

The Indian EXPRESS

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RAMNATH GOENKA
BECAUSE THE TRUTH INVOLVES US ALL

Anatomy of a choice



GILLES VERNIERS

SP-BSP partnership in UP makes the contest open and competitive in India's politically most important state

OPPOSITION'S DUTY

It will hurt democracy if Balakot does away with discussion, leaves behind only the patriotism test

THE BJP, AND the government it leads at the Centre, fiercely deny that they are politicising the February 26 Balakot strike and, ahead of a crucial Lok Sabha election, putting it to electoral use. Yet, to any question raised by the Opposition on the operation carried out in the wake of the Jaish attack at Pulwama, the answer of top leaders of party and government is: Are you doubting our armed forces? Followed by the not-unstated insinuation: By asking a question on a matter of national security, you are making Pakistan happy. In this, Prime Minister Narendra Modi and BJP chief Amit Shah have set the tone. In a rally in Patna, PM Modi accused the Opposition of demoralising the armed forces. And Shah claimed in Ahmedabad, breaking a heavy official silence — and even as the Indian Air Force chief says: "We don't count human casualties, we count what targets have been hit, or not hit" — that "more than 250" terrorists were killed in Balakot.

There are two options before the Opposition. One, it can evade and skirt the issue of national security altogether, ahead of what may well turn out to be a national security election. And play dead, as it has done so often in the past on fundamental issues. On cow vigilantism, the Congress, for instance, has been so spooked by the fear of Hindu consolidation in favour of the BJP, that it has either retreated or caved in to the BJP's terms. It is a law and order issue, not a hate crime against Muslims, says the Congress, even as its newly-elected governments in Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh unleash their own showy schemes and programmes in the name of the cow. Or two, the Opposition, including the Congress, could call out the BJP — full throatedly, putting the party leaderships' weight behind it, not as sporadic, testing-the-waters interventions by mid-level leaders — on its attempt to use the figure of the soldier as a shield to stanch criticism. Parties of the Opposition could find the language to talk back to government on national security, to point out that while the nation is united in support of the soldier in times of conflict, the government that frames the policy cannot claim any exemption from disagreement or difference. In India, the armed forces are, have always been, subject to civilian control. That power equation squarely casts on the political executive the responsibility to take the questions and the duty to give the answers on national security.

The Opposition's response to the BJP's framing of the national security issue in this moment will be consequential. In the near term, it will determine whether or not there will be a genuine debate ahead of the upcoming polls, or only patriotism tests. Beyond the polls, it will determine whether or not there are any learnings for the future from this fraught February.

UNMET FARM CHALLENGE

Policy still hasn't adjusted itself to address the crisis of agricultural produce deflation

INDIA'S AGRICULTURAL OUTPUT grew by hardly 2.7 per cent during the last October-December quarter. That isn't bad, if one takes the corresponding year-on-year increases for the preceding 10 quarters; these have ranged between 4.2 per cent and 7.5 per cent. The cause for concern is that these reasonably good production growth rates in "real" terms haven't translated into higher farm incomes, which are a product of output multiplied by current prices. According to the Central Statistics Office, the annual growth in "nominal" gross value added (GVA) from agriculture at current prices for October-December was 2.04 per cent. Not only was this below the "real" GVA growth of 2.67 per cent, but also the lowest since the minus 1.1 per cent rate recorded way back in October-December 2004. Worse, we now have seven consecutive quarters of single-digit nominal growth rates — the target of doubling farmers' income in five years requires an annual increase of 14.4 per cent.

The above data is reflective of a phenomenon rarely seen in India: Agricultural produce deflation. That this isn't a one-off thing is established by consumer food price inflation, too, ruling below overall retail inflation now for 29 consecutive months since September 2016. The implications are not just economic — low food prices, among other things, have allowed the RBI to soften its monetary policy stance and cut interest rates — but also political. If farmers find incomes not rising or even falling despite bumper harvests, they are bound to vent their anger. Managing agrarian unrest has, indeed, been the single biggest challenge for the Narendra Modi government, especially after prices of the rabi crop planted after demonetisation crashed at the time of market arrivals in April-June 2017. Prices haven't looked up since.

If prices aren't rising because of a general economic slowdown and stagnant incomes — particularly among lower-decile households, whose elasticity of demand for food is the highest — this might be more episodic than structural. But even if that is so, agricultural policy needs a fundamental review. The supply response of Indian farmers — their ability to increase production when prices go up — has improved significantly over the past two decades. It has rendered the old approach of looking at the sector through the prism of shortages redundant. Shortages are better left to be managed by market forces than imposing stockholding limits and export restrictions. Farmers suffer when their produce prices are low. The next government, irrespective of the party heading it, should ensure that they aren't denied the opportunity to make money when prices shoot up.

BAHUBALI TRUDEAU

The Canadian prime minister, darling of the liberals, is a bit of a strongman too

YOU EITHER DIE a hero or live long enough to see yourself become the villain," remarked the caped crusader in *The Dark Knight*. And, as Canada's Prime Minister Justin Trudeau seems to be finding out, being a politician known for high ethical standards is often like being Batman. Trudeau — the blue-eyed boy of Western liberals, the diversity-loving, immigrant-welcoming anti-Trump — is caught in the middle of a script that threatens to tarnish the carefully curated image.

The SNC-Lavalin scandal involves bribes allegedly paid to Libyan government officials during the Muammar Gaddafi era to secure contracts, as well as defrauding the Libyan government. Trudeau and his staff have been accused of scuttling the investigation into the matter by pressuring the justice minister at the time, Jody Wilson-Raybould.

Trudeau probably understands more than most the power of a narrative, of image and personal brand in politics. He has consistently presented himself as a feminist. Now the appearance of trying to professionally intimidate a woman colleague, and being accused of demoting her when his office didn't get its way, is bound to hurt the Liberal Party in an election year. Of course, leading politicians in democracies older and larger than Canada have been accused of batting for particular companies. But strongmen can power through scandals in a way that those presenting themselves as the answer to the immoralities of their time cannot. The realities of political compromise, or of "trying to protect Canadian jobs" may have worked for another politician, one less full of righteousness than Canada's PM. Or maybe he will emerge stronger from the crisis and go from being the gentle hero in an increasingly xenophobic west, to a liberal *bahubali*.

AFTER WEEKS OF negotiations, the SP and BSP have announced the distribution of seats that both parties will contest in Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh and Uttarakhand, in a pre-electoral alliance that may have a major bearing on the outcome of the 2019 General Elections. In 2014, the BJP won 90 per cent of the seats in these three states, a result that gave it a majority of seats in the Lok Sabha. A setback in the key Hindi belt states would mean a loss of this majority.

In UP, the distribution of seats matches each party's broad electoral geography. The SP gets more seats in the Doab, a traditional sub-regional stronghold where it currently holds four of its five seats. The BSP gets an edge in Western UP and northeastern UP, where it usually outperforms the SP. The RLD gets a handful of seats in Jat-dominated regions of Western UP. The SP will run in 10 reserved seats, against seven for the SP. In MP, the SP and BSP will combine forces in districts adjacent to UP. In Uttarakhand, the alliance greatly favours the BSP which has a presence across the state.

An examination of the data shows that, although formidable, the SP-BSP alliance would not automatically lead to a major victory in UP, or have a significant impact in the other two states. In 2014, the BJP's vote share in UP surpassed the combined vote share of the SP and the BSP in 37 seats. Had the SP and the BSP contested together and their vote shares added up perfectly, they could have won 13 seats with small margins (below 5 per cent) and 30 other seats with comfortable margins.

If one looks at more recent results, comparing assembly constituency performance within parliamentary segments, and including the Congress, which ran in an alliance with the SP in most seats, an SP-BSP combine would have been clearly outvoted in 48 seats, and nearly defeated in 11 other seats.

In the other two states, the question is not so much whether the SP-BSP alliance makes electoral sense on its own, but whether its alliance with the Congress would make a difference for the bipolar contest between the Congress and BJP. In MP, the combined vote share of the SP and BSP was 6 per cent, below the average victory margin of the BJP

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(9.4 per cent). This means that assuming that vote transfers would have taken place, a Congress-SP-BSP alliance could have altered the outcome in seven seats. In Uttarakhand, a hypothetical Congress-SP-BSP combine would have made a difference in only one seat (Haridwar). The SP has no presence in the state which, in the absence of an alliance with Congress, makes the tie-up with the BSP merely symbolic.

These, again, are hypothetical scenarios, based on calculations that barely connect with the reality of electoral politics and alliance dynamics. These calculations, however, indicate that the alliance does not give the SP and the BSP a clear advantage against the BJP. There are at least six other factors that complicate the scenario.

To begin with, it is always worth noting that past results are no predictors of future performance. Second, there is no telling whether vote transfers between the SP and BSP bases will take place in full or in equal measure. Recent CSDS-Lokniti survey data shows that wealthier and more urban segments of Yadav voters tend to vote more for the BJP than the poorer and more rural segments. This does not hold true for Jatav voters, who largely remain loyal to the BSP irrespective of class differentiation. The SP and BSP contested in an alliance only once (in 1993) and there hasn't been much harmony between these parties' respective bases since. Some SP voters might be tempted to cast their vote elsewhere. The last four by-polls in UP indicated that such transfers can take place. But these were essentially local contests, in which the personality of the candidates mattered as well as parties' strategies. These bypolls also revealed that in a bipolar contest, the BJP can maintain or even increase its vote share.

Third, even if these three parties' combined vote share includes around 80 per cent of the total vote share, there are still 20 per cent of votes that will be distributed between them, the Congress, small parties and independent candidates. Small numbers can make the difference in close races.

Fourth, the absence of the Congress from the alliance might cost them dear, even if the Congress's base is small and its performance

modest. A slightly resurgent Congress is unlikely to grab any voter from the BJP but can dent the alliance's support base. Fifth, a fair distribution of seats between the SP and BSP means that both parties must discard many aspiring candidates, some of whom may run as independents or may even end up running on a BJP ticket.

Finally, there is the question of the internal cohesion of the alliance. The decimation both parties have suffered in the last two elections in UP has given them clarity that it is the only way forward. But Mulayam Singh Yadav's latest utterances indicate that the SP is still struggling to present itself to voters as a united entity.

There are imponderable factors that may play in favour of the alliance. The general disillusionment and anger against the BJP, farmers' distress, joblessness, violent assertion of sections of Thakurs against Dalits, two destructive years of Yogi Adityanath's administration, recent setback in MP and stray cows wreaking havoc across constituencies could thwart the BJP.

These factors could indeed pave the way to a victory for the alliance in UP, although social polarisation is more likely to split the electorate into two camps rather than aggregate them into a counter-wave. A split result would still achieve the result of stripping the BJP of its majority at the Centre, unless it can compensate for the losses elsewhere.

What can be said with some certainty is that the SP-BSP partnership (with the RLD in Western UP) makes the contest open and competitive in India's politically most important state. Voters now have a clear choice in front of them and can exercise their right to choose on their own terms. This development also illustrates the inability of the Congress to come to terms with the fragmentation of the political space in India and recognise the necessity to strike deals with other parties. One can predict that each side will blame the other if and when the results do not match expectations.

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SWAMI AGNIVESH

AS WE CELEBRATE THE BRAVE

Our public life is, increasingly, being configured by fear

THE DUTY LAID upon one who cares for truth is different from the duty laid upon a politician. Politicians expect spiritual people to conform, while they remain free to set the agenda. This intimidates and stifles me.

It is a matter of joy that our captured pilot, Abhinandan Varthaman, is home. Every life is incomparably precious to me. The untimely loss of a human life is unbearably tragic and, if seen objectively, indefensible. For that very reason, efforts are made to drape war in heroism and patriotism.

Deaths through war are not accidental. These "martyrdoms" are a result of decisions taken, not by fate or some enemies, but by one's own leaders. This could generate a corrosive sense of guilt, which cannot be wished away. There is only one way it can be dealt with — by glorifying the victims. Glorification of the victims of one's own decisions is a palliative and a compensation for the injustice of sending them into the jaws of death.

Consider this. It is, mostly, old men who create war. But the young fight and die in them. The sons of those who launch wars, with the fanfare of patriotism, don't perish fighting. Politicians are extraordinarily brave with the lives of other people's children.

This unromantic reality is camouflaged by creating a national hysteria aimed at compelling others to fall in line and sing the same chorus. As a rule, nationalist, patriotic hysteria is created by those who want to keep the rights of citizens to think rationally in sus-

ended animation. By doing so, they seize the initiative and gag the rest of the people. The strange thing is while they claim absolute freedom to do so, they deny even a modicum of leeway to anyone who has independent views and opinions. So, an undeclared war on freedom of thought rages by the side. Wars come and go, but the integrity and dignity of life must endure. Abhinandan is hailed as a hero. Those who risk their life for the country deserve appreciation and recognition. But there is a problem in creating the impression that only military action involves bravery.

To me, our farmers are at least as brave as our soldiers. For every soldier who dies for the country, at least a thousand farmers perish. In 2014, for example, 12,360 farmers and farm labourers committed suicide. During the same period, 64 army personnel died in action. So, the proportion is 2,000:1. That is, for every jawan killed, 2,000 farmers perished. So, it takes far greater bravery to be a farmer in India than to be a soldier. Farmers perish in their struggle to feed us. They die in the line of duty to sustain life. By what logic is sustaining life less valuable or laudable than defending life?

We don't do this injustice to our farmers deliberately. We do it by habit. We have got used to a system, a social and national outlook, that devalues farmers as well as workers in the unorganised sector, who are largely responsible for keeping our lives going. This should alert us to the extent to which our perceptions and inclinations are manipulated.

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This problem of blinkered priorities is embedded in religions as well. Our religious texts glorify kings and warriors. They are silent and blind about those who sustain life. Take the case of women. How come a woman who voluntarily and joyfully undergoes the near-death agony of giving birth to a new life is doing less of a service than a soldier? Men don't have to undergo it; so, out of ignorance, they fail to value it. Consider, the plight of doctors and nurses. Or fire-fighters and rescue operators, even ordinary men and women who risk their life to save others in disaster. We take all these for granted.

Over centuries, we have created a system that values the bravery involved in killing over the courage to foster life. We are no longer even aware that courage is involved in these commitments and undertakings. This explains why we do not see many in the public sphere brave enough to stand by the truth they know. Our public life is, increasingly, being configured in fear. The extravagance with which certain types of bravery are celebrated will be complemented by the brutality with which other forms of bravery will be criminalised and crushed.

If courage is a value in battles, it cannot be an anti-value in day-to-day life. If courage is laudable in uniform, it should be legitimate in civilian attire too.

The writer is a Vedic scholar and social activist



MARCH 5, 1979, FORTY YEARS AGO

RSS CHIEF SPEAKS
RSS SANSANGHCHALAK BALA Saheb Deoras called upon the critics of his organisation to face it ideologically, instead of hurling "baseless and unjust allegations" at it. Addressing a gathering of RSS workers in Delhi, Deoras said the RSS is being blamed for every disturbance or mishap that occurred in the country. "We are blamed for assassination attempts, riots, ousters of chief ministers and even floods, drought and outbreak of encephalitis. This is unjust." Claiming that the RSS is not interested in politics of power and publicity, Deoras said the allegations made against it are an insult to the organisation which believed in national reconstruction

through cultural rejuvenation. He said that "some newspapers and journals also indulge in RSS-baiting."

CHINA-VIETNAM WAR
CHINA IS REPORTEDLY planning to withdraw its troops from Vietnam, but Hanoi claimed that half a million Chinese soldiers were still involved in the invasion against Vietnam and called on its population to defeat the aggressors. A Japanese foreign ministry spokesman said the Chinese foreign affairs minister has told the Japanese ambassador that China plans to pull out its troops from Vietnam. Another official announcement claimed that between February

17, the start of the invasion, and March 2, Hanoi's troops had killed 42,000 Chinese soldiers, knocked out 381 military vehicles, including 259 tanks and armoured cars and destroyed 66 artillery pieces and mortars.

UP JANATA DIVIDE
NONE OF THE 177 legislators who voted for Raj Mangal Pandey in the Janata UP legislature party leadership contest figures in the list of ministers finalised for being sworn in. Among those to be sworn in are Ram Naresh Yadav, former UP chief minister, Balbir Singh, Chandrawati, Abid Ali Ansari, Mohammed Masood Khan, Shri Chandra and Kali Charan (all ministers in the previous cabinet).

15 THE IDEAS PAGE

Our fitting tribute

The National War Memorial is a reminder that our soldiers are the unsung heroes of our democracy. It is incumbent on all citizens to act in a manner that boosts the morale of our armed forces



M VENKATESH NAIDU

I WAS OVERWHELMED with emotion after visiting the National War Memorial this week. It was a solemn moment of prayer, a moment of pride and a moment of optimism. I paid homage to the fallen soldiers who made the supreme sacrifice for a noble cause. I was proud that we had such brave men in our midst. I was optimistic that the memorial will inspire many others to take the valourous path shown by these brave sons of our country and that our country is in safe hands.

I am happy that finally, over 70 years after Independence, we have a National War Memorial dedicated to the thousands of defence personnel who laid down their lives to defend India's sovereignty and territorial integrity.

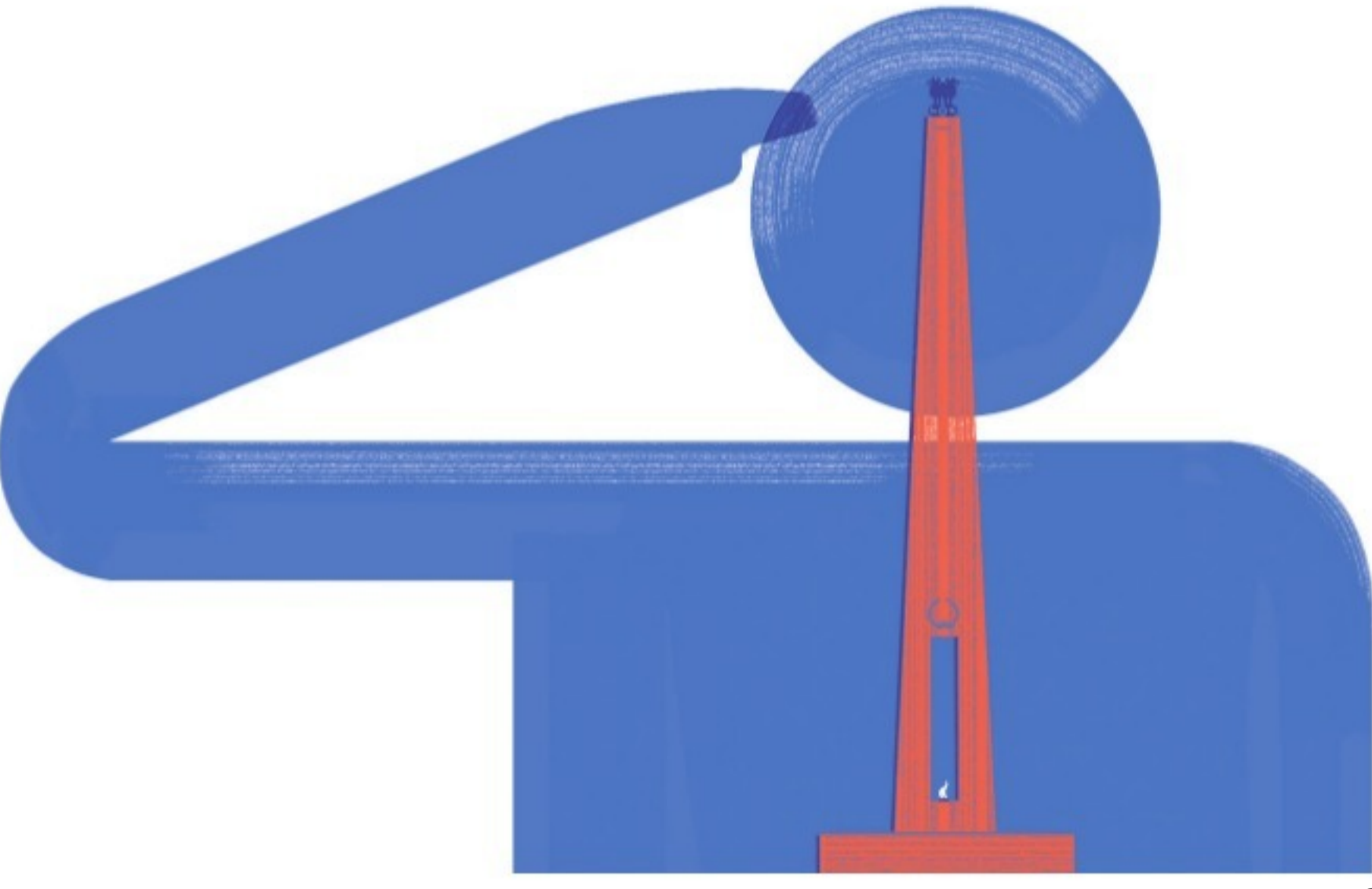
Thanks to the initiative of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, this memorial is built in memory of our soldiers who lost their lives in the India-China War of 1962 and the soldiers who died during the wars thrust on us by Pakistan in 1947, 1965, 1971 and the Kargil War of 1999. It also commemorates the sacrifices made by our soldiers sent on peaceful missions of the United Nations, Humanitarian Assistance Disaster Relief (HADR) and counter-insurgency operations. Indian soldiers have shown extraordinary dedication and courage in different theatres within India and abroad.

India accounted for 27 per cent of the global economic output in the 17th century. Despite this economic prowess, India never attacked any country because we are peaceful and believe in Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam.

Even under British colonial rule, Indian soldiers played a significant role in global theatres, participating in World War I and II. This was supported by all the parties at that time because they felt that our peoples' sacrifice in the battlefield would hasten the process of India's freedom as promised by the British. However, the British had, by and large, ignored Indian requests later.

India contributed immensely to the World War effort in terms of both men and material. Her soldiers served with credit in numerous battlefields around the globe — in France and Belgium, in Arabia, East Africa, Gallipoli, Egypt, Mesopotamia, Palestine, Persia and Salonika. About 8,00,000 Indian troops fought in all the theatres of the war. In all, 47,746 were killed or missing and 65,000 were wounded.

In November 2018, I was privileged to unveil the Indian Armed Forces Memorial at Villers-Guislain in France, the first of-its-kind built by India in France after the country's Independence. I felt at that moment that we should have had a war memorial in our country long ago. That moment was mooted in the 1960s. We ought to have acted much earlier but I am pleased that, at last, now, we have a befitting memorial because there are innumerable unsung heroes who demonstrated their valour in several battles in defence of our motherland.



C R Sasikumar

Even as the world community has been learning for peaceful coexistence and conventional wars are on the decline, terrorism has become an instrument of state policy for some misguided nations over the last three decades. India has been at the receiving end of such terrorism sponsored from across the border. The Mumbai terrorist attack (26/11), the heinous attack on our Parliament, regular acts of terror in Jammu and Kashmir, shook the pride and confidence of our nation. Hundreds of our brave soldiers and paramilitary forces gave up their lives in warding off such mindless attacks.

Our grateful nation resonates with the motto of "Jai Jawan-Jai Kisan". The National War Memorial is a fitting tribute to all those in uniform who have made the supreme sacrifice. It also has immense aesthetic value in that it creates a serene environment which encourages a visit to reflect on the exalted patriotism and sacrifices of our soldiers. I am pleased that the National War Memorial, spread over 40 acres, has a uniquely Indian design. It comprises of four concentric circles resembling the Chakravayuha — a formation immortalised by the Mahabharata. These circles are named Amar Chakra, Veerta Chakra, Tyag Chakra and Rakshak Chakra. The names of our soldiers who died in defence of India and on other assignments is etched in stone in these concentric circles. The memorial also has an Obelisk at its centre, with an eternal flame which symbolises the fact that the supreme sacrifices of our soldiers will be remembered eternally. It also contains statues of all the Param Vir Chakra awardees.

As PM Modi has suggested, our countrymen should treat a visit to this site as something akin to a pilgrimage to a holy site. That's how we need to revere and respect our fallen heroes. I do hope all citizens will be visiting this sacred memorial in the months to come. We should not only remember the supreme sacrifice made by thousands of soldiers to ensure that the country's unity and integrity, but we should also not act in any manner which affects the morale of the armed forces. We should put our country first, nothing else.

Our response to the Pulwama attack was a pre-emptive strike to check unbridled proliferation of terror apparatus. This has drawn

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the world's attention to the mounting tide of terror and India's plea for concerted action at the global level by concluding the United Nations Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism. This is, indeed, an opportune moment for an effective global response to this global challenge. It is heartening to note that there has been such widespread global support for Indian perspective and recent actions. One "Abhinandan" effectively articulated the mood of our nation by shooting down a fighter aircraft of the sponsor of terrorism in a daring act of valour and commitment.

This war memorial is an eternal reminder that our soldiers are the unsung heroes of our democracy. They are the silent, conscientious sentinels of peace.

The world over, many countries remember the fallen heroes on specially-designated days. For example, the Memorial Day in the US, Remembrance Day in countries like Australia, New Zealand and Armistice Day in France are solemn occasions when people pay their respects to the war veterans and fallen heroes. Similarly, Italy has a number of remembrance and memorial ceremonies dedicated to both soldiers and civilians who have been affected by war. Since 2000, Giorno Della Memoria (International Holocaust Remembrance Day) has been held on January 27. Yom Hasho'a, Israel's Day of Remembrance of the Holocaust and Heroism, is held on the 27th day of Nissan in the Hebrew calendar, towards the end of April or beginning of May. In Germany, Volkstrauertag ("national day of mourning") is held two Sundays before the first day of Advent.

As opined by Squadron Leader Rana Chhina, the main suggestion is to institutionalise the grass roots culture of remembrance by highlighting the valour of armed forces and a special day of remembrance to be observed regularly. This is a very valuable suggestion. I hope the political leadership will take a call on this.

Let us pay sincere homage to the fallen heroes, if possible, by dedicating a commemoration day to show that we care for their families and the war veterans who are still alive. After all, they have given their days and years fighting for us.

The writer is Vice-President of India

WHAT THE OTHERS SAY

"Using warplanes to bomb targets deep inside another sovereign country's territory has only aggravated the situation. As has the rhetoric of Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi, who is keen to present a strong image ahead of the coming elections."
—CHINA DAILY

The Gulf as a channel of peace

As West Asia develops strong economic bonds with India, it could become Delhi's ally in nudging Islamabad towards political moderation



RAJA MANDALA

BY C RAJA MOHAN

THE IDEA that the Gulf countries might have some interest, let alone a role, in South Asian security would sound quite improbable for most Indian ears. Whatever that role might be, there is no mistaking the significant activism of the Gulf countries to help defuse the current tensions between India and Pakistan. Media reports, for example, suggest that Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) pressed Pakistan to release Wing Commander Abhinandan Varthaman who was downed after a dogfight in the air with Pakistan Air Force last week.

In the past, many parts of the Gulf and Middle East tended to act as Pakistan's strategic depth. For decades, shared religious identity and common approach to regional affairs gave Pakistan a political edge over India in the region. In recent years, though, Delhi has begun to correct that imbalance. As many Gulf countries, especially Saudi Arabia and the UAE, develop stronger economic and security bonds with India, they could become potential allies in nudging Pakistan towards political moderation and regional accommodation in the Subcontinent. The parlous state of its economy and dependence on financial bailouts from the UAE and Saudi Arabia has made Pakistan more amenable to such an outcome.

This is not some thing new. The security of the Indian Subcontinent and the Gulf region have always been inter-linked. The nature of that interdependence has, of course, varied over time and space. But independent India has tended to underestimate the importance of this strategic intimacy with the Gulf, thanks to Delhi's entrenched ideological approach to the Middle East.

In the colonial era, undivided India loomed large over the Gulf. During that era, the Raj offered security protection, a framework for commerce and some administrative support. The Gulf and other locations in the Middle East were critical links in the larger architecture of Great Britain's Imperial defence system in the eastern hemisphere centred on undivided India.

The armies of India had to embark on repeated expeditionary operations in the Gulf and the Middle East through the 19th and early 20th centuries. The Indian army played a key role in the Middle Eastern theatre in both the World Wars.

After Independence, India pulled out of any security role in the Gulf and the Middle East. Pakistan, however, joined the Anglo-American effort to replace the security vacuum created by the Indian withdrawal. It became a member of short-lived regional military alliance called the Central Treaty Organisation (CENTO). Its regional members included Pakistan, Iran, Iraq and Turkey. While India aligned with the nationalist and non-aligned governments like Egypt, Pakistan embraced conservative and pro-Western regimes.

While CENTO did not survive, it provided the basis for Pakistan's external and

internal security cooperation with a number of countries in the Gulf region. Some of them like Jordan, Iran and Turkey backed Pakistan during its wars with India in 1965 and 1971. As the Arab nationalist regimes steadily weakened in relation to the regional conservatives, India steadily lost political ground to Pakistan in the 1970s.

Matters got worse in the 1980s as India remained silent on the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan and the Gulf regimes joined Pakistan in promoting jihad against the Soviet Union. While India's energy and economic dependence on the Gulf grew, its political vulnerability was shockingly visible when Delhi's lone friend in the region, Saddam Hussein, invaded Kuwait and annexed it in 1990.

As key countries in the region rallied behind the US to roll back Saddam Hussein's aggression, India scrambled to evacuate thousands of expatriates from the region. More significantly, India seemed unable to navigate the rapidly changing Middle East with its old slogans.

The 1990s also saw Pakistan mobilise significant support within the Middle East, including at the OIC and other international forums, to castigate India's internal policies. The attack on the Babri Masjid and India's troubles in the Kashmir valley gave ample political ammunition to Pakistan.

Paradoxically, the nuclear tests by India and Pakistan in May 1998 and the Kargil crisis in the summer of 1999, opened the possibilities for restructuring South Asia's relations with the Gulf. The strategic dialogue between Jaswant Singh and the US Deputy Secretary Strobe Talbott during 1998-2000 opened an influential new channel to the Gulf. More important, the US mobilised Saudi Arabia during the Kargil War to encourage Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif to accept the Indian demand to pull Pakistan's army back to the Line of Control. Sharif, fearful of the army chief Pervez Musharraf, wanted an American cover.

The influential Saudi ambassador in Washington, Bandar Bin Sultan, arranged a meeting for Sharif at the White House with President Bill Clinton on July 4, 1999. Prince Bandar received Sharif at the Dulles Airport and prepared him for the meeting next morning with Clinton. After he signed the controversial agreement (in Pakistan) to restore the Line of Control in accordance with the Simla Agreement, Prince Bandar had a Saudi Royal accompany a nervous Nawaz Sharif back home.

After Kargil, the NDA brought a new self-confidence and intensity to the engagement with the Gulf and the Middle East. That Jaswant Singh was the first Indian foreign minister to ever visit Saudi Arabia in late 2000 underlined how far Delhi and Riyadh had drifted in the decades before.

The bilateral relationship with Saudi Arabia that steadily improved in the UPA decade, acquired a fresh momentum under Prime Minister Narendra Modi. Two decades ago, Jaswant Singh sought to lift the Pakistan constraint on the bilateral relationship with Saudi Arabia. Today the House of Saud is becoming a valuable partner for Delhi in promoting regional security in the Subcontinent and beyond.

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Show us the paradigm shift

Instead of spewing vitriol, PM must answer questions on national security



THE PRIME minister has called the dropping of payloads in Balakot a pilot project. The projects are meant to validate new ideas and processes. They are then taken forward to venture capitalists to determine their viability. The prime minister doesn't quite appreciate that the viability of such a pilot project is highly suspect.

The pilot project is over and its fallout is back. The nation embraced the homecoming of its brave son.

There are serious questions that must be asked. What has this pilot project achieved? Hopefully, the government will soon demonstrate that 300-400 terrorists were eliminated. The foreign media, however, seems to have questioned such an outcome. At the risk of being called anti-national, I think it is in the right of the country's citizens to know the extent of damage caused to terrorists at the training camps in Balakot — it is the duty of the government to inform them. Coinciding with Abhinandan's homecoming, was the killing of five security personnel in an encounter in Kupwara. We should have known that such a pilot project will not deter Pakistan or terrorists in their forays across our borders.

The surgical strike carried out by this government in September 2016 against the terrorist launchpads in Pakistan Occupied Kashmir

(K) also failed to deter Pakistan's attempts to destabilise Kashmir through terrorist activities. Both the July 2015 Gurdaspur and January 2016 Pathankot terror attacks caught this government unawares. There was no follow up, except that we were deeply embarrassed at having allowed the ISI to set foot in India without Pakistan following through its reciprocal commitment. The September 2016 terror attack on an army brigade at Uri apparently resulted in a surgical strike. The prime minister patted himself on the back for this allegedly historic first. Surgeries of this nature are meant to target the cancer that infects the body politic. However, the cancer is spreading, the surgery having failed. I will assume that 300-400 people were killed at Balakot. Does this government believe that terrorism will come to an end and that Indian military installations will not be targeted or that cross-border adventurism will cease? Pakistan is the hotbed of terrorism. Does this government believe that the killing of 300 terrorists will change the mindset of Pakistan's military establishment? For Pakistan, terrorism is a valuable strategic enterprise. As long as it can, in the words of Pervez Musharraf, inflict a thousand cuts on this enterprise will continue.

Pilot projects are the result of a new way of dealing with a problem. The claim that post-Pulwama, there has been a paradigm shift in

our policy towards terrorism is nothing but self-deception. After the Indian air-strikes which were solely aimed at terror camps across the border, Pakistan had the temerity to launch air-strikes across the international border in an attempt to target our military establishments. If launching the "real project" means crossing the international border on a regular basis and targeting terrorist camps deep within Pakistan, the consequences may well be frightening. Yet we need to bring succour to the families of the 40 CRPF jawans who lost their lives in the terrorist attack.

Our policy must be multi-pronged. In the context of the present international environment, we have the support of the Western world and in particular, the US. Pakistan must deliver and bring to justice terrorists who find Pakistan a safe heaven. But President Donald Trump, as he opens a dialogue with the Taliban in the Af-Pak region, needs Pakistan to take those talks forward. So, at present, not much will be achieved through American pressure. All of Europe, particularly France, as well as Japan and Australia are on board. They believe that Pakistan must take effective steps to deal with terrorists at home. But China will not let Pakistan down given its strategic interests and the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor project. The UN Security Council Resolution 1267 can only be passed if China also believes that Masood Azhar

should be declared a global terrorist. That support is unlikely.

As far as the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) is concerned, Pakistan is in the grey category since July 2018 and international pressure can be brought to blacklist it. The environment is right for a diplomatic blitzkrieg to build up international opinion against Pakistan. But we must also not forget that the generals behind the terrorists or the others who support them have to be dealt with. The political establishment in Pakistan does not call the shots. We need to strategically think as to how the Pakistani military establishment is to be addressed.

The entire Opposition will stand by the government and the prime minister if he can assure the people of this country that with surgical strikes and the dropping of payloads, not a single jawan will be killed in times to come. The enemy, Mr Prime Minister, is not the Opposition. The term "anti-national" should be used for those who take the nation for a ride. Open your eyes to the reality of the problem. The visceral hatred that you display in your colourful vocabulary is the enemy of the good. That mindset needs a surgical strike. Only unity at home will help us deal with an implacable hostile neighbour.

The writer, a senior Congress leader, is a former Union minister

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

ABOUT DIGNITY

THIS REFERS TO the editorial, 'Towards dignity' (IE, March 4). Manual scavenging is a blot on country's social and economic track record. Besides being exposed to hazardous conditions, manual scavengers are also subjected to social atrocities. Swachh Bharat Mission (SBM) is an exemplary testimony to political will. But state governments should take a leaf out of the Delhi government's initiative.

Ketan Kishan, Gurugram

THIS REFERS TO the editorial, 'Towards dignity' (IE, March 4). Merely enactment of laws to prohibit manual scavenging will not end this scourge. The Delhi government's step to deploy 200 machine-equipped trucks is a good initiative. But the government must ensure that the measure is implemented on a sustainable basis.

Deepak Singhal, Noida

PRESENCE IN GULF

THIS REFERS TO the editorial, 'A new conversation' (IE, March 4). Since the inception of the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), Pakistan has been at the forefront of the organisation's anti-India resolutions. However, in the recent years, India's footprint has in-

LETTER OF THE WEEK AWARD

To encourage quality reader intervention, The Indian Express offers the Letter of the Week award. The letter adjudged the best for the week is published every Saturday. Letters may be e-mailed to editpage@expressindia.com or sent to The Indian Express, B-1/B, Sector 10, Noida-UP 201301. Letter writers should mention their postal address and phone number.

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creased in the Persian Gulf region. Operation Raahat in Yemen and the extradition of Christian Michel James illustrate India's close ties with West Asian countries. The only glitch is OIC's statement on the Indian military's actions in Kashmir.

Sauro Dasgupta, Kolkata



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If there are questions of current or contemporary relevance that you would like explained, please write to explained@expressindia.com

DECISION
2019
THE QUESTIONS THAT MATTER

What does Jay Panda bring to BJP in Odisha?

He won big in 2014, but not all see him as a game-changer

Good optics, but Panda gains more than the BJP

SAMPAD PATNAIK
 BHUBANESWAR, MARCH 4

FORMER BJD MP Jay Panda joined the BJP on Monday evening. This was the assessment of workers and leaders of the BJP: Panda's entry is "not a game changer", but it is "good optics" for the party as it seeks to challenge the popularity of Naveen Patnaik, who has been Chief Minister since 2000.



"He (Panda) is no mass leader, but he can help us build our case that people are fleeing the BJD, which is now beset by corruption and lethargy," a BJP leader said. There was no indication until late Monday evening whether — and from where — Panda would contest. In 2014, he won the Kendrapara seat by a margin of over 2 lakh votes — however, that victory was on a BJD ticket, at a seat that sent Biju Patnaik to Lok Sabha thrice, and has voted Janata and its successor parties continuously since 1977.

"Naveen gifted Panda the BJD's safest seat in 2009 (Lok Sabha election), and the party machinery got him elected. He did well in 2014 because of the Naveen wave that saw the BJD winning 20 out of 21 seats in Odisha," said a BJD MP.

BJP workers in Kendrapara, however, said Panda has been a "fairly decent" MP, and would be able to help the party win some goodwill in coastal Odisha.

The BJP, which trails the BJD by a distance as far as party organisation is concerned, lacks well known 'younger' leaders in the coastal districts.

Congress leader Panchanan Kanungo recalled that in 2014, the Congress had finished second at Kendrapara, and the BJP was a distant third. "If he (Panda) contests from Kendrapara, he will harm the BJD to an extent, and will hand an advantage to the Congress."

According to BJP workers, however, Panda stood to benefit more from the BJP than vice versa. They said that they expected him to work with "humility", and to "not make demands" for a few years at least.



FAIZAN MUSTAFA

What is Article 370?

Included in the Constitution on October 17, 1949, Article 370 exempts J&K from the Indian Constitution (except Article 1 and Article 370 itself) and permits the state to draft its own Constitution. It restricts Parliament's legislative powers in respect of J&K. For extending a central law on subjects included in the Instrument of Accession (IoA), mere "consultation" with the state government is needed. But for extending it to other matters, "concurrence" of the state government is mandatory. The IoA came into play when the Indian Independence Act, 1947 divided British India into India and Pakistan. For some 600 princely states whose sovereignty was restored on Independence, the Act provided for three options: to remain an independent country, join Dominion of India, or join Dominion of Pakistan — and this joining with either of the two countries was to be through an IoA. Though no prescribed form was provided, a state so joining could specify the terms on which it agreed to join. The maxim for contracts between states is *pacta sunt servanda*, i.e. promises between states must be honoured; if there is a breach of contract, the general rule is that parties are to be restored to the original position.

A number of other states enjoy special status under Article 371, from 371A to 371I.

What were the terms included in the IoA for Kashmir?

The Schedule appended to the Instrument of Accession gave Parliament the power to legislate in respect of J&K only on Defence, External Affairs and Communications. In Kashmir's Instrument of Accession in Clause 5, Raja Hari Singh, ruler of J&K, explicitly mentioned that the terms of "my Instrument of Accession cannot be varied by any amendment of the Act or of Indian Independence Act unless such amendment is accepted by me by an Instrument supplementary to this Instrument". Clause 7 said "nothing in this Instrument shall be deemed to commit me in any way to acceptance of any future constitution of India or to fetter my discretion to enter into arrangements with the Government of India under any such future constitution".

How did the accession come about?

Raja Hari Singh had initially decided to remain independent and sign standstill agreements with India and Pakistan, and Pakistan in fact signed it. But following an invasion from tribesmen and Army men in plainclothes from Pakistan, he sought the help of India, which in turn sought the accession of Kashmir to India. Hari Singh signed the Instrument of Accession on October 26, 1947 and Governor General Lord Mountbatten accepted it on October 27, 1947.

It was India's stated policy that wherever there was a dispute on accession, it should be settled in accordance with the wishes of people rather than a unilateral decision of the ruler of the princely state. In India's acceptance of the IoA, Lord Mountbatten stated that "it is my Government's wish that as soon as law and order have been restored in Kashmir and her soil is cleared of the invader, the question of the State's accession be settled by a reference to the people". India regarded accession as purely temporary and provisional, as stated in the

AN EXPERT EXPLAINS

Understanding Articles 370, 35A

A recent central ordinance, which extends reservation to SCs and STs in J&K, throws the spotlight on Article 35A, as well as Article 370 from which it derives. While regional political leaders have warned against dilution of Article 35A, petitions challenging it are due to come up in SC. What are these two provisions?



Sheikh Abdullah, in the presence of Jawaharlal Nehru, announces in Srinagar that Kashmir would be part of India. Express Archive

Government of India's White Paper on J&K in 1948. In a letter to J&K Prime Minister Sheikh Abdullah dated May 17, 1949, Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru with the concurrence of Vallabhbhai Patel and N Gopalaswami Ayyangar wrote: "It has been settled policy of Government of India, which on many occasions has been stated both by Sardar Patel and me, that the Constitution of Jammu and Kashmir is a matter for determination by the people of the state represented in a Constituent Assembly convened for the purpose."

How was Article 370 enacted?

The original draft was given by the Government of J&K. Following modification and negotiations, Article 306A (now 370) was passed in the Constituent Assembly on May 27, 1949. Moving the motion, Ayyangar said that though accession was complete, India had offered to have a plebiscite taken when the conditions were created, and if accession was not ratified then "we shall not stand in the way of Kashmir separating herself away from India". On October 17, 1949, when Article 370 was finally included in the Constitution by India's Constituent Assembly, Ayyangar reiterated India's commitment to plebiscite and drafting of a separate constitution by J&K's Constituent Assembly.

Was Article 370 a temporary provision?

It is the first article of Part XXI of the Constitution. The heading of this part is 'Temporary, Transitional and Special Provisions'. Article 370 could be interpreted as temporary in the sense that the J&K Constituent Assembly had a right to modify/delete/retain it; it decided to retain it. Another interpretation was that accession was temporary until a plebiscite. The Union government, in a written reply in Parliament last year, said there is no proposal to remove Article 370. Delhi High Court in *Kumari Vijayalaxmi* (2017) too rejected a petition that said Article 370 is temporary and its continuation is a fraud on the Constitution. The Supreme Court in April 2018 said that despite the headnote using the word "temporary", Article 370 is not temporary. In *Sampat Prakash* (1969) the SC refused to accept Article 370 as temporary. A five-judge Bench said "Article 370 has never ceased to be operative". Thus, it is a permanent provision.

Can Article 370 be deleted?

Yes, Article 370(3) permits deletion by a

PARENT PROVISION AND ITS OFFSHOOT
ARTICLE 370

Part of the Constitution ever since it came into effect, it lays down that only two Articles would apply to J&K: Article 1, which defines India, and Article 370 itself. Article 370 says other provisions of the Constitution can apply to J&K "subject to such exceptions and modifications as the President may by order specify", with the concurrence of the state government and the endorsement of the J&K Constituent Assembly.

ARTICLE 35A

Introduced by a Presidential Order of 1954, it empowers the J&K legislature to define a "permanent resident" of the state, and to provide special rights and privileges to those permanent residents.

Presidential Order. Such an order, however, is to be preceded by the concurrence of J&K's Constituent Assembly. Since such an Assembly was dissolved on January 26, 1957, one view is it cannot be deleted anymore. But the other view is that it can be done, but only with the concurrence of the State Assembly.

What is Article 370's significance for the Indian Union?

Article 370 itself mentions Article 1, which includes J&K in the list of states. Article 370 has been described as a tunnel through which the Constitution is applied to J&K. Nehru, however, said in Lok Sabha on November 27, 1963 that "Article 370 has eroded". India has used Article 370 at least 45 times to extend provisions of the Indian Constitution to J&K. This is the only way through which, by mere Presidential Orders, India has almost nullified the effect of J&K's special status. By the 1954 order, almost the entire Constitution was extended to J&K including most Constitutional amendments. Ninety-four of 97 entries in the Union List are applicable to J&K; 26 out of 47 items of the Concurrent List have been extended.; 260 of 395 Articles have been ex-

tended to the state, besides 7 of 12 Schedules.

The Centre has used Article 370 even to amend a number of provisions of J&K's Constitution, though that power was not given to the President under Article 370. Article 356 was extended though a similar provision that was already in Article 92 of the J&K Constitution, which required that President's Rule could be ordered only with the concurrence of the President. To change provisions for the Governor being elected by the Assembly, Article 370 was used to convert it into a nominee of the President. To extend President's rule beyond one year in Punjab, the government needed the 59th, 64th, 67th and 68th Constitutional Amendments, but achieved the same result in J&K just by invoking Article 370. Again, Article 249 (power of Parliament to make laws on State List entries) was extended to J&K without a resolution by the Assembly and just by a recommendation of the Governor. In certain ways, Article 370 reduces J&K's powers in comparison to other states. It is more useful for India today than J&K.

Is there any ground in the view that Article 370 is essential for J&K being a part of India?

Article 3 of the J&K Constitution declares J&K to be an integral part of India. In the Preamble to the Constitution, not only is there no claim to sovereignty, but there is categorical acknowledgement about the object of the J&K Constitution being "to further define the existing relationship of the state with the Union of India as its integral part thereof. Moreover people of state are referred as 'permanent residents' not 'citizens.'" Article 370 is not an issue of integration but of autonomy. Those who advocate its deletion are more concerned with uniformity rather than integration.

What is Article 35A?

Article 35A stems from Article 370, having been introduced through a Presidential Order in 1954. Article 35A is unique in the sense that it does not appear in the main body of the Constitution — Article 35 is immediately followed by Article 36 — but comes up in Appendix I. Article 35A empowers the J&K legislature to define the state's permanent residents and their special rights and privileges.

Why is it being challenged?

The Supreme Court will examine whether it is unconstitutional or violates the basic structure of the Constitution. But unless it is upheld, many Presidential Orders may become questionable. Article 35A was not passed as per the amending process given in Article 368, but was inserted on the recommendation of J&K's Constituent Assembly through a Presidential Order. Article 370 is not only part of the Constitution but also part of federalism, which is basic structure. Accordingly, the court has upheld successive Presidential Orders under Article 370.

Since Article 35A predates basic structure theory of 1973, as per *Waman Rao* (1981), it cannot be tested on the touchstone of basic structure. Certain types of restrictions on purchase of land are also in place in several other states, including some in the Northeast and Himachal Pradesh. Domicile-based reservation in admissions and even jobs is followed in a number of states, including under Article 371D for undivided Andhra Pradesh. The Centre's recent decision extending to J&K reservation benefits for SCs, STs, OBCs and those living along international borders, announced last week, throws the spotlight back on Article 35A.

(The author is an expert of constitutional law and Vice-Chancellor of NALSAR University of Law, Hyderabad)

THIS WORD MEANS

POPE PIUS XII

Why is this wartime Pope so controversial?

ARCHIVES FROM the pontificate of Pius XII (in AP photo alongside) would be declassified on March 2 next year, the 81st anniversary of Pius's election to the papacy, Pope Francis announced Monday. This could potentially open the doors to new research on the history of World War II, especially on aspects related to the Vatican's response to the Holocaust.

Pius XII was head of the Roman Catholic Church from March 2, 1939 until his death on October 9, 1958. Before he became Pope, Pius was the Vatican's representative to Nazi Germany, and the Cardinal Secretary of State, in which capacity he negotiated the Reichskonkordat with the Third Reich to safeguard properties of the Church in Germany.

The opening of the archives is important because Pope Pius XII sits at the centre of a bruising historical controversy that has endured since at least the 1960s. While some scholars such as the former Harvard professor Daniel Jonah Goldhagen (*A Moral Reckoning — The Role of the Catholic Church in the Holocaust and its Unfulfilled Duty of Repair*: 2003) allege that the Church under Pius remained shamefully silent as the Nazis massacred millions of innocent Jews, others such as Rabbi David G Dalin (*The Myth of Hitler's Pope — How Pope Pius XII Rescued Jews from the Nazis*: 2005) have argued powerfully that the wartime Pope



has been slandered unfairly.

On Monday, Pope Francis said he was allowing access to Pius's private papers "with a serene and confident mind" and that serious scholarship would be able to evaluate "in the correct light" the highs and lows of his pontificate. The New York Times reported.

The Vatican usually opens its archives 70 years after the end of a pontificate. Calls for the early release of Pius's papers intensified after the Vatican put him on the path to sainthood. "The Church is not afraid of history," Francis told officials and staff of the Archivio Segreto Vaticano, the papal repository that, according to its website, contains some 12 centuries of documents.

FACT CHECK, GROUND REALITY

Minister Gadkari's urine-to-urea idea: Experiments and constraints

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
 NEW DELHI, MARCH 4

UNION ROAD Transport and Highways Minister Nitin Gadkari told young innovators at the Mayor Innovation Awards ceremony of the Nagpur Municipal Corporation Sunday that if India could store the urine of its people and use it to manufacture urea, it would no longer need to import the chemical compound used to manufacture fertiliser.

This is an idea Gadkari has proposed earlier, too. In 2015, he had said he collects urine in a 50-litre can for use in his garden. Plants that received "urine therapy" showed better growth than those that got "plain water", he had said. And in 2017, the Minister had suggested the setting up of urine banks in every *tehsil* to produce urea.

On Sunday, Gadkari repeated his idea, "I have asked for storage of urine at airports," he said. "We import urea, but if we start storing urine of the entire country then we will

not need to import urea. It has so much potential, and nothing will be wasted."

India's urea needs

India consumes about 30 million tonnes of urea annually, of which 24 million tonnes is indigenously produced and 6 million tonnes is imported. In a *Mann Ki Baat* address in November 2017, Prime Minister Narendra Modi had called for a cutting of urea consumption by half by 2022. Urea prices in India are lower than those in neighbouring countries of South and Southeast Asia, as well as China.

Urea from urine

Across the world, scientists have studied the extraction of urea from urine, and the use of urine as fertiliser for its nitrogen content.

In 2011 in South Africa, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation announced a grant of \$400,000 to the University of KwaZulu-Natal's Pollution Research Group



Fertiliser is manufactured from urea; India's consumption is 30 mn tonnes.

for an initiative aimed at exploring design and implementation of a toilet system that would lead to the safe disposal and recovery of valuable material from excreta.

A part of the project was to filter urine and flush water to create a high-quality wa-

ter stream, with the concentrated urine stream being processed to separate urea and other salts. The research is ongoing.

In the early 1990s, Sweden started a urine separation project, as a part of which special toilets and storage tanks were fitted in peo-

ple's homes and the urine was used locally.

"The first phase of modern urine diverting toilets took off in the early 1990s targeting single households and summer houses and more than 10 ecovillages... One major environmental feature of many ecovillages was their sanitation system. The urine from these installations was either reused or disposed of on the premises or used by a nearby farmer," said a study conducted by researchers from three Stockholm-based organisations. (*Urine Diversion: One Step Towards Sustainable Sanitation*: 2006)

The paper traced the progress of the project from the first phase to the second over five years, and its movement from rural to urban settings in the second phase. Between 2000 and 2005, the project faced a backlash over lack of municipal support. In the fourth phase, municipal bodies adopted sanitation policies that encouraged reuse.

According to estimates, in 2006, there were a little over 10,000 porcelain urine diversion toilets installed in homes in

Sweden, along with a few 15 larger systems.

Unsure in India

Experts closer home, however, say that the process of collecting, storing, transporting and isolating urea from urine is fraught with troubles.

"First, we will have to change our toilet system entirely, similar to what Sweden did, and install special toilets where urine and solid waste are stored separately. Specialised underground tanks will also have to be set up. Urea can be extracted from urine using several chemical procedures. The problem is in scaling up and making the project feasible," said a senior professor at Delhi University.

On Sunday, Gadkari complained that "Other people do not cooperate with me because all my ideas are fantastic." Even the municipal corporation will not help, "because in government, people are trained to be like (blinkered) bulls who walk in the rut, not looking here and there," PTI quoted him as saying.