

Influencing the influencer



AMBI PARAMESWARAN

At a panel discussion organised by a media company I was made to share the stage with a group of new age digital marketers. It included the CEO of possibly India's biggest digital celebrity/influencer, Miss Malini, and a few more.

How do these digital mavens operate? What is their secret sauce?

One of the panelists, a pretty successful blogger/youtuber, explained that she posts three videos every week. And there is a particular day and time for the post to go live. One of the posts is a fun post that is sheer "time pass", the other is something that her followers will find useful. She was from the beauty domain, so the post was often about something related to grooming which would be useful to her followers. She keeps one more which is a sponsored post, that is often paid for by a brand.

Does she post "any" message as long as she gets paid for it? No! She is clear that her followers will get upset with her if she does not curate the content. So she is very careful what she posts, even as a sponsored message. She reaches out to companies when she sees a fit. And only accepts invitations if she feels it would be of interest to her viewers.

Interesting, I thought. Do celebrities who appear in television spots and charge a huge fee go through such a screening process, I wondered.

Intuitively the social media celebrity understood what the father of motivational research, psychology guru Ernest Dichter wrote about in 1966 in his *Harvard Business Review* article "How word of mouth advertising works". Why do consumers talk to friends about a product or a service? Dichter's research showed that there are three broad reasons. The first is what he calls "product involvement": You are so excited about a new product that you can't wait to speak about it to your friends. The second is "self involvement": You want to show off that you are the expert, you have inside information, you see yourself as an innovator. The third is categorised as "other involvement": Here you are genuinely concerned about the other person and want to share the information that will be of use to her/him.

I think in some ways the influencer who was on my panel was reflecting this age-old wisdom on why we spread ideas by "word of mouth". If you are an influencer then you need to know more than your followers. You need to project you have superior knowledge. But you should also be aware that you have to help your followers benefit from your knowledge, without rubbing their nose in the dirt.

The global influencer market is expected to grow anywhere around \$5 billion to \$20 billion; we don't have reliable figures for India and I am not even sure if these numbers are traceable. Given the fact that digital media is expected to grow to 20 per cent of the total media spends of ₹70,000 crore, we could assume that around 10 per cent of that may get deployed in various forms of influencer marketing games.

You may well ask me, "who is an influencer?". The definitions are difficult to come by. By broad consensus an influencer is expected to have upwards of 100,000 followers across various social media platforms of YouTube, Instagram, Facebook, Twitter etc. There is also the category of nano-influencers who have a smaller footprint but a more stronger following.

Clients are learning the game fast, ably assisted by social media marketing agencies. Not only are they looking at the sheer number of followers but also the level of engagement. The more the engagement, the more genuine the follower-ship is.

The game is played better in the developed countries. For instance, it was reported that Johnson & Johnson, when it unveiled its new natural range of baby products, enlisted the support of 100 influencers who blogged about baby care. For the uninitiated, J&J owns and runs the world's biggest baby care website, BabyCenter. But it went out of its "own media" to reach out to influencers.

Influencer marketing is not restricted to just consumer products. I was recently updated about a pharmaceutical brand that used the power of doctor influencers to spread the word about a new therapy group. Obviously the brand was not mentioned in any of the influencer marketing efforts. I remember car companies sharing their yet to be released television commercial to auto bloggers. But that was in 2005. Now the game has moved to a new level.

On the one hand, there was a complaint from the CMO of a luxury hotel saying that she gets 10 requests a day from "influencers" asking for a free stay. And we saw earlier in the article how a powerful influencer picks and chooses who to promote on her channel. So if you are looking at using the power of influencers don't just look at the numbers. Also look at the quality of the numbers and the "purpose" being served by the influencer to his or her followers.

Remember, the words of the father of motivation research.

The author is an independent brand strategist and founder, Brand-Building.com. Email: ambimgp@brand-building.com

Tricky road ahead

Sikkim's new Chief Minister PS Golay will have to achieve growth without compromising nature



PLAIN POLITICS

ADITI PHADNIS

The magnitude of the earthquake in Delhi obscured another one, elsewhere in India — in Sikkim. Pawan Kumar Chamling, India's longest serving and most successful chief minister, was dethroned along with his party, the Sikkim Democratic Front (SDF). Chamling first became chief minister in 1994 and stayed in office, ruling with an iron hand and introducing many initiatives with virtually no opposition. The Opposition came in February, 2013, in the form of the Sikkim Krantikari Morcha (SKM) led by the colourful Prem Singh Tamang — other-

wise known as PS Golay.

Golay has had a chequered past. He was a founding member of the SDF and a member of all but one of the governments Chamling headed. He then quit on the grounds of rising corruption and nepotism in the SDF to form his own party. In 2009, Chamling won all 32 assembly seats in Sikkim but in 2014, he lost 10 seats to the SKM, getting only 22 out of 32. He may have realised that he was approaching endgame because soon after Golay formed his party, he got a visit from the state government's vigilance department — presumably on instruction from Chamling — regarding misappropriation of government funds amounting to ₹9.5 lakh meant for distributing cows to beneficiaries under a state government scheme.

This was an investigation dating back to 2010. A chargesheet led to a court case and conviction with a jail sentence and a fine. Despite a corruption conviction, it is a mystery how he was allowed to contest again — and when he came out of jail in 2018, he was given a hero's welcome, normally reserved for political prisoners. His party has a majority of just two seats in the Sikkim assembly.

Sikkim itself has a complicated history and it is sometimes hard to tell the villains from the heroes in India's annexation of Sikkim. The way

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On the job

Bikhchandani tells Anjali Bhargava how an undergraduate education overseas deprives a student of a network at home, a critical input in one's life journey

Observing what's unfolding around you can be rewarding. It was while working as a young executive on the Horlicks brand in erstwhile Hindustan Milkfood Manufacturers (HMM) that Sanjeev Bikhchandani, founder of job portal Naukri.com, noticed two things.

One, the office copy of *Business India*, the magazine with close to 40 pages of appointment advertisements, vanished within minutes of arriving. A journalist in that magazine would have spent hours and days producing articles she hoped readers would pore over, but readers seemed far more interested in job openings, where there were and how they could apply for them.

Second, in the open office environment at Horlicks, he couldn't help but overhear conversations between his colleagues and headhunters all the time. For almost every job that was advertised, there were 10 that were not. Headhunters would call his colleagues and they would have long conversations and sometimes his ears were with them instead of where it ought to be.

That's when the seed that became Naukri.com later was first sowed in his head. At the time, it was only a notion that there was an opportunity here, one he wasn't sure how to make most of. This was the early 1990s and there was no internet to speak of.

Bikhchandani and I are meeting for lunch at India Habitat Center's The Deck. He orders a couscous and lettuce salad and a grilled fish. I order a mushroom soup and a bowl of rice with baby spinach, falafel and feta, one of the best vegetarian options at the recently revamped restaurant. He has a fresh lime and soda while I stick to plain water.

Bikhchandani has been part of the founding team at Ashoka University and holds clear and strong views on the state of higher education in India. I am aware that he has even stronger views on the state of his alma mater, St Columba's and St

Stephen's. He says he doesn't want to discuss these more controversial issues and I try my best to bring them up. After trying in vain, I let him hold forth on the subject he's most comfortable with.

He begins with spending a few minutes on his background and life story. The son of a government doctor, Bikhchandani had a regular middle-class upbringing, growing up in the government colonies of Delhi while studying at St Columba's. Since "good boys study science" and "good boys get into IIT", he took the IIT entrance test — oddly twice — and cleared both the times. But unlike the herd, he paused at some point and questioned whether he actually wanted to be an engineer. "I realised that I wanted to be an IITian but not an engineer," he explains.

It was a blessing in disguise because once he passed out of school, the option of studying economics at St Stephen's opened up before him. He followed this up with an MBA from IIM (A), a decision that has stood him in good stead.

After he finished his MBA and worked with HMM for a little under two years, there was a phase — six/seven years — when he just "drifted". Although married and with a small child, he struck out on his own with a partner and worked on a few small ideas, none of which succeeded. He remembers those days of struggle, staying at his father's house without paying rent, supported partially by his wife who had a good job. But "those days were different, needs and aspirations were much lower", he remembers.

Time passed but the idea of Naukri stayed with him. By 1996, technology seemed to provide an answer. Even in those days internet and email were a new animal to the world (there were only around 14,000 direct email connections in India); but he could see a very real possibility of bridging the gap through a website. Put up a listing of jobs available even if they were just aggregated from

newspaper advertisements. Hopefully, job seekers would approach the site when they are looking for jobs. He roped in two partners on a part-time and stock option basis — one helped with the technology and the other with operations — and by 1997, Naukri.com had got off to a patchy sort of start.

In its early days, Naukri was more like a one-sided listing in which the team simply rewrote newspaper appointment ads and listed them. Soon, job seekers started coming on to the site to look for opportunities. In a while, companies started listing their offers on the site and Naukri started charging to host that information. In the first three years, the operation was bootstrapped. But by the year 2000, the site had acquired a life of its own and the team was able to raise \$1.7 million from ICICI Ventures. And the rest, as they say, is history.

In 2006, the site listed, and the share price doubled in a day. On any given day, the market price was almost 20 times the price at which it listed. After Naukri.com — in which Bikhchandani holds 27 per cent — had reached a certain size and scale, the company launched a whole host of ventures under the Info Edge umbrella including JeevanSathi.com, Shiksha.com, Quadrangle and 99acres. JeevanSathi and 99acres are both known brands in their industry now although 70 per cent of the revenues of the group still come from recruitment.

I interrupt to ask if people take these websites seriously and actually look for jobs through them. I don't know if anyone has landed a job through it.

If he's surprised at my ignorance or affronted by my frankness, he does a good job of hiding it. The site carries an average of 5 lakh job listings on any given day and around 12,000 new resumes are added daily. As many as 80,000 clients hire through the site. Naukri.com, with over 4,000 employ-

the first Dewan of Sikkim, John Lall (ICS), described it, instead of honouring Sikkim's sovereignty and China's feelings, India imported mobs of Nepali-speaking people from Darjeeling and Kalimpong, told the Chogyal (King) that his people had rebelled against him and annexed Sikkim.

Chamling, however, says (possibly because he's a Nepali-speaking native of Sikkim) that the original Lepcha settlers of Sikkim who were subjugated for three centuries by Bhutia tribals from across Tibet perpetuated feudal systems and denied other tribals like Limbus and Tamangs, equal rights. According to Chamling, the rebellion against the Chogyal was actually a revolution that overthrew oppressive Qazi rule and radicalised scores of young men across Sikkim. Once he became chief minister, Chamling realised that he had to create his own constituency. He fought to extend reservations to castes like Limbus and Tamangs among the Nepali-speaking population of the state. In Sikkim, 20 per cent of the population is Bhutia-Lepcha and 40 per cent comprises Other Backward Classes. Limbus, Rais and Tamangs are around 20 per cent of the population. When they were included in the reservation net, they became Chamling's natural constituency. PS Golay is a Tamang. He challenged Chamling on issues of nepotism and corruption, and also administrative inefficiency. The very castes Chamling thought he was empowering turned against him.

Golay's campaign got traction. Sikkim's icon and famous footballer, Bhaichung Bhutia, also floated a party, Hamro Sikkim, ahead of the elections. India heard about

Sikkim's dark side: Corruption, drug addiction and mental illness. The state has just over six lakh people, but unemployment is high. It also has the highest suicide rate — 37.5 per 100,000 people, nearly triple the Indian average. Seven out of 10 teenagers in Sikkim abuse pharmaceutical drugs. One person in every family is involved in substance abuse. Though Hamro Sikkim did not win any seats, the problems it highlighted remain — and are PS Golay's headache now.

Golay (whose election affidavit, among other things, declares he has been married thrice; it mentions no divorces) will have to beat Chamling's record of growth and development. The erstwhile Planning Commission statistics tell us Sikkim recorded the steepest decline in poverty ratio the country has seen: from 30.9 per cent in 2004-05 to 8.2 per cent in 2011-12. You only have to read the 2014 Sikkim Human Development Report produced by a UNDP affiliate to understand the miracle. The HDR 2014 says between 2001 and 2012, Sikkim's net state domestic product grew, on an average, by 17 per cent every year — the highest among all Indian states — surpassing significantly the national average of 10 per cent. Sikkim has said 'no' to 13 hydel projects because they could have threatened the state's ecosystem. The alternative model of development is 'back to nature'. The state uses no chemical fertiliser whatsoever. Its orchids are world famous. The result? A Royal Bengal tiger was sighted in Sikkim in December, 2018, the state's first, and unusual at an altitude of more than 10,000 feet.

Prem Singh Tamang Golay will have to achieve growth without compromising nature.



ILLUSTRATION BY BINAY SINHA

ups. Besides evaluating start-ups, a large chunk of his time now is spent on mentoring start-ups. Often those who are starting out on this journey find him out, seek his advice and that is what he enjoys doing the most.

His involvement with higher education came about later in his life. "When I finished with St Stephen's and left Delhi University, I felt the whole experience could definitely have been better," he explains. Although Stephen's back then was a cut above the rest, he could see the benchmark for excellence at DU was rather low. "Completing the year's syllabus was considered excellent. St Stephen's, LSR and Miranda House were considered excellent as they completed the year's coursework," he adds.

As he started travelling overseas and visiting universities around the world to give talks and take classes, he could see the yawning gap between institutions in the rest of the world and those back home. That's why when the idea of Ashoka came up, he bought into it with Ashish Dhawan, Pramath Sinha, Vineet Gupta and others. "I had earlier dismissed all these misgivings convincing myself that this is not my problem. At some stage, I realised it was as much my problem as it was anybody else's." Bikhchandani — like a hundred others — became one of the founders of the university, contributing both time and money to the effort.

He's convinced India needs a 1,000 more Ashokas, arguing that when Indian students leave India to study abroad at the undergraduate level, they lose their network. "The friendships, the interaction with peers at college and the network it gives you through your life is lost," he explains, arguing that people often don't realise how critical this is. I agree as my college friends remain a more integral part of my life than friendships struck in school or at any other stage.

As we reach the end of our discussion, I enquire about his other interests — what he likes doing when he's not working. He reads, used to write a blog and spends most of his energy mentoring entrepreneurs. His own personal journey with Naukri may have come to an end but the success of every youngster he mentors will, in part, be his own. That's a full-time naukri!

The things we take for granted



PEOPLE LIKE THEM

GEETANJALI KRISHNA

Some time ago, Hindustan Unilever's #startalittlegood initiative released a short film, *The Shower*. A plush rain shower in a glass cubicle, the sort many of us have or aspire to have in our loos, mysteriously appears in a water-starved village. A farmer is startled when he accidentally turns it on. He drinks to his heart's content. A woman and a bunch of children follow. All of them drink that water. In the time it takes for an average bloke in the city to have a shower, half the village is able to slake their thirst. The yawning disparity in access to water, depicted in the film, moved me immensely. Soon after, I went to

Bhadrak district in Odisha and realised the film didn't even cover half of it. Even the most basic water amenities, people like us used every day, didn't exist there at all.

In Bhadrak, as we toured several villages collecting pre-intervention case studies for the international NGO WaterAid, I was impressed to see new toilets everywhere. Locals said that almost every household in the district had a toilet. The first person we spoke to was Minnati Bhal in Gobindpur village. She'd been relieved when a toilet was built for their physically disabled 11-year-old Smrutimayi. But the little girl remained completely dependent on her mother as the loo was about 100 meters away from their hut with neither piped water nor a paved safe path leading up to it. It originally had a commode but no rails for her to lower herself down on the seat. So Bhal still spends her day ferrying water in buckets from the communal tap. The toilet doesn't have an electricity connection either and we left with the heartbreaking image of the painfully thin mother carrying her painfully thin daughter to the toilet, balancing a torch to show her the way.

Then we met Rangelata Behera (60

who estimated she carried at least 40 buckets of water from the hand pump to the bathroom in her house every day. Her heavily-pregnant daughter-in-law couldn't do it, so the task of fetching water from the pump about 400 meters away, fell on Behera's shoulders alone. Babaji Mahalik (52) and blind since infancy, faces the same problem. "The toilet is there, but without a proper path leading to it and a piped water supply, he continues to be dependent on me for going to the bathroom," says his brother Kirtan Mahalik. In Madhupur, another village in Bhadrak, Bapun Barik a wheelchair user had a similar tale to tell. His father Babaji fetches water from the pond nearby to use in their brand new toilet. "I can't even imagine what it will feel like when water comes to our homes in pipes..." he said.

After a while, the faces and stories blurred, the refrain was the same. While toilets had been constructed (in a tearing hurry, many locals reported), not having piped water in them was a huge inconvenience. Later that evening, the faces of the people I'd met kept coming back to me. For people like them were still enslaved by the lack of the very amenities that people like us have taken for granted all our lives.

A summer invitation



PEOPLE LIKE US

KISHORE SINGH

I don't like being invited out in the summer, not for neighbourhood potlucks, casual get-togethers or dinner parties. When heatwave conditions — such as now — prevail, the walls radiate heat. You can spend an entire evening looking for the iciest spot to occupy, but you know it'll be pinched the moment you head for a refill to the bar. (In our home, the coolest spot is where the dog parks himself, and you dislodge him at your own risk). Since air-conditioning loads in homes are concentrated in the public areas, any walk through the house (to the library, for instance, or to use the washroom), implies a sauna-like tryst. If talking

about the heat isn't bad enough, experiencing it is worse.

But experience it you must, however briefly. In the dash from your house to the car, and again when you find a parking spot that's a jog away from your host's home. That's all the time it takes to burst into a sweat that no amount of deodorant can erase — making all that social kissing and hugging a smelly affair. With many female guests dressing up for Instagram, it's difficult to overlook their smudged mascaras, runny eyeliners and spottily lipstick lips. The more A-listers invited, the more you're likely to question the suitability of their proximity to you. Do you really want the hors d'oeuvres you saw your hostess assembling just a moment after she'd wiped the honest sweat off her shapely brow?

If airconditioned salons are far from ideal, can you imagine what it's like in the kitchen? Especially given the extra sautéing and grilling? Can you conceive your food is untainted of perspiration? What you don't see may not harm you, but if, like me, you have a hyperactive imagination, then, well, perhaps the solution lies in remaining hungry. "I'm on a detox diet," I've explained to my hosts on several occasions — but damn if the dinner doesn't look tempting. Fortunately, I have a strong will power, and a stronger belief

that alcohol kills germs, which comes in handy when you see the bartender handling the ice with his fingers.

It isn't just home parties that run such risks. Poolside parties might sound refreshing and summery but they're as gross. Hotel banquets are never free of stale smells — and not just on account of the food. The larger the party, the more time your pre-plated food is likely to have been exposed to the sweltering heat. Trendy restaurants have just one problem — they have terribly tiny kitchens unsuitable for hand plating — ugh!

Rashtrapati Bhawan may have hygiene standards that are a benchmark for the rest of the hoi polloi, but you had to feel sorry for the august assembly of guests who braved the temperature for a seat at the new cabinet's swearing in. As I write this, I am aware of a less honourable gathering that will collect at home this evening. I can guarantee that neither guests nor hosts are looking forward to the occasion. The kitchen is a mess. Airconditioning engineers have been tasked with cranking up the cooling. The denizens of the house have been snapping at each other. The cook is in a mood. I haven't been able to come up with an excuse to recuse myself from the melee. But I promise to remain on a detox diet.

WEEKEND RUMINATIONS

T N NINAN

A cold shower

The buzz in presumably well-informed circles in the capital has been that Narendra Modi's second term in office will be different from the first. Having used the last five years to consolidate his and the Bharatiya Janata Party's political power, it is said that Mr Modi will now focus on the economy, and further that he is willing to front-load action in a way that he was not willing to do five years ago. Certainly, the economy needs fresh momentum, with quarterly economic growth dropping below 6 per cent, and hitting a five-year low. Growth for the full year is not very different from where the Modi government began. Readers might recall that the initial promise held out was of achieving double-digit growth. That being far removed from today's reality, India has also lost the claim to being the fastest-growing large economy; China is back ahead. That is a cold shower if ever there was one.

As I had written in these columns two weeks ago, this is a multi-faceted challenge, with problems confronting agriculture, manufacturing and exports, as well as fiscal and monetary policy — for both of which the room for manoeuvre is very limited. The larger narrative could be that the growth momentum generated by the first flush of reforms has petered out in the course of 15 years of relative inaction. A fresh wind is now required. Is the government up to the task?

Change will have to begin with Mr Modi, who, by all accounts, has shown little active interest in macro-economic issues, preferring instead to focus on the effective implementation of projects and programmes (to good effect, of course, as the election results show). It is obvious that this neglect cannot continue. The prime minister has to address himself to understanding the key policy levers that are available to him, including (for instance) the government's stance on the rupee's external value and how it can be nudged down in order to make Indian exports more competitive. As a starting point, the belief in a strong rupee has to be given up.

Growth is hard to come by in an environment in which the overhang of financial mismanagement by banks and companies is still there, when too many businesses are too busy writing down debt to think of making fresh investments, and when consumers are focused on the EMIs (equated monthly instalments) on their loans. For good measure, governments are sucking up too much of the available savings, preventing market interest rates from falling — affecting current cash flows and future investment. Tax revenue has fallen short this past year, and has to be given a boost; but how is one to do that in the middle of a slowdown?

In short, Nirmala Sitharaman as the new finance minister has her work cut out for her, as does Piyush Goyal, who is the new man in charge of both foreign trade and industry. Both will need to quickly put together their agenda for immediate action, along with medium-term policy goals: To make the use of capital more efficient, the labour market more flexible, and the physical infrastructure such as to be effective support for industry and trade. What is needed is systemic thinking, not ad hoc approaches that focus on quick fixes by impatient ministers eager to hit the headlines.

The finance minister could begin with further rationalising and reducing the number of rates for the goods and services tax. The Reserve Bank should press ahead with further cuts in policy rates. Disinvestment needs to be given a kick-start, with Air India an obvious starting point. But if this is to be a serious plan, the question has to be asked: Where are the buyers? Should the window for foreign buyers be opened wider, in this and other sectors?

And then, what about the underlying issues confronting agriculture, the water economy, and the business of improving the quality of education? All three issues are in the hands of new inductees into the Council of Ministers, and a key question will be how well they perform. As someone used to say, the nation wants to know.

Sushma Swaraj, a self-made success in patriarchal party

Sushma wasn't a typical BJP '*mahila*'. In her dignified departure, the BJP will miss an Indian woman politician with many enviable firsts

There was both a buzz and a hush in the front rows at Rashtrapati Bhawan as Sushma Swaraj walked in to sit in the front row with the most distinguished visitors, not head for the imposing platform where the new ministers were seated for the swearing-in. In her large fan club there was still a hope. Surely, Narendra Modi couldn't afford to go into his second term without his most popular minister.

Her health challenges are no secret. She, in fact, broke an old taboo in Indian public life by revealing — on Twitter — that she was undergoing a kidney transplant. She had handled her recovery very well.

On a new kidney, her immune system still getting used to it, she took on the Pakistanis at the UN, held meetings with her counterparts from across the world, and presented a picture of incredible poise and dignity. Never did a loose word or expression escape her lips, never a shot fired in anger or exasperation.

She made it her instrument to build an entirely new kind of diplomacy, reaching out to her compatriots across the world. Her rivals and sceptics did snigger that with Mr Modi running all of foreign policy, all she was left with was to resolve passport-visa-immigration issues on Twitter. If there were times when this bordered on being the overseas Indian's agony aunt, she didn't mind it.

In the Modi cabinet, no minister had a really great deal. Hers was a particularly tough one. The prime minister got much global limelight and glory, and she ungrudgingly made way for him. She, never short on charm, repartee and media adulation, had the old political smarts to read this writing on the wall. She stepped back, into a back-room role, and never uttered a word about him other than praise.

Having known her since 1977, the year we both started our careers in the same small city of Chandigarh, she in politics as the youngest cabinet minister in Devi Lal's Janata Party government at just 25, and I as a city reporter with the *Indian Express*, I know her to possess more fortitude and self-respect than most politicians. I am still not quite sure how she would have absorbed the new turn in her 42-year political career where she received applause as a visitor while her party's third government took oath. Particularly when her successor was S Jaishankar,

who had served under her for his entire tenure as foreign secretary (2015-18) and as ambassador to the US before that.

Maybe she would have drawn on her phenomenal inner strength and taken it philosophically. She also knew that this 'turn' wasn't merely a turn, but probably the conclusion of her remarkable political journey.

Although she was born in an RSS family in Ambala — her father was a prominent RSS functionary — she was first noticed as a defiant young lawyer for George Fernandes when he was arrested in the Baroda Dynamite Case during the Emergency.

Since Fernandes was a socialist, and as was Sushma Swaraj, the fellow lawyer she married in the thick of their anti-Emergency activism, she somehow acquired the aura of a fellow traveller. But she will remind you that her essential beliefs were of the RSS and the rest was just some popular misconception by socialist association. In 1977, as the Emergency ended and Indira Gandhi's Congress was routed, and she became Haryana's minister for labour and employment at 25, and was seen as a rising

Janata Party star and Fernandes protégé, not an RSS/Jan Sangh native.

Quite remarkably, especially for a self-made woman in Indian politics of the 1970s, she became president of the Janata Party in Haryana at 27. But once the Janata broke up later in 1979, she gravitated formally towards the breakaway Jan Sangh group. Her rise from thereon, as a self-made non-dynast, was phenomenal.

She did much to convince us that she had bought into the BJP's conservatism, from banishing the dancing Ajanta Apsara from national calendars, to banning *FTV*, railing against condom ads for "obscenity", protesting against the "*Sexy Radha*" song from *Student of the Year*, the explicit scenes of lesbian love between Shabana Azmi and Nandita Das playing sisters-in-law "Radha" and "Sita" in Deepa Mehta's *Fire*, and more recently her views on surrogacy and her description of a rape victim as "*zinda laash*" (a living

corpse). But, that won't make her your usual, regressive BJP conservative.

There are a dozen aspects of her life and track record that tell you she is different. She led a very middle class, mainstream life, made her own personal choices when few in that milieu would, and relentlessly pushed at her party's glass ceiling, reinforced through generations of patriarchy, not in the least because its parent, the RSS, is all-male in its hierarchy.

She wasn't afraid to speak out when the most abhorrent form of Hindu conservatism erupted in Mangalore and young women were being pulled out of bars and thrashed for "immorality". She spoke out for freedom of choice and safety as a modern, independent woman and the mother of a young woman. Some in her party frowned, but she was letting her rapidly growing fan club know that she was different.

Sushma had made it known well in time that she was opting out when she announced she wasn't going to contest this year. As one who fought 11 direct elections for states and Parliament, she would never avoid a good fight, especially at an age so young — just 66 now. But health had been her challenge, a consequence of early diabetes. Her departure, therefore, was planned and dignified. The only thing I might have suggested was a formal statement at some earlier stage that she was not going to join the new cabinet.

That said, even her adversaries would acknowledge that she completes her career as a winner, and a party faithful. She was an Advani acolyte but, after the 2009 rout, when he was refusing to make way for the new generation, she unhesitatingly joined the party's good "gang of four" (with Venkaiah Naidu, Ananth Kumar and Arun Jaitley) to call on RSS chief Mohan Bhagwat to intervene and choose a young party president. That brought in Nitin Gadkari.

This, despite the worst-kept secret in national politics about her rivalry with Mr Jaitley. For the party's sake, they made common cause. There were times during these past five years she may have felt slighted, overlooked or passed over by the PMO. But, those with their ear to the Lutyens ground did not miss the significance when Mr Modi chose her over Mr Jaitley to stand in for him while he was overseas and his usual number two, Rajnath Singh, was in China. He asked her to be in Delhi rather than on her pre-planned visit to Dubai.

This was acknowledgement of the trust he had in her judgement as well as loyalty. It was also the peak of her political career. You could always debate what would have happened if the BJP/RSS had chosen her as that young leader of the future after Mr Advani. She is, after all, younger than Mr Modi. What kind of BJP would she have had then? Probably not as ideologically conservative as what we have now. And unlikely to be as

cohesive and united either. It's a good discussion but academic. In politics as in cricket, every star cannot end up as a Kapil Dev or a Sachin Tendulkar. Somebody will have to play the Rahul Dravid too, indispensable but denied the fullest fame and power. That's a fair description for Sushma Swaraj, the leader, if you'd forgive me this bit of pop sociology.

By Special Arrangement with ThePrint

Confessions of a 'Khan Market gang' member



AL FRESCO

SUNIL SETHI

If certification were needed, I have been part of the "Khan Market gang" for as long as I can remember. Never a fully paid-up member because I did not live in the vicinity but by virtue of kinship and close friendships a longstanding habitue since the 1960s.

Narendra Modi's denunciation of the Lutyens elite is another classist label on a par with Rahul Gandhi's insult of "*suit boot ki sarkar*". BJP General Secretary Ram Madhav, however, elaborates further. The thundering triumph of the election result, he writes, "has completed the rejection and decimation ... of the 'Khan Market cacophony' ... of pseudo-secular/liberal cartels that held a disproportionate sway and stranglehold over the intellectual and policy establishment of the country".

As definitions go, Mr Madhav's is reduc-

tive, superficial and without context. As a post-Partition refugee market — family-run shops below, poky flats above — it was principally the domain of Jan Sanghis, though Congress politicians such as I K Gujral and Jag Pravesh Chandra also had flats there. Its chief clientele was junior or mid-level bureaucrats who occupied the neighbouring housing estates of Shaan Nagar and Maan Nagar (now Bharti Nagar and Rabindra Nagar, respectively).

My uncle, an Information Service officer, lived in Bharti Nagar for decades. Downstairs was the patrician H D Shourie, father of Arun Shourie; his daughter, Nalini Singh, was married from that low-key home. Many of my school friends, sons of resolutely middle class officials, lived there. An elderly relative, a formidable Lahore matriarch, let out her two Khan Market shops facing Sujana Singh Park to a sharp-tongued *halwai* and carried on a noisy running feud over rent.

Over the years, mid-career civil servants *en poste* in the capital, such as Bhaskar Ghose, Arundhati Ghose, Aftab Seth, Ashok Jaitly and his wife, Jaya Jaitley, to name just a few, lived in adjacent *sarkari* housing. Nandini Mehta, the journalist and publishing editor, whose father was a high-ranking ex-ICS officer (and therefore occupied bungalows in Lodi Gardens and Lodi Estate), wrote a telling memoir of Khan Market in 2006: "It's an interesting exercise to try and recall what was NOT available in Khan Market ...

there were no readymade women's clothes, no bread except sliced white, no sneakers except smelly white or brown canvas keds, no cosmetics except talcum powder, kajal, and what was known as 'vanishing' or 'cold' cream. You couldn't buy a cup of coffee there — and you never saw a foreigner either (the diplomats shopped in CP)".

When Ms Mehta's brother and she sneakily bought a copy of James Thurber's harmless humour titled *Is Sex Necessary?* at Bahrisons booksellers, Mr Bahri rang up their mother and said, "I want to warn you, your children are reading very unsuitable books." Thankfully Bahrisons still exists and I recall amiably chatting with fellow browsers such as L K Advani and Romila Thapar in later years. Like any commercial hub, Khan Market never subscribed to political or ideological divisions.

On freezing winter evenings my cousins and I would pool our meagre weekly allowance to splurge on bowls of canned tomato soup and greasy hamburgers in dingy Alfina restaurant. It was the only one. There was one printing shop, The Services Press, one children's clothing store called Chun Mun, and next door, our GP Dr (Miss) Gilani's clinic. The only posh establishment, among small time shops purveying modest merchandise, was Empire Stores, with provisions that ranged from "ham to boxes of toilet paper (it came in shiny rectangular sheets) to liquor".

In the high noon of Indira Gandhi's "quota raj" of the 1970s, key beneficiaries of grace-

and-favour housing near Khan Market were my peers and colleagues in the media. The list is too long but to mention some names: Nikhil Chakravarty, Raghu Rai, Amita Malik, H K Dua *et al.* At times it seemed that senior members of the news bureaus of the main dailies all lived in subsidised flats. By the 1990s this form of largesse began to wane; they were turfed out, the vacancies allotted to droves of more officials.

Mr Modi and the ruling political elite's disdain of the media is well-established but to condemn Khan Market-goers as an entrenched herd of "pseudo-secular/liberal cartels" would necessarily include a swathe of New Delhi's official establishment who are the neighbourhood's main residents. An IAS officer, member of an informal group of batch mates that regularly met to pick over the election campaign, said the other day: "We're checking out Khan Market's beer bars, one by one."

If Khan Market today — a neon-drenched spectacle of blingy shops and pricey eateries — is what it is, it's not due to the dramatic shift in political dispensations but because free-market India is another country, with its gilt-edged (but guilt-free) high spenders. Shakespeare is worth recalling:

"The fault, dear Brutus, is not in our stars, But in ourselves, that we are underlings."

Or as a WhatsApp message offering cheap credit this week pitifully sums up the new age of Narendra Modi: "*Ab hum sab chaabidaar hain.*" (We are all key-holders to the kitty.)

journeys of inspiring customers — the most famous being the one about the 700-pound man working to drop his extra weight. It is a fascinating portrayal that engages, excites, and entertains, all while showcasing the Nike product being used.

Indian creative and digital agencies seem to be completely missing the mark with using social platforms like Instagram, Snapchat, and even Facebook in quite the way they should be used. Most clients don't understand the medium, its apertures or its opportunities. At basics, most creatives even today are shot in horizontal format with 99 per cent art directors not understanding (or appreciating) that the content will eventually be viewed and consumed in a vertical format. Hence needs to be shot vertically. Now, that needs reconditioning of the mind. And adjusting to new realities. Which, to say the least is difficult to do. Similarly, most new social media offers combinations of video, text, pictures, blurbs, emojis, doodles, animations all possible to use concurrently in the same set of Stories. In India we have minimal use of anything but video. Similarly, there are features like 'highlight', 'swipe-up', and 'UTM codes', each designed for greater interactivity and brand-push. Most digital designers are still unfamiliar with all these.

In essence, story-telling is *passé*. Stories in the social space are brand-centric, interactive ways to display, highlight, ask-and-sell, up-sell, pre-sell and sell-out. In India we have a lot of learning ahead.

The writer is an advertising and media veteran sandeep@goyalmail.com

If 'Chernobyl' was made by Russians

EYE CULTURE

LEONID BERSHIDSKY

"*Chernobyl*," the *HBO* mini-series that ends on Monday in the US, isn't easy to watch as someone who lived in the Soviet Union in 1986 and who has since visited the Chernobyl exclusion zone. But, like many of my compatriots, I'm watching it — and thinking it should have been made in Russia, Ukraine or Belarus, not by an American entertainment channel.

There are two reasons for this. One is authenticity — despite a valiant attempt at it, the series falls short. But the other, more important reason is that this kind of harsh sermon on the importance of listening to experts and running a government for the people, not for its own sake, should have come from one of the affected countries. Those countries, apparently, haven't learned the lessons well enough to make a movie like this.

The authenticity part will probably be lost not just on Western viewers but also on the younger generation of post-Soviet ones, too. The producers tried hard to re-create the late Soviet material culture, even though it does look as though they found the objects at a flea market — they look 30 years the worse for wear. I know for a fact from several reporting trips that Russian miners don't drink vodka right at the mine, before they wash off the coal dust. And in the late '80s, they didn't require soldiers with assault rifles to keep them in check when a minister addressed them. For that matter, the soldiers in the series appear to hold their weapons US style, butt to the armpit, not Soviet-style, across the chest.

All these inaccuracies, big and small, mitigate the harshness of the movie for viewers with friends and family affected by the disaster. They serve as a filter, a reminder that this is, after all, an American TV series, not a documentary, and that none of the horrible things on the screen are real.

But even with that filter, the tough messages of the series come through loud and clear. For one thing, people are often unprepared for the enormity of something like the Chernobyl disaster; they tend to get confused, and try to fool themselves into thinking that the world isn't actually collapsing around them. That goes both for people on the immediate

scene and for the big bosses saddled with the final responsibility. These are situations when experts should be called in immediately and allowed to make decisions unhindered by political expediency or established chains of command. No amount of heroism and fatalism, powerfully portrayed in the series, is an adequate replacement for expertise.

Of course, coverups and defensiveness in such situations are heinous crimes; the Soviet Union tersely admitted the Chernobyl disaster to the world two days after it took place, and Communist Party leader Mikhail Gorbachev took 18 days before he spoke about it to the nation. By then, much of the area around the power plant had been evacuated, but May Day parades had taken place in nearby cities even though it could have been dangerous for people to be out in the open. By the time he felt free to speak, Gorbachev focused on criticising Western reports blaming the Soviet Union for the disaster. The reports would have been there in any case, but they would have been more accurate had the Soviet Union not tried to conceal the extent of the damage.

Remarkably, some Russian reactions to the series are in that vein, too. It's clear to most Russian viewers, though, that the *HBO* production is not some kind of American propaganda effort.

The question that keeps popping up in my mind is why none of the three ex-Soviet countries most affected by Chernobyl has produced such a powerful re-creation of the 1986 events for the world's edification. It would have made sense for Russia, with its current nuclear leadership, to show that it has learned the lessons.

Yet somehow it was the network that produced "*Game of Thrones*" that found the courage, the money and the considerable skill that went into the making of "*Chernobyl*." Now, the world at large will know the story from this version. That the post-Soviet nations left it to the *HBO* is, of course, not comparable with the original Soviet failure to report openly on the disaster. It is, however, a regrettable sin of omission that in the 33 years that have passed since Chernobyl's Reactor 4 blew up that the post-Soviet world hasn't produced anything as compelling as *HBO*'s flawed but riveting product.

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What Indian brands don't understand



YES, BUT...

SANDEEP GOYAL

One of the most visible trends in 2019 has been that more and more brands are getting 'human' as the circle of trust on social media tightens. In 2018, social media hit a kind of nadir. It was in fact a crisis year ... the Cambridge Analytica scandal and the subsequent Facebook Congressional hearings led to greater demand for improved confidentiality, greater data security, better ethics, and enhanced transparency. Twitter too faced a lot of heat because of the huge number of bots on its platform and was forced to purge millions of fake accounts; as a result, over 60 per cent of users no longer trust social media.

This has forced smart brands globally to focus less on maximising reach, and more on generating transparent, quality engagements that are immersive. As a result, more

than 64 per cent of the top brands in a Hootsuite survey in the US said they have either implemented Instagram Stories into their social strategies or plan to do so in the next 12 months. Similarly, Stories — the vertical, disappearing videos invented by Snapchat are growing 15 times faster than feed-based sharing. The same trend is visible on Facebook. Today over a billion users on social media use Stories as the primary way to share things with friends and family. As social media pivots from text-based platforms to truly mobile networks that enable capturing of in-the-moment experiences, Stories embody that creative pivot.

In India, however, very few brands and their creative partners understand the true meaning or intent of social media Stories. Currently, for Indian digital agencies and most clients, Stories are really, and actually, visual stories seen on a smart-screen as opposed to television ... cheaper, digitally shot, long narrations, mostly with a societal twist, and released first on YouTube. Then viralised on WhatsApp and Twitter. Sometimes promoted on Facebook and Instagram too. So, based on this understanding and interpretation of digital 'stories' the highly controversial HUL Brooke Bond Kumbh Mela film and the Surf Excel Ramzan ad which too generated a maelstrom, were created. Both touted as Stories but actually just long duration videos that told a story. The nuance and the differentiation in the digital ideation and execution is still not

being fully comprehended by content creators and their clients in India. The much acclaimed Gillette ad with the daughters as barbers or the PregaNews ad with the transgender protagonist are in the same mode: good, engaging stories, great creative renditions; but not really Stories as social media actually understands them.

There are brands around the world that have excelled at Stories. J. Crew, the clothing company, for example, created an exclusive pre-sale of its new rose-coloured Jane-in-Pink sunglasses, through a pink-themed photo-shoot which promoted the limited availability of the new range. The sunglasses were a sell-out because of the differentiated handling of the product narration which had curiosity, intrigue, envy, and even a bit of greed built into the communication. Similarly, Airbnb's *Travel Tuesday* series of Stories utilises professional photographs and user-generated content from Instagram to provide users with inspirational travel ideas. However, rather than just display the pictures of beautiful travel destinations around the world, the company transforms each photograph into an interactive quiz. Viewers are asked to identify the specific destination shown in the story through a poll feature. And after the reveal, viewers are prompted to 'swipe up' in order to activate the incorporated link that directs them to the company's website. Nike cleverly weaves Instagram Stories around the lives of not only famous athletes but also shares the



ILLUSTRATION: ROHINIT PHORE

PK JOSHI

The author is fellow, National Academy of Agricultural Sciences, New Delhi. Views are personal



Indian agriculture calls for big bang reforms

We have to modernise the sector, develop agricultural markets, promote exports of agricultural and processed commodities, consolidate small and marginal farmers, and expand the scope and amount of PM-KISAN

THE NEW NDA GOVERNMENT at the Centre is set to develop its governance agenda for the next five years. During the last five years, the agriculture sector and farmers were at the centre stage. In fact, in the just-concluded general elections, all the political parties raised issues on farmers' conditions and agrarian distress. However, none was able to provide a long-term remedy to overcome the plight of the farming community. At the same time, much was done during the last five years by the NDA-2 government to improve the condition of the agriculture sector and raise farmers' incomes. These steps included programmes and schemes to increase agricultural production, improve sustainability and resilience,

and raise farmers' incomes. The agriculture sector must receive high priority as it contributes to the national food security and provides employment opportunities to more than half of the country's population. One must also keep in mind that incomes in the agriculture sector must increase for the overall growth of the economy, as this increased income creates demand for industrial and services sectors.

Despite the substantially increased investment in agriculture and the launch of several new programmes, there has been a general feeling of farmer distress across the country. The question one must ask is: When and where did things go wrong? It appears that agriculture is excessively supported by the government, and almost everything in this sec-

tor is controlled by the government. For example: (1) growing subsidies in production (fertiliser, power, irrigation, machines, seeds, credit); (2) raising minimum support prices; and (3) increasing farmers' allocation to new schemes such as soil health cards, agricultural insurance, National Food Security Mission, agricultural insurance, etc.

In addition, several research studies reveal that (1) agricultural subsidies are overcrowding investments; (2) incentives continue to traditional crops and production systems (rice and wheat); and (3) there are no incentives to demand-driven agricultural commodities.

The fact is that farmers are not given incentives to produce efficiently, compete in the global markets, and carry out agriculture as agribusiness. Unless the agriculture sector is liberalised and the government control is minimised, it will continue to suffer. The new government may consider the following to improve the agriculture sector and subsequently farmers' welfare:

■ First, modernise the sector: Globally, the next 20 years will witness a remarkable change in agriculture and agricultural practices. The focus will be on increasing production from a declining resource base, especially land and water. Labour will be replaced by machines and drones. Therefore, Indian agriculture must keep pace with the changing scenario and respond to the dwindling resource base, unfolding demand for agricultural commodities at national and global level, and the rising climate change threats.

Modern technologies need to be promoted to make agriculture more efficient, competitive, sustainable, resilient and environment friendly. This will require investment in agricultural research, and in developing linkages between research and industry and service centres for disseminating modern technologies. Equally important is to reform the agricultural research system with more decentralisation to undertake target-oriented research.

■ Second, develop agricultural markets: Volatile prices of agricultural commodities are a major source of agrarian distress. Prices steeply fall immediately after a crop harvest, when a majority of farmers sell their produce. However, consumers continue to pay higher prices. It means that (1) consumers are ready to

pay higher prices, and (2) demand is there to absorb prices. The huge margins between what farmers receive and what consumers pay is due to inefficient, unorganised and fragmented markets of agricultural commodities. Despite the rising agricultural production of almost all commodities, appropriate markets have not been developed at the same pace. In the past, excessive efforts have been made to increase agricultural production (which is good), but without giving due attention to developing new markets. Therefore, developing and liberalising markets should receive high priority as the volume of produce from different parts of the country has increased manifold. The government should gradually withdraw in fixing agricultural prices and their procurement. Instead, the organised private sector must be attracted to develop agricultural markets—let the market decide prices and the government may compensate farmers in case there is a steep fall in prices of key agricultural commodities.

■ Third, promote exports of agricultural and processed commodities: Indian agriculture has already achieved food self-sufficiency, and now it needs to leapfrog from the food security syndrome to market-oriented agriculture. This will require a stable and proactive trade policy. Exports of many agricultural commodities are increasing, but imports are rising faster than exports. India has a huge potential to export several of its agricultural commodities to Africa, Central Asia, South East Asia and West Asia, besides to its neighbouring countries in South Asia. India can take advantage of the ongoing trade war between China and the US to develop its own market. It requires identification of niche commodities to different markets depending upon their tastes, preferences and requirements. However, success will depend upon how quality and food safety issues are ensured.

■ Fourth, consolidate small and marginal farmers: Indian agriculture is dominated by small and marginal farmers—more than 86% holdings have land less than two hectares. This group has tiny marketable surplus; they have high transaction costs and low bargaining power. Small and marginal farmers and their produce may be consolidated through (1) incentives to form farmer producer organisations, self-help groups and/or cooperatives; (2) promote contract farming and develop vertical integration; and (3) incentivise states to implement the already developed model land lease Act. There is a misperception that (2) and (3) will lead to corporate farming. What is

wrong if corporate sector brings in new technologies, best practices, more investment, and gives higher returns to farmers? Care may be taken that the corporate sector does not exploit farmers.

■ Fifth, expand the scope and amount of PM-KISAN: In this year's Interim Budget, the government announced an income support scheme to the farmers, called the Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi Yojana (PM-KISAN). Farmers must be supported as a majority of them are small and marginal. It is proposed that the amount of Rs 6,000 per farmer is increased. This can be done by ceasing many of the old and existing schemes that are not making any impact on farmers' welfare and have become redundant with time.

The success of agriculture reforms will depend on a strong political will. The new government may consider constituting an Agricultural Council on the pattern of GST Council for having consensus on issues related to model market Act, model land lease Act, subsidies, investment and strengthening agricultural research and extension.

It is also an opportune time that a new agricultural policy may be drafted to prepare a medium- and long-term roadmap for various reforms in the agriculture sector.

The success of agriculture reforms will depend on a strong political will. The new government may consider constituting an Agricultural Council on the pattern of GST Council for having

The future of retail banking

SUBHASISH ROY

The author is general manager, IDBI Bank. Views are personal



Banks need to develop more mobile-based applications for retail banking operations

ON ACCOUNT OF ECONOMIC slowdown and policy-level issues, the growth of credit to the corporate sector has declined, whereas credit growth in the retail sector has gone up. As per latest data, credit growth to industry was 4.4% in December 2018; in the same period, credit growth to retail was 17%. It seems the economic slowdown that has affected corporate credit may not hit retail credit. Indian households have borrowed more since the last few years to fund their property, vehicle and credit card purchases. Retail credit, which has shown significant growth in the recent past, is expected to show steady moderate growth. As per CRISIL, the retail segment is expected to grow by 19% in FY20, led by strong consumer demand and higher penetration by banks. Sectors that will drive growth are housing and consumer durables.

A reason for higher growth in retail credit is that delinquency level in retail is low as compared to corporate. This is because in retail the ticket size is very small, and risk is distributed among a large number of borrowers in retail lending. While many banks have shifted their strategy towards retail lending, still a large number of people are out of reach of retail finance. Major challenges for banks are (1) retention of existing customers and (2) acquiring new customers in a cost-effective way. As per a study in the Harvard Business Review, a 5% increase in customer retention can increase profitability by 35% in banking business.

To address these challenges, technology has to play a greater role. Today, a large number of customers prefer digital modes of transaction rather than branch banking. The future of retail banking, therefore, lies in innovative financial technology. Here, new-generation private and foreign banks appear to have taken the lead. Other banks, too, need to move from branch banking to digital banking, and need to launch more digital applications rather than open new branches. This will not only reduce operational costs, but also help banks reach the target customers in a faster and convenient manner.

Going forward, the major demand for retail transactions, including loan products, cash management, wealth management, insurance services, etc., in both urban and metro areas, will mainly come from younger customers. A recent survey revealed that among all modes of banking channels, the new generation prefers smartphones the most. Thus, in order to succeed, banks need to develop more mobile-based applications for various retail banking operations. In addition, artificial intelligence and big data analytics will play a crucial role towards determining the success of retail banking in the future. To capitalise on this area, banks first need to develop a big data warehouse where they capture potential customers' various transaction patterns. Then, based on this data, they have to select their target customer. After customer selection, banks need to develop software applications based on AI and robotics, which can be useful for performing complex tasks relating to transactions such as small value loans, appraisal, KYC-related issues, loan monitoring, etc. Considering that most traditional banks lack expertise in this area, they can collaborate with fintech firms, utilising the latter's innovative ideas and technologies. Such a step can provide a competitive edge to banks to deliver their retail banking products and services through new digital platforms.

While digital banking has its benefits, there are also risks involved, such as cyberfraud and IT-related risks. Banks, thus, need to develop robust risk management tools and techniques. Further, overdependence on innovative technologies may lead to systemic risks across the financial sector, which may affect overall financial stability. To address this issue, we perhaps need a separate regulatory framework and strengthened governance, to ensure integrity of data, algorithms and the stability of the financial system.

Many traditional banks still lack expertise in digital field, and they can collaborate with fintech firms, utilising the latter's innovative tech

TURKEY

THE GLOBALECONOMY IS grappling with risks like trade war, volatile crude oil prices, Brexit, to name a few. Another crisis situation that has been brewing for the last one year is the economic and political turmoil in Turkey, which faced a currency crisis in mid-2018. In a span of a fortnight, the Turkish lira depreciated sharply by 40%. The crisis spread over to other emerging market currencies and stocks. Adverse investor sentiment led to large sell-off from emerging markets. Capital inflows into EM economies fell to \$2.2 billion in August 2018 from \$13.7 billion in July 2018. Currencies like Argentinian peso and South African rand fell by 10% each, while the weakening in the rupee was relatively less in the period under review. The MSCI Emerging Market equity index also fell by 5%, triggered by the Turkish currency crisis.

Cut to May 2019, Turkey witnessed another sharp depreciation of the lira. The currency fell to a 7-month low of 6.2 to a dollar, weakening by over 15% since the beginning of the year. Investor sentiment for the Turkish economy is weak and there is social and political instability. So, what are the lingering risks affecting the Turkish economy?

For more than a decade, Turkey enjoyed the availability of cheap credit and foreign capital that fuelled high economic growth. GDP grew by an average of 5% in the last five years. This led to debt level in the economy

Is another global crisis brewing?

Aggravation of Turkey crisis could impact investor sentiment in EMs

RUTUJA MORANKAR & RAJANI SINHA

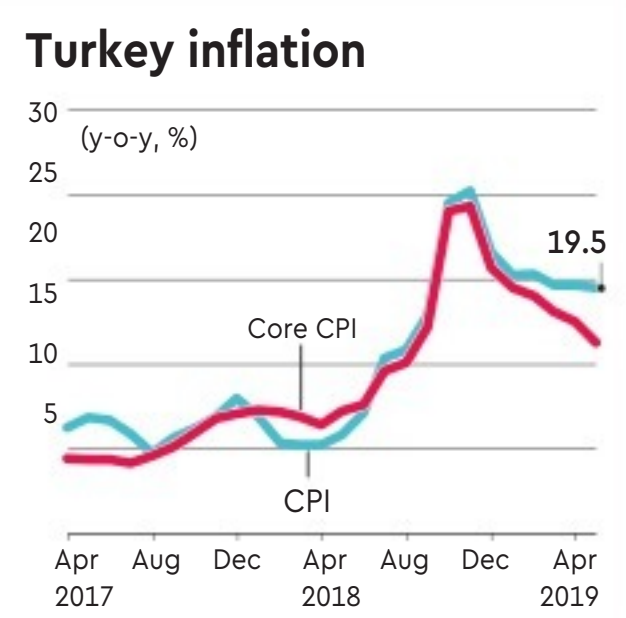
Authors are corporate economists based in Mumbai

accelerating. Turkey has an external debt-to-GDP ratio of 53.5%. More worrisome is the short-term debt of \$177 billion, which is maturing in the next 12 months. While debt levels are high, Turkey's forex reserves have been dwindling. Forex reserves at \$60 billion are not enough to support currency in case of further deepening of crisis. The country has forex reserves to short-term debt ratio of 30%, which is quite low. The IMF advises this ratio to be maintained at 100%.

Sharp weakening of the currency as investor sentiments dwindle is pushing up dollar-denominated debt burden. This is adding to the stress on the indebted corporate sector, resulting in rising levels of banks'

non-performing loans. Sharp weakening of the currency has also resulted in higher import prices and double-digit inflation in the economy. Inflation is currently hovering around 20%. In response to rising inflation, the Central Bank (TCMB) tightened the key policy rate to 24% in September 2018 from 8% in May 2018. This has increased borrowing costs sharply, dampening growth.

Turkey entered into recession in Q4CY18 following two consecutive quarters of negative GDP growth. According to the IMF, Turkey will record negative growth of 2.4% on an annual basis in 2019. On the labour market side, the unemployment rate has risen to the highest since 2009, at



14.7%. This raises concerns that it may no longer have sufficient firepower to defend the lira in case of another sharp depreciation.

The US and Turkey are at loggerheads over their Syria policy. Last year, the US-Turkey relationship particularly soured over the detention of a US pastor by Turkey. The US responded by doubling tariffs on imports of steel and aluminium from Turkey. In March 2019, the US announced the removal of the Generalized System of Preferences (GSP) status of Turkey, which could adversely impact exports from Turkey. More recently, Turkey's plan to purchase the Russian missile defence system has miffed the US (as the US claims it to be non-compatible with the

NATO). The US is considering imposing sanctions on Turkey. The US-Turkey relationship will be crucial and an escalation of tensions is likely to weigh on the lira.

The Erdogan government, on the other hand, won a second term in the general elections held last year. However, it recently lost the mayoral election for Istanbul. The decision by the election commission to nullify Istanbul municipal elections and go for re-election in June led to mass protests and social unrest. Investors showed reduced faith in democratic institutions. President Erdogan's party had also lost mayoral election in Ankara and some cities in south Turkey earlier during the year, which high-

lights reducing support for his government. The market is anticipating policy instability and conflict, domestically and in foreign affairs, which could dampen the economy and result in flight of capital.

In an attempt to stabilise the economy, the Turkish finance ministry announced reforms over the next 4-5 years. These include agricultural policy to keep food prices in check. The government is also infusing \$5 bn to recapitalise state banks and taking off some bad loans from the balance sheet of banks. Two special funds are to be created to manage high debts in energy and construction sectors. Bad assets would be reduced through debt-to-equity swaps. There are plans to boost tourism, exports and improve judiciary regulations. Some reforms on pensions and taxes to improve consumption are under way. But these measures have failed to enthrone the investor.

To conclude, high debt is a big risk for Turkey, with low forex reserves and weakening currency. This could lead to downgrade of Turkey's sovereign rating (which is currently B+ stable, four notches below investment grade). Debt default by Turkey would impact European banks, especially Spanish and Italian, due to a high exposure to Turkey debt. Further aggravation of the Turkey crisis could impact the investor sentiment for the EM basket. Resulting capital outflows would severely impact Brazil, South Africa, Argentina and, to some extent, India.



The Indian EXPRESS

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RAMNATH GOENKA

BECAUSE THE TRUTH INVOLVES US ALL

TEAM MODI

How Party President Shah works with Home Minister Shah will be watched; Sitharaman has her task cut out

PRIME MINISTER NARENDRA Modi's team for his second term is ready and there are some unmistakable and unmissable signals. Amit Shah, Home Minister, makes an important statement about the new government. As party president, Shah has not just been credited with toning up the BJP's organisational muscle, but also with delineating in sharper and unarguably harsher ways, its ideological agenda. This was mirrored in the party's renewed insistence and stridency, in the just concluded campaign, on some critical issues.

The Shah-led BJP, and Shah himself, have promised that the process to update the National Register of Citizens, which has caused turmoil and is yet inconclusive in Assam, will be extended to the rest of the country. Under Shah, the BJP, during the election campaign, weaponised the NRC to press home some ideological points — more than seven decades after Independence, the onus is on citizens to prove their Indianness, and (Muslim) illegal immigrants from Bangladesh are to be seen, in Shah's words, as "termites" even as proposed amendments to the Citizenship Bill paved the way for non-Muslim minorities to citizenship. Shah has helped inject a similarly unforgiving lexicon on the Kashmir issue — in election rallies, he promised, or threatened, to scrap the special status to J&K under Article 370 of India's Constitution if the BJP is re-elected. On "national security" in general, catapulted by the BJP into the highest priority issue in this Lok Sabha campaign, Shah led from the front, accusing political opponents of patronising Naxals, and drawing associations between student protests in JNU, surgical strikes in the wake of Uri and India's attack on terror camps in Balakot. As home minister now, at the very least, the home ministry will be more pro-active. It could, in fact, become the hub for efforts to lend government imprimatur to the BJP's controversial ideological positions on critical issues, re-drawing the battlelines. How party president Shah works with Home Minister Shah will be watched in a government that has promised to win *sabka vishwas* (everyone's trust).

If Shah deals in battlelines, Nirmala Sitharaman continues to break glass ceilings — she was India's first full-time woman defence minister, she is its first woman finance minister in decades (since Indira Gandhi, as PM, held the portfolio). Her shift to the finance ministry carries forward her breathtaking rise and also points to the absences she steps into — her elevation is so startling only because there are so few women in the nation's top jobs. She comes to the office in challenging times — she will need to find ways of reviving growth amid a general stasis or slowdown, from employment to investment to jobs and exports. And last, but certainly not least, the allocation of the important External Affairs portfolio to lateral entrant S Jaishankar promises to burnish the second Modi government's engagement with the world, especially the big powers. Ground level campaign reports suggest that foreign policy as photo-op was widely popularised in the first Modi regime. Now, with Jaishankar on board, it gets more strategic depth.

ECONOMY IS NOT WELL

With underlying drivers of growth sputtering, the slowdown is deeper and more entrenched than was believed

INDIA'S ECONOMIC GROWTH slowed to a 20-quarter low of 5.8 per cent in the fourth quarter of 2018-2019, well below expectations. Growth for the full year came at 6.8 per cent, the slowest pace in the last five years, according to data released by the Central Statistics Office (CSO). While leading indicators had pointed towards sluggish economic activity, the slowdown is deeper and more entrenched than was believed, with both consumption and investment weakening. Coupled with recent data, these numbers would suggest that economic activity is likely to continue to be subdued in the first half of the current financial year as well.

Latest data shows that gross value added (GVA) grew at a mere 5.7 per cent in Q4FY19, driven by a contraction in agriculture, and slower growth of manufacturing, construction, and trade, hotels, transport and communication. Agriculture contracted by 0.1 per cent in Q4FY19, down from 2.8 per cent in the previous quarter. Part of the decline could be attributed to the base effect. The sector had grown by a 6.5 per cent in the fourth quarter of 2017-18. Much of the sector's performance depends on how the monsoon fares this year. The IMD has predicted an average monsoon, with rainfall to be 96 per cent of the long term average, though greater clarity, especially over its distribution, will emerge in coming weeks. Manufacturing was another area of weakness, as the corporate results season has shown. The sector grew by a mere 3.1 per cent in Q4, down from 6.4 per cent in Q3. Though, on the flip side, public administration, defence and other services and financial, real estate and professional services, grew at a robust pace. The former, which largely connotes government spending, grew by a healthy 10.7 per cent in Q4, up from 7.5 per cent in Q3, presumably on account of higher spending by state governments.

On the expenditure side of the data, private final consumption expenditure, which is largely household demand, slowed down to 7.2 per cent in Q4, from 8.1 per cent in Q3, in line with the trends suggested by leading indicators. The twin balance sheet problem continues to drag down fresh investments, with gross fixed capital formation, which connotes investments, slowing to 3.6 per cent in Q4, down from 11.7 per cent in Q3. With the underlying drivers of growth sputtering, the new finance minister has an unenviable task ahead.

STRUCK DUMB

Congress announces it will give media the silent treatment for a month. Is it just a clever way of saying it has nothing to say?

THERE IS NO denying the element of schadenfreude among the many detractors of the Congress after the party's abysmal performance in the Lok Sabha elections. And while there ought to be no pride in kicking someone when they are down, India's oldest political party isn't helping its own cause by giving the silent treatment to the media.

The party leadership's decision not to have its spokespersons appear on TV news debates for one month does, arguably, make strategic sense. As it picks up the pieces of yet another electoral rout and contemplates assigning blame, or shielding people from it, it may be best to do so without its leaders making, or being provoked to make, any untoward public statements. But the manner in which the *maun vrat* has been announced, and is being imposed, is a tactical error. First, as anyone who has ever thrown a tantrum — or been at the receiving end of one — will tell you, the "silent treatment" loses much of its edge when no one's actually talking to you. In the wall-to-wall coverage following the BJP-led NDA's massive win, there appears to be little space — except among mean detractors and disappointed supporters — for what the Congress wants to say. Second, the request by the Congress media cell to channels not to invite its spokespersons to their shows betrays a lack of faith in its own. Why the advisory to journalists if Congressmen know this is a time to be circumspect?

The reason for keeping mum may be neither strategic nor tactical. India's Grand Old Party has been most visibly in crisis since 2014, and the 2019 verdict has provided no hope of a revival, no galaxy of new leaders that can catapult the party to future success. Perhaps the imposed month-long silence of its leaders is a means to stoically contemplate these questions. Or maybe, Congressmen just have nothing to say.



AMARTYA LAHIRI

A FEW NUMBERS are useful to put in perspective the development challenge that India faces today. India's current gross domestic product (GDP) is around \$2.5 trillion while its GDP per person is \$2,000. With an annual population growth of 1.1 per cent and aggregate GDP growth of 6.6 per cent, India's per person GDP is currently growing at 5.5 per cent annually. At these growth rates, India's per person GDP would be around \$19,000 in 2060.

To put this scenario in perspective, Greece's per person GDP today is around \$20,000. Even if India manages to sustain an average growth rate of 7 per cent for the next 41 years, India's per person GDP would still be barely above the current per person GDP of Greece. And, Greece isn't exactly a development role model.

The uncertainties around these scenarios are also huge. If the average aggregate growth rate drops to 5.6 per cent, India's per person GDP in 2060 would be around \$12,000, which is only slightly above the per person GDP in China today. This is the risk inherent in India slipping even slightly from its current growth path and the scale of its development challenge.

Development is a challenge globally, not just in India. The per person GDP of the richest 5 per cent of countries in the world is over 50 times larger than the per person GDP of the poorest 5 per cent. What explains such large disparities across countries?

Output is produced by combining labour of different skill types, land, capital, energy and public infrastructure. Combining these inputs also requires entrepreneurship and management. For example, at the level of the firm, managers who are better at matching the skills of individual workers to tasks are able to generate higher revenues. This applies at the level of the country as well. It is the unmeasured X-factor that is commonly referred to as productivity.

India should learn from its past, and speed up critical reforms

Forty years is the working life of a whole generation. The period 1950-1990 already saw a generation barely experiencing any growth in incomes. India cannot let that happen again. Development is a long game. India needs to act now and stay the course.

A number of researchers have found that measured inputs account for at most half of the per person difference in output across countries. The remaining output gap is due to differences in productivity levels across countries. For some reason, the same measured inputs produce much more output in the richer countries, relative to poorer nations.

What is the secret sauce that richer countries use which makes them so productive? There are a few suspects. The first is clearly the policy environment in the country. Economies that encourage capital and labour to easily move across firms, sectors and countries towards their most productive use tend to be more productive. Economies where such mobility is restricted have more misallocation of labour and capital. There are many examples of these: Historians working as bankers, capital stuck in loss-making firms that cannot shut down due to exit policies and limited technology inflows due to import restrictions.

A second reason for differences in productivity across countries is the quality of institutions. The types of contracts that individuals and businesses are willing to sign depend hugely on things like the rule of law, the nature of laws, enforcement of contracts and property rights, reliability of public data and information, the independence of agencies that oversee law enforcement and dissemination of public information.

How does this apply to India? Clearly, there are many impediments to the supply of inputs. Businesses need land to build factories, and foreign partners for the latest technologies. Factories are needed to absorb the labour that India has. A large fraction of this labour is currently stuck in extremely distressed conditions in agriculture because not enough jobs are being created in other sectors. Moreover, current labour laws make large scale hiring costly for firms. Addressing these require reforms to India's existing land

acquisition and labour policies.

Businesses also need capital which they acquire from financial markets. This requires a healthy credit culture wherein debts are repaid, insolvencies are dealt with in a quick and orderly way, and banks are free to lend to the most productive borrower. Our banking sector is mostly state controlled. Banks face myriad constraints on lending due to targets for priority sector lending, statutory liquidity ratio and informal pressures on directed lending. Repeated loan waivers have vitiated the credit culture making it harder for banks to recover loans. The introduction of the insolvency and bankruptcy code has been an excellent initiative but resolutions under it are still slow. All of this bids up the cost of funds for private businesses. Financial sector reforms, including bank privatisation, are clearly needed.

More generally, private businesses, locally and globally, need to feel that India is business friendly — its industrial and trade policies are not subject to sudden reversals, enforcement agencies are independent, public data is reliable, and the country values domain specialists in overseeing its market infrastructure. This is about generating confidence in the institutional structure of India to encourage greater investment and newer technology inflows through foreign direct investment.

As we saw above, relatively small changes in performance can induce wide divergence in potential outcomes over a sustained period. Forty years is the working life of a whole generation. The period from 1950 to 1990 already saw a generation barely experiencing any growth in incomes. India cannot let that happen again. Development is a long game. India needs to act now and stay the course.

The writer is director, Centre for Advanced Financial Research and Learning, Mumbai and professor of economics at the University of British Columbia (views are personal)



KHALED AHMED

ON MAY 11, three terrorists attacked the only five-star hotel in Gwadar, the new port city of Balochistan being built with assistance from the Chinese Belt-and-Road Initiative. They killed four hotel employees and a navy soldier before being shot by the army. The attack was claimed by the outlawed Balochistan Liberation Army (BLA).

The official view was that "sudden intensification of attacks is linked to the launch of the second phase of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor, the progress on border fencing and the fluid situation in Afghanistan". This statement encapsulates the new threat perception in Islamabad and Rawalpindi. The reference to "border-fencing" points to the threat to a state that felt threatened only on the eastern border in the past. And border-fencing with Afghanistan is not going to be easy as there is no agreed formula of demarcation of the Durand Line.

In the Federally Administered Tribal Area (FATA) — now merged with Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa province and thus "regularised" — a new protest movement, the Pashtun Tahaffuz Movement (PTM), complains of the "disappeared" people of FATA. The complaint is similar to the one made by the BLA in Balochistan but with a difference: PTM is a regular political party with two seats in the National Assembly.

The trouble in Balochistan is seen as connected with the ongoing covert conflict with India. The BLA is composed of the "disappeared" (through extrajudicial killing) men that the Baloch nationalists in the Quetta assembly blame on the Pakistan army, accusing it of capturing and eliminating them. Pakistan wavers between belief in the two versions because of the capture of

THE ALLY'S NUDGE

Push from China could force Pakistan to operate as a normal state

Kulbhushan Jadhav from Balochistan in 2016.

The PTM too is accused by the army of being funded by the Kabul government in tandem with India. It is evident that Pakistan is now worried about its western border more than its eastern one which is already fenced against infiltration by India. Prime Minister Imran Khan's India policy — backed by the army — is that of normalisation, which to many looks like putting aside Pakistan's "revisionism" over Kashmir in favour of concentration on the western border which it never thought of protecting in the past.

The move away from "India centrism" has come in the wake of internal upheaval in the two tribal areas — comprising almost half of Pakistan's territory — where lack of development has caused the population to move. The Baloch, small in number, have lost their youth across the border or in the badlands of Balochistan while the Pashtun of FATA have migrated inland — mostly to Karachi where they form the largest group after the Urdu-speaking refugees from India — and to Saudi Arabia and the Emirates of the Gulf. Lack of development in Balochistan, from where Pakistan extracted gas and spent it lavishly in Punjab and other provinces till it was exhausted, has alienated the Baloch intelligentsia and caused the emergence of the BLA.

The lack of development of infrastructure in FATA has made this crucial northwestern region unlivable. Moreover, by allowing the Afghan Taliban and their Arab and Uzbek fellow-warriors to locate themselves in FATA and infiltrate Afghanistan to fight the American war against the Soviet-supported government in Kabul completely destroyed the local hierarchies that had kept the "tribal museum" of Pakistan intact.

Imran Khan's talk of normalising relations with India has caused many to do a double-take. Everyone knows "making peace" with Prime Minister Narendra Modi means forgetting Kashmir. In Pakistan too the "Kashmir first" mindset is changing under pressure from the Chinese Belt and Road project, the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), which is crucially dependent on the development of the Gwadar Port and its hinterland. CPEC is viewed by Pakistan as a game-changer. But without peace on the borders, this transformation may not be achieved.

Peace with India becomes crucial because of the neglected western border and the offended countries beyond it: Afghanistan and Iran. In 1998, the Taliban, along with infiltrators from Pakistan, tried to take the northern city of Mazar-e-Sharif in Afghanistan, killing its anti-Taliban Shias and the five Iranian diplomats in the city's Iranian consulate. Pakistan has spent half a century facing trouble on both eastern and western borders, including Uzbekistan.

It is time for change in Pakistan and it is going to be difficult, given the tough man expected to be ruling India for some time — Modi. Pakistan's economy is in deep crisis. Meanwhile, China's persuasion to "normalise" the state of Pakistan is becoming intense, judging from the way it has abstained from vetoing the resolution on Jaish-e-Mohammad chief Masood Azhar at the UN. China wants its corridor through Pakistan to run normally and that requires Pakistan to live normally as a state.

The writer is consulting editor, Newsweek Pakistan

JUNE 1, 1979, FORTY YEARS AGO

MRS GANDHI INDICTED

INDIRA GANDHI HAS been indicted by the Maruti commission for exerting undue influence over the government machinery to promote the business interests of her son, Sanjay Gandhi, during her tenure as prime minister. The report, according to informed sources, has also indicted the former Haryana chief minister, Bansilal, for helping Sanjay Gandhi obtain land and several senior officers for showing undue favours to the three concerns of Sanjay Gandhi. The report prepared by the commission's chairman, Justice Alak Chandra Gupta, was taken to the home ministry by a commission official, N K Prasad, in a sealed cover and handed over to

J C Pandey, joint secretary.

ARMY IN AHMEDABAD

THE ARMY WAS called out in Ahmedabad to control the situation arising out of violence by agitating policemen. Jawans took control of the city police headquarters, according to a senior police official. The Border Security Force had also been alerted, he said. The policemen, who were returning after holding a meeting, attacked the city police control room and destroyed the entire furniture and the telephone exchange. A car in which M D Patel, secretary of the Public Works Department, was travelling, was attacked and set afire, the official said.

BENAZIR IN LARKANA

BENAZIR BHUTTO, DAUGHTER of the executed former prime minister of Pakistan, arrived in Larkana last night and heard thousands of supporters chant "long live Bhutto" and "Bhutto will live for thousands of years". A tearful Benazir told welcoming crowds at the railway station, "The entire nation of Pakistan is in the grip of this mood today. Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto belonged to Larkana. So long as he lived, he never bowed to anything wrong. Let us all pledge that we should follow the late Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto's guidelines of politics" she said. She added that she would stay in Larkana and meet anybody who knew about the last days of her late father.



15 THE IDEAS PAGE

Why chemistry trumps arithmetic

All indicators lead to the same conclusion: Modi's BJP recorded a spectacular victory in 2019 due to its provision of inclusive growth — very close to the best in the world in 2014-18



NO PROOF REQUIRED

BY SURJIT S BHALLA AND KARAN BHASIN

BEFORE WEGO into policy mode, one last attempt at explaining what caused the great electoral victory of Narendra Modi/BJP in 2019. At the risk of over-simplification (but not really), one view is that it was Balakot that really turned people's minds. National security was a prominent concern, and the voters felt that their future would be more "secure" with Modi. We don't have any disagreement with that conclusion — the issue for us is whether the security issue was the most important factor. It was not.

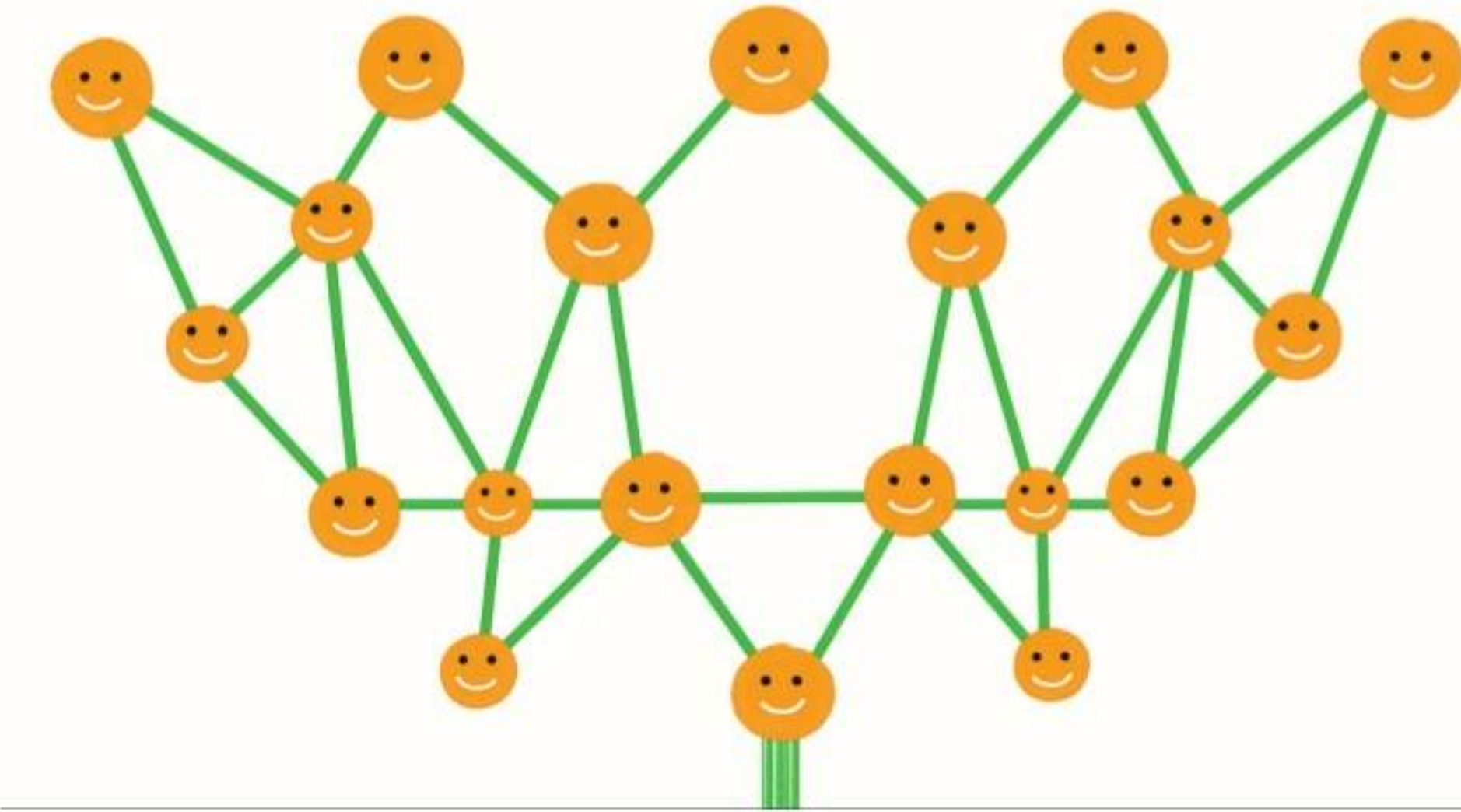
An associated view, and one that pre-dates Balakot, is that people primarily vote on the basis of caste. This is the arithmetic in the title, that is, caste accounting suggested that in several states, especially Uttar Pradesh, the caste and religion arithmetic (votes cast by the lower castes and Muslims) would easily approximate the vote share of the upper-caste non-Muslim support for the BJP. Hence, the expectation in January 2019 that the most likely outcome of the election was a hung Parliament.

The chemistry perspective is that PM Modi is a charismatic politician and the others (the diverse set of Opposition candidates) are not and, therefore, Modi won. Note that this explanation, like the invisible hand, was nowhere to be seen in January 2019, and especially unseen in December 2018, when the BJP lost three state elections.

An alternate explanation (and which one of us has claimed to be the main reason behind Modi's victory, and explained in detail in a pre-election analysis in the book, *Citizen Raj*) is that in this whodunnit case, it was the economic redistribution policies of the Modi government, which were primarily responsible for the large gains made by the BJP. There was charisma, yes; chemistry, yes. And Balakot and the weak faces of the Opposition, yes. But by far the most important factor was the accelerated nature of inclusive growth unleashed in Modi 1.0.

Let us count the components of this inclusive growth. The much-criticised demonetisation was the first salvo. It made possible a sharp increase in direct tax collections, an increase which made possible expenditure on the poor (here defined as the bottom 37 per cent of the population or 500 million people). To ensure that there were no leakages in the expenditure on the poor, the government decided to create the JAM trinity — Jan Dhan, Aadhaar and Mobile. The Jan Dhan accounts made it possible to transfer funds directly into the banks of beneficiaries using the Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) mechanism while Aadhaar ensured that the identification errors were minimised.

Over the last five years, the government has made a total transfer, in 2011 prices, of Rs 2.15 trillion in subsidies which include LPG, the PM Kisan Yojana and other social security programmes. The government has also managed to create collective assets at an unprecedented scale. Roads: In 2013, only 56 per cent of villages in India were connected; in 2018, the road coverage is over 91 per cent. Electricity: Under



CR Sasikumar

the Saubhagya scheme, an additional 20 million houses have been electrified. While these assets may not directly affect the measurement of consumption poverty, their availability is critical for future productivity gains, and gains that will have an impact on the economy (and poverty reduction).

Additionally, the government has made an asset transfer amounting to Rs 1.21 lakh crore or Rs 1,210 billion in 2011 prices. This asset transfer is primarily in terms of the construction of toilets and houses. The benefits for poverty reduction in this transfer should not be underestimated. Toilets lead to better health, and less spread of disease. The psychic and happiness "income" worthy of a pucca roof is also beyond an economic calculation.

Our contention is that the Modi government provided inclusive growth, and the recipients of this were thankful to the government and hence voted for it. The above government programmes did not differentiate on the basis of caste or religion; and many surveys have documented that the people felt "touched", possibly for the first time, by the Centre's redistributive policies. Many states have been known for being efficient in the execution, and delivery, of public welfare programmes. The same, unfortunately, cannot be said for most programmes run by the Central government.

But that was before Modi 1.0. We have mentioned the various types of transfers that have taken place over the last five years. These programmes, if effective, must have had an impact on reducing absolute poverty. There is an abundance of data on poverty alleviation, both for India and the world (primarily through the World Bank). This poverty effect is measurable, and relatively non-controversial and free of subjective biases associated with voting behaviour (for example, voters were happier with a toilet and therefore voted for Modi/BJP).

We offer two sets of poverty calculations for India. The reduction in absolute poverty according to the middle-income poverty line of PPP \$3.2 per capita per day (pppd); and the reduction in poverty associated with just the pure asset transfer (houses and toilets) of Rs. 1.2 trillion. For our sample of comparable countries, we use World Bank data for non-oil developing economies with a minimum population size of 10 million (a total of 54 countries).

Two time-periods are chosen — the 10-year period 2004-2013 (UPA I & II) and the Modi 1.0 period (2014-2018). In case you for-

It was the economic redistribution policies of the Modi government which were primarily responsible for the large gains made by the BJP. There was charisma, yes; chemistry, yes. And Balakot and the weak faces of the Opposition yes. But by far the most important factor was the accelerated nature of inclusive growth unleashed in Modi 1.0.

got, our purpose is to assess the "inclusive growth equal to poverty reduction performance" under UPA and Modi 1.0.

During the period 2004-2013, the best-performing economy was Vietnam with a reduction in poverty of 50 percentage points (ppt). China was second with a 37.5 ppt reduction and India 18th with a 17.2 ppt reduction. Between 2014-2018 Ethiopia is the best poverty reduction economy (28.8 ppt), Bangladesh second (21.5 ppt), Cote d'Ivoire third at 15.5 ppt and followed by Cambodia and India (both at 14.9 ppt reduction). Note that for the same poverty line, poverty was reduced by 17 ppt over 10 years (UPA) and at nearly twice the rate during five-years of Modi 1.0 (15 ppt).

We now proceed towards an estimate of additional absolute poverty reduction due to asset transfers. These asset transfers accrue mainly to the bottom 500 million; hence, total transfer of Rs 1,210 b for 500 m amounts to Rs 2,420 per person. At a 7.5 per cent discount rate, this asset will result in an annual flow of (2420*0.075) Rs. 181 in perpetuity. Given a PPP exchange rate of Rs 20, this asset transfer is equal to a transfer of nine PPP\$ a year or PPP\$ 45 over the five years of Modi 1.0 (since we are looking at poverty reduction from 2014 to 2018). The average consumption level of the 40th percentile in India in 2018 is PPP\$ 3.18 per day or PPP\$ 1160 annually. Hence, the asset-income transfer amounts to approximately an additional 4 per cent of consumption.

One final calculation and then we are done. An increase of 4 per cent in the consumption level of the bottom 40 per cent will result in approximately an additional 2.4 ppt reduction in poverty in 2018. In other words, poverty in India in 2018 was not 41.1 per cent as observed but rather 38.7 per cent (middle income poverty line of 3.2 PPP\$ a day), and this was the third best poverty reduction in the world.

No matter what the calculation, the Indian record on inclusive growth was spectacular during 2014-18; and much better than the good record during 2004-2013. We think this performance (delivery of welfare) was noticed by the poor voter; and why the 2019 election result was not a surprise to us. Chemistry delivered — because it was backed by a solid performance.

Bhalla is contributing editor, The Indian Express. Bhasin is a New Delhi-based policy researcher. Views expressed are personal

WHAT THE OTHERS SAY

"The path of peace in Afghanistan continues to test the patience of all those involved in the task of bringing security to the war-torn country." — DAWN

Slow and steady loses the race

Congress and other Opposition parties are up against a regime whose leaders have a 24x7 commitment to electoral politics. Their time for 2024 starts now



ANIL DHARKER

THE DRAMA around Rahul Gandhi's resignation hides a central fact: The Congress party became a slow, lumbering elephant quite a while ago, and the failure of 2019 shows it's a very slow learner indeed.

Looked at objectively, none of the Gandhis after Indira wanted to be in politics with the sole exception of Sanjay (had he lived, he would have out-Modied Narendra Modi, but that's another matter). Rajiv Gandhi was content being an airline pilot, Sonia being a home maker, Priyanka being a mother and Rahul drifting along doing a bit of everything. All of them answered a "higher call" and became reluctant politicians because the Nehru-Gandhi name was conjoined to the Congress party.

If Rajiv had said no when he was air-dropped into the PM's post, the political trajectory of India would have been different, but that's one of the ifs and buts of history. At the same time, it is easy to forget that after the 1998 elections were won by Atal Bihari Vajpayee's NDA, Congress was in dire straits, and Sonia's entry rejuvenated the party. She refused the prime ministership, which was admirable; she didn't let go the levers of power, which was not.

The ambivalence to a full-fledged career in politics has resulted in a vacillating reluctance to plunge headlong into the hurly-burly of politics. Look at the dates: Rahul's elevation to Congress President was talked about for years but he took up the position only on December 16, 2017, less than 18 months before the 2019 elections. Similarly, the will-she-won't-she question about Priyanka's political entry was a matter of speculation for months, but she was made general secretary of UP East only in February 2019, a mere three months before the general elections.

This Hamletesque equivocation doesn't work in politics. In fact, it induces a soporific attitude to fast-changing circumstances, rather than the pro-active, dynamic action which changing situations demand. Consider the central theme of the recent elections. Narendra Modi — fully aware of the multiple economic failures of his government — made his campaign a presidential-style one and happily positioned it as a Modi versus Rahul Gandhi contest.

The absurdity of this was obvious: Here

was a leader of a party which had won 282 seats in 2014 against someone whose party had just 44. This was a David-Goliath story with a twist — Goliath had all the ammunition. It was necessary to change this narrative as quickly as possible, yet Sonia Gandhi got in touch with leaders of Opposition parties to make the point that Rahul wasn't necessarily the PM candidate as late as May 15. By then, six of the seven voting phases in the country were already over.

Even the perennial Rahul bashers would have to admit that Rahul Gandhi fought the unequal battle against Modi valiantly and courageously, and that each passing day saw him grow in stature. However, to add to his handicap, he wasn't just battling an outsized Modi; he was also battling the "Pappu" image, created and viciously propagated by the BJP's trolling factory. He needed to fight that first, yet his revelatory television interview with NDTV's Ravish Kumar took place only on May 11, when five of seven polling phases were over. A spate of other interviews followed — all open and unscripted — in which Rahul impressed with his frank and thoughtful answers to often difficult questions. But what use were these when they came so very late?

People like Narendra Modi and Amit Shah have no interests outside politics. Whether such a single-minded focus, which excludes all other aspects of human existence, is good for the country is another matter. What their attitude does show is that this 24x7 commitment is essential for electoral success: Politics is not for the dilettante. You can't work for a few months and hope that miracles will happen. "Miracles" are nothing but the result of a long hard slog put in over years and years.

The Modi wave is so strong that it will engulf all in its way unless the other parties get together and form pre-poll alliances. Even thoughtful supporters of the BJP (yes, there are a few) agree that the kind of massive mandate given to Modi is not good for the country: Democracy needs a unified and coherent Opposition to apply the occasional brake and prevent the government in power from going out of control. For this cohesion to happen, the Mayawatis of the world have to give up unrealistic ambitions, the Sheila Dikshits have to go into retirement and the Mamata Banerjees have to dampen their fire with reason and logic. It's a herculean and almost impossible task but it's the leader of the Congress Party (still the biggest Opposition party in parliament), who has to play the facilitator. For the Congress, and for non-BJP parties, 2024 starts now.

Dharker is a writer and columnist

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

TASKS AT HAND

THIS REFERS TO the editorial, 'The new order' (IE, May 31). With Arun Jaitley and Sushma Swaraj unavailable for a place in Narendra Modi's cabinet, a paucity of ministerial level talent, an internal problem of the BJP, has once again come to the fore. The induction of Amit Shah and S Jaishankar in the Union cabinet is more of a necessity than anything else. How the government functions will be the real test of this new order. Right now, let's not jump to any conclusion.

Vijai Pant, Hampur

THIS REFERS TO the editorial, 'The new order' (IE, May 31). After being inducted into Narendra Modi's cabinet and leading his party to phenomenal success, Amit Shah will have to pave the way for someone else to take up the BJP president's job. Whoever is given that responsibility will have to fill very big shoes. One potential replacement is a close confidant of both Modi and Shah. J P Nadda has delivered 61 seats in an intensely fought election in Uttar Pradesh, despite a SP-BSP alliance.

Bal Govind, Noida

TALK, PLEASE

THIS REFERS TO the article, 'Play the long game' (IE, May 31). While the writer asserts that the current government's — "terror and talks can't go together" — suits India's interests, Delhi needs to acknowledge the relation between the elected representatives and military in Pakistan and also take cognisance of the role non-state actors play there. For a stability in South Asia, both countries need to be come to the negotiating table without any baggage.

Aishwarya Shetty, Mumbai

INVEST IN PEOPLE

THIS REFERS TO the article, 'How to use

LETTER OF THE WEEK

TMC's TASKS

THIS REFERS TO the editorial, 'What Didi does' (IE, May 30). After his victory in the General Elections, the Prime Minister said that there are two classes: "Haves" and "Have nots". Both need to be taken care of for development and growth. Mamata Banerjee needs to remember that the protests she led in 2008 paved her way to power in West Bengal and led to the exit of Tata Motors from the Nano Project in West Bengal to Gujarat. The present PM was then the state's Chief Minister. But in the run up to the elections, TMC flaunted the presence of Tatas in West Bengal. Such changes in position does not seem to have done the party any good. The TMC has much to introspect.

Krishan Kumar Chug, New Delhi

In their own ivory towers

The ascendant right liberal is as elitist and parochial as his left counterpart



ASAD ALI

Ek hammam mein tabdil hui hai duniya
sab hi narige haiin, kise dekh ke sharmaaun maini
— Sulaiman Areeb

THERE IS SOMETHING we need to be grateful for to Prime Minister Narendra Modi. No, not the injection of a testosterone-fuelled nationalism that now seems to course through the veins of every patriotic Indian. He has revealed the sanctum sanctorum of the people's personal politics in all its nakedness. Like political predilections. Modi has, thankfully, tripped a switch in our subconscious and ensured we have enough confidence to show the world who we really are as political creatures.

This big reveal has meant the foregrounding of the "right" liberals, ignored first cousins of the "left" liberals. Let's call them RLs and LLs. RLs are tolerant of diverse people and open to political engagements at dinner parties and social media. They don't want to ban things. Most things their celebrated LL cousins do, really. Except, they believe in the might of the right — at least now they do. And now is when they are gloating under the glorious rays of a massive mandate.

However, just as the LLs were, mostly, circumscribed by class privilege, just as the LLs skimmed the surface of issues before form-

ing opinions and outraging on social media, and, just as they often fit an arguably pre-set narrative in their heads to an assortment of facts before them — the RLs too, suffer from this malaise.

The RLs feel the mandate doesn't have much to do with Hindutva. They assert the voters have chosen a man who can make India stronger. Pulwama and Balakot are the new markers of patriotic fervour and those questioning this hate the country. But just over a month ago, more than 150 retired military officers including former chiefs of the army, navy and air force wrote an open letter to the president urging to "take all necessary steps to urgently direct all political parties that they must forthwith desist from using the military, military uniforms or symbols, and any actions by military formations or personnel, for political purposes or to further their political agendas". Do the RLs feel these officers have denuded the idea of India and national security by speaking out? In a report in this publication (IE, January 24), it was revealed how woefully short the IAF will be in the next two years when it comes to squadrons of fighter aircraft. Did the national security enthusiasts outrage then?

Another RL topic is how the mandate reflects a people united in their recognition of a singular identity, as an Indian, negating

caste. This is as facile an argument as the idea of soya "meat" is in biryani. Multiple publications including this one have tried to contextualise how the BJP has been exceptionally efficient in rewiring caste equations. The party's understanding, for instance, in the Hindi heartland and UP in particular, of the OBCs. The Yadavs being a core SP votebank, it focused more in ticket distribution on smaller OBC castes and "Other OBCs", which worked in their favour. Among Dalits, BJP gave tickets to even smaller jaatis. All this isn't nullifying caste currents. It's creating and capitalising on newer eddies in the caste pool to the benefit of the BJP.

The fear that minorities feel is one aspect about which there isn't much the RLs can say with conviction. The violence, they know, will never stop — whether it is Adivasi professor Jeetraj Hansda's arrest or the regulation Muslim/Dalit man being lynched. The only option is to generously apply the palliative of "these are fringe elements". That we still consider ideology-driven goons (of any party) as fringe is indicative of the intransigence of some to look reality in the eye.

A steely resolve to evade reality that strikes a dissonant note with their personal politics unites RLs and LLs. Consider these: A Muslim domestic help in Mumbai says she has enough savings to buy a house in the

suburbs but she'd rather rent one owned by a Hindu. The financial gain acts as incentive for the landlord to ensure "goons" don't come to throw her out because of her religion. If she buys a house, the chances of getting targeted are higher. Another Muslim domestic help who hails from a Saharanpur village in UP says that, in the past women in her village had to wait for certain times of the day to use the toilet, which was some distance away from their homes. Now, because of PM Modi's schemes, she finally has some dignity. The RLs would likely be silent at the former and the LLs would dismiss the latter as a rarity (both verifiable instances).

For both, their leftist and rightist tendencies are incidental, a function of their lived experience. Their concerns display a common lack of acknowledgement of class-caste privilege and they share the same enthusiastic disdain for diametrically opposite viewpoints. One category has simply been at the wheel longer than the other, which now feels compelled to take over and drive in the wrong direction with the same sense of urgency and confidence as the former. A new grammar of political consciousness has to evolve that goes beyond the teflon uniformity of the liberal identity.

asad.ali@expressindia.com





His new Council

There is a clear realignment of power in the second Modi government

His self-assurance boosted by a massive popular mandate, Prime Minister Narendra Modi constituted a 58-member Council of Ministers, with more than 20 fresh faces, on Thursday. In a group far outshone by its leader, analysing individual talent is not easy, and may be irrelevant too. Mr. Modi, characteristically, sees to it that his imprimatur on all executive decisions is unmistakable. Still, the composition of the council throws light on Mr. Modi's thinking. The induction of his long-time lieutenant and BJP president Amit Shah as Home Minister not only fortifies the Prime Minister's authority, it might be the precursor to further changes in the party organisation and the national security architecture. While Mr. Shah's entry into the Cabinet was expected, the surprise induction of former Foreign Secretary S. Jaishankar as the External Affairs Minister is evidently meant to deal with the choppy international waters that rock India's sailing. Mr. Jaishankar has been a close confidant of Mr. Modi. He has his task cut out, as India faces challenges with its most important international partner, the U.S. The spillover effects impact the country's interests in multiple ways, including its objectives of economic and technological advancement. By placing the two confidants in critical Ministries, Mr. Modi appears to loosen the grip of his own office on the government; the effects will be felt by National Security Adviser Ajit Doval if he continues into a second term, as is widely expected. The triumvirate of Mr. Modi, Mr. Shah and Mr. Jaishankar will form the centre of power.

Rajnath Singh as Defence Minister and Nirmala Sitharaman as Finance Minister are next in the pecking order. While the top layer of the Council is infused with fresh talent and is expected to generate new momentum, its representative character is skewed. It has only six women, one less than the previous one; the majority community and the Hindi heartland States have disproportionate representation. While Mr. Modi rewarded the upper caste groups that supported him wholeheartedly, the OBCs and Dalits who shifted to his party significantly in 2019 have had to be content with lower representation, at least for now. There is an argument that it is healthy that Mr. Modi does not bargain with caste, linguistic and region-oriented interests groups. Apna Dal leader Anupriya Patel from Uttar Pradesh was dropped; the Janata Dal (United) from Bihar was offered only one berth, which it refused to accept; and the Shiv Sena wanted at least three but has had to be content with one. As equations change, Mr. Modi might have to rethink these positions and there is scope to expand. A Council more representative in nature, in terms of gender, social and linguistic backgrounds and religion, will better reflect the mosaic that is India.

A second election

Israel goes back to voters within six months in a changing political landscape

When the results of the April elections in Israel were announced, Benjamin Netanyahu, whose Likud party won 35 seats in the 120-member Parliament, was the winner. He was set to form a government with support from right-wing and religious parties to kick off a record term as Prime Minister. But his plans crumbled as the ultra-orthodox Jewish parties and right-wing nationalist Yisrael Beiteinu failed to come on board. When the deadline to form the government expired on May 29, Mr. Netanyahu had the support of 60 lawmakers, one short of majority. For the first time in Israel's history, a Prime Minister-designate failed to form a government, and the country will go to the polls again in September. The issue at stake is a military service bill. The ultra-orthodox Jews, the Haredim, are exempt from mandatory military service. Yisrael Beiteinu leader Avigdor Lieberman, a former Netanyahu aide, has submitted a bill to the Knesset that would enable the government to draft them. Mr. Lieberman, who has five lawmakers, made it a precondition for his support that the bill be passed. On the other side, the orthodox parties, which have 16 legislators, wanted the bill to be amended. Mr. Netanyahu's right-wing religious coalition collapsed before his eyes.

Mr. Netanyahu is a survivor. He will continue to lead the Likud in the September elections and appears better-placed than his rivals to form a coalition government. However, his challenges are rising. The new election will be held around two weeks before his pre-indictment hearing on corruption charges. The allegations have already dented Mr. Netanyahu's image. For decades, he had presented himself as a stronger, better alternative to Israel's old establishment elite. His war rhetoric, strongman policies and appeasement of orthodox Jews all furnished his appeal at a time when the Israeli electorate was steadily moving to the right. But the April election and the subsequent rift within Mr. Netanyahu's coalition suggest that the political landscape may be changing. The Israeli left is no longer Mr. Netanyahu's main political threat. The Labor party won only 4.43% votes and six seats in the April elections, while the Blue and White, a centrist coalition that is as hawkish on national security as the Likud, won 35 seats. The Blue and White didn't stand a chance to form the government this time because it lacked allies. By refusing to back Mr. Netanyahu over the conscription bill, Mr. Lieberman is further trying to weaken this left-right battle and bring into focus secular-versus-religious issues. Mr. Lieberman says he is fighting to prevent Israel becoming a religious state, and by saying so he is attacking Mr. Netanyahu's ties with religious parties. The challenge before Mr. Netanyahu is to fight growing political and legal odds in an election just months away.

The idea of Congress-free India

The party has been the biggest hurdle for those devoted to remaking India into a 'Hindu rashtra' or into a socialist utopia



VARGHESE K. GEORGE

A fashionable school of soundbite intellectualism seeks to reduce the outcome of the election to the 17th Lok Sabha into the success of one individual and the failure of another. Prime Minister Narendra Modi's oratory, marketing, cunning, etc. and the massive funds available to him were factors in his success while Congress president Rahul Gandhi's untrained oratory and ineffective command over the limited human and material resources under him were factors in his defeat. But the Modi-Gandhi binary is ahistorical, as 2019 has been in the making for a century – the advance of Hindutva through meticulous organisation building and ideological training, and a corresponding retreat of the Congress on both counts. The contest between the themes, Mr. Gandhi's 'love all' and Mr. Modi's 'I will hit you at home', could not have been timed worse for the former historically, though this slogan was never an irresistible one. That creed cost Mahatma Gandhi his life; 'death to Gandhi' was a slogan of many Hindu fundamentalists before his assassination in 1948, by one of them.

Not a new leitmotif

'Death to Congress' – or a Congress-free India – is not a new leitmotif in the country's politics, though the idea appears to have acquired a new urgency for some. This call for a Congress-free India comes from diametrically opposite perspectives. For instance, Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) president, and now Union Home Minister,

Amit Shah's call for a Congress-free India is for the advancement of Hindutva, while Swaraj India president Yogendra Yadav wants the Congress dead for the exact opposite reason. Mr. Yadav believes the Congress is the only obstruction in the emergence of an alternative to the BJP, presumably his own party which is now TV studio-based.

This certainly sounds ironical, but is neither surprising nor unprecedented. Those who dreamed of reviving India to its pristine Hindu glory and those who vowed to build India into a utopia – of socialist, anarchist or market varieties – all thought the only force that obstructed them in their pursuit was the Congress. They disliked the Congress, variously, for not being Hindu enough, socialist enough or market-friendly enough. They joined hands in waves of anti-Congress mobilisations on different occasions for several decades. While constituents of anti-Congress coalitions had their legitimate grievances about the dominant party, a streak of self-righteous egotism of leaders also contributed to them. Successful waves of anti-Congress mobilisations progressively weakened the party, and opened political avenues for excluded social groups. But they also contributed to an erosion of public trust in parliamentary democracy, party politics, the rule of law and constitutionalism.

The Navnirman Movement in Gujarat in the early 1970s that attacked MLAs to force their resignations, and on its model the Bihar movement led by Jayaprakash Narayan to force legislators to resign, were attempts to overcome the Congress electoral majority in street fights. The latest among these – and India's first mob agitation raised through social media – was the Anna Hazare movement of



2011 that sought sweeping anti-corruption measures and painted politics and politicians as universally corrupt. The widely held claim of populists all around the world today is that they speak for the authentic people without the institutional mediation of popular will in representative democracy has a history in India. We have rarely witnessed a bottom-up mobilisation against communal and caste violence, and this selective nature of 'people's mobilisation' is also revelatory. At each stage of anti-Congress mobilisation, and electoral alliances in 1967, 1977 and 1989, all individual constituents imagined they were using the others, but it was always the Hindutva groups that came on top. The Anna movement was the prefect precursor to the rise of Mr. Modi in 2014.

A post-2002 binary

So, while it is understandable why Mr. Shah wants a Congress-free India, it is difficult to comprehend why anyone anti-BJP would like the Congress to die. In fact, the 2002 Gujarat riots appeared to bury anti-Congressism among anti-BJP parties forever, as UPA-I took shape on the principle of a valid binary: that the fundamental fault-line of Indian politics is whether India shall remain an inclusive and non-sectarian country or become a Hindu rashtra.

While one call is for the death of

Outlining the first 100 days

There must be a revamp of how government services are delivered, and how India does business



SRIVATSA KRISHNA

A full majority government has been re-elected in India after many years. A young, aspirational India has identified itself with Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his "idea of India". Here is a non-exhaustive agenda for Mr. Modi's first 100 days. India is on the cusp of overtaking the United States to becoming the world's second largest economy, with a consumer spending of \$5.7 trillion, 77% of the population under 44 (80% among the middle class), and a billion Internet users, all by 2030, according to the World Economic Forum.

In mission mode, Mr. Modi needs to expand his "home delivery of services" model (cooking gas, health care, multiple citizens' services) to cover major government services. Separating the "point of decision" of a government service from "point of delivery" will be a necessary condition to get red tape out of the way. Technology as the lifeblood has to flow through every major government programme, especially in agriculture and health care, through the ambitious 'Digital India' programme, which cannot remain a stapled-together version of

the schemes of previous years; it needs to become genuinely transformational. An 'AAA' Government or "Anytime-Anywhere-Anyhow" (or on any device or platform) delivery of services is still far away, which Mr. Modi needs to accelerate in deep collaboration with the private sector.

Loan waivers and input subsidies have not ameliorated rural distress, so the key policy shift is to move away from production to income. Having promised \$85 per small farmer as a direct transfer, he needs to move from an inefficient, ossified cross-sector subsidy regime to an income-support model. This is possible by expanding this to cover all farmers in terms of both value and volume. This unconditional cash transfer should be an electronic transfer (banks, primary agricultural credit societies and post offices, with an area cap) keeping an eye on the fiscal deficit.

Harnessing data

India is emerging as a major 'data economy' with over 800 million mobile phone users, half of whom own a smartphone. India needs to leverage the enormous data it produces and deepen use of an 'India Stack' everywhere. However, India is way behind the U.S. and China in terms of artificial intelligence, data analytics and blockchain. It needs to pump in millions of dollars to make itself future ready, perhaps by first completing the fibre optic pipe that it begun to lay



five years ago. It needs to make it extremely simple for startups to start and die (should they wish to). India received about \$11 billion in venture capital through 748 deals in 2018 (of \$29 billion private equity inflows) but there is much more capital waiting to come if its unicorns and 'soon'icorns (soon to be unicorns) benefit from an easier regulatory framework.

Mr. Modi needs to set up an "India First" Investment Agency directly in his office which should reach out to select 'Fortune 1000' companies to set up shop in India. For example, why shouldn't a Tesla set up its next gigafactory in India if it can be done at half the cost of doing it in Nevada? After a deep dive into their annual reports, he needs to send empowered envoys to attract them for marquee investments (in exchange for assured job creation). Credible incentives must include an exemption from India's notoriously opaque land laws and bureaucratic maze. This should not and must not be outsourced to any Ministry, for only the credibility of the highest office will make investors take such calls

and commitments seriously.

There are 200-odd labour laws that mandate companies with 100 or more workers to get government permission to lay off or even change job descriptions (which never comes). Thus, India does not get the benefits of scale of huge factories with over 75% firms employing less than 50 workers, to escape such regressive laws. There is a golden opportunity to compete with and take business away from Bangladesh (garments), China (toys, electronics and manufacturing) as their wages rise. India can turn attractive by abolishing such restrictive labour laws, which will enhance employment by erasing a key factor that throttles India's global competitiveness.

There are an estimated three million vacancies in government jobs in India and these are often left unfilled to keep the fiscal deficit low. While many of these jobs are redundant for a "New India" in overstuffed sectors such as railways recruitment needs to start now through employment exchanges to buttress the dismal number of doctors, teachers, police officials to keep the ship moving.

Fast tracking privatisation

There must be a start to the privatisation of Air India and the other top 10 public sector entities without the restrictive covenants that discouraged bidders the last time. It should not be a tinkering on the margins with privatisation as has

been the case so far. The bold reclassification of bad loans (of about \$190 billion) to reveal their true picture needs to be followed by recapitalisation, a merging of banks, narrowing down priority-sector lending, and, finally, at least some privatisation. This will stop bleeding coffers and send out a strong signal to the world that the Modi government means business.

Last but not the least, the focus needs to be on execution and delivery. Mr. Modi should set up a delivery unit inside the Prime Minister's Office using modern technology tools (OmniFocus and Slack), for deep monitoring and follow-up, programme-wise and office-wise. The government's relentless focus should be on results and not only on process and effort. This can be the next avatar of the Pro-Active Governance And Timely Implementation (PRAGATI) system.

A surging 1.3 billion-strong "New India" identifies itself with Mr. Modi. Economic super performance should become a causal effect for election victories and the perpetual intellectual and execution gridlock needs to be broken. Mr. Modi has to deliver India victory in its war against poverty, the bureaucracy and every anti-prosperity force that holds it back. Make no mistake. This mandate is for transformational and not incremental change.

Srivatsa Krishna is an IAS officer. The views expressed are personal

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Letters emailed to letters@thehindu.co.in must carry the full postal address and the full name or the name with initials.

Team Modi

Prime Minister Narendra Modi's careful selection of Ministers for the various cabinet portfolios, especially important ones such as Home, Foreign Affairs, Defence and Finance, deserves appreciation. There is no question of favouring the so-called heavyweights in terms of seniority or regional considerations, which were the norms followed earlier. Merit seems to come first in Mr. Modi's scheme of things. I hope that the new Ministers perform well. An interesting portfolio to watch would be Home Affairs and how it aids in federalism, under strain now.

V.S. GANESHAN,
Bengaluru

■ Modi 2.0 appears to be quite similar to Modi 1.0. Distilled to its core, the mandate of 2019 was about an element of faith – a faith in Mr. Modi and his ability to defend the interests of the Indian state and advance the goals of growth, development, national security and stability. Now that the new government has taken charge, he cannot keep harping on national security as there are a host of issues that require immediate attention. The expectations are even higher this time as the National Democratic Alliance has had a stable five-year run, unencumbered by the whims of self-seeking allies. A stable and strong government should be synonymous with peaceful co-existence, with absolutely no space for lynch mobs,

self-styled vigilantes and hate-mongers. To deliver on the expectations of the electorate, Mr. Modi would do well to continue with the discipline he instituted in his last term, but make way for autonomy and transparency.

PADMINI RAGHAVENDRA,
Secunderabad

■ As the Home Minister, Amit Shah should 'do right by all manner of people' without being swayed by any extraneous consideration. He will be watched closely to see how he handles domestic affairs 'without fear or favour and without affection or ill-will'. He must ensure that no one is persecuted in the name of 'internal security'. He has a constitutional and moral obligation to provide protection to India's religious

minorities, which he must fulfil.

G. DAVID MILTON,
Maruthancode, Tamil Nadu

■ With a strong leader, backed by an overwhelming majority, come decisive and bold decisions. This has been clear in the selection of cabinet picks. The selection of a trained foreign service diplomat, not a party man, shows that business will not be usual in New Delhi. The agenda since the first term of Mr. Modi, to raise the global profile of India as a serious player, will be well served with the selection of a former career officer. There is also a balancing act as far as rewarding supporters, as is evident by the picks from Odisha, Telangana and Rajasthan. Domestic, job-oriented growth that

augments India's aspiration to be a global leader will be the task for the new government.

SESHADRI RAMKUMAR,
Lubbock, Texas, U.S.

Laying out priorities

The hard work and determined approach of Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy are what have fetched him rewards in terms of his resounding electoral win in the Andhra Pradesh Assembly polls. Besides these it is also the mistakes and blunders of his

CORRECTIONS & CLARIFICATIONS:

In the front-page story titled "T.N. fails to find a place in Ministry" (May 31, 2019), there was a reference to Atal Bihari Vajpayee becoming Prime Minister for the second time in March 1999. It should have been March 1998.

It is the policy of The Hindu to correct significant errors as soon as possible. Please specify the edition (place of publication), date and page. The Readers' Editor's office can be contacted by Telephone: +91-44-28418297/28576300 (11 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday to Friday); Fax: +91-44-28552963; E-mail: readerseditor@thehindu.co.in; Mail: Readers' Editor, The Hindu, Kasturba Buildings, 859 & 860 Anna Salai, Chennai 600 002, India. All communication must carry the full postal address and telephone number. No personal visits. The Terms of Reference for the Readers' Editor are on www.thehindu.com

Raichur, a thirsty land between two rivers

Northern Karnataka is in the grip of a severe water shortage. As wells dry up, **Serish Nanisetti** reports on the struggle of the people in the region.



Despite being located between two rivers, the Krishna and the Tungabhadra, Raichur is a dust bowl. (Above and below) Braving the heat, villagers go in search of water in Raichur, Karnataka. ■ NAGARA GOPAL

Every morning, Simalamma, 35, and her eight-year-old son, Ganesh, trek half a kilometre from their home in Janakirammagar Camp on the outskirts of Raichur in northern Karnataka in search of water. The land is cracked and the sun is harsh. Their destination is a pond owned by a wealthy farmer, Anil Gouda, who sometimes uses the water to irrigate his fields. Unlike borewell water, which is laced with arsenic, the water from Gouda's pond, though muddy, is free of arsenic.

Raichur is the land that the medieval Persian rulers of the region called Doab. Despite being located between two rivers, the Krishna and the Tungabhadra, it is a dust bowl in the first week of May.

In search of water

"I do this thrice a day," says Simalamma. Ganesh pushes a two-wheeled cart which has space for six empty plastic pots, to the edge of the small fenced pond. His mother walks down to the edge of the pond and fills each pot with about 10 litres of water. Other women from the surrounding area do the same.

The people from the shanty town have to go further afield to get their drinking water when Gouda irrigates his lands. Janakiramnagar Camp has three water tanks, or ponds. Of these, the community of about 150 families that live in this area owns one. The muddy brown water is used for drinking. Sometimes cattle reach the edge of the pond to drink water, and the villagers shoo them away. "We have no choice. If we use the borewell water for cooking, the rice turns brownish yellow. It tastes different. If we have a bath, the water sticks to our hair. This water may look dirty but it is better than the borewell water," says A. Narsappa, a farm hand, while collecting water for domestic use. Multiple studies have found arsenic contamination of groundwater in the region. A study in the *Journal of Neurosciences in Rural Practice* in 2017 even linked the low intelligence quotient of children in the Hutti region of Raichur to groundwater contamination.

However, water was not an election issue during either the Karnataka Assembly election in 2018 or the Lok Sabha election this year. Voter turnout in Raichur was below 60%, perhaps an indication of the indifference of the voters. A week after polling for the general election, not a single poster can be spotted in the town. It appears as if the election fever bypassed the city and its surrounding areas.

“The MLA from Raichur, Shivaraj Patil [who was first with the JD(S) and then joined the BJP], got us the overhead water tank here. In his first term, a foundation stone was laid. In his second term, a tank has been built. Just before these elections, it was painted. By the next Assembly elections we hope the pipes will be connected and we will get water sup-



ply from this tank," says K. Srinivas, a farmer. "Nobody came here for campaigning. We have 750 votes in this area but the candidates didn't want to face us."

Failure of programme

The Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) has tracked the systemic failure of supplying drinking water across the country in its performance audit. Karnataka lost the share of funds it received as part of the National Rural Drinking Water Programme (NRDWP) because of mismanagement and not spending the money allocated to it. The Central government stipulation is that States must maintain two accounts for managing fund disbursement for the various projects under the NRDWP. But between 2010 and 2017, Karnataka was found to be operating 108 accounts. Citing inflated bills and unauthorised parking of funds, the monies were sent back to the Central treasury.

The NRDWP guidelines were modified in 2013 to focus on piped water supply, increasing household tap connections and improving drinking water supply norms. The objective of the programme was to provide safe and adequate water for drinking, cooking and other domestic needs to every rural person on a sustainable basis.

But implementation of the NRDPWP has been disastrous over the past five years. The programme used ₹81,168 crore in five years to improve rural water supply but, according to the CAG audit, only an additional 5.5% rural habitations have been impacted. At the end of five years, 82% of the rural population and 83% of rural households did not have access to the adequate water supply of 55 litres per capita per day as envisaged. At least 15% of rural schools did not have access to safe drinking water. The audit shows failure at every stage of

the programme from planning, fund management, monitoring and grievance redress.

The failure of the NRDWP has also hit the Swachh Bharat Abhiyan. “Only 25% of people who have borewells use toilets at home. All the others go out in the open fields,” says Narsappa. Between 1971 and 2017, Raichur had deficit rainfall. So struggle for water has become a part of the residents’ daily life. In a good year, the area gets 450 mm rain with south-west monsoons. In 46 years, only 18 have been good years.

Wells without water

A hundred years ago, a suspected El Niño event led to one of the biggest famines in the region that killed thousands and displaced lakhs of people. The Nizam of Hyderabad, Mir Osman Ali Khan, drafted a British mining engineer, Leonard Munn, to bring succour to the region. Munn was appointed Special Officer in charge of Well Sinking and Geological Survey Departments. Till his death in 1935, Munn and his staff dug 1,200 wells in Raichur. Munn thought that the hexagonal concrete wells were a cheaper solution than hand-pumps and borewells. Most of these wells, with their six fixed pulley systems, exist till today. "The water from these wells is sweet unlike borewell water. We can draw this water whenever we want. But this is the first time there is no water in the well," says Laxmamma, a villager from Wandali near the Hutti Gold Mines. In Chinchergi, a few kilometres away, another Munn well is still being used. There is water, but not enough to be drawn out. Two women sit near the well washing clothes with water drawn from a tap. The women guide us to another 'Munn sahib bawī'. Only clumps of leaves and stones are at the bottom of the dry well.

In his lifetime Munn became known as 'Saavira Bhavigala Saradara' (master of thousand wells) in the region. Munn's

belief that community wells were better than hand-pumps has helped generations of water hunters. The logic is being followed now too. The Public Works Department in Atanur is building a drinking water tank that is 1,400 ft long and 700 ft wide. "We have dug up to 17 ft. We plan to dig up to 20 ft. This tank will get filled up when water from the Bangarappa reservoir is released through the canal," says Khaja Hussain, who is executing the work on the tank at Atanur on the Raichur-Bagalkot Road. At the centre of the tank is a pulley system which the villagers can use to draw water without contaminating the water body, just as they did with the wells dug by Munn. Villagers stop and watch the progress of the work and chat with the workers while they eat lunch.

Sitting near a shrub that gives no shade, three women, Sivamma, Malamma and Kupamma, open their food bags that contain three paper-thin *bajra* rotis each, a small bowl of boiled string beans and a slice of onion. The women pick stones from the area; they are preparing to grow millets there. They sell the stones and get ₹100 a day. "It's been five months since we have had any work. If a couple has grown-up children, they emigrate to big cities and send money to their families. Since we have small children we have to stay home and find work in the village," says Sivamma of Chinchergu. She says she struggles to get water home before rushing for work as a daily wage labourer every morning.

A few metres ahead, a tractor tills a rolling hillock covered with small stones. The soil is barely visible between the stones. "I am preparing the ground for the monsoon. I am planning to grow millets here. Last year there was no rain. But this year, I am expecting a better crop," says Erramma. Tilling a rocky terrain for a single crop of millets is possible for her as her son lives and works in Bengaluru and sends money home.



The man who built countless wells

Lingsugur is a small village between Raichur and Bagalkot. A plaque on a small building on the main road of the village reads, 'Captain Leonard Munn Memorial Hall'. Behind it is a British-era cemetery where Munn is buried under a flat pink granite with an inscription that reads: "April 1928 to October 1935, Director Geological Survey and Special Officer Well Sinking Department. He and his staff sank or remodelled more than 1,200 wells in the Famine Zone of this Rai-

chur District where his name is a household word. Blessed is the man who passing through the valley of weeping make it a well". The inscription records that Munn passed away on October 21, 1935. The area known as the Christian cemetery is mostly unknown to outsiders. But the countless wells that dot the region keep alive the name of the man who was born in Madresfield, Worcestershire, in 1878 and came to finally rest on dry, dusty land.

It doesn't help that the quality of soil is rated poor in the district. "We issue a soil health survey card which shows what agricultural inputs are needed for a good crop. All the key minerals like nitrogen, phosphorus, potassium and iron are low in this region. A good crop can be harvested only if agricultural inputs like fertilizers are used on a big scale and the monsoon is normal," says Rahman, a scientist at the Soil Research Centre in Raichur. The borewell water is of limited use for agricultural purposes as the groundwater is 'moderately alkaline'. "This is a land of two rivers but there is no water. This has been the case from my childhood," says Laxmanna Gouda, a farmer and an agricultural activist from Raichur.

In 1993, the Karnataka government took up work on the Ganekal balancing reservoir (locals call it the Bangarappa tank) on the Tungabhadra left bank canal. The 0.75 TMC reservoir was a lifeline for the residents of Lingsugur and Raichur during drought years. Water from the reservoir is released every two days through canals to fill small water ponds used for drinking purposes.

Gouda pins hope on the proposed national river-linking project to help make a living out of his 13-acre land. "When all the rivers are linked there will be no water shortage in the country. Now a lot of water flows into the sea while farmers are left high and dry. We have become single crop farmers. My grandfather used to tell us how they used to grow two crops. But due to mismanagement of water, we have been reduced to this state," says Gouda. On a smaller scale, there is a project to link the Gugal barrage on the Krishna river with the Bangarappa tank on the Tungabhadra river. This will supply water to 120 villages. "Yes, there is a plan to link the two water bodies. We have done a preliminary survey but work is yet to begin as clearances have to be secured," says an executive engineer of Krishna Bhagya Jala Nigam Limited, which manages the water resource.

“Raichur and other areas of Karnataka have many traditional systems of wa-

ter harvesting and storage which replenish the water table. Big water projects are unsustainable. Before a river-linking project is planned, we need to think about the people and the potential of the rivers. Both the Krishna and the Tungabhadra are non-perennial rain-fed systems that emerge out of the Western Ghats. There is no way to assess the water supply or find out when there will be extra supply," says V.G. Govindankutty, a geographer who has studied water bodies and their use in the region. He says only community water management can help the villagers. Munn too favoured a community-based approach to solve the water crisis in Raichur. He calculated that one well is sufficient for 500 people and one pulley for 100 people. But his proposal has few takers in the age of big multi-crore projects.

A subject of conflict

Linking the water bodies is easier said than done as the Krishna river water has been a subject of conflict among the four States through which it passes. Starting as a small stream in the upper reaches of the Western Ghats in Mahabaleshwar, the river flows through Maharashtra, Karnataka, Telangana and into the Bay of Bengal through Andhra Pradesh. It traverses a journey of about 1,400 km. In Karnataka, it flows for about 480 km before entering Telangana. Almatti is one of the biggest dams on the river with a gross storage capacity of 123.08 TMC. Only after water is released from this dam does it reach the Naryanpur project. A hundred kilometres downstream is the Gugal barrage in Raichur, and then it travels another 20 km to Girjapur, before reaching the Jurala project in Telangana. The parched land soaks up the water. And then there are a series of dams and reservoirs that hold the key to water security to the region. But they are also potential triggers for water wars as the lower riparian States get inadequate flows.

As its thirst remains unquenched, Raichur may well be the battleground for water wars in the region.

बिज़नेस स्टैंडर्ड

वर्ष 12 अंक 90

तमाम आर्थिक चुनौतियां

राजधानी नई दिल्ली के जानकार लोगों के बीच एक चर्चा यह रही है कि प्रधानमंत्री नरेंद्र मोदी का दूसरा कार्यकाल पहले से अलग होगा। पिछले पांच वर्ष उन्होंने अपनी और भारतीय जनता पार्टी की स्थिति मजबूत करने में खपाए। कहा जा रहा है कि अब वह अर्थव्यवस्था पर ध्यान केंद्रित करेंगे। यह भी कहा जा रहा है कि अब वह ऐसे कदम उठाने को तैयार हैं जो वह पांच साल पहले करने को तैयार नहीं थे। निश्चित तौर पर अर्थव्यवस्था को नए सिरे से गति चाहिए।

तिमाही आर्थिक वृद्धि गिरकर 6 फीसदी से नीचे आ चुकी है और पांच साल के निचले स्तर पर है। पूरे वर्ष की वृद्धि का हाल भी वही है जहां से मोदी सरकार ने शुरुआत की थी। पाठकों को याद होगा कि शुरुआत में दो अंकों में वृद्धि हासिल करने की बात कही गई थी। हकीकत उससे कोसों दूर है। भारत सबसे तेज बढ़ती बड़ी अर्थव्यवस्था का तमगा गंवा चुका है और चीन उससे आगे हो गया है।

मैंने दो सप्ताह पहले भी इस स्तंभ में

लिखा था कि यह बहुमुखी चुनौती है। कृषि, विनिर्माण और निर्यात के क्षेत्र में तमाम चुनौतियां सामने हैं। राजकोषीय और मौद्रिक नीति अलग समस्या है। दोनों ही जगह गुंजाइश बहुत सीमित है। व्यापक दलील यह हो सकती है कि पहले दौर के आर्थिक सुधारों ने जो गति प्रदान की थी, वह 15 वर्ष की निष्क्रियता के कारण गंवा दी गई। अब एक नई लहर की आवश्यकता है। क्या सरकार ऐसा कर पाएगी?

बदलाव की शुरुआत मोदी से ही करनी होगी। अब तक उन्होंने वृहद आर्थिक मुद्दों में कोई खास रुचि नहीं दिखाई है। उन्होंने परियोजनाओं और कार्यक्रमों के प्रभावी क्रियान्वयन में अधिक रुचि ली है। चुनाव नतीजे बताते हैं कि वह इसमें सफल रहे हैं। अब यह अनदेखी जारी नहीं रह सकती। प्रधानमंत्री को अपने समक्ष मौजूद प्रमुख नीतिगत कारकों की समझ पैदा करनी होगी।

इसमें रुपये के बाह्य मूल्य को लेकर सरकार का रुख और देश के निर्यात को अधिक प्रतिस्पर्धी बनाने में इसकी उपयोगिता भी शामिल है। शुरुआत करें तो रुपये की मजबूती की मान्यता को त्यागना होगा।

बैंक और कंपनियां अब तक जिस तरह का वित्तीय कुप्रबंधन कर रहे हैं, उसे देखते हुए कहा जा सकता है कि बेहतर वृद्धि हासिल करना बहुत मुश्किल है। यह ऐसा दौर है जब ढेर सारे कारोबारी नए निवेश पर विचार करने के लिए पुराने कर्ज को कम करने में व्यस्त हैं और उपभोक्ता ईएमआई पर केंद्रित हैं। सरकारें मौजूदा बचत का काफी हिस्सा खपा रही हैं और बाजार की ब्याज दरों को गिरने से रोक रही हैं। इसका असर नकदी की आवक और भविष्य के निवेश पर हो रहा है। बीते वर्ष कर राजस्व लक्ष्य से पीछे रह गया, उसे

गति देने की आवश्यकता है। मंदी के दौर में यह कैसे होगा?

संक्षेप में कहें तो बतौर नई वित्त मंत्री निर्मला सीतारमण और विदेश व्यापार और उद्योग मामलों के प्रभारी पीयूष गोयल के समक्ष काफी कुछ करने को है। दोनों को जल्द से जल्द अपना एजेंडा लागू करना होगा। इसके साथ ही मध्यम अवधि के नीतिगत लक्ष्य

तय करने होंगे ताकि पूंजी का किफायती इस्तेमाल हो सके, श्रम बाजार को अधिक लचीला बनाया जा सके और बुनियादी ढांचा ऐसा हो जो उद्योग और व्यापार को प्रभावी सहयोग दे सके। इसके लिए व्यवस्थित सोच अपनाने की जरूरत है।

सुर्खियों में आने के लिए तात्कालिक कदम उठाने की प्रवृत्ति पर अंकुश लगाना होगा। वित्त मंत्री वस्तु एवं सेवा कर दरो

को तार्किक बनाने और उनकी तादाद कम करने से शुरुआत कर सकती हैं। भारतीय रिजर्व बैंक को नीतिगत दरों में कटौती कर सहयोग करना चाहिए। विनिवेश को गति देने की जरूरत है, इसकी शुरुआत एयर इंडिया से हो सकती है। परंतु अगर इस दिशा में गंभीरता से आगे बढ़ना है तो यह सवाल लाजिमी तौर पर उठेगा कि खरीदार कहां हैं? क्या इसमें तथा अन्य क्षेत्रों में विदेशी खरीदारों का दायरा व्यापक किया जाना चाहिए?

इन सब बातों के अलावा कृषि, जल संबंधी अर्थव्यवस्था तथा शिक्षा की गुणवत्ता सुधारने जैसे मसलों का क्या जो हमारे समक्ष मुह बाये खड़े हैं? ये तीनों मंत्रालय नए मंत्रियों के हाथ में हैं। ऐसे में यह सवाल कहां रहेगा कि आखिर उनका अन्य क्षेत्रों में रहेगा? जैसा कि एक सज्जन कहते रहे हैं, देश यह जानना चाहता है।



विनय सिन्हा

देश की नौसैन्य क्षमता के आकलन का वक़्त

हिंद महासागर एवं एशिया-प्रशांत क्षेत्र में अपने व्यापक हितों को देखते हुए भारत को अपनी नौसैनिक क्षमता की नए सिरे से समीक्षा करने की जरूरत है। बता रहे हैं प्रेमवीर दास

चीन के छिंग ताओ बंदरगाह पर

चीनी नौसेना की मेजबानी में आयोजित इंटरनैशनल फ्लीट रिव्यू को लेकर पिछले दिनों काफी कुछ लिखा जा चुका है। इसमें भारतीय नौसेना के दो जहाजों ने भी शिरकत की। इसी तरह अगले कुछ दिनों में भारतीय एवं फ्रांसीसी नौसेनाएं भारत के पश्चिमी तट पर संयुक्त अभ्यास ‘वरुणा’ में हिस्सा लेंगी। बहुत लोगों का मानना है कि ऐसे संपर्क महज दिखावा होते हैं जबकि कुछ लोगों की नजर में ऐसे अभ्यासों की अहमियत कहीं ज्यादा होती है। सच्चाई इन दोनों नजरियों के कहीं बीच में है।

असल में, इन आयोजनों के दौरान समारोह और परेड जैसे कार्यक्रम होते हैं लेकिन इन सबके केंद्र में यह होता है कि शिरकत कर रहे मेहमान नौसैनिक अधिकारी मेजबान के साथ अच्छे ताल्लुक बनाएं। इस तरह इन सैन्य अभ्यासों के साथ कूटनीति का भी पहलू जुड़ा होता है। इंटरनैशनल फ्लीट रिव्यू का एक संदेश और उद्देश्य होता है। फ्लीट रिव्यू के जरिये मेजबान नौसेना की ताकत का प्रदर्शन करना तो सरलीकरण है। दुनिया इसके बारे में पहले से ही जानती है और ताकत का

प्रदर्शन करने की जरूरत नहीं होती है।

फिर संयुक्त अभ्यास का सवाल आता है। ऐसा ही एक संयुक्त अभ्यास अगले महीने होने वाला है। भारत और फ्रांस दोनों ही हिंद महासागर क्षेत्र की बड़ी नौसैनिक ताकत हैं और इस क्षेत्र में उनके हित एक-दूसरे से जुड़े हुए हैं। अमेरिका, रूस, ब्रिटेन, ऑस्ट्रेलिया, जापान और सिंगापुर के साथ भारत के संयुक्त सैन्य अभ्यासों में ये सेनाएं नियमित तौर पर शिरकत करती हैं। इन अभ्यासों से समुद्री सेनाओं के बीच पेशेवर संपर्क बनता है और हमें अपनी गतिविधियों की समीक्षा का भी मौक़ा मिलता है। लेकिन उससे भी अहम यह है कि इससे दूसरे देशों को यह संदेश दिया जाता है कि आपसी सामरिक समुद्री हितों से द्विपक्षीय संपर्क बढ़ता है। पासेक्स किस्म कम सारगर्भित होता है लेकिन फिर भी उनकी अहमियत होती है। ये सभी बुनियादी तौर पर एक कूटनीतिक सहक्रिया की उपज होते हैं।

इंटरनैशनल फ्लीट रिव्यू और संयुक्त अभ्यासों को इसी संदर्भ में देखा जाना चाहिए। वे नौसैनिक पोतों का सम्मिलन या समारोहपूर्ण आयोजन भर नहीं होते हैं बल्कि यह प्रदर्शन होता है कि भागीदार देश मेजबान देश के साथ किस तरह संपर्क करना चाहते हैं? विदेश नीति और उससे उपजी कूटनीति देशों को प्रेरित करती है और इन अभ्यासों में शामिल होकर ये देश अपने समुद्री हितों को सुरक्षित एवं संरक्षित करने की कोशिश करते हैं। इस लक्ष्य को पूरा करने में केवल नौसेनाएं ही सक्षम होती हैं और इसीलिए विदेश नीति के लक्ष्यों के हिसाब से ऐसे आयोजन अंतरराष्ट्रीय संबंधों के मुताबिक तय किए जाते हैं।

यह तथ्य हमें भारत के अपने समुद्री हितों और दूसरे देशों के साथ संपर्क के तरीकों तक पहुंचाता है। भले ही भारत हिंद महासागरीय क्षेत्र की एक बड़ी क्षेत्रीय शक्ति है लेकिन इसके हित हिंद-प्रशांत रंगमंच तक फैले हुए हैं। इसकी वजह यह है कि भारत का आधे से भी अधिक व्यापार इस समुद्री मार्ग से ही होता है। इसके निर्विघ्न संचालन के लिए ही भारत ने दक्षिण और पूर्वी चीन सागर में अपने

अभ्यासों को इसी संदर्भ में देखा जाना चाहिए। वे नौसैनिक पोतों का सम्मिलन या समारोहपूर्ण आयोजन भर नहीं होते हैं बल्कि यह प्रदर्शन होता है कि भागीदार देश मेजबान देश के साथ किस तरह संपर्क करना चाहते हैं? विदेश नीति और उससे उपजी कूटनीति देशों को प्रेरित करती है और इन अभ्यासों में शामिल होकर ये देश अपने समुद्री हितों को सुरक्षित एवं संरक्षित करने की कोशिश करते हैं। इस लक्ष्य को पूरा करने में केवल नौसेनाएं ही सक्षम होती हैं और इसीलिए विदेश नीति के लक्ष्यों के हिसाब से ऐसे आयोजन अंतरराष्ट्रीय संबंधों के मुताबिक तय किए जाएँ। हमारा मौजूदा रुख गत छह दशकों में बनी धारणाओं को थोड़े-बहुत बदलावों के साथ जारी रखने से अधिक कुछ नहीं है। हमें अपने राष्ट्रीय सुरक्षा हितों और उसके हिसाब से अपनी सैन्य शक्ति के बारे में एक समग्र एवं ‘दे नोवो’ (नए सिरे से) आकलन की जरूरत है।

(लेखक राष्ट्रीय सुरक्षा सलाहकार बोर्ड के सदस्य रहे हैं। वह नौसेना की पूर्वी कमान के प्रमुख रह चुके हैं)

भारत के अतीत उतार-चढ़ाव वाला रहा है। वह एसडीएफ के संस्थापक सदस्य थे। एक बार के सिवाय वह चामलिंग की हर सरकार में शामिल रहे। बाद में एसडीएफ में भ्रष्टाचार और भाई-भतीजावाद का आरोप लगाते हुए उन्होंने अलग पार्टी बना ली। सन 2009 में चामलिंग को सिक्किम में सभी 32 विधानसभा सीटों पर जीत मिली लेकिन 2014 में उन्हें 10 सीट एसकेएम के हाथ गंवानी पड़ी और उनकी पार्टी के पास 22 सीट रह गई। शायद उन्हें अंदाज़ा हो गया था कि हालात बिगड़ने वाले हैं। क्योंकि गोले के पार्टी बनाने के तुरंत बाद राज्य सरकार के सतर्कता विभाग ने संभवतः चामलिंग के निर्देश पर सरकारी धन के दुरुपयोग के मामले की जांच शुरू की। यह मामला 9.5 लाख रुपये के फंड का था जो राज्य सरकार की एक योजना के तहत लाभार्थियों को गाय देने के लिए आवंटित थे। यह जांच वर्ष 2010 की है। आरोपपत्र के बाद मामला अदालत में गया और उन्हें जुर्माने और जेल की सज़ा का सामना करना पड़ा। भ्रष्टाचार के मामले में दोषी सिद्ध होने के बाद भी उनको दोबारा चुनाव लड़ने दिया गया जो अपने आप में रहस्यमय है। इतना ही नहीं 2018 में जब वह जेल से बाहर आए तो उनका किसी नायक की तरह स्वागत किया गया। ऐसा स्वागत आमतौर पर राजनीतिक बंदियों का होता है। सिक्किम विधानसभा में उनकी पार्टी को महज दो सीट का बहुमत है।

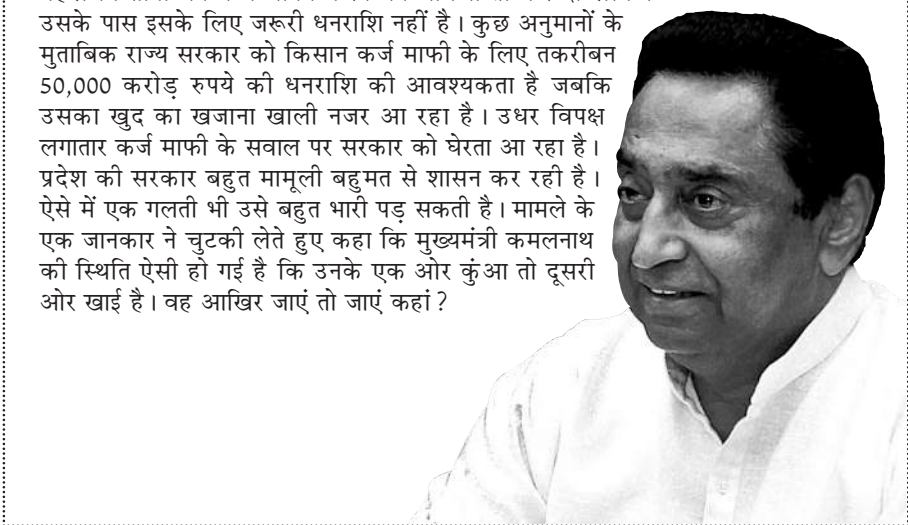
सिक्किम का इतिहास जटिल है और कई बार यह कहना

इसलिए क्योंकि वह नेपाली बोलने वाले हैं) कि सिक्किम के मूल लेप्चा लोगों पर तिब्बत की भूटिया जनजाति तीन सदियों तक कायम रही। उसने अलग की व्यवस्था थोपी और लिंबू और तमांग जैसी अन्य जनजातियों को समान अधिकार नहीं दिए। चामलिंग के मुताबिक स्थानीय शासक के विरुद्ध विद्रोह दरअसल एक क्रांति थी जिसने दमनकारी काजी शासन को उखाड़ फेंका। एक बार मुख्यमंत्री बनेने के बाद चामलिंग को लगा कि उनको अपना जनाधार बनाना होगा। उन्होंने राज्य की नेपाली बोलने वाली आबादी में लिंबू और तमांग जैसी जातियों के लिए आरक्षण बढ़ाने की लड़ाई लड़ी। सिक्किम में 20 फीसदी आबादी भूटिया-लेप्चा है जबकि 40 फीसदी अन्य पिछड़ा वर्ग। लिंबू, राय और तमांग कुल आबादी का करीब 20 फीसदी हैं। जब उनको आरक्षण के दायरे में शामिल किया गया तो वे स्वाभाविक तौर पर चामलिंग के मतदाता बन गए। पीएस गोले तमांग हैं। उन्होंने भ्रष्टाचार और भाई-भतीजावाद तथा प्रशासनिक नاکामी के मुद्दे पर चामलिंग को चुनौती दी। ऐसे में वही जाति चामलिंग के खिलाफ हो गई जिसे वह सशक्त बना रहे थे।

कानाफूसी

इधर कुआं, उधर खाई

मध्य प्रदेश में कांग्रेस के नेतृत्व वाली प्रदेश सरकार वर्ष 2019-20 का बजट बनाने में लगी हुई है। बजट निर्माण की प्रक्रिया उतनी सहज नहीं है जितनी कि वह नजर आ रही थी। कारण एकदम स्पष्ट है। जानकारी मिल रही है कि राज्य सरकार ने गत वर्ष हुए विधानसभा चुनाव के पहले किसानों की कर्ज माफी करने की घोषणा तो कर दी लेकिन उसके पास इसके लिए जरूरी धनराशि नहीं है। कुछ अनुमानों के मुताबिक राज्य सरकार को किसान कर्ज माफी के लिए तकरीबन 50,000 करोड़ रुपये की धनराशि की आवश्यकता है जबकि उसका खुद का खजाना खाली नजर आ रहा है। उधर विपक्ष लगातार कर्ज माफी के सवाल पर सरकार को घेरता आ रहा है। प्रदेश की सरकार बहुत मामूली बहुमत से शासन कर रही है। ऐसे में एक गलती भी उसे बहुत भारी पड़ सकती है। मामले के एक जानकार ने चुटकी लेते हुए कहा कि मुख्यमंत्री कमलनाथ की स्थिति ऐसी हो गई है कि उनके एक ओर कुंआ तो दूसरी ओर खाई है। वह आखिर जाएं तो जाएं कहां?



आपका पक्ष

भारत में हीट एक्शन प्लान का प्रयोग

विश्व में ग्लोबल वॉर्मिंग के बढ़ते असर को देखते हुए भारत सरकार ने एक अनूठी पहल की है। गर्मियों के समय में एयर कंडीशनर (एसी) से निकलने वाली गर्म हवा के कारण तापमान में वृद्धि होती है। वर्ष 2100 तक एसी के उपयोग से 0.5 डिग्री तापमान की वृद्धि होगी। एक स्वास्थ्य संगठन की रिपोर्ट के अनुसार वर्ष 2050 तक गर्म हवा की चपेट से सालाना 2,55,000 लोगों की मौत हो सकती है। विश्व में सिर्फ भारत ने इंडियन कूलिंग एक्शन प्लान नामक एक राष्ट्रीय नीति का प्रारूप तैयार किया है। इससे एसी से निकलने वाली गर्म हवा के प्रकोप से वातावरण को सुरक्षित किया जा सकता है। अहमदाबाद समूचे दक्षिण एशियाई देशों में पहला



ऐसा शहर बना जिसने इसके प्रभाव से निपटने के लिए हीट एक्शन प्लान बनाया। इस योजना को भारत के अन्य 17 शहरों और 11 राज्यों में धरातल पर लाने की कोशिश की जा रही है। फिलहाल भारत में 7 प्रतिशत प्रतिशत लोग अपने घरों में एसी इस्तेमाल करते

भारत ने इंडियन कूलिंग एक्शन प्लान नामक एक राष्ट्रीय नीति का प्रारूप तैयार किया है

हैं। विकसित देशों अमेरिका और जापान में 90 प्रतिशत लोग एसी का उपयोग करते हैं। भारत

पाठक अपनी राय हमें इस पते पर भेज सकते हैं : संपादक, बिजनेस स्टैंडर्ड लिमिटेड, 4, बहादुर शाह जफर मार्ग, नई दिल्ली - 110002. आप हमें ईमेल भी कर सकते हैं : lettershindi@bmail.in
उस जगह का उल्लेख अवश्य करें, जहां से आप ईमेल कर रहे हैं।



दैनिक जागरण

जीवन में महत्वपूर्ण सिर्फ़ इरादा होता है

मोदी के मंत्री

मोदी सरकार की वापसी के बाद जिज्ञासा केवल यही नहीं थी कि इस बार किसे मंत्रिपरिषद में जगह मिलती है, बल्कि यह भी थी कि किसे कौन सा मंत्रालय मिलता है? इन दोनों सवालों का जवाब सामने आ गया है और सरकार में शामिल हुए भाजपा अध्यक्ष अमित शाह ने जहां गुहमंत्री की जिम्मेदारी संभाली वहीं निर्मला सीतारमण ने वित्त मंत्रालय की। अमित शाह ने भाजपा अध्यक्ष के तौर पर जो कुछ हासिल किया वह एक मिसाल है। अब उनसे यही उम्मीद की जाती है कि गुहमंत्री के रूप में भी वह विभिन्न चुनौतियों का सामना करते हुए मिसाल कायम करेंगे। निर्मला सीतारमण रक्षा मंत्री बनने वाली पहली महिला थीं। अब वह वित्त मंत्रालय संभालने वाली पहली महिला भी बन गई हैं। चूंकि वह आर्थिक मामलों की अच्छी जानकार हैं इसलिए वित्त मंत्री के रूप में उनका चयन उपयुक्त फैसला है। ऐसा ही फैसला विदेश सचिव रहे एस जयशंकर को विदेश मंत्री बनाने का भी है। उनके शपथ लेते ही जहां यह स्पष्ट हो गया था कि वह अगले विदेश मंत्री बनने जा रहे हैं वहीं यह भी कि प्रधानमंत्री विदेश नीति को पहले जैसा ही महत्व देने वाले हैं। राजदूतों के तौर पर अमेरिका और चीन में काम कर चुके जयशंकर सुषमा स्वराज की जगह लेंगे जिन्होंने एक छाप छोड़ी है। वह छाप इतनी गहरी है कि विदेश मंत्रालय ही नहीं, देश भी उनकी कमी महसूस करेगा। उन्हें इसके लिए जाना जाएगा कि उन्होंने अपने नेतृत्व में विदेश मंत्रालय को आम आदमी से जोड़ा। मंत्रिपरिषद को सुषमा स्वराज की तरह ही अरुण जेटली की भी कमी महसूस होगी, जिन्होंने सेहत के चलते सरकार से दूर रहने का फैसला लिया। उन्होंने नोटबंदी के साथ ही देश के कर ढांचे की तस्वीर बदलने वाले जीएसटी को ही लागू नहीं करया, बल्कि हर मुश्किल वक्त पार्टी और सरकार के लिए ढाल की बन।

मंत्रियों के चयन और विभागों के बंटवारे से यह साफ है कि प्रधानमंत्री ने एक ओर जहां नेताओं की क्षमता को महत्व दिया है वहीं निरंतरता का भी ध्यान रखा और शायद इसीलिए आंतरिक सुरक्षा की चुनौतियों से भली तरह परिचित राजनाथ सिंह को रक्षा मंत्रालय की जिम्मेदारी सौंपी गई। इसी तरह बेहतर काम कर दिखाने वाले नितिन गडकरी के पास परिवहन एवं राजमार्ग मंत्रालय तो है ही, उन्हें सूक्ष्म, लघु एवं मध्यम उद्योग मंत्रालय की भी जिम्मेदारी दी गई है। इसके प्रति सुनिश्चित हुआ जा सकता है कि वह इन उद्योगों की समस्याओं का समाधान करने में सक्षम होंगे। चूंकि उनके कुशल प्रशासक होने में किसी को संदेह नहीं इसलिए एक बार फिर उनसे बेहतर नतीजे देने की उम्मीद की जाती है। ऐसी ही उम्मीद अन्य मंत्रियों से भी की जाती है-इसलिए और भी, क्योंकि मोदी सरकार से लोगों की अपेक्षाएं और बढ़ गई हैं। अनुभवी नेताओं को महत्वपूर्ण मंत्रालय दिए जाने और नए चेहरों को मंत्री बनाए जाने से मंत्रिपरिषद को जरूरी ऊर्जा और गति मिलनी चाहिए। नए मंत्रियों की क्षमता का आकलन तो उनके कामकाज से ही होगा, लेकिन यह उल्लेखनीय है कि प्रधानमंत्री ने उन्हें मंत्रिपरिषद में स्थान देकर यह संदेश भी दिया कि भाजपा नए और काबिल लोगों को मौके देने वाली पार्टी है।

जय श्रीराम और ममता

लोकसभा चुनाव समाप्त हो चुका है, पर बंगाल में ऐसा लग रहा है कि चुनाव जारी है और तृणमूल प्रमुख एवं मुख्यमंत्री ममता बनर्जी अब भी चुनावी मोड़ में हैं। चार मई को पश्चिम मेदिनीपुर जिले के चंद्रकोण में जय ममता का काफिला गुजर रहा था तो कुछ लोगों ने जय श्रीराम के नारे लगा दिए। फिर क्या था ममता ने काफिला रुकवा कर नारा लगाने वालों को भला-बुरा कह ही साथ ही कुछ लोगों की गिरफ्तारी भी हो गई थी। हालांकि पुलिस ने गिरफ्तारी से इन्कार किया था। इसे लेकर ममता की देशभर में काफी आलोचना हुई थी। इस मुद्दे को लोकसभा चुनाव में प्रधानमंत्री नरेंद्र मोदी से लेकर भाजपा अध्यक्ष अमित शाह ने जमकर उछाला था। लगा कि अब इस मुद्दे पर राजनीति नहीं होगी, परंतु गुरुवार को जिस तरह से ममता ने उत्तर 24 परगना जिले के भाटपाड़ा विधानसभा क्षेत्र में जय श्रीराम के नारे लगाने के बाद रिपक्ट किया है उस मुद्दे को फिर से हवा मिल गई है।

जय श्रीराम का नारा लगाने वालों को गुरुवार को गाड़ी से उतरकर मुख्यमंत्री ने अपराधी कहते हुए चमड़ा खींच लेने की धमकी दी थी। मुख्यमंत्री की धमकी के बावजूद लोग डरे नहीं और जय श्रीराम का नारा लगाते रहे। ममता का काफिला गुजरने के बाद पुलिस हरकत में आई और नारेबाजी का वीडियो देखकर लोगों की पहचान करने के बाद रात में दबिश दे दी। पकड़ने के बावजूद पुलिस उन लोगों की गिरफ्तारी नहीं दिखा रही है। पुलिस अधिकारी असमंजस में हैं कि जय श्रीराम बोलने पर कौन सी धारा लगेगी, परंतु यहां सवाल यह उठ रहा है कि आखिर मुख्यमंत्री ममता बनर्जी जय श्रीराम के नारे से इतनी चिढ़ क्यों रही है? उन्होंने जिस तरह से जय श्रीराम बोलने वालों के खिलाफ प्रतिक्रिया देती दिख रही हैं उससे लोग भी अवाक हैं। जय श्रीराम को कभी गाली बोल रही हैं तो कभी बोलने वाले को अपराधी बता रही हैं। यह दूसरी बार ऐसी घटना हुई है। क्या एक सीएम को इस तरह संरेआम सड़क पर लोगों को धमकी देना सही है? इस पर उन्हें सोचने की जरूरत है।

कोई बीमारी नहीं है समलैंगिकता

सुनीता मिश्रा

हाल ही में देश की महिला धावक दुती चंद ने एक बड़ा खुलासा किया, जिसे सुनने के बाद सभी चौंक गए हैं। दरअसल उन्होंने कहा कि वह समलैंगिक हैं और पिछले कई सालों से इस रिश्ते में रह रही हैं। दरअसल ब्लैकमेलिंग से तंग आकर उन्हें अपने रिश्ते को सार्वजनिक करने के लिए मजबूर होना पड़ा है, क्योंकि उनकी बहन उन्हें ब्लैकमेल कर रही थी। वह इस बात को छिपाने के लिए उनसे 25 लाख रुपये मांग रही थी।

खैर! महिला खिलाड़ी ने अपनी बहन की धमकियों से तंग आकर अपने रिश्ते को सार्वजनिक तौर पर कबूल कर लिया है। वह चाहती तो पहले ही इस बात को समाज के सामने कबूल करती थीं, लेकिन उन्होंने ऐसा नहीं किया, क्योंकि आज भी हमारा समाज इस रिश्ते को उचित नहीं मानता है। उसके अनुसार समलैंगिक होना एक बीमारी है और ऐसे लोग समाज के लिए खतरा हैं। समलैंगिक वह व्यक्ति होता है जो समान सेक्स या लिंग के प्रति अकर्षित होता है। विषमलैंगिक लोगों से उनकी जीवनशैली अलग होती है। उनकी

जैसे हर व्यक्ति का रंग, रूप समान नहीं होता, उसी प्रकार सभी विषमलैंगिक हों यह भी जरूरी नहीं है

जेनेटिक संरचना भी भिन्न होती है। समलैंगिकता प्राकृतिक है। जैसे हर व्यक्ति का रंग, रूप समान नहीं होता, उसी प्रकार सभी विषमलैंगिक हों यह भी जरूरी नहीं है।

पिछले साल सुप्रीम कोर्ट ने भारत में समलैंगिकता को अपराध की श्रेणी से बाहर करते हुए धारा 377 को मनमाना और अतांकिक बताते हुए असंवैधानिक करार दिया था। कुछ देशों में इन्हें कानूनी मान्यता दे दी गई है, लेकिन आज भी वहां सामाजिक हालात में कोई खास सुधार देखने को नहीं मिलता है। आधुनिक समय में भी ऐसे लोगों को समाज घृणा दृष्टि की से देखाता है। फरवरी 2019 में 'सिनेमाघरों में सोनम कपूर अभिनीत फिल्म 'एक लड़की को देखा तो ऐसा लगा' रिलीज हुई थी। फिल्म में उन्हें समलैंगिक दिखाया गया था। फिल्में समाज का आईना होती हैं, इसके माध्यम से समलैंगिक



डॉ. विजय राणा

मोदी के लिए यह सिंगापुर की कायापलट करने वाले ली-क्वान-यू पड़ाव है, अब उन्हें भी भारतीय लोकतंत्र को योग्यतंत्र में बदलना होगा

वर्ष 2019 के जनादेश से हमें दो संदेश मिलते हैं। एक तो यह कि तमाम विविधताओं के बावजूद जब भारत के नागरिकों के सामने अपने भविष्य की दिशा तय करने की चुनौती आती है तो वे एक राष्ट्रीय सहमति का निर्माण करने में सक्षम होते हैं। हम बुद्धिजीवी और पत्रकार दिशाभ्रम के शिकार हो सकते हैं, लेकिन जनता इस समस्या से पीड़ित नहीं है। जनादेश से जुड़ा दूसरा संदेश यह है कि मिथ्या प्रचार करने वाले सबसे पहले खुद अपने विचारों में कैद होकर बाहरी दुनिया से बेखबर हो जाते हैं। गुजरात से लेकर उत्तराखण्ड और कर्नाटक से लेकर हिमाचल तक मतदाताओं ने एकमत से देश की बागडोर प्रधानमंत्री मोदी को सौंपने का फैसला किया। यह राष्ट्रीय सहमति हमारे लोकतंत्र की परिपक्वता का एक महत्वपूर्ण उदाहरण है। प्रधानमंत्री जवाहरलाल नेहरू को विपक्ष कभी प्रभावी चुनौती नहीं दे पाया, लेकिन किसी सकारात्मक कार्यक्रम के आधार पर भारी बहुमत हासिल करने का एक उदाहरण पहले ही मिला था। 1971 में इंदिरा गांधी ने गरीबी हटाओ जैसे नारे के दम पर सत्ता हासिल की थी। हालांकि वह इस वादे को निभाने में बुरी तरह विफल रही थी। 1984 में राजीव गांधी को भारी बहुमत मिला था, लेकिन वह जनादेश इंदिरा गांधी की हत्या से उजड़ी सहनुभूति का परिणाम था।

पीवी नरसिंह राव, अटल बिहारी वाजपेयी और मनमोहन सिंह की गठबंधन सरकारें अपने अस्तित्व को बचाने और रूटे सहयोगियों को मनाने में ही लगी रहीं। हालांकि इस दौरान कुछ

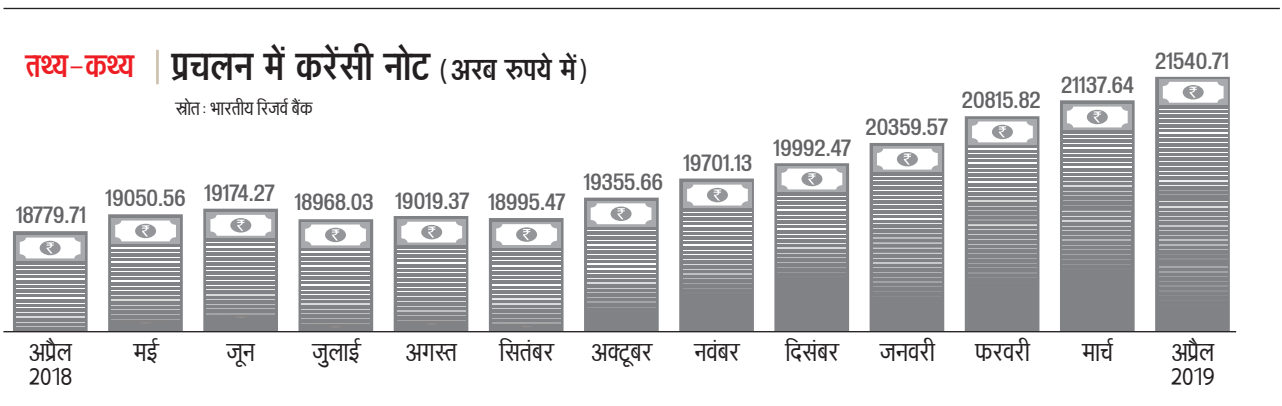
बहुत अच्छे काम भी हुए, लेकिन मनमोहन सिंह के शब्दों में 'गठबंधन की राजनीति' की मजबूरियों के कारण ये सरकारें सांसदों की खरीद फरोख्त, भ्रष्टाचार में लिप्त मंत्रियों के बचाव और देश की अर्थनीति और विदेश नीति से संबंधित कठोर फैसलों से कतराती रहीं।

लोकसभा चुनाव के दौरान कई बुद्धिजीवी तानाशाही का भय दिखाकर कमजोर सरकार और मजबूत विपक्ष की दुहाई देते रहे, लेकिन यह जनता है और वह सब जानती है। गठबंधन की कमजोर सरकारें वोटबैंक की राजनीति की गुलाम रही हैं। समाज के कुछ तबके उनकी बांह मरोड़ते रहे। वे देशहित में सख्त और दूरगामी कदम नहीं उठा सकी थीं। कल्पना कीजिए कि यदि मोदी किसी गठबंधन सरकार के प्रधानमंत्री होते तो क्या वह टैक्स-चोरी पर आधारित काले धन वाली अर्थव्यवस्था पर कुठाराघात करने वाला जीएसटी कानून लागू कर सकते थे या फिर पाकिस्तान के खिलाफ पहले सर्जिकल और फिर एयर स्ट्राइक कर सकते थे? जनता ने बड़ी अपेक्षाओं के साथ मोदी को ताकत दी है। राजनीतिक सहमति जनता ने बनाई है, लेकिन अब सामाजिक सहमति का निर्माण मोदी को करना होगा। मोदी को वर्ग हित, जाति हित और संप्रदाय हित की राजनीति से ऊपर उठकर बिना किसी भेदभाव के देश के सभी नागरिकों के लिए काम करना होगा और इस क्रम में एक शांत, सक्रिय और श्रमशील समाज का निर्माण करना होगा। अइंगेबाज अफसरशाही को जवाबदेही सिखानी होगी और नकारा अधिकारियों को बाहर

पेयजल संकट से जूझता ग्रामीण भारत

भले ही संविधान के अनुच्छेद 47 में यह दर्ज हो कि प्रत्येक देशवासी को साफ पानी मुहैया करवाना राज्य का दायित्व है, लेकिन आज भी देश की कोई 17 लाख ग्रामीण बसावटों में से लगभग 78 फीसद में ही पानी की न्यूनतम आवश्यक मात्रा पहुंच सकी है। यह भी विडंबना है कि इस पर अब तक करोड़ों रुपये खर्च होने के बावजूद सरकार परियोजना के लाभों को प्राप्त करने में विफल रही है। आज महज 45,053 गांवों को नल-जल और हंडपंपों की सुविधा मिली है, लेकिन लगभग 19,000 गांव ऐसे भी हैं जहां साफ पीने के पानी का कोई नियमित साधन नहीं है। हजारों बस्तियां ऐसी हैं जहां लोग कई-कई किलोमीटर पैदल चल कर पानी लाते हैं। ये आंकड़े भारत सरकार के पेयजल और स्वच्छता मंत्रालय के हैं। अगस्त 2018 में सरकार की ऑडिट रिपोर्ट में कहा गया था कि सरकारी योजनाएं प्रति दिन प्रति व्यक्ति को सुरक्षित पेयजल की दो बाल्टी प्रदान करने में विफल रही हैं, जो कि निर्धारित लक्ष्य का आधा था। रिपोर्ट में कहा गया कि खराब निष्पादन और घंटिया प्रबंधन के चलते सारी योजनाएं अपने लक्ष्य से दूर होती गईं।

भारत सरकार ने प्रत्येक ग्रामीण व्यक्ति को पीने, खाना पकाने और अन्य बुनियादी घरेलू जरूरतों के लिए स्थायी आधार पर पानी की न्यूनतम मात्रा उपलब्ध करवाने के इरादे से राष्ट्रीय ग्रामीण पेयजल कार्यक्रम 2009 में शुरू किया था। इसमें हर घर को परिशिोधित जल घर पर ही या सार्वजनिक स्थानों पर नल द्वारा मुहैया करवाने की योजना थी। इसमें 2022 तक देश में शत प्रतिशत शुद्ध पेयजल आपूर्ति का संकल्प था। भारत के नियंत्रक एवं महालेखा परीक्षक की रिपोर्ट कहती है कि कई हजार करोड़ रुपये खर्च करने के बाद भी यह परियोजना सफेद हथौथ साबित हुई है। 2017



सुश्रेष्ठ गुजरात

संघत के लिए संकट बने तंबाकू उत्पाद शीर्षक से लिखे अपने आलेख में डॉ. सूर्यकांत ने तंबाकू उत्पादों के सेवन से होने वाली हानियों का उल्लेख किया है। तंबाकू जीवन शक्ति को कम कर देता है और धीरे-धीरे मानव जीवन को लील लेता है। लेखक ने सही लिखा है कि जितना राजस्व कर के रूप में इससे प्राप्त होता है उससे कहीं अधिक राशि तंबाकू जनित बीमारियों के इलाज में लोगों को खर्च करनी पड़ती है। सिगरेट, बीड़ी, तंबाकू के पैकेटों पर वैधानिक चेतावनी सरकारी हद्दियातों के अनुसार बेशक वर्षों से लिखी जा रही है, परंतु इसका असर शून्य ही है। जिसे तंबाकू सेवन की लत पड़ चुकी है, वह इसे किसी भी कीमत पर नहीं छोड़ना चाहता। देश के लगभग सभी राज्यों में तंबाकू निर्यंत्रण प्रकोष्ठ हैं, परंतु इनका कितना असर है सभी को विदित है। हरियाणा की बात की जाए तो वर्षों से राज्य में गुटका, पान मसाला, जर्दा, तंबाकू आदि के उत्पादन, भंडारण एवं वितरण पर पूरी तरह प्रतिबंध है, परंतु हकीकत यह है कि प्रदेश के प्रत्येक गांव, कस्बे एवं शहर में इनकी खुलेआम बिक्री होती है। केवल राजस्व को प्राप्त के लिए लोगों के जीवन से खिलवाड़ नहीं किया जा सकता। एक विशेष अभियान चलाकर इससे होने वाले दुष्परिणामों के प्रति लोगों को जागरूक करना चाहिए। सरकार और समाजसेवी संस्थाओं को इसके लिए अपनी अग्रणी भूमिका का निर्वहन करना चाहिए।

sureshgoyal8@gmail.com

राष्ट्रवादी विचार की जीत

एक बार फिर मोदी सरकार के चारे के साथ भाजपा ने सरकार बना ली। भारत के इतिहास में ऐसा पहली बार हो रहा है कि

सुश्रेष्ठ गुजरात

कोई गैर कांग्रेसी पार्टी लगातार दूसरी बार पूर्ण बहुमत के साथ सरकार बनाई है। प्रियंका गांधी वाड्रा के आने से कांग्रेस के प्रदर्शन में सुधार की उम्मीद जगी थी, परंतु मोदी लहर के सामने किसी की एक न चली। कांग्रेस की हार की एक बड़ी वजह उनके नेताओं के अमर्यादित बयान भी रहे। अभी भले ही कांग्रेस पार्टी के अंदर पद त्याग और इस्तीफे की उठापटक चल रही हो, परंतु उन्हें इस बात का ध्यान रखना चाहिए शब्द किसी भी चुनाव में बहुत महत्व रखते हैं। किसी स्वच्छ चरित्र वाले व्यक्ति को अपराध कहने के बजाय अगर कांग्रेस विकास के मुद्दों पर ध्यान देती तो शायद नतीजे इतने खराब नहीं आते। इसके अतिरिक्त कांग्रेस ने विधानसभा चुनाव के परिणाम से हर मान लिया था कि मध्य प्रदेश, छत्तीसगढ़ और राजस्थान में उन्हें वोट मिलेंगे ही, जबकि उन्हें मालूम नतीजा चाहिए कि विधानसभा चुनाव से लोकसभा चुनाव के नतीजों का निर्णय नहीं किया जा सकता। इसी तरह गुजरात के विधानसभा चुनाव में कांग्रेस ने भाजपा को कड़ी टक्कर दी थी, परंतु लोकसभा चुनाव में एक भी सीट नहीं जीत सकी। इसका और एक उदाहरण ओडिशा के चुनाव में देखा जा सकता है जहां पर लोकसभा चुनाव में तो भाजपा ने बीजेडी को कड़ी टक्कर दी, परंतु विधानसभा चुनाव में भाजपा बहुत कम सीट ला सकी। बहरहाल लोकसभा चुनाव के परिणाम से यह तो तय हो गया है कि लोगों ने धर्म और जाति की भावनाओं से ऊपर उठकर राष्टवादी विचारधारा को महत्व दिया है जो सतहनीय है।

shubhamgupta.121@gmail.com

आखिर कसूरवार कौन?

गुजरात के एक कोचिंग सेंटर में आग लगने से मारे गए छात्रों

का कसूरवार कौन है? आज हर राज्य के कोने-कोने में शिक्षा के नाम पर ऐसी दुकानें खुल रही हैं जिनपर सरकार और प्रशासन का ध्यान ही नहीं जाता है। रोजगार की जदोजहद में विद्यार्थी अपना भविष्य संभालने के पक्कर में मजबूरीवश ऐसे संस्थानों में प्रवेश लेते हैं। क्या संबंधित विभागों की जिम्मेदारी नहीं बनती कि वह ऐसे किसी भी शिक्षा संस्थानों को पूर्ण जांच पड़ताल करके ही अपनापति प्रमाणपत्र दें। जो शिक्षा संस्थान नियमों की पालना नहीं करते उनको तुरंत बंद कराना चाहिए।

आचार्य राम कुमार बघेल शास्त्री, पलवल

राजनीति के योद्धा

दैनिक जागरण के 31 मई के अंक में प्रदीप सिंह का लेख, चुनावी रणनीति के शहंशाह, मोदी व अमित शाह की कार्यशैली पर बिल्कुल सटीक है। वैसे भी मोदी और अमित शाह की आपसी राजनीतिक समझ, आमजन से जुड़ने की कला, वाक्पटुता और सामरिक विषयों पर उनको महारत हासिल है। यही कारण है कि 5 साल में डेढ़ की चोट पर 16 चुनाव जीते। ओडिशा और पश्चिम बंगाल में जीत इसकी मिसाल है।

दीपक गौतम, सोनीपत

इस संबंध में किसी भी विषय पर राय व्यक्त करने अथवा दैनिक जागरण के राष्ट्रीय संस्करण पर प्रतिक्रिया व्यक्त करने के लिए पाठकगण सादर आमंत्रित हैं। आप हमें पत्र भेजने के साथ ई-मेल भी कर सकते हैं।

अपने पत्र इस पते पर भेजें :
दैनिक जागरण, राष्ट्रीय संस्करण,
डी-210-211, सेक्टर-63, नोएडा
ई-मेल: mailbox@jagran.com



ईश्वर की कृपा

इस संसार का प्रत्येक मनुष्य परमात्मा की कृपा दृष्टि प्राप्त करना चाहता है। विशेष रूप से वह जब दुखों के सागर में निमग्न होता है तथा अपने आप को असह्य अनुभव करता है, तब उसका झुकाव परम सत्ता परमात्मा की ओर होता है। ईश्वर की कृपा सब पर अचानक यूं ही नहीं हो जाती। ईश्वर की कृपा प्राप्त करने के लिए मनुष्य को स्वयं को उचित पात्र बनाना पड़ता है। ईश्वर तो आनंद एवं कृपा का आगाध सागर है, लेकिन उसकी अनुकंपा से वंचित रहने का कारण हमारी अपनी ही विकृतियां होती हैं। ईश्वर की समीपता का लाभ मनोभूमि को पवित्र बनाए बिना संभव नहीं हो सकता। हमारी दृष्ट तथा तामसिक प्रवृत्तियां प्रभु कृपा प्राप्ति में हमसे बड़ी बाधा हैं। जिस प्रकार धुंधले दर्पण में मुंह दिखाई नहीं पड़ता तथा गंदे पानी की तली में पड़ी हुई वस्तु ओझल रहती है उसी प्रकार अंत:करण की मलिनता के कारण आत्मा मूर्छित पड़ी रहती है। वास्तव तथा तृष्णा के आवरण आंखों पर पड़ी बांधे रहते हैं। लोभ तथा अत्यधिक आसक्ति रूपी रस्सी मनुष्य के मानस पटल को इस प्रकार जकड़े रखती है कि उसे प्रभु अनुकंपा प्राप्त हेतु पात्र बनने ही नहीं देती। आत्मिक पक्षिकार के बिना प्रभु अनुग्रह प्राप्त होना अवर्षभव है। जप, तप, साधना अंत:करण पर पड़े मलिन संस्कारों को दूर करने की विधियां हैं।

दृष्ट प्रवृत्तियों से स्थूल शरीर, दुर्बुद्धि से सूक्ष्म शरीर में तामसिक प्रवृत्तियां भर जाती हैं और समुच्चा व्यक्तित्व पतन के गर्त में जा गिरता है। इसी दुर्गति की दलदल में धंस कर मनुष्य प्रभु कृपा से वंचित रहता है। कठोर चट्टान पर लगातार वर्षा होते हुए भी हरियाली उत्पन्न नहीं होती। इसमें बादलों से अनुरोध करना व्यर्थ है। चट्टान को ही कोमल रेत में बदलना पड़ेगा। ठीक इसी प्रकार मनुष्य को भी अपनी मनोभूमि को पावन बनाना चाहिए। तामसिक तथा कुसंस्कारों की जो परत अंत:करण पर चढ़ गई है वही आत्मा तथा परमात्मा के साक्षात्कार में सबसे बड़ी बाधक है। मनुष्य विवेकशील प्राणी है। नर से नारागण, पुरुष से पुरुषोत्तम, लघु से महान बनने का एक ही उपाय अंत:करण की पवित्रता है। शुद्ध अंत:करण से ही प्रभु कृपा के अनुग्रह का पात्र बनता है। ऐसे सात्विक पुरुष को ही प्रभु की अनुकंपा प्राप्त होती है।

आचार्य दीपचंद भारद्वाज

6 नई दिल्ली

1 जून, 2019

संतुलित आधार

नई सरकार में मंत्रिमंडल के गठन और मंत्रियों के विभागों के बंटवारे का काम लगभग पूरा हो चुका है। ऐसी स्थिति में स्वाभाविक ही सरकार की तस्वीर में इस बात की खोज की जाएगी कि देश और राजनीतिक सहयोगियों के बीच मौजूद भिन्नताओं के मद्देनजर किस स्तर तक संतुलन बिठाया गया है। इस लिहाज से देखें तो नरेंद्र मोदी के नेतृत्व में बनी मौजूदा सरकार ने अपनी ओर से इस बात का ध्यान रखने की कोशिश की है कि सबको अपनी नुमाईंदगी दिखे। इसके बावजूद इतने बड़े देश में सभी पक्षों को चूँकि पूरी तरह संतुष्ट करना संभव नहीं है, इसलिए अगर संतुलन के कुछ सवाल बाकी रहेंगे तो इसमें कोई हैरानी बात नहीं होगी। गौरतलब है कि न केवल राष्ट्रीय जनतांत्रिक गठबंधन के सभी सहयोगियों को उनकी मांग के मुताबिक जगह देना संभव नहीं हुआ, बल्कि पिछली बार खुद राजग सरकार में मंत्री रहे कई ऊंचे कद के नेताओं को भी मौका नहीं मिला। मसलन, अरुण जेटली, सुषमा स्वराज, सुरेश प्रभु, महेश शर्मा, मेनका गांधी जैसे कदावर नेता मौजूदा मंत्रिमंडल में नहीं हैं। जाहिर है, यह सवाल चर्चा का केंद्र जरूर रहेगा कि इस बार बाहर रह गए ज्यादातर मंत्रियों के शामिल नहीं होने की वजह उनका प्रदर्शन रहा या नई सरकार में नए चेहरों को जगह देने के लिए कुछ पुराने लोगों को किनारे किया गया। यों अरुण जेटली ने खुद पत्र लिख कर मंत्रिपरिषद में शामिल नहीं होने की इच्छा जताई थी।

सबसे ज्यादा चौंकाने वाली बात यह रही कि बिहार में भाजपा की प्रमुख सहयोगी पार्टी जदयू इस बार सरकार या मंत्रिपरिषद से बाहर है। इसका कारण शायद यह है कि सरकार में शामिल होने का प्रस्ताव जदयू को अपने अनुकूल नहीं लगा और इसलिए उसने बाहर रहने का फैसला किया। लंबे समय से भाजपा की अच्छी सहयोगी मानी जाने वाली पार्टी अगर सरकार गठन से संतुष्ट नहीं है तो यह देखने की बात होगी कि आने वाले वक्त में जदयू का क्या रुख रहता है और उसका सत्ता-संतुलन में क्या असर पड़ता है। हालांकि तमिलनाडु में भाजपा की सहयोगी पार्टी अन्नाद्रमुक को भी मंत्रिपरिषद में फिलहाल जगह नहीं मिल सकी। इसके अलावा, चुनाव में सामाजिक समीकरण की बुनियाद पर गठित गठबंधनों का सामना करने के मकसद से राजग और भाजपा ने भी उसी के मुताबिक बिसात बिछाने की पूरी कोशिश की थी। यही वजह है कि नतीजे के आकलन में जातिगत समीकरणों का मुद्दा प्रमुख रहा और इसकी छाया सरकार के गठन में साफ़तौर पर देखी जा सकती है। कुल अटंटावन मंत्रियों में अगड़ी जातियों का प्रभाव साफ दिखता है, लेकिन अन्य पिछड़े वर्गों, अनुसूचित जाति और जनजातियों को भी पर्याप्त जगह मिली है।

जहां तक महिलाओं की नुमाईंदगी का सवाल है, पिछली राजग सरकार में मंत्रिपरिषद में दस महिलाओं को शामिल किया गया था, जबकि इस बार केवल छह महिलाओं को जगह मिल सकी। इसके बावजूद कहा जा सकता है कि नई सरकार के गठन में इस बात का खयाल रखने की कोशिश की गई है कि समाज के सभी वर्गों को अपना प्रतिनिधित्व दिखे। फिर भी उत्तर प्रदेश से सबसे ज्यादा प्रतिनिधि और दक्षिण भारत में खासी सीटें मिलने के बावजूद वहां से कुल चार चेहरों की उपस्थिति और खासतौर पर तमिलनाडु से एक भी मंत्री का नहीं होना सत्ता में संतुलन का आकलन का आधार बनेगा। हालांकि विभागों के बंटवारे के मामले में इस बात की पूरी कोशिश की गई है कि देश भर में इसका सकारात्मक संदेश जाए। अब यह देखने की बात होगी कि इस समूची कवायद के बाद आने वाले वक्त में सरकार क्षेत्रीय सहित दूसरे तमाम पक्षों के साथ संतुलन कायम करने में कितनी कामयाब हो पाती है !

खतरे का संदेश

हर साल इकतीस मई को मनाया जाने वाला विश्व तंबाकू निषेध दिवस इस बात का संदेश देकर जाता है कि अब हम तंबाकू के सेवन को बंद करें और आने वाली पीढ़ियों को गंभीर संकट से बचा लें। लेकिन लगता है यह संदेश मात्र इस दिन विशेष के लिए होता है, अगले दिन से हम सब इसे भुला देते हैं। इसी का नतीजा है कि आज सिर्फ भारत में नहीं, ज्यादातर विकासशील देशों में बच्चों से लेकर उम्रदराज लोग तक तंबाकू के नशे के आदी हैं। मादक पदार्थों में अगर किसी पदार्थ का सबसे ज्यादा सेवन किया जाता है तो वह तंबाकू है। बीड़ी, सिगरेट, पान, गुटखा जैसे तमाम रूपों में तंबाकू का नशा सामान्य है। चूँकि तंबाकू से बने उत्पाद सस्ते और आसानी से उपलब्ध होते हैं, इसलिए किसी और नशीले पदार्थ के मुकाबले तंबाकू का नशा करने वालों का वर्ग कहीं ज्यादा बड़ा है। हालांकि सब जानते हैं कि तंबाकू एक नहीं, कई गंभीर और जानलेवा बीमारियों का कारण बन सकता है, फिर भी इसे छोड़ नहीं पाते। ऐसे में सवाल उठता है कि विश्व तंबाकू निषेध दिवस का आखिर औचित्य क्या रह जाता है। सवाल है कि इसके जानलेवा होने के बारे में जानते हुए भी इस मसले पर समाज जागरूक क्यों नहीं हो पा रहा ? क्या यह सरकार और समाज के लिए चिंता और विचार का विषय नहीं होना चाहिए?

इस बार विश्व तंबाकू निषेध की थीम ‘तंबाकू और फेफड़े का स्वास्थ्य’ रखी गई है। जाहिर है, पूरी दुनिया में लोगों को यह बताने की कोशिश हो रही है कि तंबाकू फेफड़ों के लिए कितना हानिकारक है, बीड़ी-सिगरेट का धुआं कितनी तेजी से फेफड़ों को कमजोर खत्म करता हुआ आ जाने कितनी गंभीर बीमारियों से ग्रस्त कर सकता है। वैसे ही भारत में वायु प्रदूषण लोगों के स्वास्थ्य के लिए सबसे बड़ा खतरा बना हुआ है। लाखों लोग जहरीली हवा से होने वाली बीमारियों से मर रहे हैं। ऐसे में तंबाकू का सेवन करने वालों के लिए तो खतरा कहीं ज्यादा बड़ा और गंभीर है। तंबाकू का सेवन करने से पच्चीसों बीमारियां और चालीस से ज्यादा तरह का कैंसर हो सकता है। सरकारी आंकड़ों की मानें तो भारत में धूम्रपान करने वालों की संख्या बारह करोड़ है। लेकिन यह आंकड़ा हकीकत से कोसों दूर ही होगा। गांवों, कस्बों, शहरों से लेकर महानगरों तक में शायद ही कोई ऐसी दुकान, थड़ी, गुमटी होगी जहां बीड़ी, सिगरेट और गुटखा न मिलता हो। अधिसंख्य आबादी के लिए तंबाकू के उत्पाद रोजमर्रा की लत बन चुके हैं। इसीलिए तंबाकू के खतरों के बारे में लोगों को जागरूक करना सरकारी तंत्र के लिए एक असंभव-सा काम बन गया है।

ऐसे में बात घूम फिर कर जागरूकता पर आ जाती है। हालांकि जागरूकता अभियान चलते भी हैं, लेकिन हमारे यहां वे दिखावटी ज्यादा होते हैं। दूसरी ओर, कई विकसित देशों के उदाहरण सामने हैं जहां तंबाकू के इस्तेमाल के खिलाफ सरकार की पहल से बड़े जागरूकता अभियान चले और इनका परिणाम यह रहा कि धूम्रपान करने वालों की संख्या में खासी कमी देखी गई। लेकिन भारत में ऐसे प्रयास नहीं दिखते। इसके पीछे बड़ा कारण तंबाकू उद्योग के हित हैं, सरकार इसे खत्म नहीं होने देना चाहती। तंबाकू के उपभोग के मामले में भारत दुनिया में दूसरे नंबर पर आता है। तंबाकू की बड़े पैमाने पर खेती होती है। तंबाकू की खेती और इससे जुड़े उद्योग में तीन करोड़ लोग लगे हैं। सरकार को खरबों रुपए का राजस्व मिलता है। ऐसे में क्या सरकारी तंत्र से उम्मीद की जा सकती है कि वह देश को तंबाकू मुक्त बनाएगा ?

कल्पमेधा

प्रजातंत्र का अर्थ मैं समझता हूँ कि उसमें नीचे से नीचे और ऊंचे से ऊंचे आदमी को आगे बढ़ने का समान अवसर मिले।

–महात्मा गांधी

कौन सा देश

सौरभ जैन

अब तक दुनिया के छतीस देशों, जिनमें मॉरीशस, आस्ट्रेलिया, सिंगापुर, दक्षिण कोरिया, श्रीलंका, थाईलैंड, ब्राजील, मेक्सिको, उरुग्वे, बहरीन, ईरान, सऊदी अरब और संयुक्त अरब अमीरात तथा भारत के बारह राज्य शामिल हैं, में ई-सिगरेट की बिक्री पर रोक लगा दी गई है। लेकिन भारत के अधिकांश राज्यों में यह अब भी कई रूपों में उपलब्ध है।

हालांकि तमिलनाडु में भाजपा की सहयोगी पार्टी अन्नाद्रमुक को भी मंत्रिपरिषद में फिलहाल जगह नहीं मिल सकी। इसके अलावा, चुनाव में सामाजिक समीकरण की बुनियाद पर गठित गठबंधनों का सामना करने के मकसद से राजग और भाजपा ने भी उसी के मुताबिक बिसात बिछाने की पूरी कोशिश की थी। यही वजह है कि नतीजे के आकलन में जातिगत समीकरणों का मुद्दा प्रमुख रहा और इसकी छाया सरकार के गठन में साफ़तौर पर देखी जा सकती है। कुल अटंटावन मंत्रियों में अगड़ी जातियों का प्रभाव साफ दिखता है, लेकिन अन्य पिछड़े वर्गों, अनुसूचित जाति और जनजातियों को भी पर्याप्त जगह मिली है।

हालांकि तमिलनाडु में भाजपा की सहयोगी पार्टी अन्नाद्रमुक को भी मंत्रिपरिषद में फिलहाल जगह नहीं मिल सकी। इसके अलावा, चुनाव में सामाजिक समीकरण की बुनियाद पर गठित गठबंधनों का सामना करने के मकसद से राजग और भाजपा ने भी उसी के मुताबिक बिसात बिछाने की पूरी कोशिश की थी। यही वजह है कि नतीजे के आकलन में जातिगत समीकरणों का मुद्दा प्रमुख रहा और इसकी छाया सरकार के गठन में साफ़तौर पर देखी जा सकती है। कुल अटंटावन मंत्रियों में अगड़ी जातियों का प्रभाव साफ दिखता है, लेकिन अन्य पिछड़े वर्गों, अनुसूचित जाति और जनजातियों को भी पर्याप्त जगह मिली है।

जहां तक महिलाओं की नुमाईंदगी का सवाल है, पिछली राजग सरकार में मंत्रिपरिषद में दस महिलाओं को शामिल किया गया था, जबकि इस बार केवल छह महिलाओं को जगह मिल सकी। इसके बावजूद कहा जा सकता है कि नई सरकार के गठन में इस बात का खयाल रखने की कोशिश की गई है कि समाज के सभी वर्गों को अपना प्रतिनिधित्व दिखे। फिर भी उत्तर प्रदेश से सबसे ज्यादा प्रतिनिधि और दक्षिण भारत में खासी सीटें मिलने के बावजूद वहां से कुल चार चेहरों की उपस्थिति और खासतौर पर तमिलनाडु से एक भी मंत्री का नहीं होना सत्ता में संतुलन का आकलन का आधार बनेगा। हालांकि विभागों के बंटवारे के मामले में इस बात की पूरी कोशिश की गई है कि देश भर में इसका सकारात्मक संदेश जाए। अब यह देखने की बात होगी कि इस समूची कवायद के बाद आने वाले वक्त में सरकार क्षेत्रीय सहित दूसरे तमाम पक्षों के साथ संतुलन कायम करने में कितनी कामयाब हो पाती है !

हालांकि तमिलनाडु में भाजपा की सहयोगी पार्टी अन्नाद्रमुक को भी मंत्रिपरिषद में फिलहाल जगह नहीं मिल सकी। इसके अलावा, चुनाव में सामाजिक समीकरण की बुनियाद पर गठित गठबंधनों का सामना करने के मकसद से राजग और भाजपा ने भी उसी के मुताबिक बिसात बिछाने की पूरी कोशिश की थी। यही वजह है कि नतीजे के आकलन में जातिगत समीकरणों का मुद्दा प्रमुख रहा और इसकी छाया सरकार के गठन में साफ़तौर पर देखी जा सकती है। कुल अटंटावन मंत्रियों में अगड़ी जातियों का प्रभाव साफ दिखता है, लेकिन अन्य पिछड़े वर्गों, अनुसूचित जाति और जनजातियों को भी पर्याप्त जगह मिली है।

संजीव राय

हमारे परिचय-वृत्त यानी ‘सीवी’ में हमारी अकादमिक विफलताओं का उल्लेख नहीं होता है, लेकिन प्रिंसटोन विश्वविद्यालय के प्रोफेसर जोहंस हाँउसफेर मनोविज्ञान और लोक मामलों के विद्वान होने के अलावा अपने प्रोफाइल में विफलताओं को दर्ज करने के लिए जाने जाते हैं। उन्होंने अपनी असफलता के दस्तावेज को 2016 में ऑनलाइन कर दिया था और देखते-देखते वह लाखों लोगों तक पहुंच गया। उन्होंने खुद प्रिंसटोन विश्वविद्यालय पहुंचने तक की अपनी यात्रा में नौकरी में चयन न होने, छात्रवृत्ति में चयनित न होने, शोध पत्र बिना छपे लौटा दिए जाने और डिग्री-पीएचडी पाठ्यक्रम में नामांकन न होने जैसी असफलताओं का उल्लेख किया है।

अब सीवीएसई और राज्यों के दसवीं और बारहवीं कक्षा के परीक्षा-परिणाम आ चुके हैं। लेकिन वे माता-पिता और बच्चे सामाजिक दबाव झेल रहे होंगे, जिनके नंबर अपेक्षया कम आए होंगे या जो असफल करार दिए गए होंगे। क्या किसी बच्चे की स्कूली परीक्षा में असफलता उसकी खुद की असफलता होती है? क्या इस असफलता में उस स्कूल, उनके अध्यापकों, शिक्षा-व्यवस्था और सामाजिक-आर्थिक-राजनीतिक व्यवस्था की भागीदारी नहीं होती है? शिक्षा शास्त्र और

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जन्सत्ता

क्यों न लगे ई-सिगरेट पर पाबंदी

हालांकि तमिलनाडु में भाजपा की सहयोगी पार्टी अन्नाद्रमुक को भी मंत्रिपरिषद में फिलहाल जगह नहीं मिल सकी। इसके अलावा, चुनाव में सामाजिक समीकरण की बुनियाद पर गठित गठबंधनों का सामना करने के मकसद से राजग और भाजपा ने भी उसी के मुताबिक बिसात बिछाने की पूरी कोशिश की थी। यही वजह है कि नतीजे के आकलन में जातिगत समीकरणों का मुद्दा प्रमुख रहा और इसकी छाया सरकार के गठन में साफ़तौर पर देखी जा सकती है। कुल अटंटावन मंत्रियों में अगड़ी जातियों का प्रभाव साफ दिखता है, लेकिन अन्य पिछड़े वर्गों, अनुसूचित जाति और जनजातियों को भी पर्याप्त जगह मिली है।

आयात रोकने के लिए एक परामर्श जारी किया था। ऐसा करने के लिए आधार दिल्ली उच्च न्यायालय की मानव स्वास्थ्य को लेकर चिंता थी। दिल्ली उच्च न्यायालय ने ई-सिगरेट के खतरों की रोकथाम में हो रही देरी पर गहरी चिंता व्यक्त की। नतीजतन, सेंट्रल ड्रग्स स्टैंडर्ड कंट्रोल ऑर्गनाइजेशन ने राज्यों और केंद्र शासित प्रदेशों में सभी दवा नियंत्रकों को अपने अधिकार क्षेत्र में ई-सिगरेट और प्लेवर्ड हुक्का सहित इलेक्ट्रॉनिक निकोटीन डिलीवरी सिस्टम के विनिर्माण, बिक्री, आयात और विज्ञापन की अनुमति नहीं देने का निर्देश दिया था। ई-सिगरेट मानव स्वास्थ्य के लिए इतनी हानिकारक है कि इस साल अप्रैल में भारत के चौबीस राज्यों और तीन केंद्रशासित प्रदेशों के एक हजार से अधिक डाक्टरों ने भारतीयों, विशेषकर युवाओं में इसकी लत लगने के पूर्व इस पर प्रतिबंध लगा देने की मांग की है।

ई-सिगरेट एक बैटरी संचालित यंत्र है जो तरल निकोटीन, प्रोपलीन, ग्लाइकोल, पानी, ग्लिसरिन के मिश्रण को गर्म करके एक एअरोसोल बनाता है जो असली सिगरेट का अनुभव प्रदान करने का कार्य करता है। ई-सिगरेट की बिक्री सर्वप्रथम 2004 में चीन के बाजारों में तंबाकू के विकल्प के रूप में प्रारंभ की गई थी। विश्व स्वास्थ्य संगठन 2005 से ई-सिगरेट के व्यवसाय को वैश्विक व्यापार बनने की बात को स्वीकार करता है। वर्तमान में तो यह व्यवसाय लगभग तीन अरब डॉलर तक पहुंच गया है। जाहिर है, इसकी प्रवृत्ति धूम्रपान के आदी व्यक्तियों में तेजी से बढ़ रही है। धूम्रपान करने वाले व्यक्तियों में ई-सिगरेट के प्रति आकर्षण बढ़ने का कारण इसका दुष्प्रचार है। सिगरेट सेवन करने वालों के मध्य इस भ्रांति को फैलाया गया है कि ई-सिगरेट के सेवन से स्वास्थ्य पर प्रतिकूल प्रभाव नहीं पड़ता है। जबकि अब तक सिगरेट का सेवन करने वाले लोग इस बात से वाकिफ थे कि सिगरेट से कैंसर, फेफड़ों से संबंधी रोग, श्वसन तंत्र पर बुरा प्रभाव जैसी समस्याएं होती हैं। सिगरेट में पाए जाने वाले निकोटीन का प्रभाव सिगरेट पीने के चालीस मिनट बाद भी रहता है। इसलिए इस भ्रांति को फैलाया गया गया कि सिगरेट की तुलना में ई-सिगरेट हानिरहित है। इस भ्रांति ने ई-सिगरेट के व्यवसाय को वैश्विक रूप से समृद्ध बना दिया और अपने दैनिक जीवन में धूम्रपान को जीवन शैली का हिस्सा बना चुके लोग स्वतः इस ओर आकर्षित होते चले गए।

ई-सिगरेट के प्रचलन में आने के बाद धूम्रपान करने वालों की संख्या में तेजी से वृद्धि हुई है। निरंतर कहना था कि उन्होंने तंबाकू की मात्रा को कम करने के लिए ई-सिगरेट का सहारा लिया। जबकि सैतिस प्रतिशत लोगों की राय थी कि सिगरेट नैसे बचाने के लिए ई-सिगरेट के विकल्प का चुनाव किया। भारत में बिकने वाली कुल ई-सिगरेट में से करीब 50 फीसद ई-सिगरेट की बिक्री ऑनलाइन होती है। इसकी आपूर्ति में चीन सबसे बड़ी भूमिका निभाता है। ऑनलाइन उपलब्धता के चलते बच्चों से लेकर किशोरों तक इसकी पहुंच बहुत आसान हो गई है। ऑनलाइन बाजार जहां जीवनशैली को सुलभ एवं आसान बनाता है, वहीं ऐसे उत्पादों की बिक्री के चलते स्वास्थ्य एवं जीवन को संकट में भी ला खड़ा करता है।

ई-सिगरेट के सेवन से स्वास्थ्य पर पड़ने वाले प्रभावों को जानने के लिए किए गए एक अध्ययन में

हालांकि तमिलनाडु में भाजपा की सहयोगी पार्टी अन्नाद्रमुक को भी मंत्रिपरिषद में फिलहाल जगह नहीं मिल सकी। इसके अलावा, चुनाव में सामाजिक समीकरण की बुनियाद पर गठित गठबंधनों का सामना करने के मकसद से राजग और भाजपा ने भी उसी के मुताबिक बिसात बिछाने की पूरी कोशिश की थी। यही वजह है कि नतीजे के आकलन में जातिगत समीकरणों का मुद्दा प्रमुख रहा और इसकी छाया सरकार के गठन में साफ़तौर पर देखी जा सकती है। कुल अटंटावन मंत्रियों में अगड़ी जातियों का प्रभाव साफ दिखता है, लेकिन अन्य पिछड़े वर्गों, अनुसूचित जाति और जनजातियों को भी पर्याप्त जगह मिली है।

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मनोविज्ञान इस बात की वकालत करते हैं कि हर एक बच्चा या व्यक्ति बुनियादी रूप से एक दूसरे से भिन्न होता है। फिर एक जैसी दक्षता विकसित करने और उसे प्रमाण-पत्र जारी करने की पद्धति कहां तक उचित है? स्कूल समाज का एक छोटा रूप होता है। जैसे समाज में अलग-अलग दक्षता के लोगों की भूमिका होती है, वैसे ही स्कूल में भी अलग-अलग हुनर और प्रतिभा के विद्यार्थी होते हैं। एक अनुमान के मुताबिक सौ विद्यार्थियों की कक्षा में केवल बीस फीसद अकादमिक रूप से बेहतर प्रदर्शन करने

वाले होते हैं। अस्सी प्रतिशत विद्यार्थी स्कूल में अकादमिक रूप से औसत होते हैं। लेकिन उनकी रुचि जीवन के विभिन्न आयाम जैसे खेल, संगीत, साहित्य, कला, अन्वेषण, रचनात्मकता आदि में ज्यादा हो सकती है और सार्वजनिक जीवन में वे अपनी पहचान बना लेते हैं। जिन लोगों ने फिल्म या खेल में नाम कमाया है, उनमें से कितनों ने पांच सौ में से चार सौ निन्यानवे अंक हासिल किए हैं? आप अपने आसपास देखिए। स्कूल से बाहर आकर कितनों ने अपनी मेहनत से स्कूल में बनी औसत विद्यार्थी की धारणा को पलट दिया है!

बोर्ड की परीक्षा में जिन विद्यार्थियों के नंबर नब्बे प्रतिशत से अधिक आए, उनमें से कुछ के माता-पिता उनके अंकपत्र फेसबुक पर साझा कर रहे हैं। निश्चित

लेकर जिम्मेदारी और बड़ी हो जाती है। देश के विकास की बात करें तो सरकार ने गरीबों के लिए सस्ती हवाई यात्रा से लेकर प्रणामंत्री आवास योजना तक की शुरुआत की थी। यदि सरकार इस कार्यकाल में देश के हर नागरिक को अपनी छत देने का लक्ष्य हासिल कर लेती है तो यह गरीबी खत्म करने के लिए बड़ा कदम साबित होगा।

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डॉ प्रशताक अहमद

प्रधानाचार्य, सीएम कॉलेज दरभंगा (बिहार)

संपर्क : 09431414586

ईद की खुशी में न सिर्फ मुसलमान, बल्कि विभिन्न धर्मों के लोग शामिल होकर मुसलमानों की खुशी को दोबाला करते हैं और तमाम भेदभाव मिटता हुआ नजर आता है . चारों तरफ सामाजिक सौहार्द की फिजा कायम हो जाती है . इस तरह ईद एक मजहबी त्योहार के रूप में हमारी जिंदगी में खुशियों की धारा तेज करने के साथ-साथ समाज में आर्थिक संतुलन कायम करने और सामाजिक सरोकार को मजबूत बनाने का सबक भी सिखाता है .

सामाजिक और आर्थिक संतुलन का त्योहार है ईद-उल-फितर

रमजान मुसलमानों के लिए एक पाक व मुबारक महीना है, लेकिन यह सिर्फ मजहबी दृष्टिकोण से ही अहमियत नहीं रखता, बल्कि सामाजिक, आर्थिक संतुलन और स्वास्थ्य की दृष्टि से भी इस माह-ए-मुबारक का अलग महत्व है. मजहबी दृष्टिकोण से रमजान के इसी माह में इस्लाम धर्म का पाक कुर'आन शरीफ नाजिल हुआ. साथ ही रोज़े जैसी पाक इबादत और नमाज-ए-तरावीह भी रमजान के महीने में ही पूरे किये जाते हैं. इस पूरे महीने को तीन भागों में बांटा गया है- पहला दस दिनों का असरा रहमत का कहलाता है यानी शुरू के दस दिनों में बंदों पर अल्लाह की रहमतों की बारिश होती है. जबकि दूसरा दस दिनों का असरा माफ़ेरत (माफी) का होता है. इस अंसरे में नेक बंदा अपने गुनाहों की जो भी माफी मांगता है, उसे अल्लाह कबूल फरमाता है. और आखिरी असरा निजात (छुटकारा) यानी जहन्नम से छुटकारे का होता है. इस तरह पूरा रमजान का महीना मुसलमानों के लिए अल्लाह की रहमतों से मालामाल होने का महीना है और जब रमजान की तमाम इबादतों को पूरा करने में कोई बंदा कामयाब हो जाता है तो उसी कामयाबी की खुशी में ईद मनाई जाती है. ईद का शाब्दिक अर्थ ही खुशी है. ईद मनाने से पहले इस्लाम ने मुसलमानों पर जितने मजहबी शर्तें रखी हैं, यदि उन पर संजीदगी से गौर कीजिए तो पता चलेगा कि यह महीना मुसलमानों के लिए सामाजिक सरोकार से जुड़ने का पैगाम भी देता है. रमजान में रोजे के इफ्तार का दृश्य ही सामाजिक समरसता का प्रमाण होता है कि एक ही दस्तरखान पर राजा और रंक सभी एक साथ मिल कर इफ्तार करते हैं. बगैर किसी भेदभाव के एक ही सफ में

सब अल्लाह के बंदे हैं




महानुभावो! आप सब जानते हैं कि इस्लाम का जन्म ही इंसानियत की रक्षा के लिए हुआ, क्योंकि कुरान की पहली आयत की शुरुआत ही कहती है- ‘‘अलहमदुलिल्लाहे रब्विल आलमीन’’ अर्थात् तारीफ उसकी, जो सारे जहान का रब है . जाहिर है इस्लाम ने यह नहीं कहा कि अल्लाह सिर्फ मुसलमानों का रब है . जब पूरी दुनिया का रब है, तो दुनिया में जितने भी मनुष्य हैं, सब अल्लाह के बंदे हैं, फिर इस्लाम के संबंध में इतनी गलतफहमियां क्यों हैं? इसमें सिर्फ उनका कुसूर नहीं है, जिन्होंने इस्लाम को नहीं समझा, बल्कि कुसूर तो उनका है, जिन्होंने इस्लाम को समझा है, लेकिन अपने आचरण से औरों को इस्लाम से अवगत नहीं कराया . यह बात सिर्फ इस्लाम धर्म पर ही लाजिम नहीं, बल्कि अन्य धर्मों के लोगों ने भी अपने-अपने धर्मों की तकाजों से अलग हटकर चलने की कोशिश की है. इस्लाम धर्म के पैगम्बर मोहम्मद (स0) ने जब यह कहा था कि ‘‘उस वक्त तक तुम पर खाना हराम है जब तक तुम्हारा पड़ोसी भूखा है’’ . सनद रहे कि मोहम्मद (स0) ने शब्द ‘पड़ोसी’ कहा है, मुसलमान नहीं . लेकिन आज का मुसलमान क्या इस हदीस पर पूरा उतर रहा है? यदि पूरा उतर रहा होता, तो शायद वह अपने पड़ोसी की नजर में गैर न समझा जाता और न अन्य धर्मों के मानने वालों के जेहन में अपने प्रति कई तरह के सवाल का प्रतीक बनता! जरूरत इस बात की है कि मजहब ने जो सबक सिखाये हैं, उसे जीवन जीने का उसूल समझा जाये और यदि हर धर्म का व्यक्ति अपने-अपने धर्म के तकाजों को पूरा करने लगे, तो फिर मानवता के लिए खतरा क्योंकर हो सकता है? फिर भारत का सनातन धर्म तो पूरी दुनिया को एक परिवार मानता है . उसमें जाति, धर्म या पंथ में विभेद कहाँ है .

नमाज अदा करते हैं, जैसा कि अल्लामा इकबाल ने फरमाया है :-
एक ही सफ में खड़े हो गये महमूद व अयाज न कोई बंदा रहा और न कोई बंदा नवाज
ईद की नमाज से पहले हर एक साहिबे

निसाब (आर्थिक दृष्टि से संपन्न) मुसलमानों पर फर्ज है कि वह फितरा की राशि अवश्य ही उन लोगों के बीच बांट दें, जो मुहताज व आर्थिक दृष्टि से कमजोर हैं. फितरा के संबंध में जो हिदायत दी गयी है, उसके पीछे पैगाम छुपा है कि

समाज में जो धनवान व्यक्ति हैं, वह न चाहते हुए भी मजहबी फरमान की वजह से फितरा की राशि गरीबों में तकसीम करेंगे, ताकि उस राशि से गरीब और मुहताज तबका भी ईद की खुशियां हासिल कर सकें.



किसी मुख्य व्यक्ति की पहचान यही है कि वह हमेशा खुद को बुद्धिमान समझता है, जबकि एक बुद्धिमान व्यक्ति हमेशा खुद को मूर्ख समझाता है.

- विलियम शेक्सपियर

जीवन में किसी का भला करोगे, तो आपका लाभ होगा, क्योंकि भला का उल्टा लाभ होता है. जीवन में किसी पर दया करोगे तो लोग आपको याद रखेंगे, क्योंकि दया का उल्टा याद होता है.

- चाणक्य

दूसरों के दोष पर ध्यान देते समय हम स्वयं बहुत भले बन जाते हैं, परंतु जब हम अपने दोषों पर ध्यान देंगे, तो अपने आपको कुटिल और कामी पायेंगे.

- महात्मा गांधी

॥ वास्तु टिप्स ॥

माथे के बायें हिस्से पर तिल बनाता है खर्चीला

शरीर के हर हिस्से पर मौजूद तिल का महत्व अलग है. ज्योतिष और समुद्र शास्त्र के जानकारों के अनुसार किसी भी व्यक्ति के शरीर पर 12 से ज्यादा तिल होना अच्छा नहीं माना जाता, लेकिन व्यक्ति के शरीर पर 12 से कम तिल हो, तो यह शुभ फलदायक है. जहां पुरुषों के शरीर पर दाहिनी ओर तिल होना शुभ और लाभकारी माना जाता है, वहीं महिलाओं के शरीर के बायें हिस्से पर तिल होने को शुभ और लाभकारी मानते हैं. चेहरे के विभिन्न हिस्सों पर तिल होने का भी अपना अलग-अलग महत्व है. जिन लोगों के माथे के बायें हिस्से में तिल होता है, वे खर्चीली प्रवृत्ति के लोग होते हैं. उन्हें अधिक धन खर्च करने की आदत होती है. वहीं जिन लोगों के माथे के दाहिने हिस्से में तिल होता है, उनकी आर्थिक स्थिति काफी मजबूत होती है. जिन लोगों के माथे के बीच में तिल होता है उन्हें शास्त्रों में भाग्यशाली माना गया है.

॥ ज्योतिष ॥

पंचक में क्यों नहीं किये जाते हैं शुभ कार्य

श्रीपति त्रिपाठी, ज्योतिषाचार्य

पंचक को हिंदू पंचांग के अनुसार बहुत अशुभ काल माना जाता है. ऐसी मान्यता है कि इस दौरान शुभ कार्य से बचना चाहिए और कुछ उपाय करके इसके बुरे प्रभाव को दूर करना चाहिए, ताकि बड़ी समस्या से बचा जा सके. धनिष्ठा, शतभिषा, पूर्वा भाद्रपद, उत्तर भाद्रपद एवं रेवती कुछ ऐसे ही अशुभ नक्षत्रों के नाम हैं, जिन्हें काफी अशुभ माना जाता है. धनिष्ठा के प्रारंभ से लेकर रेवती के अंत तक का समय काफी अशुभ माना गया है, इसे पंचक कहा जाता है. ज्योतिषशास्त्र के अनुसार इन पांच दिनों में न तो दक्षिण दिशा की ओर यात्रा करनी चाहिए, न घर की छत या खाट बनवानी चाहिए और न ही ईंधन का सामान इकट्ठा करना चाहिए.

ज्योतिषशास्त्रियों के अनुसार पंचक भी अलग-अलग प्रकार के होते हैं, जैसे- रोग पंचक, राज पंचक, अग्नि पंचक, मृत्यु पंचक, चोर पंचक.

रोग पंचक: अगर पंचक का प्रारंभ रविवार से हो रहा होता है, तो यह रोग पंचक कहा जाता है. इसके प्रभाव में आकर व्यक्ति शारीरिक और मानसिक परेशानियों का सामना करता है. इस दौरान किसी भी प्रकार का शुभ कार्य निषेध माना गया है. मांगलिक कार्यों के लिए यह पांच दिन अनुपयुक्त हैं.

राज पंचक: सोमवार से शुरू हुआ पंचक राज पंचक होता

ज्योतिष के अनुसार पंचक काल के दौरान शुभ कार्य करने से बचना चाहिए, ताकि जीवन में कोई बड़ी समस्या न आये .

है, यह पंचक काफी शुभ माना जाता है. इस दौरान सरकारी कार्यों में सफलता हासिल होती है और बिना किसी बाधा के संपत्ति से जुड़े मामलों का निदान होता है.

राशिफल

मेष सरकारी सेवा से जुड़े जातकों को अनुकूल परिस्थितियों का लाभ मिलेगा. जमीन-जायदद से संबंधित काम बनेंगे. दोस्तों से संबंधों में सुधार व मधुरता आयेगी.

वृष महत्वपूर्ण कामों में रुकवटें बनी रहेंगी, शत्रु हावी हो सकते हैं. आर्थिक परेशानी दूर होगी. विशिष्टजनों के सहयोग से विवादास्पद मामलें दूर होंगे.

मिथुन घर में अविवाहित बच्चों के रिश्ते आधेरे. समाज में लोग आपका फायदा उठेंगे. चलते काम में बाधा हो सकती है. उदर रोग, बुखार और से परेशान हो सकते हैं.

कर्क राजकीय पक्ष से संबंधित काम होने की संभावना. राजनीति के क्षेत्र में ऊंचाई हासिल करेंगे. शुभ समाचार की प्राप्ति होगी. बच्चों की तरफ से खुशखबरी प्राप्त होगी.

सिंह आज का दिन सुख-शांति से व्यतीत होगा. घर में खुशी का माहौल रहेगा. व्यावहारिक कुशलता एवं बौद्धिक चतुरता से अनेक समस्याओं का समाधान निकलेगा.

कन्या चिरपरिचित लोगों से मुलाकात होगी. अनायास धन व कार्य की प्राप्ति होगी. अपनी सुझबुझ से सारे कार्य बना लेंगे. आर्थिक स्थिति अनुकूल सुदृढ़ होगी.

तुला नौकरी में नया पद मिलने की संभावना है. महत्वपूर्ण कार्य में सफलता. महिला वर्ग को संपर्क से लाभ होगा. छात्रों के लिए समय उत्साहवर्धक रहेगा.

वृश्चिक संतान पक्ष की तरफ से कोई शुभ समाचार मिलेगा. मान-यश-प्रतिष्ठा में वृद्धि होगी. विवाहादि शुभ कार्य में व्यस्त रहेंगे. मनपसंद उद्धार मिलेंगे.

धनु सफलता आपके दरवाजे पर दस्तक देगी. सरकारी कार्य में प्रगति होगी. हर्षदायक समाचारों की प्राप्ति. धनलाभ होगा. बेरोजगारों को रोजगार मिलेगा.

मकर मन उच्चाभिलाषी रहेगा. रोजगार संबंधी समस्याएं हल होंगी. नये कार्य की योजना सफल होगी. व्यापार में अपेक्षित सफलता मिलेगी.

शब्दपहेली

798

वायें से दायें

- जल्दी चिढ़ने वाला, बात-बात पर अप्रसन्न होने वाला (4)
- माथा-पच्ची करना, अधिक सोच-विचार करना (2,3)
- नीला वस्त्र पहनने वाला (4)
- प्रलय, लोप, नाश, घुलना (3)
- कचहरी का एक कर्मचारी, निरीक्षक (3)
- उम्दापन, सुंदरता (4)
- जिसकी चाह न हो (4)
- आगे के लिए टाला हुआ (3)
- लोभ, लोलुपता (3)
- लिखने की मसि, स्याही (4)


12 स्वीकार करना (2,3)

13 कलापूर्ण, कलाकारी से युक्त (4)

15 वीरों के लिए जो उचित कार्य माना जाता है (4)


18 सच्चाई, नीयत (3)

शब्दपहेली उत्तर



॥ धर्म-कर्म ॥

कैसे ज़कात देना बताया गया फर्ज



जिन लोगों को ज़कात का माल देना जायज़ है, वे सात हैं - 1. फकीर 2. मिरक़ीन 3. कर्जदार 4. मुसाफ़िर 5. आमिल 6. मुकातिब 7. फी सबीलल्लाह.	
फ़कीर	वह शख्स है, जिसके पास कुछ माल है, मगर निसाब से कम है, मगर उसका सवाल करके मांगना नाजायज़ है .
मिरक़ीन	वह शख्स है, जिसके पास कुछ न हो, न खाने को ग़ल्ला और न पहनने को कपड़े हो, मिरक़ीन को सवाल करना भी हलाल है .
कर्जदार	वह शख्स है, जिसके ज़िम्मे कर्ज़ हो, उसे जकात देना वाजिब बताया गया है .
मुसाफ़िर	वह शख्स है, जिसके पास सफ़र की हाल में माल न रहा हो, उसे जकात देना जायज़ है .
आमिल	वह शख्स है, जिसको बादशाह इस्लाम ने जकात वसूल करने के लिए मुक़र्रर किया हो .
मुकातिब	वह गुलाम या नौकर है, जो अपने मालिक को माल देकर आज़ाद होना चाहे .
फी सबीलल्लाह	यानी राहें खुदा में खर्च करना . इसकी कई सूरतें हैं, जैसे कोई तालिबे इल्म है, जो इल्मेदीन पढ़ता है, उसे भी जकात दे सकते हैं .

॥ व्रत-त्योहार - ॥

सुहागिन स्त्रियों के लिए बेहद खास है वट सावित्री व्रत

हिंदू धर्म में वट सावित्री व्रत सुहागिन स्त्रियों के लिए बेहद खास है. मान्यता है कि इस व्रत को रखने से पति पर आये संकट चले जाते हैं और आयु लंबी हो जाती है. यही नहीं, अगर दीपाय जीवन में कोई परेशानी चल रही हो तो वह भी इस व्रत के प्रताप से दूर हो जाते हैं. सुहागिन महिलाएं अपने पति की लंबी उम्र और सुखद वैवाहिक जीवन को कामना करते हुए इस दिन वट यानी कि बरगद के पेड़ के नीचे पूजा-अर्चना करती हैं. इस दिन सावित्री और सत्यवान की कथा सुनने का विधान है. मान्यता है कि इस कथा को सुनने से मनवांछित फल की प्राप्ति होती है. पौराणिक कथा के अनुसार सावित्री मृत्यु के देवता यमराज से अपने पति सत्यवान के प्राण वापस ले आयी थी.

वट सावित्री व्रत कब है - 'स्कंद' और 'भविष्योत्तर' पुराण के अनुसार वट सावित्री का व्रत हिंदू कैलेंडर की ज्येष्ठ शुक्ल पूर्णिमा तिथि पर करने का विधान है. वहीं, 'निर्णयामृत' इत्यादि ग्रंथों के अनुसार वट सावित्री व्रत पूजा ज्येष्ठ शुक्ल पक्ष की अमावस्या पर की जाती है. उत्तर भारत में यह व्रत ज्येष्ठ कृष्ण अमावस्या को ही किया जाता है. ग्रेगोरियन कैलेंडर के अनुसार यह व्रत हर साल मई या जून महीने में आता है. इस बार व्रत 3 जून को है.

व्रत का महत्व - वट का मतलब होता है बरगद का पेड़. बरगद में कई जटाएं निकली होती हैं. कहते हैं कि इसी पेड़ के नीचे सावित्री ने अपने पति को यमराज से वापस पाया था. सावित्री को देवी का रूप माना जाता है. हिंदू पुराण में बरगद के पेड़े में ब्रह्मा, विष्णु और महेश का वास बताया जाता है. मान्यता के अनुसार ब्रह्मा वृक्ष की जड़ में, विष्णु इसके तने में और शिव ऊपरी भाग में रहते हैं. इसलिए माना जाता है कि इस पेड़ के नीचे बैठकर पूजा करने से हर मनोकामना पूरी होती है. वट सावित्री व्रत करने और इसकी कथा सुनने से उपासक के वैवाहिक जीवन या जीवन साथी की आयु पर किसी प्रकार का कोई संकट आया भी हो, तो टल जाता है.

तिथि और शुभ मुहूर्त : अमावस्या तिथि प्रारंभ : 02 जून, 2019 को शाम 04:39 मिनट से अमावस्या तिथि समाप्त : 03 जून, 2019 को दोपहर 03:31 मिनट तक

सुडोकू नवताल

पहेली नंबर 4187

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

19 कल्पना से परे (5)

सुडोकू नवताल - 4186 का टप खिन्न, उदास, रोगी (4)

ऊपर से नीचे

3	9	7	5	1		चित्रण या दीया रखने का आभ
1	2	8	6	2		फैटरेट्टी आदि में से धुआं आ
6	4	5	2			खाली नली (3)
5	7	3	4	6		3 रंगट खड़े होना, लड़ से कांप
2	1	9	7	3		4 अचंचित, जो जायज़ न हो (4
4	8	6	3			5 कलकत्ता, दामदूर (3)
						7 निर्माण बनामा (4)
9	3	2	8			10 यूथथीम, वस्तुतः, वास्तव में,
7	6	1	9	3		11 रोचना, आइ देना सहारा देन
8	5	4	1	7	2	लगाना (3)