



Closed road

The ban on civilian traffic on the Udhampur-Baramulla highway must be rescinded

The ban on civilian traffic for two days a week on the 271-km stretch of National Highway 44 between Udhampur in Jammu and Baramulla in Kashmir, which came into force on April 7, is an ill-advised move. The ban, which is to last till May 31, is supposedly to enable the orderly conduct of the Lok Sabha elections in Jammu and Kashmir, in the light of the tragic February 14 suicide attack on a CRPF convoy on NH 44 at Pulwama, that killed 40 personnel. On Sundays and Wednesdays, between 4 a.m. and 5 p.m., only pre-determined categories of civilian traffic will be allowed on the highway with clearance from the authorities. For the rest of the time, the highway will be given over to the movement of troops. As a measure to prevent another Pulwama-type attack, this is draconian. NH 44 is the lifeline of the State – it is vital to move goods (including perishable agricultural produce), and along it lie many educational and medical institutions. In many cases, avoiding the stretch would greatly multiply the time and distance between two points. The government is at pains to emphasise that exceptions are in place for those in medical emergencies, lawyers, doctors, tourists, government employees, students, and so on. But such a system of permits and bans militates against the freedom of movement at the heart of a democratic society. To be sure, even before the ban, civilian traffic has not moved on the highway unfettered by checks. Such is the security challenge in J&K. But to officially segregate civilian traffic is to put people's lives at the mercy of a calendar, and to invite confusion about the organising principles of Indian troop deployment.

The Pulwama attack was a wake-up call about the security drills in place to prevent terrorist strikes. It demanded an appraisal, so that the lives of soldiers and civilians alike can be secured. To throw civilians out of gear – as they were on the first day of the highway ban, on April 7 – defies logic. It also positions the administration against the people, as has become clear from the political and legal challenges to the traffic restrictions. In a State that is already under President's Rule, it has pushed the political class and the administration farther apart. The State's parties such as the National Conference and the Peoples Democratic Party have led the voices of protest. Petitions have been filed in the J&K High Court arguing that the restrictions violate Articles 14, 19 and 21 of the Constitution. The effect of any response to the Pulwama attack ought not to be an increased alienation that places troops and local people in an us-versus-them timetable. It must, instead, be a doubling up of the security protocol to make life more secure and hassle-free for civilians and soldiers alike.

Netanyahu's Israel

As he tries to clinch a fifth term as PM, hopes for peace in Palestine dim further

The April 9 parliamentary elections in Israel have underscored the structural shift in the country's democracy – the right wing reigns supreme. Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu had faced serious challenges during the campaign. He faces corruption allegations that could lead to his indictment. The Blue and White party, formed a few weeks ahead of the election, had quickly risen to become the principal opposition force, giving Mr. Netanyahu a scare. He had lost some allies even before the elections. In the event, Mr. Netanyahu has emerged victorious. While both Mr. Netanyahu's Likud party and the Blue and White got 35 seats each (after 98% of the votes were counted), he could become Prime Minister for a fifth time with support from rightwing parties. Likud has markedly improved its performance from 2015, when it had won 30 seats and still formed the government. The orthodox Jewish parties Shas and United Torah Judaism, which won seven and six seats respectively in 2015, secured eight each this time. The Union of Rightwing Parties and the right-nationalist Yisrael Beytenu have won five seats each, while the centrist Kulanu has got four. With the support of these potential allies, Mr. Netanyahu would have the backing of 65 MPs, well past the halfway mark in the 120-member Knesset.

Mr. Netanyahu ran a contentious, ultra-nationalist campaign to drum up support for Likud and its allies. He had publicly aligned with Jewish Power, a fringe party known for its racist, anti-Arab views. If Mr. Netanyahu had said there wouldn't be any Palestinian state under his watch during the 2015 election campaign, this time, a few days ahead of the poll, he said he would annex parts of the West Bank to bring Jewish settlements under Israeli sovereignty. He also exploited the security concerns of Israeli voters by presenting himself as the only leader capable of keeping them safe from "Palestinian terrorists" as well as Iran. Mr. Netanyahu is credited with stabilising the Israeli economy and, more controversially, clinching major diplomatic coups such as the U.S. recognition of Jerusalem as Israel's capital and the occupied Syrian Golan as Israeli territory, thanks to American President Donald Trump. Mr. Netanyahu is now set to become the longest-serving Prime Minister, overtaking David Ben-Gurion, the country's founder. But the Israel he leads today is totally different from what even Ben-Gurion and the early socialist Zionists had imagined. With Mr. Netanyahu showing no interest in the peace process and the occupation of Palestine being deepened both militarily and through Jewish settlements in the West Bank, Israel, which is described by a Basic Law passed last year as "the nation state of the Jewish people", is a *de facto* apartheid state. Given his record, there is little reason to hope that Mr. Netanyahu will break the *status quo* during his next term.

A crisis that resists hasty solutions

As the EU extends the Brexit deadline, it is still anybody's guess if London will finally get its act together



VIDYA RAM

On Wednesday, 12 days after the U.K. had initially been due to leave the European Union (EU), Prime Minister Theresa May headed to Brussels to persuade leaders of the remaining 27 member states to grant Britain an extension that would enable Brexit to happen by June 30 at the latest. With the ultimate decision on this lying with Brussels (and the member states, each of which has the ability to veto an extension outright), it felt a far cry from the picture of a Britain "taking back control" that the government and Leave supporters had propounded in the wake of the 2016 referendum. In the end Britain's suggested date was brushed aside as EU leaders – following an epic five-hour meeting – opted for October 31, with Britain able to leave earlier if a deal is reached.

Amid accusations

After it became clear that the original March 29 Brexit deadline was no longer tenable, accusations over who was responsible have come thick and fast. Ms. May herself faced a backlash from MPs when she appeared to blame them for the chaos, accusing them of "political games" and "arcane political rows" that she and the public had tired of. Ironically for Ms. May, her comments were also seen as bolstering the determination of MPs to continue to block her withdrawal deal within Parliament, which has now thrice been rejected by MPs.

As with the results of the 2016

referendum, the causes of the current political crisis in Britain are manifold, though the starting point surely has to be the open-ended nature of the question put to the public: "Should the United Kingdom remain a member of the European Union or leave the European Union?" The question, which itself was open to generous interpretation, was used as a launch pad for all sorts of arguments by the Leave campaign, ranging from the need to end free movement from the EU and immigration more widely, to having the opportunity to strike trade deals independently, to ending payments to the EU, to challenging the establishment. All these and other reasons played into the result: a Nuffield study published last year noted that immigration was the main reason that people voted to leave, followed by sovereignty, though the economy and the desire to teach politicians a lesson also played in.

The ambiguity of the question has meant that politicians across the political spectrum have been able to interpret the results to pursue pretty much any vision of Brexit. There's Ms. May, who has put immigration controls at the heart of her vision of Brexit. This position on free movement is also adopted to a certain extent by the Labour party, to the fury of many of its supporters. However, while Ms. May has insisted on ending membership of the EU customs union to enable Britain to forge independent trade deals on goods, Labour believes remaining in part of these arrangements is the only way to enable businesses to get the tariff and hassle-free relationship with Europe they require to continue thriving, while ensuring that no hard border develops on the island of Ireland between the Repu-



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blic of Ireland (the EU nation) and Northern Ireland (part of the U.K.).

Across party lines

These visions have not held across party lines, with some MPs choosing to leave their parties over their differences. While some Conservative MPs believe Ms. May's plan to transform the relationship is excessive, there are others who have condemned it as tantamount to a betrayal, relegating Britain to "vassal" status to the EU, particularly because of the backstop arrangements for Ireland that would put the U.K. into a customs union with the EU that couldn't be ended unilaterally were future talks to break down. Labour, on the other hand, has faced critics who believe it should be doing more to represent the 48% who voted to remain in the EU, as well as from others who have warned that fighting Brexit would amount to abandoning some of the most deprived communities in northern England which voted overwhelmingly to leave. These tensions – which have pervaded the party membership, discussion between MPs and even the cabinet and shadow cabinet – have made achieving political consensus on all sides particu-

larly difficult.

But what has been particularly striking is the government's refusal to compromise. It had become increasingly clear that the government's vision of Brexit wasn't one that would pass through Parliament – indeed, 230 MPs voted against it in January in the biggest defeat for a U.K. government in parliamentary history. Ms. May has plodded on regardless, even as some pointed out the double standards: she insisted that she should be able to bring her vote to MPs over and over again; but at the same time she robotically insisted on respecting the referendum result, despite the fact that so much had changed and so much more had become known in the past two years.

However, Ms. May is not the only one to refuse to compromise. Some Brexiters and the Conservative party's parliamentary ally, the Democratic Unionist Party (DUP) of Northern Ireland, have dug in. The DUP's intransigence will be particularly painful for Ms. May, whose impetuous decision to call a snap general election in 2017 gave them the crucial powerful hand over Brexit decisions. Indeed, had that election not been called, it is quite possible that the government would not have struggled with the numbers in getting its deal through, and Brexit could have happened on the scheduled date.

Muddle along

Advocates of a public vote too have not covered themselves in glory. The Independent Group of MPs who left the Conservative and Labour parties earlier this year courted criticism when they failed to help push the customs union and other softer options over the line in a series of indicative votes

recently. Had they done so, MPs could have got the majority they needed for a road ahead to show that there was an alternative road to Ms. May's, but instead they have continued to cling to the hope of either revocation or a public confirmatory vote.

It has been particularly unfortunate for the U.K. that given the fundamental issues that were apparent from the start of the Brexit process that Article 50 of the Treaty on European Union was triggered in March 2017 well before the type of Brexit they wanted to pursue had been agreed upon. This has forced the debate to happen against the backdrop of a deadline and cliff-edge that has made it possible for the government to threaten, "it's our deal or no deal", or "it's our deal or a long delay", making it more into a game of chicken than a country trying to forge the right road ahead. For this Parliament itself bears much responsibility, voting overwhelmingly to trigger the exit process back in 2017 with pretty much nothing to go on.

If the Brexit process was Britain's first opportunity to flout its prowess as a rational, independent trading nation, capable of holding its own on the global stage, it is a chance that has so far been missed by miles and the sense of frustration among EU leaders has been palpable. The October 31 deadline has given Britain time to find the "best possible solution." Donald Tusk, President of the European Council, said, urging Britain to "not waste this time". Whether Britain manages to do so and finally comes up with a solution acceptable to Parliament and the EU remains to be seen.

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'Deep regret' is simply not good enough

Britain's refusal to squarely apologise for the Jallianwala Bagh massacre is expected but disappointing



NAVTEJ SARNA

Though no one was holding their breath, there was some expectation of a British apology on the occasion of the centenary of the horrific Jallianwala Bagh massacre, more so since the demand came this time not from Indians alone but also from a strong contingent of British MPs across political parties. British Prime Minister Theresa May finally came out with: "We deeply regret what happened and the suffering caused."

Words are important, especially in the heavily-nuanced English language, and those who invented that language certainly know how to use them. One can imagine the careful drafting in Whitehall that would have gone into formulating the Prime Minister's statement. For comparison, in a press conference in Brussels the next day, Ms. May said that she "sincerely regretted" her failure in delivering a Brexit deal so far. "Deeply" is admittedly stronger than "sincerely", but the nature of contrition expressed is identical.

The second aspect of the statement that stands out is its passiveness – "what happened", "the suffering caused". There is no hint of agency here; this could well be the

statement of any observer and not of inheritors of the empire that committed the atrocity. The blandness too is disturbing: one would have expected some sympathy for the victims or their descendants and some reference to the brutality of the massacre.

Let us recall "what happened". On April 13, 1919, Baisakhi day, following unrest in Amritsar after protests against the Rowlatt Act, Brigadier General (temporary rank) Reginald Dyer took a strike force of 50 rifles and 40 khukri-wielding Gurkhas into an enclosed ground, Jallianwala Bagh, where a peaceful public meeting of 15,000-20,000 was being held. Immediately and without warning, he ordered fire to be opened on the crowd. The firing of 1,650 rounds was deliberate and targeted, using powerful rifles at virtually point-blank range. The "suffering caused" included several hundred dead and many times more wounded. The officially accepted figure of 379 dead is a gross underestimate. Eyewitness accounts and information collected by Sewa Samiti, a charity organisation point to much higher numbers. Non-Indian writers place the number killed at anything between 500 to 600, with three times that number wounded.

More was to follow after the proclamation, two days after the massacre, of Martial Law in Punjab: the infamous crawling order, the salaam order, public floggings, arbitrary arrests, torture and bombing of civilians by airplanes –



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all under a veil of strictly enforced censorship.

A history of evasion

Let us look next at what was done. After calls for an investigation, including by liberals in Britain, a Disorders Inquiry Committee, soon to be known by the name of its Chairman, Lord Hunter, was set up. In his testimony, Dyer asserted that his intention had been to punish the crowd, to make a "wide impression" and to strike terror not only in Amritsar but throughout Punjab. The committee split along racial lines and submitted a majority and minority report. The majority report of the Hunter Committee, using tactically selective criticism, established Dyer's culpability but let off the Lieutenant Governor, Michael O'Dwyer. The minority report written by the three Indian members was more scathing in its criticism. By then Dyer had become a liability and he was asked to resign his command, after which he left for England. This decision for a quiet discharge was approved by the British Secre-

tary of State, Edwin Montagu, and, after an acrimonious debate, also by the House of Commons. The conservative Lords however took a different tack and rebuked the government for being unjust to the officer. Similar sentiments in Dyer's favour came from the rightwing press – the *Morning Post* started a fund for him which collected £26,000 – as well as from conservative sections of the public who believed he had saved India for the empire. Rudyard Kipling, who had contributed £10 to the fund put an ambivalent comment on the wreath he sent to Dyer's funeral in 1927: "He did his duty as he saw it."

Now what has already been said: The speech that carried the day in the House of Commons in 1920 was that of Winston Churchill, no fan of Gandhi and his satyagraha. He called Dyer's deed "an extraordinary event, a monstrous event, an event which stands in sinister isolation"; privately he wrote that the "offence amounted to murder, or alternatively manslaughter". Significantly, Churchill, likening the event to "Prussian" tactics of terrorism, said that this was "not the British way of doing things". In other words, he was resorting to British exceptionalism: he was hanging out Dyer to dry as a rogue officer, while saving the larger colonial enterprise as benign.

Dyer was certainly rogue, but he was not alone. He was one of a line of several such – John Nicholson, Frederick Cooper, J.L. Cowan

– who resorted to severe disproportionate violence in 1857 and after the 1872 Kuka rebellion; he was also part of the despotic administration led by O'Dwyer (later assassinated by Udham Singh in 1940) which emboldened and then exonerated him. In 2013, then Prime Minister David Cameron quoted the same Churchill epithet of "monstrous", adding that this was a "deeply shameful event in British history" and "we must never forget what happened here." The Queen had earlier termed it as a "distressing example" of past history. Again, general homilies with hands nicely off and no admission of a larger culpability of racialised colonial violence that underpinned imperialism.

Healing a wound

Deep regret is all we may get instead of the unequivocal apology that is mandated. The expectation could be that time will add more distance to the massacre, making these calls for apology increasingly an academic exercise. We will no doubt also be advised to forgive and move on. The fact remains that there are many ways to heal a festering wound between nations, as Canada's apology for the Komagata Maru shows; clever drafting is not one of them.

Navtej Sarna is a writer and former High Commissioner to the U.K. and Ambassador to the U.S. He is a member of the Jallianwala Bagh Centenary Commemoration Committee. The views expressed are personal

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

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Court on Rafale papers

The report, "SC rejects Centre's plea to keep Rafale documents secret" (Page 1, April 11), on the Supreme Court's ruling establishes that no government is above the law and that investigative journalism cannot be stifled. The government's stance so far on documents that pertain to the deal indicates that it has something to conceal and is perhaps an attempt to buy time till the elections are over. The verdict is also an opportunity to allay aspersions voiced on the integrity of the supreme institution in the aftermath of its December order.

DEEPAK SINGHAL,
Noida

■ It is a matter of pride that *The Hindu's* efforts, through investigative journalism, to

probe the Rafale deal have finally yielded results to the extent that the Supreme Court took note of it. The top court has once again struck a blow for the freedom of speech, thereby strengthening our democracy. I hope this moment will also enlighten citizens on the need to not give up the fight of safeguarding their constitutional rights.

RAJNIT KUMAR PAUL,
New Delhi

Talking peace

The Prime Minister is leaving no stone unturned in order to somehow or the other win the general election. His repeated references to the armed forces and also the Pulwama incident in order to garner votes gloss over the point that the latter was on account of a failure of

intelligence, for which his government is responsible. The second point is about what the government has done in order to restore normalcy with Pakistan. Dialogue with Pakistan is imperative.

N.G.R. PRASAD,
K.K. RAM SIDDHARTHA,
Chennai

For the young voter

I am 80-plus and the results of this election are not going to be of very great consequence to me. But I wish the vast majority of the Indian electorate, especially the young and vibrant, cares. And so I write this note. When I was a class VI student in a village in Kerala, I spent election day on the road near the polling booth shouting, "Every vote in the bullock-cart box." Since then, I have not missed a single election

as a responsible voter. I began my adult life in Cherrapunji and had no problem mixing with people from across India. Being Khasi, Lushai, Naga or Assamese made no difference. When I moved to Shillong, there too it was a life of acceptance. It never occurred to me to even bother to find out what religion/caste or region one belonged to. To me, all were and are the citizens of this great country. All the elections I experienced were based more or less on facts. Now, things have changed. Many of us are being told that our religion is in danger; our culture is in danger; why, even our gods are in danger. Our nationalism was not a talking point at all because it was as dear to every Indian as the air he or she breathed. We cherished our freedom,

both intellectual and physical, and our democratic values. We do not want these to be taken away. Therefore, I request the young people of this land to think for themselves. Facts and truth, and not enthralling theatrics, should guide them. Before they exercise their franchise, they should make sure that they are serving this great land and not any particular politician.

Dr. C.P. DAMODARAN,
Thirissur, Kerala

One-sided

Armchair critics can never offer anything constructive to the government but derive immense pleasure by criticising people who do things honestly. What is the use of publishing articles such as "Notes on the BJP's manifesto" (OpEd page, April 11)? Incidentally, the writer

says he is associated with an organisation "in pursuit of alternative ideas and imagination". Of what use is this?

K. SIVASUBRAMANIAN,
Chennai

Expressing 'regret'

There is a huge difference between the words "regret" and "apology". What India needs is an outright apology for the Jallianwala Bagh massacre and Britain should shed its ego. Had such a brutality been unleashed on the British, Europe, America and Israel would have shamed the oppressors every year. There seem to be different standards because it happened to "others".

T. ANAND RAJ,
Chennai

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Is India's anti-satellite test a game-changer?

PARLEY

India must help shape the global governance of outer space

On April 1, the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) successfully launched a PSLV C45 rocket with a payload of 29 satellites. Days before this, on March 27, in an operation called 'Mission Shakti', the Defence Research & Development Organisation demonstrated India's ability in offensive defence capability, using a missile to destroy a satellite in Low Earth Orbit. In a discussion moderated by V. Sudarshan, D. Raghunandan and Rajeswari Pillai Rajagopalan look at India's options and its role in the global governance of outer space. Excerpts:



Rajeswari Pillai Rajagopalan is the head of the nuclear and space policy initiative of the ORF and also technical adviser to the UN group of governmental experts on the Prevention of an Arms Race in Outer Space

Rajeswari Pillai Rajagopalan: The anti-satellite (ASAT) test has been in the making for more than a decade actually. Ever since the first Chinese anti-satellite test in January 2007, there has been concern over India's own space assets and what kind of damage and destruction could happen should China decide to shoot down or temporarily disable one of our own satellites. That was the first time we recognised the importance of preserving outer space in a big way. A second important factor is that we did not want to repeat the experience of what happened in the nuclear domain. We don't want a Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons or NPT-like mechanism to come about in the space domain that would actually lead to a ban on India's future ASAT tests.

Raghunandan, how does knocking out a satellite in Low Earth Orbit actually promote deterrence?

D. Raghunandan: My own feeling is the U.S., Russia and China have come to realise the somewhat limited nature of deterrence offered by anti-satellite weapons. None of them has developed large inventories of ASAT missiles or targeted a whole range of satellites of adversary nations. One must understand that all these nations have a few hundreds of satellites up in space which are used for military or dual purposes.

How many satellites are you going to target and is knocking out one satellite going to really be a deterrent? Is it good to continue with kill-

er missiles or are there other ways to disable adversary satellites? So I have my doubts about the deterrent capabilities of ASAT missiles, particularly as you may have noticed that all nations are extremely cagey about blowing up satellites in orbit because of the debris created. And if you have multiple such things going on, then you are obviously going to create multiple sets of problems. If the conflict between nations were to reach a stage where you are knocking out each other's satellites, then I think it would have already reached nuclear weapon threshold and then we are in a different ballgame entirely.

Rajeshwari, is the deterrence in space as complex as Raghunandan says it is?

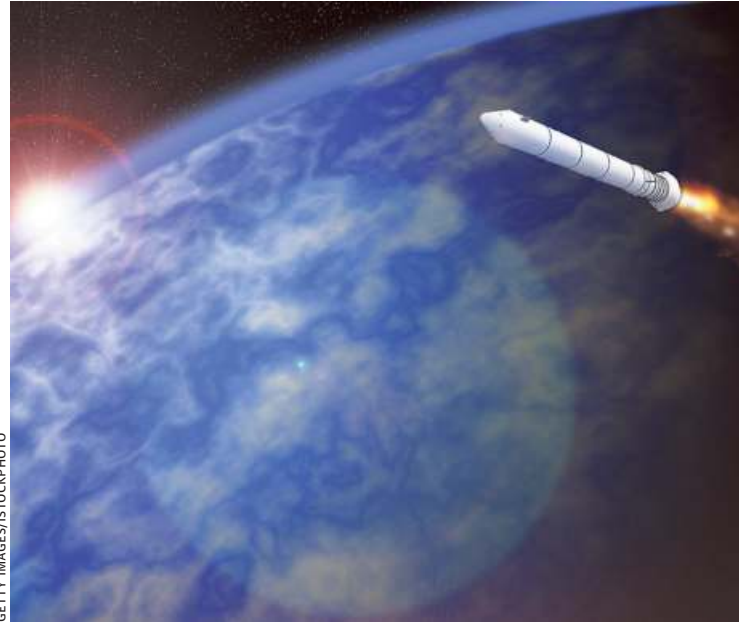
R.P.R.: It is. And I would start with the fact that, so far, the established space players who have demonstrated the ASAT capability have not adopted deterrence as part of their space policy. So we are still in a good space right now where states have not made space a part of their deterrence policy. So that is an encouraging sign and that must be continued.

D.R.: I agree.

R.P.R.: As Raghu mentioned, there are other technologies available. Increasingly, the electronic and cyber warfare capabilities, any number of technologies that can be used through cyber through lasers to create temporary disruptions, and disabling somebody else's satellite and communications services to creating more permanent damage. So there are many ways of addressing this issue.

Raghunandan, in terms of evolution of our space military posture, how integrated are we in our capabilities?

D.R.: Fortunately, ASAT capabilities have not fully been weaponised by all the countries. And, therefore, I think it affords a good opportunity to move forwards towards demilitarisation of outer space. The second aspect is that while India has articulated a doctrine with regard to nuclear weapons, which includes a



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declaration of no-first-use and so on, we do not as yet have a strategic doctrine with regard to the weaponisation in space. I think it would be good if India develops a doctrine for weaponisation in space as well as an integrated security doctrine which brings together nuclear, space and other advanced technologies so that you do have an integrated posture. The third point is that there is an added complication with regard to ASAT weaponry. That is, not all countries have their own dedicated military satellites which a third country can knock out and therefore disable that country's network-centric platforms and weapons systems. Many countries use third-party satellites. Many countries use dual purpose satellites. So it is not at all clear, for example, if India shoots down 'x' number of satellites belonging to a country, we have disabled that country's military communications. And this applies to any country.

Where are we in terms of disparities between us and China? What are we up against?

D.R.: India has barely begun development of ASAT missiles. China has been at this for more than a decade. They are believed to have worked on missiles targeting high latitude satellites at 36,000 km above the earth whereas we have only conducted the test at the Low Earth Orbit. China has also been doing considerable work experimenting with laser-based weaponry and cyber

Even as China talks the language of peaceful uses of outer space, the reality has been that there is a flourishing military programme

weaponry which are likely to prove to be more effective than a whole battery of missiles targeting satellites. We are way behind.

Isn't there an inherent contradiction between our position on no weaponisation of space that we have adopted and a steady accrual of military assets in space that we are also doing at the same time?

D.R.: There is, in the sense that these two impulses are contrary. But I think that the real question to be asked is whether India's statement about weaponisation in space, wanting to dial back weaponisation, is more for public consumption than for actual pursuit of de-weaponisation in space. If India is serious about wanting to de-weaponise space, then India should take active measures in the conference on disarmament along with other countries like Russia or China which have already initiated some proposals there. All of these have been completely stonewalled by the U.S., which disagrees with even the term 'weaponisation of space' and has resisted attempts to look for de-weaponisation of space, claiming that any moves in that direction denies

the U.S. the ability for self-defence. But if India is serious, India should declare no-first-use of the ASAT weaponry as we have done for the nuclear [weapons], and adopt a strong domestic doctrine on weaponisation of space just as we have a declared doctrine for nuclear weapons.

We are launching a lot of satellites for other countries. How much do you think our military programmes are being cross-subsidised by these launches?

D.R.: I doubt it is very much. The major reason why India is popular as a launch destination is because of its lower costs. The incomes also will be correspondingly not very high. The second aspect is that all satellites we have launched have been Low Earth satellites. The real money in international launches lies in the communication satellites, the heavier satellites at 36,000 km above the earth. That's where the money is for telephony, television and the rest. We haven't yet broken into that league in terms of satellite launching.

Rajeshwari, can you give us an overview of what we are up against in terms of their militarisation in terms of space?

R.P.R.: China has shown it has much greater space competitiveness. For the longest time, India was just doing four to five launches per year; on the other hand, the Chinese were doing this on an average of 20 a year. That has a certain consequence not just for the overall competitiveness in terms of the launch market... but when you look at the global commercial space market that is available (and that you don't want to lose it completely) and if you are not able to increase competitiveness, that's a serious problem. Second, there is another important component which is about how much of the growing requirements of the military are from the security sector within India that ISRO will be able to provide.

There is a capacity gap. Even as China talks the language of peaceful uses of outer space, the reality has been that there is a flourishing military programme under the PLA leadership. The Chinese are also set-

ting up a space station some time in the 2022-2024 time frame when the International Space Station is possibly winding down. This also leads to concerns as to how space activity in the future might shape [up].

Is there a contradiction between the impulse towards disarmament and the impulse towards militarisation?

R.P.R.: Again I would emphasise that our deterrence capability is not a war-fighting capability. We are still looking at a non-weaponisation of space. On militarisation I want to refer to a point that Raghu mentioned. Raghu said we need to prevent space militarisation. I like the idea of preventing space militarisation but I think there is a big difference between space militarisation and space weaponisation. And I think these two concepts are used in a very interchangeable manner. Space militarisation is something that has happened from the 1990s.

In the first Gulf War, for instance, you actually saw technology playing a major role in warfare. Since then, most militaries around the world have come to recognise and acknowledge the possible use of space assets for military operations. What they call intelligence gathering, surveillance, reconnaissance, military communications, drone programmes. We cannot go back on all these developments. But what we are trying to prevent today is the early trend towards weaponisation. We don't want to weaponise outer space. For that again we do not have to put weapons in outer space.

ASAT capabilities are the best example. That is warfare, that is weaponisation and that is something we are trying to see - if that can be stopped, that process can be halted. But again, we have been going back and forth, there are different understandings of what a space weapon is. How do you define these terms? There are major differences of opinion.

Now that India has demonstrated this capability, India needs to play an even more active role in the global governance of outer space. But I have a slightly different opinion when it comes to who we partner with if India feels that we alone cannot go out into the global domain and create new rules of the road. We can certainly partner with like-minded countries.



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SINGLE FILE

Reflections on a massacre Jallianwala Bagh's importance lies in what preceded it and in what followed

UDAY BALAKRISHNAN



For Indians, the massacre that evokes strong emotions is not Nader Shah's slaughter of 30,000 people in Delhi in 1739 but Jallianwala Bagh in Amritsar, where, a century ago, on April 13, troops commanded by General Dyer fired into an unarmed crowd, killing hundreds.

The massacre at Jallianwala Bagh, like later ones in Lidice (1942) and My Lai (1968), was relatively small. It was nothing compared to the hundreds of thousands killed by the Japanese army in Nanjing in 1937-38 or by Indonesian soldiers in East Timor 1975 onward.

Jallianwala Bagh's importance lies not in the numbers killed but in what preceded it and in what followed. The Anarchical and Revolutionary Crimes Act of 1919, better known as the Rowlatt Act, came into force a month before the massacre in Jallianwala Bagh. It shocked most Indians who had expected to be rewarded, not punished, for willingly fighting alongside the British in the First World War.

The massacre, followed by the feting and rewarding of its perpetrator, General Dyer, by the British public, removed all illusions about benign British rule in the country. It also marked the start of a liberation struggle like no other under Mahatma Gandhi.

It took Nobel laureate Rabindranath Tagore to capture the full import of the outrage at Jallianwala Bagh. In his letter of protest renouncing the knighthood conferred on him, he wrote: "The accounts of the insults and sufferings by our brothers in Punjab have trickled through the gagged silence, reaching every corner of India, and the universal agony of indignation roused in the hearts of our people has been ignored by our rulers - possibly congratulating themselves for what they imagine as salutary lessons."

Many massacres in history fade while some linger as grisly curiosities. The killing of every male inhabitant of the Persian town of Kernan in 1794 by Agha Mohammed Khan is better known for the latter's insistence that the eyeballs be brought to him in baskets and poured on the floor.

Most massacres that endure in public memory are those for which countries are responsible. Like Jallianwala Bagh, they are never forgotten or forgiven but unfailingly recollected through generations with deep loathing for their perpetrators. No Pole can talk about the 1940 Katyn massacre of over 20,000 Polish soldiers and civilians by the Russians, with equanimity. Another, and more recent, the 1995 massacre of some 8,000 Bosnians by break-away Serbians, is commemorated by a vast sombre memorial that doubles up as a cemetery comprising over 6,000 graves in Srebrenica.

Massacres are often lifted to immortality by art. Picasso's 'Guernica' and M.F. Husain's 'Bhopal' speak for massacres past and those that are very likely to occur in future. These works are also reminders of what the powerful, given a chance, will inflict on the weak, Jallianwala Bagh being just one example.

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NOTEBOOK

In Dharmapuri, still divided by identity politics

Tracking the hold of caste amid the visible signs of change

T. RAMAKRISHNAN

Visible signs of change can be deceptive. This was what I found in my recent visit to the Dharmapuri district in the western part of Tamil Nadu, a place regarded at the all-India level as chronically backward.

I was visiting Dharmapuri town after nine years. There are some shopping complexes and a flashy hotel in the core part of this tier-III town which were not there earlier.

Connectivity, in terms of physical infrastructure and communication, is no longer an issue. In 2006 when I went to the town for the first time on an assignment to cover the Assembly polls, it was still a sleepy and dusty town with old-fashioned shops and restaurants.

Not many changes had taken place four years later when I was there to assess the situation for a by-election. Even today, there are

some lodges which provide only lodging. If you order coffee or tea, it is brought from a nearby eatery.

Once extremely backward in education, Dharmapuri, as a district, is now the topper at the State level with regard to the gross enrolment ratio for secondary education. The district has 1,620 schools with 1.85 lakh students. It has more than 110 pre-primary schools. There are six engineering colleges, including one government-run college, says M. Vadivelan, who runs an engineering college and whose office is located opposite the campus of the Government Medical College that started functioning six years ago.

All these changes look impressive, given the track record of the district. But conversations with a cross-section of people in the district underscore the importance of the caste factor in elections. They made me

wonder about the chasm between visible changes and identity consciousness among the people.

Over time

Less than 10 km away from the town is Cholakkottai village where P. Sukumar, a middle-aged owner of a petty shop, is not unaffected by the changes. All his children go to school. At the same time, he talks vividly of how a bridge was broken and a public transport vehicle burnt down years ago "in support of the cause" of his community, the Vanniyaers. He says the community will steadfastly support Anbumani Ramadoss, the nominee of the Pattali Makkal Katchi (PMK) and former Union Minister, also a Vanniyaer.

A. Govindan, who is from Periyapallipatti village nearby, spent 27 days in jail for his participation in an agitation by the PMK. "Regardless of what the party has done for me, I

will vote for Mr. Ramadoss," he says. Sukumar and Govindan do not fail to point out that it is because of their stance that Scheduled Caste voters will support the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam's nominee.

"Who else will I support?" asks Lenin, an auto-rickshaw driver who belongs to the SC community and is living in government-provided accommodation near Morappur, about 35 km from Dharmapuri.

He is a man of few words, but when he speaks, it is not without reference to the 2012-13 tragic episode around an inter-caste marriage, which is still fresh in the memory of the public in this part of the State.

I wonder how long people, despite being similarly placed economically and educationally, continue to be divided by identity. When will changes in physical infrastructure break the hold of caste?

FROM The Hindu. ARCHIVES

FIFTY YEARS AGO APRIL 12, 1969

Rs. 1,110 crore defence spending

A new defence plan is being formulated to cover 1969-74 in view of the rephrasing of the Fourth Five-Year Plan over this period. This takes into account "the continuing hostility of Pakistan and China" towards India, "their strategic and military capabilities and the possibility of their acting in concert" against India. This has been revealed in the annual report of the Ministry of Defence for 1968-69. The report also outlines a defence expenditure of Rs. 1,110 crores for 1969-70, which works out to be 3.46 per cent of the gross national product. This is against the defence expenditure of Rs. 1,051.38 crores for 1968-69 which was 3.4 per cent of the gross national product. A new factor which has arisen during the year, the Ministry said, is the possibility of supplies of military equipment to Pakistan from the Soviet Union. Such supplies in addition to those coming from other countries at concessional rates including China are bound "to move Pakistan towards a posture of even increased intransigence and would certainly make normalisation of relations more difficult."

A HUNDRED YEARS AGO APRIL 12, 1919.

Motor Smash.

Shortly after 7:30 on Thursday [April 10] evening, a serious motor car smash took place on the Napier Road [in Calcutta] resulting in the death of Captain W.J. Simmons of the steamer "Actor" and serious injuries to a carter named Golwar and his attendant Lutna. So far as could be learnt last night Captain Simmons with two friends left the docks at about 7:30 P.M. in a motor car. One of the Captain's friends was driving while Captain Simmons and another European were seated behind. While the car was proceeding along the Napier Road the driver in order to avoid a straw cart which was in front of him swerved to his right when the wheels skidded and the car ran into an empty bullock cart which was in front of the straw cart. Captain Simmons sustained serious injuries on his head and was at once taken to the General Hospital where he died at about 1 o'clock this morning [April 11] without regaining consciousness. The driver of the cart and his attendant who were also seriously injured were removed in a motor ambulance to the Medical College Hospital.

POLL CALL

Campaign expenditure

Limits on campaign expenditure are meant to ensure a level-playing field for everyone contesting elections. The Election Commission of India imposes limits on campaign expenditure incurred by a candidate, but not by a political party. Expenditure by a Lok Sabha candidate is capped at between ₹50 lakh and ₹70 lakh. For Assembly elections, the ceiling is between ₹20 lakh and ₹28 lakh. Candidates must mandatorily file a true account of election expenses with the EC. An incorrect account, or expenditure beyond the ceiling, can attract disqualification for up to three years. There is plenty of anecdotal evidence to suggest that many candidates in India spend much more than the ceiling.

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