहने लगा पाकिस्तान में कि उसने एक किताब भी लिखी, जिसमें उसने लिखा कि जब भारत से उसको कंधार ले जा रहे थे भारतीय विदेश मंत्री जसवंत सिंह, तो उन्होंने उसको खाना और

दो मिनट का मौन

निंदा करने के अलावा व्यवस्था में चूक की बात भी करते हैं। यह उड़ी के हमले से बड़ा हमला है, जब उड़ी के बदले सर्जिकल की गई, तो इसके बदले क्या करेंगे? यह एक आम मांग बन गई है।

वही-वही दृश्य दुहरते हैं। पहले हमला होता है, फिर चूक की खबर आती है, फिर ‘लॉबिस्ट’ टुंकते हैं, फिर ‘राजनीति न करें’ की मांग होती है, फिर राजनीति होने लगती है।

लेकिन इस बार ऐसा नहीं दिखता। सभी सावधान हैं।



जिनके लोग मारे गए हैं उनका रो-रो कर बुरा हाल है। गांवों-कस्बों में रहती पत्नियां, बच्चे अचानक अनाथ हो गए हैं। वे बुरी तरह रोते-बिलखते दिखते हैं। यह सब इतनी बार दिखाया जाता है कि सबका दुख हमले के दृश्यों में खप जाता है।

गृहमंत्री मौका-ए-मुआयने पर जाने वाले हैं। एक चैनल के विशेषज्ञ कहते हैं कि पांच किलो आरडीएक्स एक बड़े मकान को तबाह कर सकता है, तो तीन सौ पचास किलो आरडीएक्स मुहल्ले भर को उड़ा सकता है। जैश-ए-मुहम्मद हमले का श्रेय लेता है और आगली बार हाफिज सईद के चित्र पर एक चैनल गोली चलाने लगता है- टॉय टॉय टॉय... अगली सुबह पीएम की अध्यक्षता में सुरक्षा पर कैबिनेट समिति (सीसीएस) की बैठक होने की खबर है। हर चैनल अनुमान लगा रहा है कि क्या फैसला करने वाले हैं। एक अनुमान के अनुसार राज्यपाल को बदल कर रिटायर्ड सैनिक अफसर जेके भेजा जा सकता है। बैठक खत्म होती है, तो पीएम शुद्ध स्वर में संबोधित करते हैं : मैं आतंकवादियों को कहना चाहता हूँ कि वे बहुत बड़ी गलती कर चुके हैं। उनको बहुत बड़ी कीमत चुकानी

और उनकी संख्या घटाने के मामले पर विचार करने से इंकार कर दिया था। जब संसद ने विरोध किया तो सरकार ने लोकसभा में अपने बहुमत के जरिए इसे चुप कराने की कोशिश की, जबकि राज्यसभा में जबर्दस्ती स्थगनों के जरिए चुप कराया गया।

सरकार को उम्मीद रही होगी कि सीएजी की रिपोर्ट उसे बचा लेगी। रिपोर्ट संसद सत्र के आखिरी दिन पेश की गई थी। सरकार को बचाना तो दूर, रिपोर्ट ने इस तथ्य को उजागर कर दिया सरकार ने देश की सर्वोच्च ऑडिट संस्था- कैग की आवाज को दबाने की कोशिश की और इसमें वह सफल भी हो गई। सरकार विमानों के सस्ता होने और जल्द ही उनके मिलने का जो दावा कर रही थी, उसकी भी असलियत इस रिपोर्ट ने दिखा दी।

लगता है कैग ने शुरू में व्यावसायिक ब्योरे में सुधार की मांग का विरोध किया होगा, जैसा कि कैग ने कहा- इसका पूर्व में कोई उदाहरण नहीं मिलता, लेकिन सरकार के एक कड़े पत्र के बाद इसका कमजोर विरोध खत्म हो गया। इसका नतीजा यह हुआ कि सौदे की तरह ही रिपोर्ट में भी पारदर्शिता नहीं रही, जिसकी कैग से उम्मीद की गई थी।

महत्त्वपूर्ण यह नहीं है कि रिपोर्ट में क्या कहा गया, बल्कि इस पर गौर किया जाना चाहिए जो इसमें नहीं कहा गया है। कैग ने जिन बिंदुओं पर कोई टिप्पणी नहीं कि उनमें ये हैं-

- विमानों की संख्या कम होने (एक सौ छब्बीस के बजाय छत्तीस) पर कीमत में संशोधन के कारण आपूर्तिकर्ताओं को होने वाले बेजा मुनाफे,
- कोई भी भुगतान सुरक्षा प्रक्रिया नहीं होने की सूरत में भारत को होने वाले धन के जोखिम,
- रफाल विमानों के अपूर्ण सौदों के पिछले आरंभ परड़े रहने की सूरत में दासो और एमबीडीए विमानों की समय से आपूर्ति कैसे सुनिश्चित करेगी,
- भ्रष्टाचार-निरोधी धाराएं हटाने के जोखिम, खासतौर से आपूर्तिकर्ताओं के बैंक खातों तक पहुंच नहीं बनने का मामला,
- सिर्फ थोड़े से विमान मिलने पर वायु सेना की संचालन क्षमता पर पड़ने वाले असर, और
- आइएनटी के तीन सदस्यों द्वारा लिखे गए असहमति के नोट।

रफाल सौदे पर जो धुंध छा गई है, उससे एक बात तो स्पष्ट है- इस बारे में अंतिम शब्द नहीं कहा गया है।

^[1] फाल सौदे की गुल्थी भाजपा की उम्मीदों से कहीं ज्यादा तेजी से सुलझती जा रही है

^[2] अगर सरकार और सत्तारूढ़ पार्टी ने यह सोचा हो कि बिना पारदर्शिता के हुई हाल

^[3] की ज्यादातर रक्षा खरीदों पर परदा डाला जा सकता है, तो वह गलत थी

^[4] अब तो उन्हें बुरी हालत में सड़क पर खड़ा कर दिया गया है

^[5] इसका बड़ा श्रेय 'द हिंदू' और उस प्रकाशन समूह के अध्यक्ष एन

^[6] राम को जाता है

^[7] हालांकि कुछ और महत्त्वपूर्ण लोग भी थे, और हैं, जो सरकार और उसके नेताओं के भारी दबाव के बावजूद पूरी ताकत से खड़े रहने के लिए

^[8] बधाई के हकदार हैं

^[9] फाल सौदे की गुल्थी भाजपा की उम्मीदों से कहीं ज्यादा तेजी से सुलझती जा रही है

^[10] अगर सरकार और सत्तारूढ़ पार्टी ने यह सोचा हो कि बिना पारदर्शिता के हुई हाल

^[11] की ज्यादातर रक्षा खरीदों पर परदा डाला जा सकता है, तो वह गलत थी

^[12] अब तो उन्हें बुरी हालत में सड़क पर खड़ा कर दिया गया है

^[13] इसका बड़ा श्रेय 'द हिंदू' और उस प्रकाशन समूह के अध्यक्ष एन

^[14] राम को जाता है

^[15] हालांकि कुछ और महत्त्वपूर्ण लोग भी थे, और हैं, जो सरकार और उसके नेताओं के भारी दबाव के बावजूद पूरी ताकत से खड़े रहने के लिए

^[16] बधाई के हकदार हैं