

The revenue challenge

The new government must focus on its revenue streams as it prepares for its first Budget



RAISINA HILL

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How much of the expenditure compression during 2018-19 has been achieved by deferring expenditure to the following year? Or how much of it was the result of off-Budget borrowing by public sector entities?

The Union government had cut its total expenditure by about ₹1.45 trillion over its revised estimates for 2018-19. Of

this, ₹13,000 crore was cut on account of capital expenditure and ₹1.32 trillion under revenue expenditure.

As has already been reported (*see: <https://mybs.in/2X6k17I?>*), the bulk of the expenditure compression was achieved through off-Budget borrowing. The burden of such borrowing has fallen on many public sector undertakings (PSU) such as Food Corporation of India (FCI), Housing and Urban Development Corporation, National Housing Bank and Rural Electrification Corporation.

Even though there is no official confirmation of such borrowing, the figures put out by the Controller General of Accounts (CGA) have revealed it all. For instance, the CGA's 2018-19 figures show how the food subsidy bill came down by a whopping 40 per cent over ₹1.71 trillion mentioned in the revised estimates.

The decline in the food subsidies bill accounts for over half of the total revenue expenditure compression. That the entire burden has been shifted to

the FCI can be gauged from the fact that the April 2019 numbers reveal no impact of any deferred expenditure.

In April 2019, the government released ₹46,862 crore of food subsidy, compared to ₹48,430 crore in the same month of 2018. Even as a percentage of the Budget estimates for the two years, the government's food expenditure bill was lower at 25 per cent in 2019 compared to 29 per cent in 2018. Clearly, there is no impact of deferred expenditure here. Instead the figures indicate a small compression.

In other words, the government may have managed to completely free itself of any deferred expenditure on account of food subsidy in the current financial year. The borrowing burden is now on the FCI. What this means for FCI's financial health is of course a different matter and a deeply worrying phenomenon for India's public finance.

In contrast, the government's subsidy expenditure on account of fertilisers and petroleum products shot up hugely in April 2019. Compared to

a subsidy spend of ₹2,582 crore for petroleum and ₹7,124 crore for fertilisers in April 2018, this year the same expenditure has more than doubled to ₹5,281 crore and ₹16,943 crore, respectively. This is puzzling. In the final CGA figures for petroleum and fertiliser subsidies during 2018-19, there was no major reduction, compared to the revised estimates. Yet, the April 2019 expenditure shows a significant jump.

It is, however, clear that the government's major subsidies bill on account of food, petroleum and fertilisers will not be a cause for concern during 2019-20. Without the burden of any deferred expenditure, meeting the major subsidies bill of ₹2.96 trillion should not be a problem, as long as international crude oil prices remain within a range of \$65-70 a barrel.

The CGA figures for April 2019 also outline the revenue challenges before the finance ministry. The ministry team, currently busy preparing the full Budget for 2019-20, must have noted that the net tax revenue in April 2019 was estimated at ₹71,637 crore, which represents a 24.5 per cent increase over the net tax revenue of ₹57,533 crore in the same month of 2018.

This level of revenue growth would have been a cause for celebration in the

normal course. But, thanks to the sharp drop in actual revenue collections compared to the revised estimates, this underlines the huge revenue challenge that lies ahead. The net tax revenue growth target for the current financial year is now as high as 29.5 per cent. Can the net tax revenue growth be raised further during the course of the year? Or should the Budget makers recognise the challenge and try to make the targets look more realistic?

Non-debt capital receipt is the only item on the revenue side that provides some comfort. The government booked a revenue of ₹2,350 crore of revenue from disinvestment in April 2019. Of this, ₹476 crore was mobilised by selling 12 per cent stake in Rail Vikas Nigam Limited through an initial public offering and ₹1,874 crore was raised by sale of enemy property. This was substantially higher than ₹435 crore of such receipts recorded in April 2018.

Even though the government may have been in election mode in April 2019, it seems both tax revenues and disinvestments did well, bringing down the overall fiscal deficit as per cent of the Budget estimates compared to the same month of 2018-19. Perhaps, more attention needs to be paid to these two areas as the new government readies to present its first Budget on July 5.

For Reserve Bank of India, small is beautiful

The small finance banks should be rechristened national development banks as their mandate is financial inclusion



BANKER'S TRUST

TAMAL BANDYOPADHYAY

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) will soon open its window accepting applications for small finance banks' (SFBs) licence through the year. The draft guidelines for such "on-tap" licensing is likely to be ready by August. The decision is important in many ways.

First, it encourages the non-banking finance companies (NBFCs), including microfinance institutions (MFIs), to become banks. This will take care of liquidity problem (in the long run), governance and financial inclusion. Second, it charts out the glide path: Every entity that wants to become a universal bank will have to take this route of transformation. It also means that the on-tap licensing window for universal bank is shut, for the time being. Finally, it demonstrates the Indian central bank's confidence in the new set of banks, many of which are completing their second year of existence.

The RBI had given in-principle approval to 10 entities for entering the

small finance banking space in September 2015. Eight of them are MFIs, one an NBFC and another, a local area bank. Along with the SFBs, the RBI also gave licences to 11 payments banks.

If nothing else, the numbers — 72 applications for SFBs and 41 for payments banks — illustrate how starved of banking services is Asia's third largest economy.

The SFBs are subject to all prudential norms like any other commercial bank and, on top of that, they need to give 75 per cent of their loans to the so-called priority sector (for universal banks it is 40 per cent); up to ₹10 lakh of such loans do not need to be backed by any collateral security. And, 50 per cent of an SFB loan portfolio should constitute smaller loans of not more than ₹25 lakh. An RBI review of the performance of the SFBs reveals they have achieved their priority sector targets and the mandate for financial inclusion.

Payments bank is a different story. It is not allowed to give any loans; it can take deposits (maximum ₹1 lakh) and 75 per cent of such deposits will have to be invested in government securities while the rest can be placed as deposits with other commercial banks. Quite a few entities have surrendered their licences as they found it difficult to discover the right business model.

Three small finance banks are listed on bourses; their financials are in the public domain. The performance of the rest varies between good and indifferent.

What are their challenges? Indeed, technology is a challenge but a bigger challenge is human resources — getting

the right talent on board as many such banks are headquartered in small cities and they can't pay the top dollar. A far bigger challenge is compliance with RBI's regulatory norms. Migration from a light-touch regulation to a highly regulated arena is not easy. In private, hand on heart, many promoters of such banks say the cost of regulation is too high and, given a choice, they would have loved to go back to the MFI days. Many of them are still grappling with the task of deposit mobilisation. Most senior citizens are rate-shoppers but higher interest rate may not be the hook to attract others who look for many financial products under one roof.

Despite all these, the SFBs are a remarkable story in a credit-starved nation. While the payments bank model is yet to pass the test of time, the SFBs will create a more diverse banking sector. Going by the December 2018 data of MicroFinance Institutions Network, a self-regulatory body, SFBs' share in the microfinance pie is little over 18 per cent (₹30,187 crore) in contrast to MFIs' 36 per cent (₹60,631 crore), banks' 36.5 per cent (₹53,605 crore) and NBFCs' 10.7 per cent (₹17,852 crore). Others account for 2.4 per cent of the small loan market (₹4,010 crore).

Since the RBI wants to take a relook at the licensing norms before opening the licensing window, here are a few unsolicited suggestions:

■ The dividing line between the SFBs and MFIs are quite vague. In fact, many SFBs are primarily banking on the MFI business model even after becoming a bank. As a result, there is scope for regulatory arbitrage and confusion.

For instance, a small borrower cannot take money from more than two MFIs but this restriction is not applicable to SFBs or universal banks. There are banks liberal in giving loans to the



NEW STRATEGY The RBI as a regulator must create a separate division to regulate SFBs. Its inspection team needs to be trained separately as SFBs are a different kettle of fish

small borrowers to prevent them from approaching SFBs and MFIs. Besides, the MFIs are not allowed to extend more than ₹1 lakh loan to any single borrower but the same borrower can take double the amount from SFBs and universal banks. This leads to over-leveraging and can spell trouble in future. This is important as 85 per cent of the MFI loans need to be given to group borrowers who do not need to offer any collateral.

■ The capital requirement for SFBs must be raised from ₹100 crore. They need money to put in the right technology platform and creating the branch network.

■ The SFBs could be allowed to continue with the bank borrowing for first three years of their existence as it takes time to build the deposit franchise. An abrupt transition is not healthy either

for capital or liquidity.

■ Now that the RBI is ready to welcome more SFBs, the regulator must create a separate division for their regulations. Its inspection team needs to be trained separately as SFBs are a different kettle of fish like, say NBFCs and regional rural banks. There should be a separate supervisory cadre for these banks.

■ There are quite a few micro issues too. For instance, for securitisation of a micro loan by a bank, the interest rate is capped at 8 per cent over a bank's MCLR (marginal cost of fund based lending rate) but in reality such loans are priced much higher. Similarly, affordable housing loans can be given the same status as agriculture loans. This will encourage the SFBs to get into this segment in a big way and address the housing shortage. This also strengthens the SFB balance sheets as such loans are secured.

■ Finally, the SFBs should be rechristened as National Development Bank. They are in the business of financial inclusion. More importantly, the "small finance bank" sobriquet creates confusion and negativity among the depositors. Most of them are scared to park their money with this genre of financial intermediaries as they are not a "bank" but a "small finance bank". The fact that they are licensed to do business by the RBI does not cut ice. This slows down the deposit mobilisation process. Unless they are able to raise cheap deposits, they cannot pare the cost of their loans. So, the very purpose of creating the new sets of banks gets defeated.

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INSIGHT

Building a specialised supervisory cadre at the central bank



AMOL AGRAWAL

During the RBI board meeting held in May 2019, the central bank announced creating a specialised supervisory and regulatory cadre. The board noted the growing complexities and interconnectedness of the financial sector and wished to strengthen the regulation and supervision of commercial banks, urban cooperative banks and non-banking financial companies (NBFCs). In the June 2019 monetary policy, RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das termed this as a "major decision".

This is welcome news but what is not clear is the additional roles this cadre will play. The RBI already has two separate departments for this purpose: Department of Banking Regulation (DBR) and Department of Banking Supervision (DBS). The DBR, as the name suggests, looks at the overall functions of banking regulation that include licensing, branch expansion, maintenance of statutory reserves, operations, amalgamation, reconstruction and liquidation of banking companies. The DBS, on the other hand, deals with on-site and off-site surveillance of banks. Likewise, there are separate departments for cooperatives supervision and regulation and another department for

non-banking regulation.

The history of how the RBI has organised itself over time to deal with banking regulation is quite interesting. At the time of the inception of the RBI, banks were governed by the Indian Companies Act (1913), which did not define banking but had certain provisions that allowed a firm to be called a bank. Thus, the first task of the RBI was to provide a definition of a bank. Under the amendment in Indian Companies Act, a bank was defined as "a company which carries on as its principal business the accepting of deposits of money on current account or otherwise, subject to withdrawal by cheque, draft or order". The amendment also prescribed a minimum paid-up capital of ₹50,000 for banks and a cash-reserve ratio on the bank's deposits.

Despite these changes, the RBI top brass wished for a comprehensive banking regulation. The wishes became an urgency as the failure of Travancore and Quilon Bank (formed by the merger of Travancore National Bank and Quilon Bank) in 1938 exposed the inadequacy of the banking laws and governance. The RBI studied banking laws in several countries such as Canada, Australia, the US etc and proposed large-scale changes to the government. The proposals were delayed due to World War II and then India's Independence. Most of these proposals became part of Banking Regulation Act (1949) that specified only banking firms should use the word bank and gave the RBI powers to inspect banks at will.

Institutionally, the RBI had established Department of Banking Operations (DBO) in 1945 to deal with all banking problems and inspection. In 1950, it established Department of

Banking Development (DBD) following suggestions of Rural Banking Committee. Both DBO and DBD were very powerful departments in the early part of the RBI's history. The two were merged in 1965 to become the all-powerful Department of Banking Operations and Development or DBOD as financial market participants would call mostly with fear. In 1966, the RBI established a separate Department of Non-Banking Companies for regulating the NBFC sector.

Post the reforms of 1991, there were two more changes. The Narasimham Committee on financial sector reforms suggested streamlining of regulation and supervision which had become over-regulated and over-administered. It proposed separating the supervision function from other functions of the RBI and establishing a quasi-autonomous Banking Supervisory Board under the aegis of the RBI. The board would supervise not just banks but also NBFCs and development financial institutions. The board would be chaired by the governor and have three members drawn from different fields and one representative from the government. Accordingly, then finance minister Manmohan Singh announced establishing a Board of Financial Supervision in his Budget speech of 1993-94. The RBI also established a new Department of Financial Supervision to aid the BFS. However, the composition of BFS was different with four members drawn from the central board of the RBI. Over time, the scope of BFS was enlarged to include cooperatives, RRBs and primary dealers.

In 2014, the RBI made a Committee on Organisational



LACK OF SUPERVISION It would have been much better if the RBI's central board had highlighted where the existing departments fell short and then suggested a remedy

Restructuring of the Reserve Bank (Chair: Deepak Mohanty). Based on the Committees' suggestions, the name of DBOD was changed to DBR (name of Rural Planning and Credit Department (RPCD) was also changed to Financial Inclusion and Development Department (FIDD)). The RBI also separated the regulation and supervision tasks and placed DBR and DBS separately under two deputy governors and executive directors.

It is also interesting to note that RBI is not the lone central bank here. Before the crisis, central banks mainly looked at monetary policy and banking supervision was either delegated to a separate agency or demoted to a lower role. After the crisis, this thinking has reversed significantly. The US Federal Reserve now has a vice-chairperson for supervision (currently Randal Quarles) and releases a separate report on supervision and regulation. The European Central Bank is building a single supervision board (SSB), whose purpose is to build a harmonious system of banking supervi-

sion across member economies. The vice-chair of SSB is from the ECB's executive board and ECB separately nominates four members to the board (currently all positions are vacant barring one). The Bank of England is behind Prudential Regulatory Authority (PRA), which regulates and supervises around 1,500 banks, building societies, credit unions, insurers and major investment firms. Of the four deputy governors, one is CEO of PRA (currently Sam Woods).

These are interesting times for central banks. They have for long obsessed with monetary policy and sidelined the more basic function of banking supervision. The blame for the ongoing banking crises lies not just with bankers but also with the supervisors. Critics might say we have had banking regulation for ages now and new regulations will hardly help. However, what we are talking about is supervision, which is different. Regulation is writing rules and supervision is enforcing them. In fact, most banking policy action is around regulation and less about supervision.

Having said that, in the RBI's case, banking supervision has always been part of its DNA. It would have been much better if the RBI's central board had highlighted where the existing departments fell short and then suggested a remedy. Critics have pointed to the RBI's lack of supervision in the ongoing NPA crisis and fraud cases. Hopefully, the central bank will clarify the role of this new cadre and how it is going to add value to the RBI and the Indian banking system.

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CHINESE WHISPERS

Politics of business

The three-language proposal in the draft National Education Policy has become the focus of a heated political debate in Tamil Nadu, where it has quickly taken the shape of an anti-Hindi agitation by Dravidian parties. What is interesting is a tweet by Bharatiya Janata Party leader H Raja listing out the schools run by Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK) leaders in the state. Raja has alleged that DMK leaders, including president M K Stalin's daughter who runs a school, are up in arms because their business (of running schools) would be affected if the three-language formula were to be implemented. In Chennai city alone, DMK leaders and their family members run at least five schools, while across the state, close to a dozen schools are run by them, alleged the BJP leader.

Singur back on Mamata's table



The Trinamool Congress' recent loss in Singur, part of the Hooghly Lok Sabha seat in West Bengal, has hurt the party perhaps the most. In an internal meeting, Trinamool President and Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee (*pictured*) reportedly told her colleagues the defeat was "a shame" for the party, and that "it is our fault that we lost Singur". Understandable, because it was her agitation in Singur against the use of farmland to build factories that won her the CM's chair in 2011. The Left had sanctioned a Tata car factory there but the project was abandoned because of her agitation. The BJP's Locket Chatterjee won the seat. To regain lost ground, Banerjee will launch her Janasanjog Yatra or 'a connect with the people' campaign on July 21 as part of the Trinamool's annual Martyr's Day rally.

U-turn for B-team?

Before the Lok Sabha polls, the Congress had accused Maharashtra's Vanchit Bahujan Aghadi (VBA), led by Dalit leader Prakash Ambedkar, of being a B-team of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP); now it appears the Maharashtra state unit of the Congress is in talks with the VBA for a pre-poll tie-up for the upcoming assembly election. Ambedkar is a grandson of the architect of India's Constitution, B R Ambedkar, and his party is backed by Hyderabad politician Asaduddin Owaisi's All India Majlis-e-Ittehadul Muslimeen. The two fought the Lok Sabha elections together, notching up a sizeable portion of the votes, while failing to win even one of the 48 seats in the state. The Congress' desperation is understandable — there is a threat of a mass exodus, a la the Trinamool in West Bengal, with Maharashtra Congress President Ashok Chavan alleging that Chief Minister Devendra Fadnis is calling the Congress' Assembly lawmakers and urging them to join the BJP.

LETTERS

Rajnath's silence

For many who had witnessed Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) veteran L K Advani being insulted many times in public by BJP leaders, the slighting of Defence Minister Rajnath Singh, first by removing him as home minister and then by omitting his name from the various cabinet committees would not have come as a surprise at all.

What is really baffling is Singh's marked silence over his unceremonious shift to defence and his meek protest against his missing name in various cabinet committees. At first instance itself, when his self respect was needled by stripping him of his home portfolio, should he not have put down his papers and called it quits?

Further, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, who is much junior to him, is present in almost all the cabinet sub-committees. Isn't that an insult to injury?

Shalini Gerald Chennai

A service to people

Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister Jagan Mohan Reddy's experiment of appointing five deputy chief ministers to be selected from the SC, ST, backward classes and other minority communities is going to set a precedent in Indian politics. Giving a fixed term of two-and-a-half years only to each of the ministers is also a refreshing idea that will keep the other MLAs on their toes in working for the people and not get complacent. Being complacent might make them lose their chance of getting a ministry in the second half. Let the chief ministers of other states too emulate Reddy's example for which he deserves kudos. Politics needs to be viewed as an opportunity to service people rather than a plum profession.

Brij B Goyal Ludhiana

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Over to banks now

New NPA resolution norms are finely balanced

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has adopted a carrot-and-stick approach to the resolution of stressed assets. The new norms released last Friday have empowered banks to hammer out a resolution but have also put in place enough safeguards against any intent to ever-green stressed accounts. Lenders will be subject to stringent action, including higher provisioning and monetary penalties. Resolution plans shall provide for payment not less than the liquidation value due to dissenting lenders, the RBI said in its latest framework.

The most substantive change in the new stressed asset resolution norms two months after the Supreme Court struck down Mint Road's February 12 circular is that banks now get a 30-day window to decide if an account is a non-performing asset (NPA) as distinct from the earlier one-day default norm, which was both harsh and impractical. The revised circular gives non-banking financial companies (NBFCs), small finance banks, Nabard, Exim Bank and Sidbi a place around the resolution table.

The idea is obviously to make sure that most cases should be settled within the new framework, with the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (IBC) being the last option. While lenders have to be proactive, the RBI will continue to direct banks to start insolvency proceedings for specific defaults. If anything, pressure has been increased on the banks, which have to mandatorily sign an inter-creditor agreement (ICA). The ICA will provide any decision agreed by lenders representing 75 per cent in terms of voting share or 60 per cent of them in terms of numbers. Banks will have to work double-quick around their internal bureaucracies to ink an ICA within a month of default.

Failure to see the resolution plan (RP) through will entail an additional 35 per cent in provisioning — 20 per cent if they can't make it work within 180 days and an additional 15 per cent if no resolution is found within a year. The price to be paid by way of additional provisioning will be of worry for state-run banks, which have been recently capitalised and also the ones which continue to be under the RBI's Prompt Corrective Action framework. But it is unlikely the more prudent banks will be unduly bothered on enhanced provisioning as they would have already done so for the entire exposure on their own.

While the central bank's norms will apply to defaulters of ₹2,000 crore immediately, the same for those between ₹1,500 crore and less than ₹2,000 crore will kick in only from January 1, 2020. Such a staggered approach has raised a few concerns among banks — visibility is poor as to how they are to proceed from here on in the cases of exposures of less than ₹2,000 crore. Smaller banks in particular are worried on this aspect.

The thinking behind the revised circular is that the recognition of default or accounting for deterioration in the quality of assets should be independent of the reasons for such default or deterioration. The best part of the new norms is that they retain the spirit of the February 12 circular and offer a mechanism that will enable resolutions through requisite majority. The onus now is on banks to speed up resolution as the earlier circular impacted loans worth ₹3.8 lakh crore across 70 large borrowers.

GSP fallout

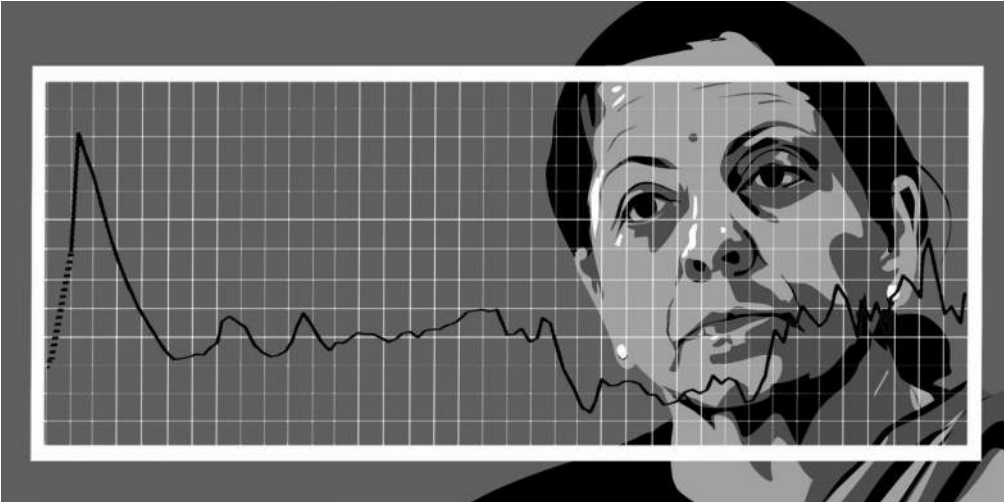
Govt must seek to restore competitive edge of exports

Trade relations between India and the US have continued to be an issue. The US administration has confirmed that India will be no longer be considered a developing nation for the purpose of benefiting from the Generalised System of Preferences (GSP). The GSP provides tariff-free access to the US market for companies from developing countries in certain sectors. But, the US has removed India from the GSP because it has not assured the US that it will provide reasonable and equitable access from America to its markets. This is an odd reason since the whole point of the GSP is not equity but special status to developing countries, which are deemed worthy of preferential access to US markets. The idea here is essentially that India has failed to convince the US government that it is in fact still a developing country, unlike, say, China. Some compromises, especially on poorly drafted domestic measures such as price caps for medical equipment and e-commerce policy, should have been attempted with the US. This is unquestionably a failure of both regular and economy diplomacy.

New Union Commerce Minister Piyush Goyal has said Indian exporters do not see the GSP withdrawal as a matter of "life and death". No one can quarrel with his comments that industry and exporters should not depend on government subsidies and instead focus on becoming more competitive. But the effects of this withdrawal of the GSP should not be minimised in any manner. Some senior government and other officials have been almost blasé about the effects, minimising the gains to India under the scheme as "only" \$260 million a year. It is true that goods worth "only" \$6 billion will be affected of the exports worth \$54 billion from India to the US. But that is patently a wrong way of looking at the issue. There are specific sectors that will be hard hit because they operate on tight margins and the removal of tariff-free access to the US market will render them suddenly uncompetitive — they may be, on average, 7 per cent more expensive. Some of the sectors affected include imitation jewellery, leather articles other than footwear, pharmaceuticals and surgical instruments, chemicals, and plastics. Several of these sectors are dominated by small- and medium-sized companies that will have trouble staying competitive. A further fall in exports could not just keep growth from recovering, but also be another big negative for jobs.

The government will now have to work out how another negative shock to exports can be avoided. The first task must be to ensure that not too many exporters go under because of an inability to handle the transition. There must then be efforts to render the exporters in these sectors more competitive and cost-efficient by at least the 7 per cent margin that they have lost, thanks to the removal of tariff-free access. Direct subsidies or tax breaks should be used only as a last resort, such as has been created for the textiles sector under the Rebate of State and Central Levies and Taxes scheme. However, tax breaks cannot be a sustained solution either for textiles or for any other sector.

ILLUSTRATION: BINAY SINHA



A growth Budget

The Budget speech must include reform measures for PSU banks, a commitment to boost PSU bank lending, and specific measures to resolve the problems faced by NBFCs

In less than a month from now the new Finance Minister, Nirmala Sitharaman, will present the first Budget of the re-elected government. Her challenge is to combine a sense of continuity with a promise of change to meet the high expectations aroused by the election campaign. But at the present stage this should be subordinated to the need to give an appropriate tonic to an economy that is showing signs of illness.

The litany of economic woes that she has to take into account is long and includes:

- A steady decline in the growth rate of GDP, which has come down to 5.8 per cent in the Jan-Mar quarter of 2018-19;
- Fiscal pressures because of a large shortfall in tax collections, leading to a real deficit of over 4 per cent of GDP in 2018-19, disguised by transferring an unprecedented volume of expenditure to this, the following financial year;
- Major problems in non-banking financial companies, with risks of default and serious fraud charges, which will put off investors and dry up flows to borrowers;
- Continuing balance sheet problems in the corporate sector with a quarter of large companies preoccupied with deleveraging and survival;
- Small- and medium-enterprises facing difficult credit conditions;
- Continuing concerns about the slow pace of job creation and farmer distress;
- A global economy threatened by the confrontation between the USA and Iran, the USA and China, and the slowdown in the prime drivers of global growth.



NITIN DESAI

However, the first Budget of a new finance minister and a newly elected government cannot be just a repair job. Words and tone matter and the FM must fully use the communication skills she demonstrated when she was a party spokesperson. But what is the message she should seek to convey at the present juncture?

The finance minister's speech could project the Budget as the delivery of promises about infrastructure and welfare spending that figured in the ruling party's election manifesto. This option is not available this year as the recent data on tax collection trends do not leave much room for any big increase in public spending.

She could fulfil a similar political purpose by spelling out details of some of the major reform measures that are part of the manifesto. But that will be difficult as these details require more time to work out than the thirty days available to her before she presents the Budget.

A more standard option would be to focus on fiscal rectitude and the commitment to stay within the short- and medium-term deficit targets. But that may not be plausible, given the fact that the real deficit is running way above the target set in 2018-19 Budget and the Interim Budget tax projections look unrealistic.

The economy does face inflation risks because of the possibility of an oil price increase and the impact of a delayed monsoon on food prices. But these are supply-side pressures, which should not be met by demand-side containment measures like high interest rates or tight deficit control. Hence the

How not to waste the NBFC crisis

Over the last nine months, a few non-banking financial companies (NBFCs) like Dewan Housing and Finance (DHFL), Infrastructure Leasing & Financial Services (IL&FS) and those of the Anil Ambani group are unravelling like a slow train wreck. This has caused enormous turbulence in the financial sector and in a small segment of the stock market. Additionally, banks and mutual funds are feeling the heat because they have lent to these troubled finance companies. How bad is the crisis and what are the lessons from it? The first thing we know, unsurprisingly, is that public sector banks (PSBs) are at the forefront when it comes to lending to finance companies. They include State Bank of India, at one time the elite among the PSBs, and now the poster boy of bad lending.

Only a few bad apples

The second thing we know is that this crisis is not ravaging the entire NBFC sector as it did in the late 1980s and again in the mid-1990s. In those periods, dozens of leasing and finance companies, many of them small fly-by-night operations, went belly up. Over the years, the regulation of finance companies has vastly improved and most of them are led by a better quality of corporate managers. That is why only three NBFCs are affected by the current liquidity and solvency crisis. In all three cases, the debacle is an outcome of over-ambitious managements trying to boost capital, loan books and profits by hook or by crook.

Just look around and you will see dozens of NBFCs like Bajaj Finance, Cholamandalam Finance, Shriram Finance, HDB Financial Services (a retail finance company of HDFC Bank), PNB Housing, Canfin Homes, and LIC Housing (in housing finance) are totally unaffected. Last year

they improved their profits and loan quality. Only a few finance companies which lent indiscriminately to the real estate, which siphoned off money and played the market-cap game, are down in the dumps. These, and IL&FS, which is a category by itself, need to be liquidated systematically. So the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) is right; it is not a shadow banking crisis but a problem limited to a few bad eggs.

I cannot emphasise this enough since I see knee-jerk and even alarming policy prescriptions coming from sensible people. Speaking to a television channel, Ajay Piramal, who runs a large finance company called Piramal Enterprises and also has stakes in two Shriram group companies, said the RBI could open "a special window of funds that can be lent to NBFCs. Or if it can take the first loss of, let's say, 10 per cent, and ask banks to lend more to NBFCs". He also suggested that the "RBI can also look at a special purpose vehicle which can lend funds to NBFCs on short-term paper ... besides, there is the ECB (external commercial borrowing) route. Today, housing finance companies can raise money as ECBs only for affordable housing companies. Can they (RBI) make it (available) for all real estate lending ..."

Unless Mr Piramal knows something that no one else does, ideas like asking the RBI to take the first 10 per cent loss for the shenanigans of crooked managements seem extreme. So far, the RBI has kept a distance and said that no special support is needed. What I would like to see Mr Piramal doing (of course without talking about it) is to push the bad actors out of the system while he selectively picks on their better assets to strengthen his own formidable finance operations. This is how the system will be



IRRATIONAL CHOICE

DEBASHIS BASU

recent reduction in interest rates is welcome and will certainly help. But the interest rate cut by itself is not enough. The rate cut must be passed on and the logjam in the capital market needs to be cleared.

The theme of this year's Budget speech should be what the economy badly needs today — a growth booster. Judging by company reports, growth in rural demand for fast-moving consumer goods has slowed. Reported sales figures for automobiles and other durables also suggest a slow-down perhaps because the boost which came from the Seventh Pay Commission bonanza is petering out. The problems of the NBFCs that provided loans for this purpose and for housing may also be a part of the reason. Growth in private corporate investment has been slowing because of the slackening of demand growth and because nearly a quarter of the large corporates are too focused on deleveraging and survival to consider fresh investment. Export growth has also been disappointing. What has kept the overall growth rate going is public spending.

What can the FM do to boost growth and investor sentiment?

She cannot consider a direct fiscal stimulus, given recent trends in tax collections. However, the Budget can help by policy changes that improve the demand prospects for industry. It could aim at bringing new consumers into the aspirational middle class fold perhaps by proposing calibrated indirect tax changes to the GST Council. It should include measures to strengthen the links between defence acquisitions and public procurement for high-tech infrastructure (e.g. metro rail) and domestic manufacturers by bringing them in at the design stage. Another area crying out for major reforms is agricultural marketing and processing. Would she be willing to announce measures that would rescue the dairy, meat-exporting, and leather industries from the challenge they face from *gau rakshaks*? The FM should put together a package of micro-economic measures in a growth-booster package for organised manufacturing and the informal sector, focusing on promoting demand growth and credit flow.

Given the turmoil and confusion in the financial markets, the FM as the controller of institutions that account for 70 per cent of all financial assets will have to deal at length with what she proposes to do. The Budget speech must include reform measures for PSU banks, a commitment to boost PSU bank lending, and specific measures to resolve the problems faced by NBFCs. If Sebi has some bright ideas on promoting domestic private equity and venture funds and for boosting IPO options, particularly for start-ups, the FM must find a place for them in her Budget.

Reforms to sustain long-term growth and employment potential, improve social security and living conditions can come later after they are more fully worked out. Fiscal prudence should not be forgotten; but it should be the sub-text rather than the dominant theme and must rest on plausible projections of revenues and expenditure. This Budget should focus on short-term growth boosters and provide a tonic to strengthen confidence and investor sentiment.

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cleaned up and strengthened, not by asking banks to lend more to bad companies.

And which banks would lend more? Well, good private banks have been cherry-picking good assets already. So, when we say banks should lend more, we are really talking of PSBs, when they have lost quadrillions of rupees through corrupt and incompetent lending in multiple boom-bust cycles over the past 40 years. This policy prescription, of socialising losses after all gains have been privatised by a few crooked promoters, is exactly the opposite of how the capitalist system is supposed to work. Even if we need a bailout, the first thing to do is to sack current promoters and replace them with professionals with a mandate to liquidate the entity at the best price, as the government did with IL&FS. But our PSBs were unable to remove even Naresh Goyal in time and allowed Jet Airways to sink. Hence, a sensible bailout of NBFCs is a pipedream.

The real lesson

The main lesson from this crisis is the role of mutual funds and credit rating agencies, which offered the highest rating to junk paper. Both are regulated by the Securities & Exchange Board of India (Sebi), which needs to pull them up. In the 2017 bull market, the fund industry couldn't cope with the torrent of inflows from people, enticed by the mutual funds' *sahi hai* campaign. The quality of investment declined. However, just as oceans return the garbage we throw in, the market has thrown back the trash that mutual funds sold to hapless investors during the boom. This will happen over and over again, unless Sebi forces rating agencies and mutual funds to have their skin in the game, by changing the basic structure of regulation. Let's not waste this crisis with band-aid bailouts but look for a surgical cure.

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1984 and its afterlife



BOOK REVIEW

LEV MENDES

Shortly after the presidential inauguration of Donald Trump and his counsellor's invocation of "alternative facts," anxious readers, bracing themselves for the worst, propelled George Orwell's *1984* back to the top of the best-seller lists. Published in 1949, under the shadow of Hitler and Stalin, the novel projects a nightmare vision of a future in which truth has been eclipsed. Its inventive vocabulary of state power and deception — Big Brother, Hate Week, Newspeak, double-

think, the Thought Police — clearly resonated with the despair of present-day Americans. As does the very term "Orwellian," used increasingly to describe any number of troubling developments: from Trump's habitual lying to the toxic politicisation of the news media; from the expansion of campus speech codes to Silicon Valley's hijacking of our data and attention (the citizens of *1984* are monitored continuously by "telescreens").

Orwell's novel is the subject of Dorian Lynskey's wide-ranging and sharply written new study, *The Ministry of Truth*. Lynskey, a British journalist and music critic, believes that *1984* — one of the 20th century's most examined artefacts — is actually "more known about than truly known" and sets out to reground it in Orwell's personal and literary development. This is just as well, since Orwell, ever suspi-

cious of armchair intellectualism, made a practice of writing directly from experience, to the point of plunging himself into many of the crises of his day.

In 1936, he joined a coalition of left-wing forces opposing Franco in Spain. Intending to fight fascism, Orwell discovered its diabolical twin, Soviet communism, and became, in Lynskey's words, acutely aware of how "political expediency corrupts moral integrity, language and truth itself." He left Spain a committed anti-communist — and lifelong adversary of Stalin's defenders — and spent the World War II years back home in England. In 1946, Orwell moved to the island of Jura, where, at the age of 45, he completed *1984* shortly before succumbing to tuberculosis.

Lynskey focuses much of his book on the origins and the afterlife of *1984*. He devotes several early chapters to the rise of utopian and dystopian fiction, told through compressed portraits of figures like H G Wells (who "loomed over Orwell's childhood like a planet") and Yevgeny Zamyatin, the

author of *We* — a sort of precursor to "1984." And he documents the various political and cultural responses to the novel, which was a sensation from its first publication.

1984 has inspired writers, artists and other creative types, from Margaret Atwood to David Bowie to Steve Jobs, whose commercial introducing Apple's Macintosh computer famously paid homage to the novel. Its political fate, however, has been somewhat cloudier. What Orwell observed of Dickens, that he is "one of those writers who are well worth stealing," has proved no less true of Orwell himself. Socialists, libertarians, liberals and conservatives alike have vied to remake him in their own image and claim his authority.

Lynskey largely refrains from participating in the quarrel over Orwell's and his novel's true teachings and rightful heirs. If anything, *The Ministry of Truth* can seem too remote at times from its subject matter.

Nor does Lynskey illuminate the literary or intellectual qualities that dis-

tinguish Orwell's novel from its many predecessors and descendants in the dystopian genre. In short, while we learn a great deal about the evolution and influence of *1984* as a cultural phenomenon, we sometimes lose sight, in the thick of Lynskey's historicising, of the novel's intrinsic virtues — of what makes it distinctive and accounts for its terror and fascination in the first place.

Lynskey is surely right, however, to note that the meaning of Orwell's novel has shifted over the decades along with the preoccupations of its readers; and that in our low, dishonest moment, it is "most of all a defence of truth." Reflecting back on the Spanish Civil War and the falsification of its record, Orwell worried that the "very concept of objective truth is fading out of the world." Yet he never seems to have resigned himself completely to hopelessness.

Winston Smith, the doomed protagonist of *1984*, inhabits a world in which individuality has been made almost obsolete, history is daily rewritten and

reality is fabricated according to the whims of the state. Winston attempts, despairingly and bravely, to rediscover what life was like before the rise of Big Brother. He is shocked that his lover, Julia, is indifferent to the state's assault on truth — the unreality of the present is all she has known and all she believes ever was or will be. Her complacency is the counterpart to Winston's energising despair. In this way, *1984* elevates despair into a sort of necessary condition of truth-seeking. It is here if nowhere else, Orwell suggests, that hope for humanity may lie.

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**THE MINISTRY OF TRUTH
The Biography of
George Orwell's "1984"**
Dorian Lynskey

Doubleday; \$28.95; 355 pages

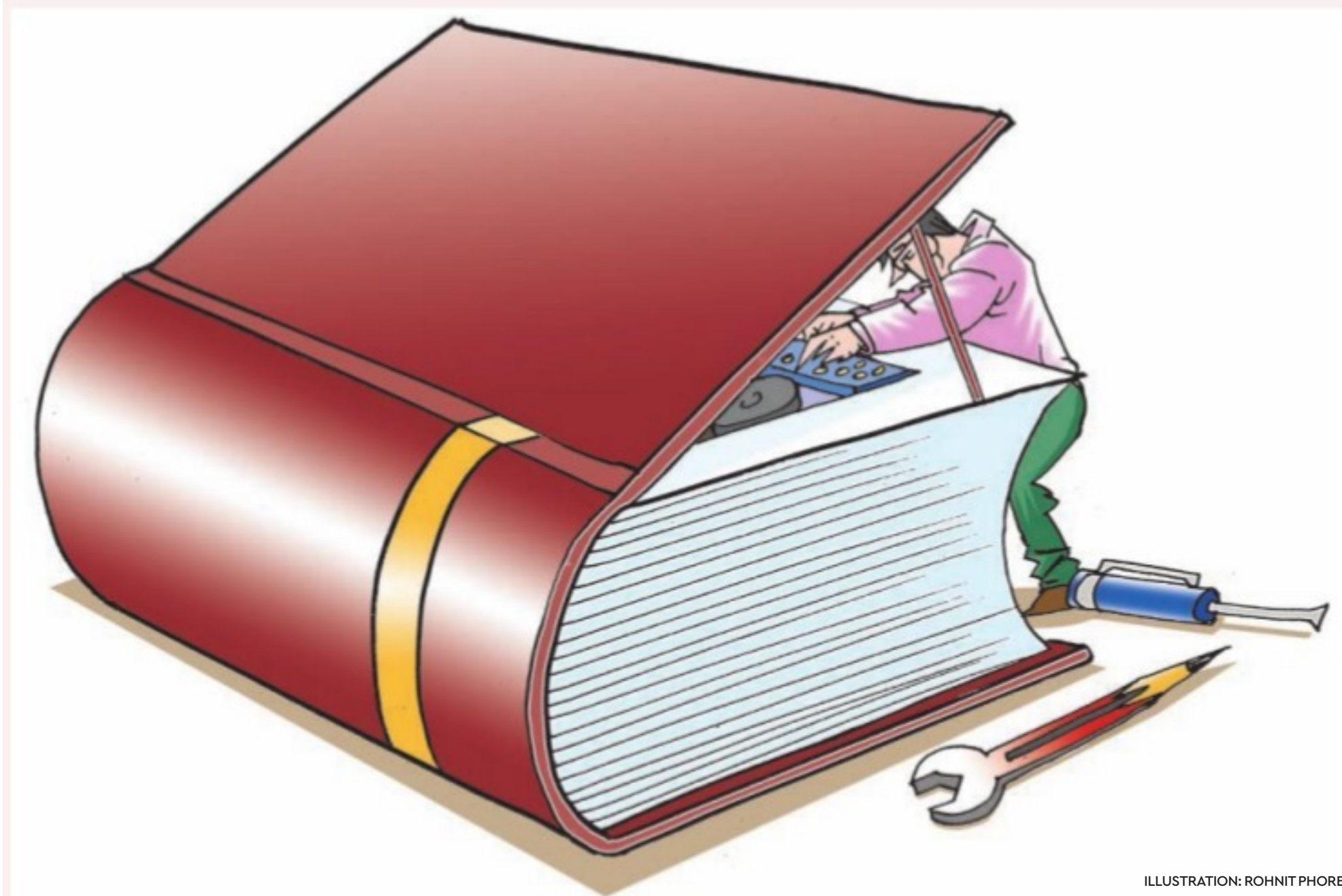


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NEW EDUCATION POLICY

Ushering in a golden era in education

Unless there is a vibrant movement to support the NEP, it will remain a pipe dream, and India would have a lost another golden opportunity to usher in a million mutinies in the education sector, as recommended by the NEP

THE NEWLY RELEASED 480-page draft report on 'New Education Policy' by a nine-member committee headed by K Kasturirangan is a delight to study. It constantly reminds us of our civilisational contribution that has been down played or often ignored by the current education system. The NEP, if implemented fully, will completely transform India's education sector.

Unfortunately, it is a crying shame that some our political leaders have tried to highlight the non-issue of three-language policy to build political capital rather than discussing the more substantive issue of how the NEP will help the country. Since children learn lan-

guages quickly between the ages of 2 and 8, the NEP suggests that encouragement should be given to children to learn many languages. No priority has been given to Hindi and, in fact, more emphasis is placed to teach India's classical languages like Sanskrit, Kannada, Tamil, Telugu, etc. Still, after the protests, the government tweaked the draft NEP to make sure that for non-Hindi speakers Hindi is not mandatory.

If the NEP is implemented even partially, it will usher in a new era in India's education sector. There will be no fear of one examination deciding the destiny of a student. Going to school will be enjoyable, and not boring like today. Students will have far more flexibility to select

courses. Rote-learning will be replaced by creative thinking. Minimum bureaucracy, less regulation and less scope for corruption. Only honest elected leaders will opt to become education ministers.

Although the report deals with all aspects of school education, higher education and professional education (health, technical, legal and healthcare), greater emphasis is given to school education. Early childhood education, which has been more or less totally neglected, is given the highest priority. This is influenced by the fact that over 85% of cumulative brain development occurs prior to the age of 6.

The current 12 years of schooling will be replaced by 15 years, but still students can complete high school by the age of 18. The current 5+3+2+2 will be replaced by 5+3+3+4. The current system consists of primary, upper primary, secondary and pre-university. It will be replaced by a Foundational stage from ages 3 to 8, Preparatory stage from ages 8 to 11, Middle stage from ages 11 to 14, and High School from ages 14 to 18. The Foundational stage will comprise five years of flexible, multilevel, play-based, activity-based and discovery-based learning, and is the most important stage.

It is at the High School stage where there is complete transformation. Pre-university or higher secondary is eliminated. Each year will be divided into two semesters, for a total of eight semesters. Each student would take 5-6 subjects each semester. There will be some essential common subjects for all. Simultaneously, there will be a great flexibility in selecting elective courses, including in the arts, music, vocational subjects and physical education. SSLC (Secondary School Leaving Certificate) and PUC (pre-university course) examinations will be eliminated. In each semester, students can take Board examinations in the subjects they have taken and there will be no in-class final examinations. Thus, the pressure of examinations will be eliminated and so also the student suicide rate.

All stages will heavily incorporate Indian and local traditions, as well as ethical reasoning, socio-emotional learning, quantitative and logical reasoning, computational thinking and digital literacy, scientific temper, languages, and communication skills.

School education will develop scientific temper, aesthetic sense, communication, ethical reasoning, digital literacy,

knowledge of India, and knowledge of critical issues facing the community and the world.

Since teachers are the critical factor in the education sector, the NEP deals extensively with this topic. The teacher education system will be overhauled completely. Teacher preparation for all school stages will be offered only in multidisciplinary universities through a four-year programme, with the curricula and processes being revamped to address current issues with teacher preparation. Institutions currently offering the two-year programme will either transition to this mode or be phased out; no new two-year programmes will be given recognition.

The objective of higher education is to create world-class multidisciplinary higher education institutions (HEI) across the country, and to increase the gross enrolment ratio (GER) to 50% by 2035 from the current level of 25%. Ancient Indian universities of Takshashila and Nalanda have served as role models in developing these efforts.

There will be three types of institutions. The first is Research Universities offering PhD and master's degree to focus on research. The second is Teaching Universities focusing on high quality teaching across all disciplines. The third is Individual Colleges offering only undergraduate courses. Every such college, irrespective of private or public, will be autonomous. All these HEIs will have the rights to award degrees, unlike today where only universities have the right. There will be no affiliating universities or affiliated colleges in the future.

In order to drive the vision of the NEP and to facilitate the efficient and holistic implementation (in India, the best of reforms have failed at the implementation stage) of the NEP, a high-level body called the Rashtriya Shiksha Aayog (National Education Commission) headed by the Prime Minister has been proposed. This body will be responsible for developing, articulating, implementing, evaluating and revising the vision of education in the country on a continuous and sustained basis.

The NEP should have discussed what are the key success factors for its implementation. One such factor is honest, competent, dedicated teachers and managers at all levels. While the NEP is exhaustive, substantive policies, especially concerning school education, could have been discussed in fewer pages. These are: (1) Getting rid of public examinations; (2) No transfer of government school teachers; (3) Developing a system to hold teachers and administrators accountable based on the performance of students; (4) Closing down of 'small' schools and integrating them into larger and integrated schools like Kendriya Vidyalayas with library and laboratory facilities, and children residing away from these schools can be transported by buses like children going to private schools; (5) The government should allocate at least 6% of GDP towards education sector, which is currently at the 3% level.

With the elimination of public examinations, it will be the end of coaching schools. Teacher unions are unlikely to favour the recommendations since they will be held accountable and also they need to teach unlike preparing children to take exams. Anganwadi unions will also not be happy since pre-schooling will take place in large school complexes. But the general public and students should rejoice and welcome the NEP. Unless there is a vibrant movement to support the NEP, it will remain a pipe dream, and India would have a lost another golden opportunity to usher in a million mutinies in the education sector, as recommended by the NEP.

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AGRICULTURAL PRICE SUPPORT

INDIA'S AGRICULTURAL PRICE support programme has lost its relevance without providing any significant benefit to the farming community, and only adding to the fiscal burden as the cost of procurement and storage of crop produce stood close to 1% of GDP for FY20 while covering select economically significant crops in selected geography. Despite the existence of floor-price-based support for over four decades, farm distress has not declined but has increased, as more and more farmers are becoming debt-ridden and are unable to get remunerative prices for their produce. Also, there have been increasing loan waivers by various state governments in recent years, adding to the fiscal burden without addressing the problem of lower incomes associated with distress sale of crops. So, there is a need for finding a strategic solution to ensure remunerative prices for farmers without distorting markets and disturbing India's fiscal math.

Agricultural support policies are common in developing as well as developed countries, to enable growers to overcome the distress arising from natural calamities and market failures. India's price support policy was introduced in the mid-1970s, with an objective to encourage adoption of Green Revolution technology, and achieving self-sufficiency in foodgrains (rice and wheat) production. The policy was extended to 24 major crops by announcing MSP, but not fully supported by procurement, causing distortion of production and marketing system.

Needs an economic alternative

Amalgamate farm support policy with institutional partnerships to reach out to all farmers

V SHUNMUGAM &
TULSI LINGAREDDY

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The policy has now lost its relevance as procurement was largely limited to rice and wheat confined to a few states. Support prices for other crops without the necessary infrastructure and logistics made it neither practically-feasible nor fiscally-viable to procure. Also, with increasing global integration of Indian markets and in view of the commitments under the WTO, it is time for Indian agri production and marketing practices to align with global best practices.

Some states have attempted to devise alternate methods to support farmers. The Bhavantar Bhugtan Yojana in MP and Rythu Bandhu in Telangana, though have some merit, are constrained by implementation issues such as estimation of price deficiency, exclusion of tenants from income support, etc, apart from contributing to fiscal burden.

So, it is essential to devise an alternate strategy that can be centrally implemented across all major crops in the country in an effective manner while containing fiscal burden.

Our analysis of price trends for six economically significant crops—rice, wheat, chana, tur, soybean and mustard (covering two markets in their major production areas)—indicates that prices gained a minimum of 10% in the first 3-4 months from their levels compared with the harvesting season in the past five years, except a few years. Occasionally, we witnessed prices in the harvesting period remaining relatively higher due to deficit production, due to drought, floods, pest attacks, etc. So, a practical solution appears to be seamless enablement of storage of crop produce for 3-4



months till the prices reach remunerative levels. Meanwhile, farmers in need of money shall be connected to commodity finance using electronic negotiable warehouse receipts (e-NWRs). The cost-benefit analysis, i.e. juxtaposing the costs of storage, handling and the cost of carry against the benefit from the average price gain during the past five years, indicated benefits exceeding costs.

The most practical alternate strategy with the least market interference can be connecting institutions in existence for provision of warehousing, issuance of e-NWRs and those providing commodity or e-NWR financing services either independently or under PPP. Support from the government to farmers can be in the form of supporting warehousing costs, enhancing availability of regulated warehouses, and underwriting

any losses that may occur to farmers under pre-decided scenarios. Another option shall be to connect e-NWRs issued to farmers to their Kisan Credit Cards. With this model, the subsidy burden can be contained, while covering most of the crops grown in the country, as it can reduce the costs of direct procurement, storage and handling of stocks, apart from reducing fiscal burden arising out of market interventions. The historic price trends and cost-benefit analysis suggest that the model can be successfully implemented with certain prerequisites.

First, the creation of adequate logistical support in the form of storage spaces and infrastructure facilities for assaying, handling, quality standardisation, etc. Third-party agencies such as FPOs can create storage spaces and infrastructure facilities. One such recent PPP initiative has been to create infrastructure for storage of soybean and pulses in Latur, Maharashtra, by MAHA-FPC in partnership with the Maharashtra Industrial Development Corporation. Towards this, NABARD has been providing support through financial schemes. It is also essential to connect them to the Warehousing Development and Regulatory Authority and hence electronic commodity repositories to connect farmers with finance.

Another requirement is the establishment of an efficient agricultural market information system, which can provide reliable and timely information on demand, supply and prices of agricultural commodities that can be disseminated at the ground level. While technological advancements

have enabled timely forecasting of crop output estimates, a reliable system for providing timely demand estimates for all major crops is essential not only for tracking price behaviour, but also for making crucial crop production decisions. This will enable farmers to grow crops that are economic and cost-effective.

Another reason farmers are not getting remunerative prices is the lack of awareness and poor agronomic practices affecting the quality standards of their produce. Suboptimal quality standards weigh down Indian agricultural exports in case there is an economic opportunity at times of glut.

In this regard, derivatives markets can play a major role not only by connecting institutions and agencies providing services like storage, quality standardisation, logistics and finance, but also by disseminating real-time price information, bringing transparency to the agricultural marketing system. Policymakers have taken a number of initiatives bearing substantial fiscal burden to raise farmers' incomes. It's time to take strategic measures to amalgamate the farm support policy with institutional partnerships to reach out to all the farmers without disrupting the crop production and marketing system. The income support already provided by the government may be mandated to be used as investment for diversification through allied activities like apiculture, sericulture, livestock rearing, etc, thus helping achieve the objective of doubling farmers' incomes.

CHINA-US TRADE WAR

Use WIOD to measure impact

AAKANKSHA
SHRAWAN

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A broader perspective using value addition in trade

AFTER ALMOST A YEAR OF tariff retaliation, a mutual decision between the US and China seemed in sight when both agreed for talks to reduce the momentum of the trade war. However, no end seems in sight as the Donald Trump administration, in addition to the existing levies, increased tariffs from 10% to 25% on \$200 bn worth of Chinese imports in May 2019. In 2018, the levies imposed by the US impacted \$250 bn worth of Chinese imports where the US imported \$539 bn worth of Chinese goods (almost 46%). Retaliation by China, in turn, led to imposition of tariffs on \$110 bn worth of imports when in 2018 China imported \$120 bn worth of US goods (92%). While these numbers give an impression that the tariffs imposed by the US on China will only affect Chinese exports, the impact is not so easy to isolate. According to the WTO and the World Bank, two in three products exported today come from the global value chains. In an integrated world order, trade flows no longer only involve two nations, i.e. an exporter and an importer. Most goods are a part of global value chains (GVC) where different stages of the production process such as manufacturing, assembling and trading happen in different countries, depending on the comparative advantage of each nation. The manufacture of a mobile phone, for example, involves the participation of around 10 countries.

Analysis using data on gross exports or imports fails to account for the presence of GVCs. The value of gross exports or imports is shared by a number of countries that were involved in even one stage of the production process. Thus, it becomes worthwhile to examine the actual losers and gainers. A tool that can help is the World Input Output Database (WIOD). It is a compilation of tables for 43 countries that constitute 85% of the world's GDP. It includes a table for each country that reflects how much of each commodity is produced and further used by each of the 35 industries as an intermediate good. For example, we can estimate 'how many dollars of Belgian fabricated metal products are used by the French transport equipment industry'. These tables provide a description of the interdependent nature of production processes and how these interdependencies manifest themselves into global trade flows.

Consider the example of US imports of electrical machinery and food products manufactured by China. These two were amongst the major imports of the US in 2018. Since the latest data for WIOD is for 2014, we try to evaluate the value added by China in its exports of the above two items. While the total gross output of electrical machinery and equipment was valued at \$1,186.4 billion in 2014, intermediate consumption was \$920.521 billion (77.58%). So, the domestic value added by China in exports of electrical machinery to the US was a paltry 22%. Similarly, in the case of food products (processed fruit and vegetables, snack foods, spices), the total value of output was \$1,807.71 billion, of which only 23% of the value in production was added by Chinese factors of production. Although it has been documented that the domestic value added in Chinese exports has seen an upward trend, a considerable share of raw materials is still imported from other countries.

Similarly, soybean was the largest US agri-export to China. But with the trade war, China has temporarily paused its purchase of soybean from the US. While the total value of production of 'Manufacture of food products and beverages' (the category in which soybean falls into) was \$970.3 bn for the US, the value added by American capital and labour was only \$245.01 bn (25.29%). This indicates that whatever tariff is imposed by China on the US (as tariffs range from 5-25%), the net impact on the US will only be on about 25% of the value of production.

Thus, the conventional reporting of international trade overstates the impact of the tariff war on exporting and importing nations. This analysis, therefore, suggests that a move such as the ongoing tariff retaliation by the US and China needs to be more seriously evaluated by the two nations, given the globalised nature of trade. While the direct losers in the trade war are the consumers in the US and China, along with the sectors that are facing retaliatory tariffs from the other country on account of rising production costs, the impact of the tariffs on other nations (transmitted because of GVCs) should also be considered. Also, an evaluation based on individual commodities or products should be undertaken since WIOD only evaluates trade flows based on broad categories of goods and services.

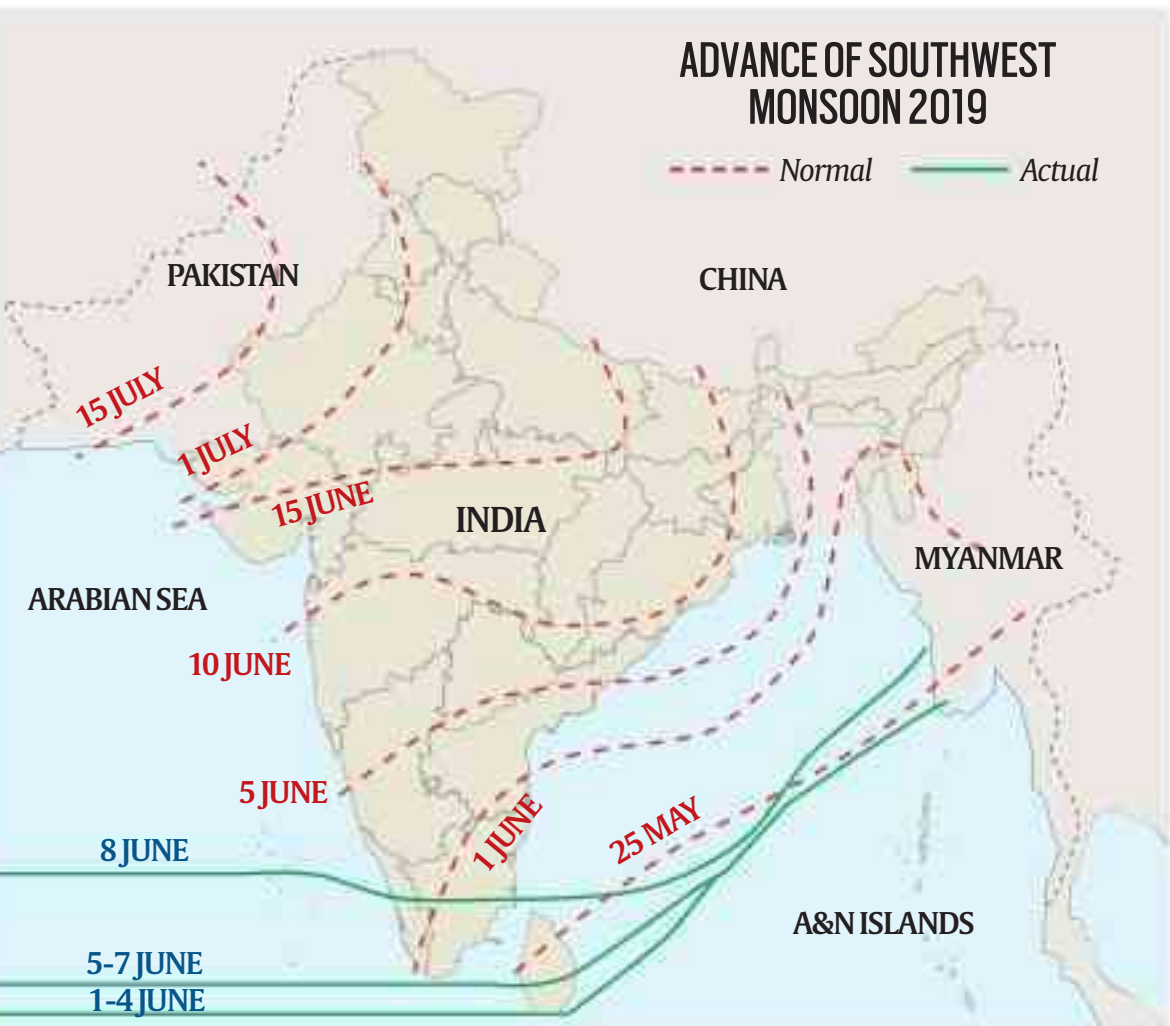


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FACT CHECK, GROUND REALITY

WHY LATE MONSOON IS NOT RELATED TO TOTAL SEASONAL RAINFALL



THE ONSET of the southwest monsoon over Kerala, which happened on June 8, marks the beginning of the four-month monsoon season over India. It came a week after its normal date of June 1.

The southwest monsoon brings over 70% of India's annual rainfall. Though an important marker for the season, the timing of the onset does not have any bearing on the quality or amount of rainfall during the season. It is just an event during the progress of the monsoon.

The Andaman and Nicobar Islands generally start getting monsoon rainfall between May 15 and 20, and the Kerala coast generally begins to have monsoon rainfall sometime in the last week of May. The onset of the monsoon is announced when certain criteria are fulfilled after May 10. If at least 60% of the 14 designated meteorological stations in Kerala and Lakshadweep report at least 2.5 mm rain for two consecutive days after May 10 — and a few other conditions relating to wind and temperature are also fulfilled — the onset of monsoon is said to have taken place; if not, it is not declared. The IMD announced that all the conditions were fulfilled on the morning of June 8.

A delayed onset has the potential to delay the arrival of the monsoon in other parts of the country as well, especially in south India, most of which starts getting rainfall within days of it reaching the Kerala coast. However, it does not mean that the monsoon over the entire country would be delayed. The northward progression of the monsoon from the Kerala coast depends on a lot of local factors, including the creation of low pressure areas. It is possible, therefore, that despite the onset happening late, other parts of the country start getting rains on time.

The IMD has maintained that most of the northern and eastern parts of the country, which start receiving rainfall only towards the end of June and early July, would have monsoon rain on time. But southern and central India, which have normal monsoon arrival dates in the first, second and third weeks of June, would obviously get delayed rains.

The delay in the onset over the Kerala coast also means that the June rainfall is likely to be deficient. But the IMD has predicted that some of this deficiency would be made up for in July and August, and that the overall seasonal rainfall would be around the 96% of the normal that it has predicted. India as a whole receives about 89 cm of rainfall in a normal monsoon season.

AMITABH SINHA

TIP FOR READING LIST

LIFE THROUGH WOMEN'S HIDDEN POCKETS

BEFORE WOMEN'S dresses had modern pockets sewn into their seams, they carried detachable pouches which the women would tie around their waists and hide under their skirts. In *The Pocket: A Hidden History of Women's Lives, 1660-1900*, Barbara Burman and Ariane Fennetaux explore what women used to keep in these pockets — pencils, a sketchbook, cake, thimbles, keys, money — and use these accessories as a lens to explore the complexities of women's experiences. For example, in a London household in 1765, a "pretty bulky" pocket gave domestic help Frances Burk away, revealing that she had helped herself to a silk handkerchief, a pair of stays, and other items. Another example is Annie Chapman, one of Jack the Ripper's victims in 1888. Her pocket was "tom down the front and also at the side" and contained an envelope, pills, a small comb and a piece of coarse muslin that she had been hoping to pawn or sell. "What particularly interests Burman and Fennetaux is the way in which women of all classes have historically used these tie-on pockets as a supplementary body part to help them negotiate their way through a world that was not built to suit them," *The Guardian* writes in its review.



RITIKA CHOPRA
NEW DELHI, JUNE 9

ON MAY 31, a committee set up for drafting a new National Education Policy submitted its report to the HRD Minister. The draft policy is in the public domain for feedback and suggestions. A meeting with all state governments has also been called later this month to seek their views. Once feedback is received, the government will finalise the policy and move it in Parliament. Some of the broad draft recommendations on school education:

Pre-primary education

The draft NEP acknowledges a "severe learning crisis" in India, where children in primary school fail to attain basic math and reading skills. Attributing a major part of this crisis to a "tragic deficiency" in early childhood care and education (ECCE) of children in the age group 3-6 years, the draft recommends that ECCE be made an integral part of the Right to Education (RTE) Act. Once ECCE becomes a justiciable right, it will be "obligatory for the public system to provide appropriate and quality educational infrastructure, facilities, and educators to all children in the age group 3-6 years".

To strengthen and expand ECCE, the draft policy recommends increased investment in existing *anganwadi* centres (meant for providing basic nutrition, healthcare and pre-school education to 3-to-6-year-olds), locating *anganwadi* centres in primary schools, encouraging primary schools to add pre-school, and building high-quality standalone pre-schools in areas where existing *anganwadis* and primary schools are not able to fulfill ECCE requirements. To ensure continuity from pre-primary to primary schools, the draft advocates bringing all aspects of ECCE under the purview of the Human Resource Development Ministry.

Reading and math skills

A large number of children currently in elementary school — perhaps over 5 crore — cannot read and understand basic text and solve simple addition and subtraction problems, the report states. Many of them eventually drop out. To address this, the draft policy proposes a host of interventions:

- Redesigning of school curriculum for Grades 1 to 5 to include dedicated mathematics and reading hours every day, activities that relate classroom maths to real-life maths, weekly puzzle-solving sessions to inculcate logical thinking, and language and maths-focused morning assemblies.
- A 'National Tutors Programme' that will enrol the best performers of each school for up to five hours a week as tutors for students who have fallen behind.
- A 'Remedial Instructional Aides Programme' to draw instructors from the local community to hold remedial classes during schools hours, after school hours and during summer vacations for students who need help.
- A school preparation module to be prepared by NCERT for all Grade 1 students to ensure they have the required learning levels (letters, shapes, colours, numbers) before starting the Grade 1 syllabus.
- Vacancies to be filled urgently to ensure a pupil-teacher ratio of 30:1.
- A nutritious breakfast, in addition to the midday meal, for improved learning.

Curriculum and pedagogy

While the 1986 education policy standardised school education with its push for a uniform 10+2 structure, the 2018 draft pitches for reconfiguration of curriculum and pedagogy in a "5+3+3+4" design, which recognises different stages of development of cognitive abilities in children. This corresponds to the age groups 3-8 years (foundational stage), 8-11 (preparatory stage), 11-14 (middle stage), and 14-18 (secondary stage).

The foundational phase (from three years of pre-school to Grade 2), the draft policy recommends, should comprise five years of flex-

SIMPLY PUT

Govt wish list for schools

Draft for new National Education Policy is public, open for feedback, suggestions, discussion. What does it prescribe for schools, from enhancing learning to restructuring curriculum and Board exam format?

WHY NEW EDUCATION POLICY

1 FROM THE CENTRE, UP TO THE STATES

THE POLICY: The National Education Policy (NEP) serves as a comprehensive framework to guide the development of education. A new policy has come along every few decades and offered the government of the day an opportunity to leave its imprint on the education system.

NOT MANDATORY. Although the state governments are expected to follow NEP, they are not bound to do so. Tamil Nadu, even today, does not follow the three-language formula prescribed by the first education policy in 1968.

2 BEFORE THIS ONE, 1968 AND 1986

SO FAR: There have been two National Education Policies, in 1968 and 1986, during the respective regimes of Indira Gandhi and Rajiv Gandhi. The NEP of 1986 was revised in 1992 when P V Narasimha Rao was Prime Minister.

NEP & BJP: The Bharatiya Jana Sangh, or the BJP in its original form, was part of the 1977-79 Janata Party government, which attempted to draw up a policy in 1979, but it was not approved by the Central Advisory Board for Education. In a way, this is the BJP's second attempt at drafting the NEP.

3 THE LATEST ONE, AFTER DELAYS

NDA's NEP: Since 2014, the NDA government has set up two committees to draft the new NEP. The second panel, led by former ISRO chief K Kasturirangan, submitted its report to the HRD Minister on May 31, after five deadline extensions.

WHAT NEXT: The draft policy is now in the public domain for feedback and suggestions. A meeting with all state governments has been called later this month to seek their views. After assimilating feedback, the government will finalise the policy and present it in Parliament.



Students in Chandigarh after a CBSE Class 10 paper this year. Draft policy proposes that the 10+2 format be replaced with 5+3+3+4, covering ages 3 to 18. Jaipal Singh

ible "play-based, activity-based, and discovery-based" learning and interaction. Instilling multilingual skills in children will be the key focus of this stage.

"This is followed by a preparatory phase consisting of three years (Grades 3, 4 and 5) of basic education incorporating some textbooks as well as aspects of more formal classroom learning. The next three years of middle school education (Grades 6, 7 and 8) would involve developing more abstract thinking and subject teaching leading up to a secondary education phase of four years (Grades 9, 10, 11 and 12)," the report reads.

The secondary phase will comprise four years of multidisciplinary study, with each year divided into two semesters. Grades 11 and 12 will be considered a part of the secondary stage (not junior college or higher secondary).

"There will be some essential common subjects for all, while simultaneously there will be a great flexibility in selecting elective courses... so that all students can expand their horizons as they see fit and explore their individual interests and talents," the draft states. It adds that the choice among science, arts and commerce should be delayed so that it is based on a student's experience and interests and not dictated by parents and society. It proposes no hard separation of school content in terms of curricular, extracurricular, or co-curricular areas, and between arts and sciences.

Languages

While the draft recommends continuance of the three-language formula, it has proposed flexibility in the choice of languages, as long as students can show proficiency in any three languages. Hindi and English are no

longer the stipulated languages that students must study from Grade 6.

Further, it advocates reduction in curriculum load and reorientation of curriculum to promote multilingualism, ancient Indian knowledge systems, scientific temper, ethical reasoning, social responsibility, digital literacy and knowledge of critical issues facing local communities. The National Curriculum Framework 2005, it states, should be revised by end-2020.

Board exam restructure

Class 10 and 12 Board examinations, according to the draft NEP 2018, should serve as a "check for basic learning, skills and analysis", which one should pass comfortably without coaching and cramming. To eliminate the "life-determining" and "high stakes" nature of Board examinations, it calls for changes including allowing students to sit for the examination twice in any given school year. "Eventually, when computerised adaptive testing becomes widely available, multiple attempts for Board examinations could be allowed," it proposes.

It also pitches a shift to a "modular" approach in which a student is able to sit for the Board exam in a range of subjects across eight semesters. "Students will be expected to take a total of at least 24 subjects (such as science, economics, Indian history, philosophy, digital literacy, physical education) Board Examinations, or on average three a semester (every six months), and these examinations would be in lieu of in-school final examinations so as not to be any additional burden on students or teachers," the draft reads.

Governance of schools

At present, the Department of School

Education (DSE) in a state is in charge of operation, regulation and policy-making. The draft NEP 2018 calls for decentralisation, with each of these functions carried out by separate bodies — policy-making by a 'Rashtriya Shiksha Aayog' (Education Commission at national level, headed by the PM); operation by DSE; regulation by an independent 'State School Regulatory Authority' or SSRA in each state, which will set basic and uniform standards for both public and private schools; academic matters, including standard setting and curriculum, to be continued to be led by the State Councils of Educational Research and Training.

While the policy advocates an end to "loading of regulatory requirements" against private institutions, it also recommends that school management committees or SMCs be set up in private schools. SMCs (with parents as members) are currently mandatory for government schools and play a significant role in governance and functioning.

For fee hikes in private schools, the draft states that the percentage of increase, based on inflation, will be decided by SSRA for every three-year period. Private schools will not use the word "public" in their names in any communication, documentation or declaration of status, it recommends.

Right to Education Act

The policy envisages a detailed review and subsequent amendment of the RTE Act for extension "downwards to include up to three years of early childhood education prior to Grade 1, and upwards to include Grades 11 and 12". It calls for a review of Clause 12(1)(c) — providing for mandatory 25% reservation for economically weaker section students in private schools — in the wake of its alleged misuse.

Other recommendations

- Early vocational exposure, with basic knowledge of various livelihoods (gardening, pottery, electric work, etc) will be taught at Foundational and Elementary levels.
- Students' progress throughout school, and not just at the end of Grades 10 and 12, should be mapped regularly through state census examination in Grades 3, 5, and 8.
- Teachers will not be engaged in time-consuming, non-teaching work such as electioneering and cooking of midday meals.
- "Para-teacher" (Shikshakarmi, Shikshamitra, etc) systems to be stopped by 2022.
- Excessive teacher transfers to be halted immediately.
- All schools will be accredited as per the School Quality Assessment and Accreditation Framework.

NEXT
HIGHER EDUCATION

Traffic Index 2018: how Mumbai congestion was measured at world high

SRINATH RAO
MUMBAI, JUNE 9

A RECENT study has ranked Mumbai as the most traffic-congested city in the world for the second straight year, and Delhi at fourth place. How was this determined, and what do the findings say of traffic across the world?

The study

The findings, published Tuesday, are part of the Traffic Index 2018 published by TomTom, an Amsterdam-based company that offers traffic solutions, uses location technology to collect traffic information, and has been publishing city rankings for eight years. The latest index ranks 403 cities across 56 countries, including 13 new cities.

The measure

For this study, congestion has been de-

fined in terms of the additional time taken to reach a destination as opposed to when the road would have been clear of traffic. Mumbai's 2018 congestion level of 65%, therefore, means that the extra travel time is 65% more than an average trip would take during uncongested conditions. For Delhi, by the same yardstick, the extra travel time is 58% more.

Average times are of actual taken trips, across every vehicle in the entire network, 24/7, TomTom explains on its website. This is worked out by establishing a baseline of travel times during uncongested conditions across each road segment in each city; travel times are analysed across the entire year (24/7) for each city, the company website states.

TomTom states that it factors for peak hours, accidents, inclement weather, construction work and all other factors likely to cause disruptions. It adds that its statis-

MOST CONGESTED CITIES

RANK	CITY	CONGESTION LEVEL	
		2018	2017
1	Mumbai (India)	65%	66%
2	Bogota (Colombia)	63%	62%
3	Lima (Peru)	58%	50%
4	New Delhi (India)	58%	62%
5	Moscow (Russia)	56%	57%
6	Istanbul (Turkey)	53%	59%
7	Jakarta (Indonesia)	53%	61%
8	Bangkok (Thailand)	53%	55%
9	Mexico City (Mexico)	52%	52%
10	Recife (Brazil)	49%	47%

Source: TomTom Traffic Index 2018



Prem Nath Pandey

tics are "calculated using GPA data from navigation devices, in-dash systems and smartphones".

Mumbai and Delhi

In both Indian cities, traffic congestion during morning and evening peak hours varies between 73% and 102%. Last year, August 8 (83%) was the worst day to drive in Delhi, owing to the movement of VIPs and restrictions put in place in the run-up to Independence Day celebrations. In Mumbai, August 21 (102%) was the worst day on the road, because of heavy showers and work on multiple Metro rail lines. The index found that traffic flows most freely between 2 am and 5 am in both cities. The least congestion last year happened on March 2 (-16%), the second day of Holi.

Around the world

Nearly 75% of the cities part of the 2018



The Indian EXPRESS

FOUNDED BY
RAMNATH GOENKA
BECAUSE THE TRUTH INVOLVES US ALL

LUCKNOW’S LONG ARM

The three arrests by UP police for a tweet and a video are an attack on free speech — they need a strong rebuff

THE HEART OF the matter is a video in which a woman makes several claims regarding herself and UP chief minister Yogi Adityanath. She is, according to her family, seeking medical help for her “mental condition”. But the Uttar Pradesh Police, which prides itself on the dubious way it has “encountered” criminals, promptly files an FIR in Hazratganj, Lucknow, on a tweet referencing the video by freelance journalist Prashant Kanojia in Delhi, picks him up from his Delhi home and takes him to Lucknow. Also arrested are Ishika Singh and Anuj Shukla, who work with the TV channel which aired the video. If the police forces were to spend their days making arrests for the unverified content that people tweet about from buses and trains, from bedrooms and even from bathrooms, it would offer relief to real criminals, who could live their lives more richly, without fear of state intimidation. Clearly, therefore, this response of the police is an attempt to intimidate anyone who takes a swipe at those in power.

In this, the UP police are doing what is, disturbingly, becoming frequent, evident in the shameful string of arrests of men and women across the country for posting or even forwarding material critical of those in power. An FIR is lodged, a quick arrest made — and the stain spreads. In this case, it’s no outraged citizen who has filed the case, it is the police themselves. How should the TV channel have treated this video is a question for the channel to answer — there’s due process available to all sides to deal with content that’s allegedly defamatory. But arrests for airing the video and sharing it are a clear violation of that process. Of course, it is too much to expect the mandarins of the UP police to read the legal provisions carefully, including the ringing Supreme Court verdict that extended the contours of free speech to online. Recall the observations of the Supreme Court in 2015, in the matter of Shreya Singhal vs Union of India. Therein, the court had struck down as unconstitutional Section 66A of the Information Technology Act, which had been repeatedly misused to launch witch-hunts against ordinary people who had spoken online against the powerful. The specific ground for quashing the section was the vagueness of the terms inviting charges — “annoying” or “offensive” comments, for instance. The term “objectionable”, which the UP Police has used to justify driving down to Delhi to make arrests, is no less vague and unconstitutional.

Hopefully, the courts, which have had a tradition of upholding free speech against the excesses of the state, will step in and show UP police their rightful place.

BREAKING THE ICE

In the new India-Pak normal, Islamabad will need to go beyond optics to revive bilateral dialogue

PAKISTAN PRIME MINISTER Imran Khan’s letter to Prime Minister Narendra Modi reiterating his call for dialogue to resolve the problems between the two countries is unexceptionable. However, the Indian experience of dialogue with Pakistan is unfortunately one in which Pakistan-based terror groups have repeatedly played spoiler — witness Mumbai 2006, Mumbai 2008, Pathankot 2016 — with Islamabad pretending helplessness, or spouting denial. Yet, Pakistan has also shown several times it is not entirely without control over its so-called “non-state actors”. Whenever push has come to shove, it has taken steps against such groups, but as events proved, only for momentary optics. Now for Prime Minister Modi to pick up Khan’s olive branch, after a poll campaign that highlighted the Balakot action, Islamabad will need to go beyond such optics.

In the new India-Pakistan normal, restraining a Hafiz Saeed from leading the customary Eid prayers at Lahore’s Gaddafi stadium, or restraining a Masood Azhar to his home or hospital, is insufficient. Pakistan is readying for the Financial Action Task Force plenary later this month, where it will be tested against its commitments last year on actions against terrorist groups. Modi has signalled through the guest list of leaders from the region at his swearing in that there will be no friendly overtures toward Pakistan for now. It was, therefore, not surprising that India has declared there will be no meeting between Prime Ministers Modi and Khan at Bishkek, on the sidelines of the Shanghai Co-operation Organisation. Just as well. Public meetings between the two sides have served little purpose in recent years. Conducted under the glare of media, they have tended to descend into a bitter point-scoring exercise for the benefit of domestic galleries on each side.

It would be folly, however, to pretend that Pakistan does not exist in the Indian neighbourhood. Despite all the rhetoric, Modi 2.0’s plans for Kashmir, whatever those might be, cannot be delinked from India’s relations with Pakistan. The second reality is Pakistan’s involvement in the US engagement with the Taliban in Afghanistan, with which India has to come to terms. Despite all the hostility, the two sides remain engaged in arrangements for pilgrims from India to access Kartarpur Sahib gurdwara for the 550th birth anniversary of Guru Nanak. In the NDA government’s previous term, the two NSAs met in secret regularly. Given that India does not want to hand Pakistan the satisfaction — or victory — of an official bilateral engagement when its long-demanded conditions for dialogue are yet to be met, the best way forward is for Delhi and Islamabad to set up a similar backchannel process. Such an engagement cannot hurt, even if it does not help.

FREEZE FRAME



Way forward in Kashmir



RAJMOHAN GANDHI

Actions intended to change the state’s status and demographics will intensify alienation

WITH ELECTIONS BEHIND us, and Narendra Modi armed with a comfortable majority for five more years, difficult national questions should be looked at. One of the hardest — as hard as creating millions of jobs, or restoring life to rural India, or protecting vulnerable children, women and men across the land — is the situation in Kashmir.

In August 1947, when India and Pakistan emerged as independent nations, Pakistan claimed the princely state of Jammu and Kashmir on the ground that Muslims constituted its majority. Less than three months later, Pakistan seized control of two-fifths of Jammu and Kashmir. For the next few years, India’s stand before the world was that the Kashmiri ruler had signed his state’s accession to India and that Kashmiris, whether Muslim, Hindu or Sikh, wished to remain with India.

Speaking for India before the UN, Kashmir’s popular leader, Sheikh Abdullah, defended this position. Over time, however, with unresolved discontent in Kashmir and a man like Abdullah in and out of prison, India’s reasoning over Kashmir was modified.

Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs and Christians, it was explained, enjoyed equal rights in India, but inter-communal harmony was a delicate matter. Calls to detach Kashmir from India would hurt Muslims across India. Moreover, such calls would make sense only if India were a Hindu state, which it was not.

In a typical comment, Sumit Ganguly and Kanti Bajpai wrote in *Asian Survey* May 1994: “For India, Kashmir is symbolic of secular nationalism.” A Muslim-majority area living and prospering in a Hindu-majority country was a matter of pride. It’s a wholly different scene today. The number of MPs in the 17th Lok Sabha who want India to become a Hindu state may not be known exactly, but it is not small.

Why should an Indian government hesitate before launching tough new policies over Kashmir? It should hesitate because Kashmiris are human beings who matter, and because India is different from China and from Israel. Today almost every country in the world has a significant Indian presence. Millions of Indian citizens live in the Gulf and in other Muslim-majority countries in Africa, the Middle East and Asia. Millions more live in countries with Christian or Buddhist majorities.

INDIA VERSUS BHARAT

Electoral compromises of BJP indicate that idea of India has prevailed over Bharat



JYOTI PUNWANI

DOES THE TRIUMPHANT return of Narendra Modi, and the humiliating defeat of the Congress, signify the end of the “idea of India”? The RSS seems to think so, for twice since the result, they have extolled the “idea of Bharat” and contrasted it with the “Idea of India”. The former is said to be indigenous and inclusive, symbolised by the phrase “Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam”, while the latter is described as an alien concept where differences of identity are emphasised.

The exact meaning of the “idea of Bharat” is available in a note by Ramakant Tiwari, co-convenor of the Delhi BJP Intellectual Cell. Titled “Idea of Bharat supercedes idea of India”, the note explains how the “idea of Bharat” draws on India’s ancient cultural heritage, symbolised by dharma, shakti, the guru-shishya parampara, maya, rebirth, the primacy of Sanskrit and the scriptures, teertha (pilgrimages), and the Kumbh Mela. Bharat was the rashtra chosen by Brahma for his incarnations, including the Buddha, writes Tiwari.

This, then, is the original genius of India. Compare that to the “malevolent” “idea of India”, traced by Tiwari not to our “first PM J L Nehru”, but to Lord Macaulay. This “malafide” foreign idea replaced our decentralised, dharma-based, democratic civilisation where “honoured visitors” were welcomed and assimilated. What we got instead was centralised planning, invaders, “selfish identities intruding from all corners of the world”, contrived phrases such as “unity in diversity”, the “conspiracy of secularism” replacing sarva dharma sama bhava, cowardice as ahimsa, subservience as “tolerance” and socialism/communism replacing our own arthashastra.

The BJP has almost dropped the ‘idea of Bharat’ in its policies in the North East and Goa, where it has not only allied with parties led by Christians but even refrained from its core belief that beef must be banned. Now, the ‘idea of Bharat’ is getting even more diluted as BJP leaders with RSS backgrounds don topics and grace iftars. Maharashtra CM Devendra Fadnavis even had an Arab-style gamchha draped around him at his party’s iftar.

It is clear that the “idea of Bharat” is not merely an exclusively Hindu view of the country but an “upper caste” one. The British destroyed our ancient gurukuls which guaranteed 100 per cent literacy, says Tiwari. Surely he means 100 per cent “upper caste” literacy?

Today there’s no way this “idea of Bharat” can prevail. And it’s not because of the *tukde tukde* gang.

The reason this idea is impossible today is because of the politics followed by the political arm of the RSS. From 2014 to 2019, the BJP has gone out of its way to woo every caste, no matter how small, and also to give tickets to candidates based on their caste. Whereas the “idea of Bharat” signifies an “upper caste” utopia, the BJP this time ensured that “lower castes”, who were not expected to vote for it, were the first recipients of its welfare schemes in a crucial state like UP, where the challenge to the BJP was primarily caste-based.

So coloured by caste is the BJP’s electoral worldview that, in the 2017 UP assembly polls, it projected our national icon, Emperor Ashok, as belonging to the Maurya caste. This Lok Sabha election, UP chief minister Yogi Adityanath called Hanuman a Dalit, while his own minister for religious affairs said the deity was a Jat.

The BJP has almost dropped the “idea of Bharat” in its policies in the Northeast and Goa, where it has not only allied with parties led by Christians but even refrained from its core belief that beef must be banned.

Now, the “idea of Bharat” is getting even more diluted as BJP leaders with RSS backgrounds don topics and grace iftars. Maharashtra CM Devendra Fadnavis even

had an Arab-style gamchha draped around him at his party’s iftar. These events are particularly hated by Hindutva-vadis who see them as political appeasement of a community that forms no part of the Hindu/Bharatiya ethos. Union minister Giriraj Singh was, in fact, expressing the “idea of Bharat” in his tweet against BJP ally Ram Vilas Paswan’s iftar, attended by Bihar CM Nitish Kumar and deputy CM Sushil Modi.

As Gujarat CM, Narendra Modi famously refused to wear a topi, and after he became PM, neither did he host an iftar nor did he attend President Pranab Mukherjee’s iftars at the Rashtrapati Bhavan. After President Ramnath Kovind took over, the Rashtrapati Bhavan iftar, and even the singing of Xmas carols there, has stopped. Now that’s the “idea of Bharat”.

Partly in 2014, and much more so in 2019, PM Modi’s campaign, and that of party president Amit Shah, was in keeping with this Hindu-centric idea. His allegiance to this idea came through also in his indifference to the continuous lynchings and Una-like incidents affecting Muslims and Dalits.

Despite that, in his first speech in Parliament, both in 2014 and 2019, the PM-elect made it a point to include minorities while describing his vision of the country. And Amit Shah reprimanded Giriraj Singh for his tweet.

Now if that’s not the victory, however superficial, of the “idea of India” over the “idea of Bharat”, what is? To make it endure is everyone’s job.

The writer is a Mumbai-based freelance journalist

JUNE 10, 1979, FORTY YEARS AGO



ASIAN POWERS UNITE
EVEN AS BLEARY-EYED delegates went about coaxing the hard-line Arabs and the Egyptians to arrive at something resembling consensus on the language in which the treaty with Israel is to be mentioned in the final communique of the conference, Indian and Sri Lanka foreign ministers, AB Vajpayee and Shahul Hameed went about more positive business. They have been jointly promoting an idea of an Asian bloc of nations, like an association of Asian Unity. Vajpayee has personally sounded out several leaders of delegations from Asian countries, and the response has been positive. The nucleus of such a grouping might take shape in Havana when

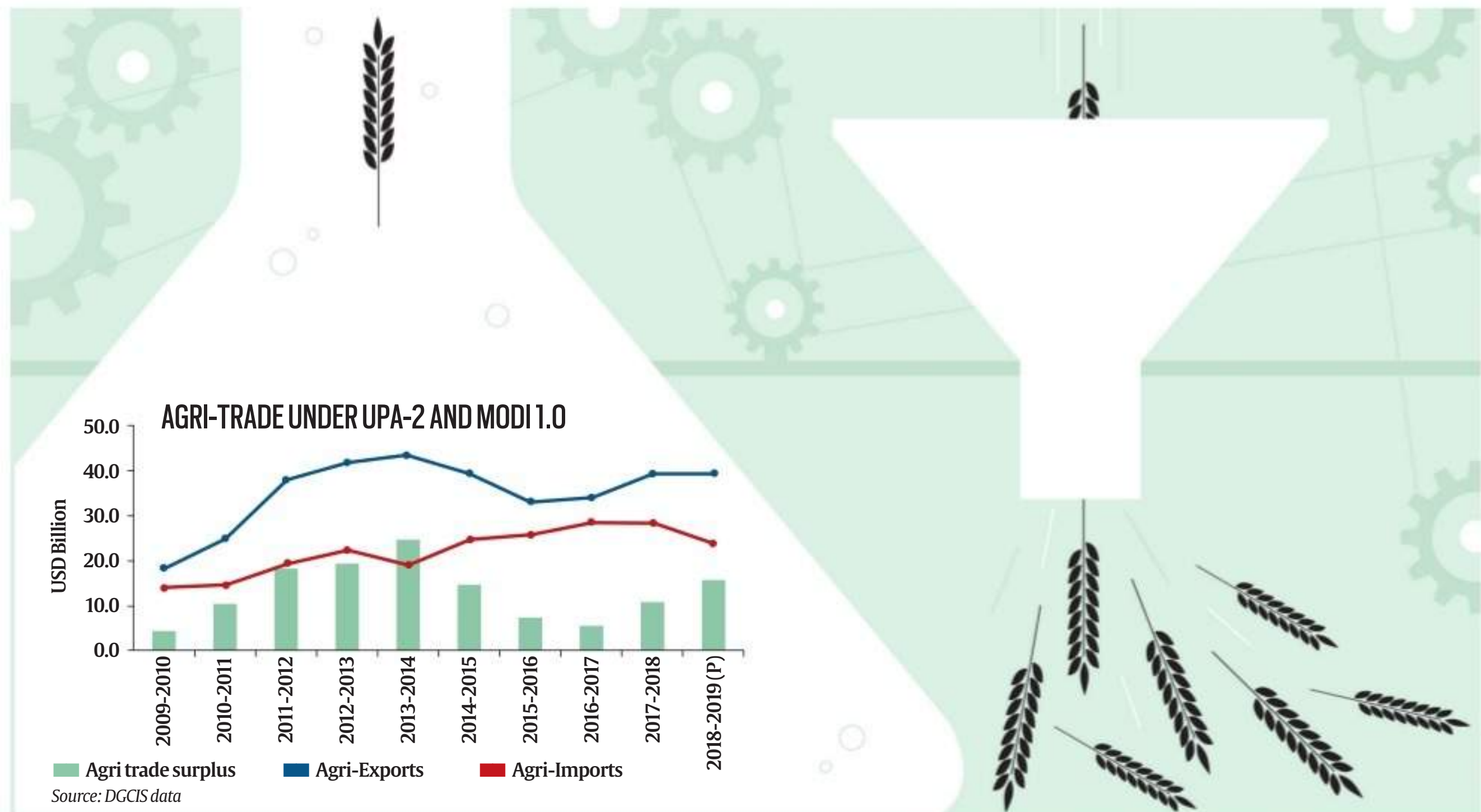
the heads of states meet for the non-aligned summit in September.

JUPITER’S VOLCANOES
VOYAGER 1 HAS TRANSMITTED some major data regarding Jupiter, which leads space scientists to believe that the planet may have, barring the earth, the only active volcanoes in the entire solar system. Larry Soderblom of the US said that the discovery had been made in the course of the scrutiny of a film taken by the spacecraft when it encountered the planet on March 5 last. UNI adds: The film revealed some red spots on Jupiter which rotated like cyclones with the atmosphere on the planet being very turbulent. Another dis-

covery was the eight volcanoes... These were claimed to be the only active ones in the entire solar system, other than those on earth.

CONGRESS SPLITS
THE CONGRESS (I) in West Bengal has split. In view of Indira Gandhi’s open support, however, the official group led by ABA Gani Khan Chowdhury and Subrata Mukherjee, has so long been on the top. But things started changing from the day the two groups fought in the presence of Mrs Gandhi at the airport hotel. The immediate provocation was perhaps the official group’s decision to invite Sanjay Gandhi to lead the Congress (I) march to Writers Building on June 22.

The Ideas Page



C R Sasikumar

WHAT THE OTHERS SAY

“Starting from the two leaders' firm political will, the stable China-Russia strategic relationship today is deeply rooted in the two countries' national interests. .”
— GLOBAL TIMES CHINA

The original Khan Market Gang

Long before the epithet was made a topic of debate by the PM, a bunch of teenagers ruled the roost in the now controversial area



SOMYA LAKHANI

DAMN, IT FEELS good to be a gangster. At least in retrospect. It was on a winter afternoon in 2003 when, unwittingly, I joined a gang — one that swindled innocent juniors of their pocket money and squandered them on gol-gappas. The gang members — teenagers, all of us — dressed in rust sweaters and grey skirts and trousers, operated from the confines of a noisy school canteen, past the sand pit in the junior school and all the way to the notorious Khan Market.

It took me 16 years and a one-liner by Prime Minister Narendra Modi to accept that I am, in fact, the OG (original gangster) of Khan Market, since my beloved school, Sardar Patel Vidyalaya (SPV) is only a five-minute walk from there.

In the early 2000s, when my parents reluctantly agreed to let me saunter outside school with two friends, “Khan” was the obvious, most doable option. With Rs 30 in my pocket, the heavy school bag on my back, I galloped away to freedom aka Bengal Sweets, the makers of XL size chole bhature and buttery pav bhaji.

That day, no one could convince me that I was any less of a gangster in my tiny universe of school friends and crushes to impress. Life taught us many lessons as we grew up, and one of them was to not take our Khan Market status seriously.

Before the wisdom of adult life had kicked in, back in the early 2000s, I found myself a best friend in school and together, we convinced Javed bhai and Saleem bhai of Khan Chacha to give our “order” of muton seekh rolls and paneer tikka rolls priority — much like our Patelian seniors and juniors. When the brothers saw “rust sweater”-sporting kids approaching their *khokha*, they knew it was time to delay the rest of the orders.

Their clients envied us school children as we raced back to school with our order to catch the bus back home. We, however, swore lifelong loyalty to the “best kebab shop” in town. When money was sparse but the desire was strong, a senior would



ONE OF
800
MILLION

A VOICE, UNDER 35

order an onion roll — a paratha stuffed with onions and green chutney — for Rs 5.

In 2010, as a cub reporter with *The Indian Express*, I filed a story on Khan Chacha turning into a swanky two-storeyed restaurant in the market. The rolls were costlier, and us old-timers were sceptical but Javed and Saleem's familiar smiles kept us coming back — till they, tragically, shut shop in Khan Market after a trademark battle a few years ago.

The Khan Market gang was in deep despair, and battled the charm of other kebab shops. Aggressive Twitter and Facebook appeals to “save Khan Chacha” didn't create a ripple. Not entirely disheartened, we continued to visit our beloved market, with its quaint terrace restaurants that now served “global” cuisine. And the Parisian patisseries replaced Mrs Kaur's Crepes & More; the mysterious Mrs Kaur who sated many a craving without ever having met us.

But before we get distracted by the grown-ups, let's rewind to the gang-wars of Khan Market. For a single afternoon, after the last exam of the semester, the market

would be flooded with various gangs: The Patelians, the Modernites, the St. Columba's boys. Arch enemies on the basketball court and acutely aware of past ego battles, the gangs of boys and girls — in their school uniforms — gave each other cold stares. Since there was no Facebook or Instagram, senior-school scandals began at tournaments and reared their ugly heads at Khan Market.

The dogs of Khan Market grew fatter in front of us and the pet shop there was a revelation to me, as near my house — in the ignored Jamna Paar — pet shops hadn't yet arrived. On one such visit, my mother picked up a red belt for me excitedly, only to be told by an embarrassed teenaged daughter that it was for a dog!

Another cherished memory of the gang members was bumping into former cricketer Ajay Jadeja — a Patelian — in Khan Market, occasionally. It was a rule to do the SPV wave (if you know it, you know it) at him every single time he was spotted.

Now, the gang is in their 30s and spread across the world — a photographer, a filmmaker, a journalist — and with a whole bunch of challenges and fewer solutions. But every single time when the OGs reunite in Khan Market, a rush of memories take over — the first sip of beer at a famous dingy bar, Javed and Saleem Bhai's gracious service, and the cookies at Mrs Kaur. At the time, little did we know we were the Khan Market Gang. Thank you, Prime Minister.

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FROM PLATE TO PLOUGH

BY ASHOK GULATI

AS PER THE last report of National Statistical Office (NSO) released on May 31, the Gross Value Added (GVA) at basic prices (2011-12 prices) for the fourth quarter (Q4) of 2018-19 has slumped to 5.7 per cent for the overall economy, 3.1 per cent for manufacturing, and -0.1 per cent for agriculture, forestry and fishery. However, for the entire financial year, FY19, GVA growth is more respectable — 6.6 per cent for the economy, 6.9 per cent for manufacturing and 2.9 per cent for agriculture.

Incidentally, for the Narendra Modi government's first five-year stint (2014-15 to 2018-19), agri-GDP grew at 2.9 per cent per annum. Many experts believe that agriculture cannot grow at more than 3 per cent per annum on a sustainable basis. Swaminathan A Aiyar, for example — whose brilliant writings I admire — has recently written that “no country has managed more than 3 per cent agricultural growth over a long period”.

This is not correct. China, for example, registered an agri-GDP growth of 4.5 per cent per annum during 1978-2016, a very long period indeed. In fact, the first thing Chinese government did in 1978, when it started off economic reforms was to reform agriculture. Agri-GDP in China grew at 7.1 per cent per annum during 1978-84, and because the Chinese government also liberated price controls on agri-commodities, farmers' real incomes increased at 15 per cent per annum. That set the stage for the manufacturing revolution, which was revved up through town and village enterprises (TVEs) to cater to domestic demand from rural areas. The rest is history.

Indian industry is today complaining that the rural demand is collapsing. Tractor sales are down by 13 per cent, two-wheeler sales are down by 16 per cent, car sales are down by

similar percentage, and even FMCG (fast move consumer goods) sales are down in April 2019 over April 2018. One of the reasons is that India has never had any major agri-reforms and farmers' incomes have remained very low. But there have been periods, reasonably long enough, when agri-GDP has grown well above 3 per cent. In fact during the 10 years of UPA from 2004-05 to 2013-14, agri-GDP grew at 3.7 per cent per annum. This dropped to 2.9 per cent during the NDA's stint between 2014-2019. When the masses do not gain, the demand for manufactured goods remains limited, slowing down the wheels of industry. So, if industry wants to prosper, we must aim at an agri-GDP growth of more than 4 per cent. My assessment is that it can grow even at 5 per cent per annum at least for a decade, provided we are focused on reforming this sector.

For that, we need to raise farm productivity in a manner that can cut down unit costs and make Indian agriculture more competitive, enabling higher exports. Unfortunately, agri-exports had a negative growth during Modi 1.0 (see graph).

During UPA-2, agri-exports more than doubled, from \$18.4 billion in 2009-10 to \$43.6 billion in 2013-14. But during Modi 1.0, they declined, going down to \$33.3 billion in 2015-16 and then recovering to \$39.4 billion by 2018-19 — but still below the peak of 2013-14.

Officials managing agri-trade need to pay heed to this massive failure as it has implications not only for overall agri-GDP growth, but also for slowing down of manufacturing growth due to sluggish demand for industrial products in rural areas. There is ample evidence that much of Indian agriculture is globally competitive. But our restrictive policies constrain the private sector from building direct supply chains from farms to ports, which bypass the *mandi* system. This leads to a weak infrastructure for agri-exports. The net result of all this is that Indian farmers do not get full advantage of global markets. Further, an obsessive focus on inflation targeting by suppressing food prices through myriad controls works against the farmer. If these policies continue, Prime Minister Modi's target of doubling farmers' real incomes by 2022-23 will re-

There is ample evidence that much of Indian agriculture is globally competitive. But our restrictive policies constrain the private sector from building direct supply chains from farms to ports, which bypass the mandi system. This leads to a weak infrastructure for agri-exports. The net result of all this is that Indian farmers do not get full advantage of global markets.

main a pipe-dream.

It has to be noted that any attempt to artificially prop up farmers' prices through higher minimum support prices (MSPs), especially in relation to global prices, can be counterproductive. Normally, MSPs remain largely ineffective for most commodities in larger parts of India. But even if they are operational through massive procurement operations, a policy of high MSPs can backfire when it goes beyond global prices.

Take the case of rice. India is the largest exporter of rice in the world, exporting about 12 to 13 MMT of the cereal per year. If the government raises the MSP of rice, by say 20 per cent, rice exports will drop and stocks with the government will rise to levels far beyond the buffer stock norms. It would be a loss of scarce resources. Besides, it would create unnecessary distortions adversely impacting the diversification process in agriculture towards high-value crops. This needs to be avoided.

Our global competitiveness in agriculture can be bolstered by investment in agri-R&D and its extension from lab to land, investment in managing water efficiently and investment in infrastructure for agri-exports value chains. Today, India spends roughly 0.7 per cent of agri-GDP on agri-R&D and extension together. This needs to double in the next five years. The returns are enormous. The meagre investments in Pusa Basmati 1121 and 1509, for example, have yielded basmati exports between \$ 4 and 5 billion annually. The returns from the sugarcane variety Co-0238 in Uttar Pradesh are similarly impressive. The recovery ratio has increased from about 9.2 in 2012-13 to more than 11 per cent today. Massive investments are also needed in managing our water resources more efficiently, to produce more with less.

But augmenting productivity alone — without pushing for export markets — can lead to glut at a home and depress farm prices, shrinking their profitability. So, first think of markets and then give a push to raise productivity and exports simultaneously.

Can all this be done under Modi 2.0? Only time will tell.

The writer is Infosys Chair Professor for Agriculture at ICRIER

VIEW FROM THE NEIGHBOURHOOD



A weekly look at the public conversations shaping ideas beyond borders — in the Subcontinent. Curated by Aakash Joshi

URGE TO TALK

THE JUNE 9 editorial in *Dawn* begins with the assertion of a sentiment that has become common in Pakistan when it comes to talks with India: “While the messages coming from New Delhi are mixed, Islamabad is clear in its vision: Let both nations come to the negotiating table and find a way forward to shed the animosity of the past seven decades — and counting — and attempt a new start in South Asia”.

It recalls that post the Pulwama attacks, the two countries were on the “brink of war”, and given that scare, “the importance of talks cannot be overstated”. The editorial contends that post the elections in India, it remains unclear what position Prime Minister Narendra Modi intends to adopt vis a vis Islamabad and Rawalpindi. The meeting of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation in Kyrgyzstan is an opportunity for Imran Khan and Modi to break the ice.

The editorial even goes on to suggest a trajectory for a possible diplomatic detente: “Let both start with the ‘soft’ issues (CBMs, people-to-people contact) and work their way up to the major issues (Kashmir, violence). It is clear that if these opportunities are lost, then only further turbulence is likely in one of the most tortured geopolitical relationships in the world”. It does not, how-

ever, mention New Delhi oft-stated pre-condition — “terror and talks can't go together”.

SRI LANKA, UNFORGED

WHILE THE NEWS pages of the Sri Lankan English language media have given extensive coverage to Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to the country, on the eve of his arrival, there were few editorials or opinion articles on the visit. Instead, the social cleavages and political turmoil that have come to the fore since the Easter terror attacks continue, understandably, to dominate the conversation. Siri Hettige, Chair of Sri Lanka Studies at the South Asia Institute at the University of Heidelberg argues in *The Daily Mirror* on June 6 that “what we witness today is an extraordinary situation that we can ignore only at our own peril. It is the culmination of a series of long-neglected economic, political and societal issues. If we fail to identify the gravity of the emergent situation in the country today and explore all possible avenues and find a way out of this unprecedented crisis, consequences for the country and the people can be dire”.

On the political front, he argues, “people inhabiting this landmass have not come together as a cohesive political community transcending ethnic, religious and linguistic divisions. This is largely due to the failure of

post-independence regimes over the last sixty years to adopt appropriate national policies to achieve such a national goal. The result has been intermittent inter-community violence and conflict that not only led to an enormous waste of financial and human resources but also encouraged many people to leave the country”.

On the economy, uneven development and the retreat of the state led to much dissatisfaction, as was seen during the Tamil insurgency.

Finally, and most importantly, governments have failed in their primary duty of being the arbiters of violence: “Successive governments including the present one have failed to even effectively enforce the law against the perpetrators of violence. It is against this background that we need to look at the most recent terrorist attacks and other violent incidents that followed. The way the government leaders have reacted to these recent developments has made the situation worse”.

READING AN ELECTION

MUHAMMAD ZAMIR, A former diplomat and foreign affairs analyst weighs on Narendra Modi's decisive election to a second term by the people of India in *The Dhaka Tribune* on June 9. Zamir highlights the grow-

ing and deepening relationship between Bangladesh and India, as well as the fact the PM Sheikh Hasina was among the first to congratulate Modi.

Yet, as has been the trend in Bangladesh since the issue of the NRC in Assam and the Citizenship Bill has become salient in India, Zamir flags many issues. Among these is Amit Shah's (now home minister) divisive and offensive rhetoric against Muslims and Bangladeshis in political speeches: “Shah... also needs to understand that fuelling nationalist sentiment by accusing others of appeasing Muslims can only create instability. This needs to be avoided.”

Zamir also points out that the election win in India has been seen globally in complex ways: The foreign media have acknowledged that a mixture of development and nationalism has worked in Modi's favour. There has been a subtle juxtaposition of nationalist rhetoric, subtle religious polarisation, and a swing of welfare programs, and these have helped the BJP considerably. Modi and the BJP managed to fuse nationalism and development with technology as the common denominator. He has promised the citizens safety and security through the protection of India's “land, air, and outer space,” and also targeted welfare schemes for the poor — homes, toilets, credit, and cooking gas”.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

LETTER OF THE WEEK AWARD

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

THE WINNER RECEIVES SELECT EXPRESS PUBLICATIONS

The Lok Sabha elections, is now seeking exemption from court appearance on flimsy grounds.

Tharcus S Fernando, Chennai

KEEPING FRIENDS

THIS REFERS TO the article, ‘An ocean of neighbours’ (IE, June 7). The author's observations regarding the expansion of the idea of the neighbourhood bodes well. But this should not lead to ignoring the traditional neighbourhood, especially Bangladesh and Nepal. Domestic rhetoric against Bangladeshi Muslims and fears that they will be deported can queer the pitch in bilateral relations. Nepal, meanwhile, has growing ever-closer to China.

Bishwadeep Chatterjee, via email





Andhra spectrum

Jagan Reddy is showcasing his widened social base with his choice of Ministers

Starting off as an unsure heir to his father Y.S. Rajasekhara Reddy's legacy 10 years ago, Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy has since transformed himself into a mass leader. He has done this by sheer tenacity, but his political rise was devoid of an ideological thread. Deeply aware of this inadequacy, which is more pronounced amid the BJP's dominance nationally, Mr. Reddy has made an early move to fortress the wide-spectrum social coalition that accorded his YSR Congress Party a landslide victory, by appointing five deputies. The death of his father, then Chief Minister and better known as YSR, in 2009 had pushed the Congress over the cliff in the State, a downslide in fortunes that befell it nationally too. Humiliated by the Congress and jailed during its rule, Mr. Reddy continued his tireless travels across the State, finally arriving this summer at his destination, the CM's chair. The constitution of his Council of Ministers, including Mekathoti Sucharita, a Dalit woman, as the Home Minister, and five deputies, is evidently aimed at nurturing the coalition of social groups that he singlehandedly built up through his travels. The five Deputy CMs are from the Scheduled Caste (K. Narayana Swamy), Scheduled Tribe (Pamula Pushpa Sreevani), backward caste (Pilli Subhash Chandrabose), Muslim (Amzath Basha) and Kapu (Alla Kali Krishna Srinivas) communities.

Unitary projects such as nationalism have strong homogenising tendencies that consider particular identities and their aspirations for representation irrelevant or even fissiparous. Weaker sections of society are often at the receiving end of such projects, even if they are enthusiastic subscribers. Mr. Reddy's success in weaving together a political base that denied the BJP a foothold in Andhra Pradesh, a State where it could not win a single seat, and vanquished the Telugu Desam Party was built on a sensitive appreciation of the aspiration for representation among diverse sections of society. Mr. Reddy's predecessor, N. Chandrababu Naidu, had two deputies, one a Kapu and one from another backward caste; that was aimed more at accommodating formidable interest groups rather than empowering the weakest. YSR had won in 2004 and 2009 with an expansive welfare agenda. Mr. Reddy believes that welfarism alone is not sufficient and representation is critical in the changed situation. YSR's victories were the bedrock of the Congress in 2004 and 2009; Mr. Reddy's victory signals the decimation of the party in the State. But his politics holds out some useful lessons for the Congress and other parties seeking to challenge the Hindutva juggernaut: that material betterment of the citizenry needs to be complemented with wider social coalitions.

St. Petersburg consensus

Russia and China are strengthening ties amid tensions with the U.S.

The bonhomie between China's and Russia's leaders at the St. Petersburg International Economic Forum last week was demonstrable. In a sign of the heightened tensions between the U.S. and the two countries, Russia's annual investment gathering was boycotted by the U.S. Ambassador to Russia, Jon Huntsman. His absence was ascribed to the prevailing environment in Russia for foreign entrepreneurs, typified by the detention of U.S. private equity investor Michael Calvey on allegations of fraud. Conversely, the Chinese telecommunications equipment manufacturer Huawei signed an agreement with Russia's principal mobile operator to start 5G networks, in a rebuff to Washington's attempts to isolate the firm internationally. Russian President Vladimir Putin and his Chinese counterpart Xi Jinping made it clear in St. Petersburg that the tensions with the West had only drawn them closer. The rift with Russia began with Moscow's annexation of Crimea in 2014 and the stand-off in eastern Ukraine that continues. Russia's tensions with the U.S. and some EU countries stem also from their opposition to the 1,200-km-long Nord Stream 2 gas pipeline from Russia to Germany. U.S. objections draw in part from its eagerness to export liquefied natural gas to Europe, besides thwarting Moscow's ambition to dominate the region's energy market. Far more sensitive has been U.S. Special Counsel Robert Mueller's inquiry into possible Russian meddling in the 2016 U.S. presidential election. Washington's blacklisting of Huawei, prohibiting it from selling technology to the U.S. and barring domestic firms from supplying semiconductors to Beijing, falls into a class of its own among international trade disputes.

Amid these tensions, in St. Petersburg Mr. Xi and Mr. Putin emphasised that bilateral relations were at a historic high, marked by increased diplomatic and strategic cooperation. China participated in Russian military exercises on its eastern border last September, marking a watershed. Moscow and Beijing, hostile rivals of the Cold War era, have for a while been adopting common positions at the UN Security Council on critical international issues. Bilateral relations are also guided by pragmatism. Russia appears realistic about the growing Chinese economic clout in Central Asia, once firmly in its sphere of influence, thanks to China's massive infrastructure investments under the Belt and Road Initiative. Chinese cooperation would moreover prove critical for Russia's elaborate plans to exploit the Northern Sea Route along the Arctic as an alternative transportation hub. International sanctions have not been very effective in isolating Russia. European states, notably Germany, recognise the importance of engaging with Russia to contain Mr. Putin's expansionist aims. Equally, President Donald Trump's "America first" policy is compelling potential rivals to make common cause.

Inhumane, and utterly undemocratic

Mohammad Sanaullah's case must serve as an urgent call for rethinking the National Register of Citizens



GAUTAM BHATIA

On June 8, upon the orders of the Gauhati High Court, Mohammad Sanaullah was released on bail from a detention camp in Assam. He had been detained on May 29, after a Foreigners Tribunal had declared him an illegal immigrant. The Gauhati High Court's bail order came after a week of sustained public pressure, occasioned by the revelation that Mr. Sanaullah had served for three decades in the Indian Army.

In the intervening period, a shocking number of irregularities surfaced. In its inquiry report, the Assam border police had written that Mr. Sanaullah was a 'labourer'. The three men who signed the case report claimed that the investigating officer had fabricated their signatures. The investigating officer himself admitted that it might have been an "administrative mix-up". Yet, it was on the basis of such shoddy material that the Foreigners Tribunal – a quasi-judicial body expected to follow the rule of law – came to the conclusion that Mr. Sanaullah was a "foreigner", and packed him off to a detention camp – until the High Court stepped in to set him at liberty.

But Mr. Sanaullah is among the luckier ones. Investigative journalists have revealed over the last few years that 'administrative errors' of this kind are the rule rather than the exception. As Mr. Sanaullah acknowledged in an interview after being released, there were people in the detention camps with similar stories, who had been there for 10 years or more. For these individuals, without the benefit of media scrutiny, there may

be no bail – only an endless detention. But by forcing the conversation onto the national stage, Mr. Sanaullah's case has provided hope that we may yet recognise the unfolding citizenship tragedy in Assam for what it is, and step back from the brink while there is still time.

NRC, Foreigners Tribunals

According to the Assam Accord, individuals who entered Assam after March 24, 1971 are illegal immigrants. There are two parallel processes to establish citizenship: the Foreigners Tribunals operating under the Foreigners Act, and the National Register of Citizens (NRC), which is under preparation. While nominally and formally independent, in practice, these two systems bled into each other, with people who have been declared as foreigners by the Foreigners Tribunals, and even their families, dropped from the draft NRC.

For something as elemental and important as citizenship, one would expect these systems to be implemented as carefully as possible, and with procedural safeguards. This is especially true when we think of the consequences of being declared a non-citizen: disenfranchisement, exclusion from public services, incarceration in detention camps, statelessness, and deportation. Before treating an individual – a human being – to such drastic consequences, the very least a humane and civilised society can do is to ensure that the rule of law has been followed to its last degree.

The reality, however, is the exact opposite. In a vast number of cases, the legally mandated initial inquiry before an individual is dragged before a tribunal as a suspected "foreigner" simply does not happen – indeed, it did not happen for Mr. Sanaullah. The Tri-



RITU BALAKONWAR

bunals themselves are only constrained by a very limited number of procedural safeguards. This has led to situations where Tribunals have issued notices to entire families, instead of just the suspected "foreigner". Additionally, reports show that Foreigners Tribunals habitually declare individuals to be "foreigners" on the basis of clerical errors in documents, such as a spelling mistake, an inconsistency in age, and so on. Needless to say, the hardest hit by this form of "justice" are the vulnerable and the marginalised, who have limited documentation at the best of time, and who are rarely in a position to correct errors across documents. On occasion, orders determining citizenship have been passed by tribunals without even assigning reasons, a basic *sine qua non* of the rule of law. In addition, a substantial number of individuals are sent to detention camps without being heard – on the basis of *ex parte* orders – and the detention centres themselves are little better than concentration camps, where families are separated, and people not allowed to move beyond narrow confined spaces for years on end.

The process under the NRC is little better. Driven by the Supreme Court, it has been defined by sealed covers and opaque proceedings. For example, in a behind-closed-doors consultation with the NRC Coordinator, the Supreme Court developed a new

method of ascertaining citizenship known as the "family tree method". This method was not debated or scrutinised publicly, and ground reports found that people from the hinterland were not only unaware of the method, but those who were aware had particular difficulties in putting together "family trees" of the kind that were required (the burden fell disproportionately upon women). And recently, it was found that a process by which individuals could file "objections" against people whose names had appeared in the draft NRC – and on the basis of which these people would be forced to once again prove their citizenship – had resulted in thousands of indiscriminate objections being filed, on a seemingly random basis, causing significant hardship and trauma to countless individuals. However, when the people coordinating these "objections" were contacted, they brushed it off by saying that it was mere "collateral damage" in the quest to weed out illegal immigrants.

The role of the judiciary

In a process riddled with such flaws, and where the consequences are so drastic, one would expect the judiciary, the guardian of fundamental rights and the guarantor of the rule of law, to intervene. Instead, the Supreme Court, led by the present Chief Justice of India, has played the roles of cheerleader, midwife, and overseer. Not only has it driven the NRC process, as outlined above but it has repeatedly attempted to speed up proceedings, pulled up the State government when it has asked to be allowed to release people detained for a long time, and instead of questioning procedural violations and infringement of rights, has instead asked why more people are not in detention centres, and why

more people are not being deported. Most egregiously, the Court even used a PIL about the inhumane conditions in detention centres in order to pursue this project.

However, what the Supreme Court has failed to understand is that in questions of life and death, where the cost of error is so high, it is not "speed" that matters, but the protection of rights. But through its conduct, the Supreme Court has transformed itself from the protector of the rule of law into an enthusiastic abettor of its daily violation. And the Gauhati High Court has been no better, passing a bizarre and unreasoned order stating that it would be a "logical corollary" that the family members of a declared foreigner would also be foreigners, on the basis of which the border police have sent the names of entire families to NRC authorities. This is the very antithesis of how constitutional courts should behave.

Focus the spotlight

Mohammad Sanaullah is, for now, a free man. But a society in which his case is the exception instead of the rule, where it needs a person to be an ex-Army man, and his case pursued by national media for a full week before interim bail is granted, is a society that has utterly abandoned the rule of law. Yet Mr. Sanaullah's case can do some good as well: it can prompt some urgent national introspection about a situation where, in the State of Assam, thousands of people languish in detention camps for years, victims of a process that, to use an old adage, would not be sufficient to "hang a dog on". If anything can trigger an urgent and imperative call for change, surely this will – and must.

Gautam Bhatia is a Delhi-based lawyer

A clear arc from India to Nigeria

The leadership in both countries must take the initiative to energise bilateral ties



MAHESH SACHDEV

It was a coincidence straight out of the silver screens in Mumbai or Lagos: the leaders of India and Nigeria both began their respective second terms within a day of each other following their unexpectedly decisive election victories. The challenges faced by Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Nigerian President Muhammadu Buhari during their first terms were uncannily similar: security against terror, monetary and fiscal conundrums, a communal and sectarian divide, chronic unemployment, rampant corruption, rural distress and a fragile neighbourhood being the recurrent themes.

Each of the two leaders is widely acknowledged as an outlier to the system riddled with corruption and nepotism and is admired for his personal probity, hard work and discipline.

For instance, Mr. Buhari, 76, returned to power in 2015 – 30 years after he ruled Nigeria as a military dictator. The intervening decades were spent variously in detention, farming and as challenger-candi-

date in three presidential elections.

Diverse trade

It may be tempting to both Indians and Nigerians to shrug at these similarities as banal trivia; however, under them lies plenty of substance and potential linking the two countries and aspirations of their people. First, Nigeria being Africa's most populous country (191 million) and economy (\$376 billion) as well as the world's sixth largest oil exporter (about 2 million barrels per day) is evidently important to us. According to the latest Indian Department of Commerce statistics, Nigeria is India's largest trading partner in Africa (19th overall) with total trade estimated at \$13.5 billion in 2018-19. As official Nigerian data show, thanks to our booming oil imports, India is Nigeria's largest trading partner. For the same reason, Nigeria enjoys 4:1 surplus in bilateral trade. Nevertheless, it is still a sizeable market for India's manufactured exports, such as (2018-19 figures) miscellaneous machinery (\$500 million), vehicles (\$495 million), pharmaceutical products (\$447 million), textile items (\$299 million), iron and steel articles (\$152 million) and plastics (\$109 million).

In contrast to the stagnancy in India's global exports, its exports to Nigeria surged by 27% last year



FILE PHOTO/ANAND

to reach around \$2,880 million. Indian investments in Nigeria are estimated at around \$15 billion with a further \$5 billion in the pipeline. There are at least 180 Indian companies operating in Nigeria with pharmaceuticals, steel, power, retailing, fast-moving consumer goods and skillings as their mainstay. Approximately 50,000 Indians reside in Nigeria, some of them for decades. Most of them are professionals, such as engineers, accountants, bankers, trainers and health-care experts.

Success despite apathy

While all these facts go to underline the substantive nature of India-Nigeria ties, they also point to two important contextual factors. First, all these achievements are the outcome of valiant attempts by individual stakeholders with scant official encouragement or support.

For instance, some simple tweaking in our visa procedure can help thousands of Nigerians avail of our medical and educa-

tional facilities, benefiting all sides and creating huge people-to-people goodwill. Despite the encouraging numbers, the two governments have not yet been able to facilitate direct connectivity of air travel, banking and shipping – steps which could have promoted the ease of doing bilateral business.

Second, enormous potential still waits to be leveraged in such sectors such as upstream hydrocarbons (despite India being the largest buyer of Nigerian crude), agriculture, health care and skillings. Despite their growth, Indian exports to Nigeria are still around a quarter of China's.

Much potential

Although bilateral ties have had to face strong headwinds during the past five years, more could have been accomplished. Mr. Buhari, who was trained in India as a military officer and holds this country in high esteem, attended the third India-Africa Forum Summit held in October 2015 and met Mr. Modi for bilateral talks. Then Vice President Hamid Ansari's bilateral visit in September 2016 broke the hiatus in top-level contact since Manmohan Singh's Nigeria visit, as Prime Minister, in 2007.

Though some ministerial-level visits took place in the past five years, these were mostly for multi-lateral events in India. The last ses-

sion of the Joint Commission Meeting was in 2011 and the Foreign Office Consultations were held in 2003. Bilateral ties have not drawn commensurate proportion of the resources offered by India to its African partners largely due to some systemic issues. Defence cooperation has been mostly episodic and training oriented.

As the two leaders begin their respective second innings, they need to give a push to India-Nigeria ties sooner rather than later. Actions along few force-multiplier axes suggest themselves. With oil and other commodities becoming a seller's market, an early summit between the two leaders is an obvious imperative. It could evolve a multi-pronged strategy to leverage evident economic complementarities in sectors such as hydrocarbons, infrastructure, institution-building, defence and agriculture. A purposive follow-up session of the joint economic commission soon thereafter could provide an incremental and sustainable road map empowering the relevant bilateral stakeholders. If handled deftly and with political will, it could usher in an India-Nigeria economic synergy that has been untapped for some decades.

Mahesh Sachdev was the Indian High Commissioner to Nigeria during 2008-13. He is the author of the book, 'Nigeria: A Business Manual'

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.

A word of advice

One wonders which direction Indian democracy is headed upon hearing Congress president Rahul Gandhi's renewed attack on the Prime Minister ("Modi's campaign filled with hatred: Rahul", June 9). The campaigning during the general election was marred by personal insinuations. Practically no short- or long-term policies for the welfare of people and steps to strengthen democracy were discussed. Mr. Gandhi knows very well that his 'chowkidar chor hai' line did not find resonance with the people. The Opposition must let the government begin work, while maintaining vigil.

P. R. V. RAJA,
Pandalam, Kerala

Party travails

The emerging fault lines within the Congress party,

right from its AICC headquarters to almost every State unit, are a serious setback to the party ("Congress travails go from bad to worse", June 9). The epidemic of open dissidence explains the parochial mindset of Congress leaders. The lack of ideological commitment is evident. The leaders of the party are supposed to be its soldiers who strengthen it during crises, but we have the reverse happening here.

N. SADHASIVA REDDY,
Bengaluru

Creeping fear

The report, "A thread of fear and hate" ('Ground Zero' page, June 8), holds a mirror to the harsh reality of fear gripping the minorities predominantly in north India as well as highlighting the danger posed to lives and

livelihoods by right-wing elements. The Prime Minister's pronouncement of 'Sabka Vishwas' immediately after the general election, his declared intention to win over the minorities and his dramatic gesture of highlighting the importance of the Constitution raised hope of a new beginning. It should not be allowed to fade away. The right wing should know that the greatness of India can never be realised by suppressing its multiple identities.

MANOHAR ALEMBATH,
Kannur, Kerala

Use with care

In our school days in the 1950s and 1960s, paper and stationery use were important especially in large families that worked hard to make both ends meet. In our family, for instance, we were given

strict instructions by elders not to leave any blank space in notebooks ('Open Page', "Go for the blank space", June 9). Any blank space was later combined with other such papers and bound afresh into small rough notebooks 4 inches by 5 inches in size. There were occasions when the opening side of a notebook and the pages thereafter were used for one subject, with the reverse end (upside down) used for another subject. I still remember how some of us did combined studies in mathematics. We used chalk pieces to work out the problems on a red oxide floor in order to save paper, and then used a duster cloth to wipe off our work. The 'use with care' habit was reflected in postcard writing too.

SESHAGIRI ROW KARRY,
Hyderabad

The wink

It was a delight to read the writer's delectable account of variants of the wink ('Open Page', "The simple pleasures of a momentary wink", June 9). I wonder whether the present generation, so busy with gadgets, has found time to even think about the fading of this 'simple pleasure'.

CORRECTIONS & CLARIFICATIONS:

In the 'Life' page article titled "A glorious yellow bloom in honour of botanist E.K. Janaki Ammal" (June 9, 2019), a sentence that read "Mrs. Viraraghavan, who claimed that the rose named E.K. Janaki Ammal is the only tropical rose species in the world ..." should be corrected to say: "Mrs. Viraraghavan said that the rose named E.K. Janaki Ammal was bred from *Rosa clinophylla*, which is the only tropical rose species in the world..."

A sentence in the Business page report headlined "Banking system on the cusp of a transformation: Das" (June 8, 2019) read: "However, if we take into account the capital conservation buffer (CCB), some banks, especially public-sector banks (PSBs), are falling short of the required 10.875%." It should have been 1.875%.

In the story titled "Can't stop, won't stop: the rise of Tamil rap" (The Hindu Weekend, June 8, 2019), the reference to Singapore-based Lady Kash should be corrected to read as Singapore-born Lady Kash.

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Is NITI Aayog old wine in a new bottle?

There must be a review of what the think tank has achieved to adopt the new role described in its charter



ARUN MAIRA

The Narendra Modi government has its plate full. It needs to increase employment and incomes; revive investments and growth; untangle the financial sector; navigate muddled-up international trade; solve the perennial problems of poor education and health, and the growing problems of environmental pollution and water scarcity. Even though statistical confusion was created in the run-up to the election to deny that problems of unemployment and growth were serious, high-powered Cabinet committees have been formed to tackle them.

Regardless of whether or not India has the fastest growing GDP, it has a long way to go to achieve economic and social inclusion, and restore environmental sustainability. India's problems are complex because they are all interrelated. Fixing one part of the system alone can make matters worse. For example, providing skills to millions of youth before there are enough employment opportunities is a bold fix that can backfire. The complexity of the task demands a good plan and a good strategy.

Under scrutiny

Does the Indian government have the capability to make good plans and strategies to address its complex challenges? Since India has not done as well as it should have to produce faster growth with more inclusion and sustainability, one would have to surmise that it has not developed the requisite capabilities. Mr. Modi has known this. Indeed, the first major reform he announced in his first term was to abolish the Planning Commission. He replaced it with the lofty titled 'National Institution for Transforming India' (NITI Aayog).

Now, when the country's economy has not performed to the high expectations Mr. Modi had created, and citizens' aspirations for 'acche din' have not been realised, the performance of the NITI Aayog is under scrutiny, as it should be. Many people are even nostalgically recalling the Planning Commission, including



KAMAL MARANG

some who were very critical of it and wanted it overhauled.

Mr. Modi's predecessors, Manmohan Singh and Atal Bihari Vajpayee, had faced similar, large, economic, social, political and global challenges. When Vajpayee was presented a nine-point plan by a global think-tank to increase the economy's growth to 9%, he famously retorted, "We know all that. The question is, how will it all be done?" He highlighted that many stakeholders must be involved in the implementation of a plan in a large, diversified and democratic country – the States, the private sector, civil society and even the political Opposition. Therefore, it is not good enough to have a plan, there must also be a strategy for its cooperative implementation too.

Dr. Singh declared that reform of the Planning Commission was long overdue. An intensive exercise was undertaken. Many stakeholders were consulted. International practices were examined. An outline was drawn of a substantially reformed institution which would, in Dr. Singh's words, have a capability for "systems reform" rather than making of Five-Year Plans, and which would have the "power of persuasion" without providing budgets.

A commission chaired by C. Rangarajan, then Chairman of the Prime Minister's Economic Advisory Council, examined budgetary processes, divisions of responsibilities between the Finance Ministry and the Planning Commission, and distinctions between 'plan' and 'non-plan' expenditures. It concluded that budgetary responsibility must be concentrated in the Finance Ministry, and it was no longer desirable for the Plan-

ning Commission to have powers for financial provisions.

Some in the Planning Commission were worried that it would lose its teeth if it did not have any financial power. How else would it persuade the States to do what it wanted them to do? Chief Ministers retorted that the Planning Commission must improve its ability to understand their needs and to develop ideas that they would want to adopt because they accepted the ideas as good for them, not because they would have to if they wanted the money. Mr. Modi, as a powerful Chief Minister, understood well the limitations in the Planning Commission's capabilities and what it needed to do to reform itself, which the investigations commissioned by Dr. Singh had also revealed. It is not surprising, therefore, that the bold charter of NITI Aayog that Mr. Modi announced in 2015 was consistent with Dr. Singh's and Vajpayee's insights. He was implementing an idea whose time had come.

A good starting point

Implementation of radical change is never easy. If things don't go well soon, nostalgia will rise for the old order – even though there was dissatisfaction with it. And the change-maker will be blamed for the disruption. The NITI Aayog charter is a good starting point for a new journey in transforming the governance of the Indian economy. The NITI Aayog and the government would do well to conduct an open-minded review of what NITI Aayog has achieved so far to adopt the new role described in its charter – that of a catalyst of change in a complex, federal, socioeconomic system. And assess whether it has

transformed its capabilities sufficiently to become an effective systems reformer and persuader of stakeholders, rather than merely be an announcer of lofty multi-year goals and manager of projects, which many suspect it is.

There is deep concern that NITI Aayog has lost its integrity as an independent institution to guide the government; that it has become a mouthpiece of the government and an implementer of the government's projects. Many insist that NITI Aayog must have the ability to independently evaluate the government's programmes at the Centre and in the States. Some recall that an Independent Evaluation Office set up in the last days of the UPA-II government was swiftly closed by the NDA government. Others counter that the Planning Commission had a Programme Evaluation Organisation all along and which continues. They miss the need for fundamental transformation in the approach to planning and change.

The traditional approach of after-the-fact evaluation sits in the old paradigm of numbers, budgets and controls. The transformational approach to planning and implementation that 21st century India needs, which is alluded to in NITI's charter, requires evaluations and course-corrections in the midst of action. It requires new methods to speed up 'organisational learning' among stakeholders in the system who must make plans together and implement them together.

The NITI Aayog's charter has provided a new bottle. It points to the need for new methods of cooperative learning and cooperative implementation by stakeholders who are not controlled by any central body of technical experts with political and/or budgetary authority over them. Merely filling this new bottle with old ideas of budgets, controls and expert solutions from above will not transform India. The debate about NITI Aayog's efficacy must focus on whether or not it is performing the new role it must, and what progress it has made in acquiring capabilities to perform this role, rather than slipping back into the ruts of yesterday's debates about the need for a Planning Commission.

Arun Maira was a member of the Planning Commission

FROM THE READERS' EDITOR

A debate that divides

An ideological prism should not be used to malign a journalistic inquiry



A.S. PANNEERSELVAM

Polarisation is not restricted to our body politic alone; it is seeping into the vitals of our social fabric, leading to a situation where there is little dialogue. Nothing exemplifies this divide better than the debate over the feature, "The politics of food" (Magazine, June 2).

A range of interviews

As a news ombudsman, I have to address two questions. One, what did the story say that provoked such angry responses and counter-responses? And two, did the story meet the crucial requirements of journalism or was it just lazy opinion masquerading as a feature? The story asked why Akshaya Patra Foundation (APF), run by Iskcon, refuses to add onion or garlic to the mid-day meals (MDM) it provides in Karnataka even though the children crave the familiar taste.

It was a story based on interactions with the beneficiaries of the affirmative action, the children. It was neither a quick opinion piece quoting just one critical expert, nor did it black out the opinions of those who support the programme. If children find the food unpalatable, is it right for anyone else to say that they should not complain and instead eat what is provided to them? Isn't this an indication that the purpose of the affirmative action has been turned on its head? The report drew its larger conclusion based on interviews with a range of people, including the children, the director of the National Institute of Nutrition (NIN), the principal secretary of education in Karnataka, and Right to Food activists. It also quoted APF.

Was the story hurriedly written as some Twitter warriors claim? If it failed to provide the arguments advanced by the defenders of the scheme, then it would be fair to term it an attack. But the report recorded the opinions of most of the agencies involved. It cited what NIN said when it gave a formal nod to APF's menu: "The nutritive values of menus with ingredients used in the mentioned amounts certainly meet and often exceed the prescribed energy (Kcal) and protein requirements prescribed by MHRD (Ministry of Human Resource Development) for the MDM." It also recorded the view of the principal secretary of education in Karnataka:

"Under the Mid-Day Meal Scheme, what the government has prescribed are the nutrient levels required in a meal – the level of carbohydrates, proteins, etc. They have not prescribed the ingredients. So when we got this particular complaint, we referred it to CFTRI and NIN asking them about the advantages of onion and garlic and if we have to use them. NIN has said that APF meets the nutrition standards, so why should we cancel the contract with APF? Except for this one small reason (the refusal to use onion and garlic), there are a lot of advantages for the govern-



M.A. SRIRAM

ment to continue its contract with Iskcon. They provide hygienic meals and cater to a large group of children in the State as well as in the country. We aren't delving into philosophical and religious issues. And we cannot punish them unnecessarily for somebody's objections."

Understanding a complex reality

In a fair journalistic manner, the report questioned the arguments advanced by the defenders of the scheme but never did it attempt to silence any one of them. In fact, it is the only place where we find the technical reading of the NIN: "We computed macronutrients and micronutrients from the MDM menus recommended by the Karnataka government and the MDM menus provided by APF from the published scientific data of the Institute (Indian Food Composition Table and Nutritive Value of Indian Foods). It is an accepted norm to assess the nutritional quantity and quality of food using the computational methods from the quantities of ingredients that go into making it."

Partisanship and polarisation should not come in the way of our understanding a complex reality. A few years ago, a story dealing with the nutrient content of a noon-meal scheme meant for underprivileged children would not have drawn the ire of anyone. An ideological prism should not be used to malign a journalistic inquiry.

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SINGLE FILE

Crossing the barrier

PM Modi has adopted an aspect of the presidential system by appointing S. Jaishankar as External Affairs Minister

T.P. SREENIVASAN

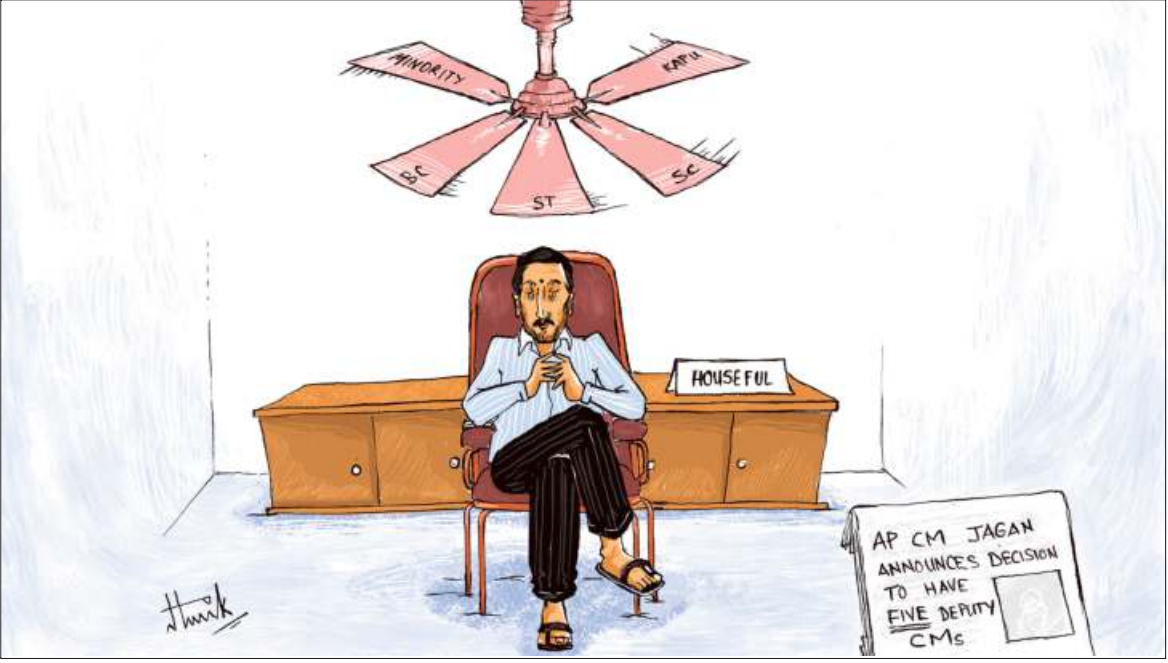


In the management of international affairs in parliamentary democracies, there is a barrier between politicians who formulate policies and the professionals who implement it. To cross the barrier, professionals have to join politics and move up the hard way to ministerial positions. By appointing former Foreign Secretary S. Jaishankar as the Minister of External Affairs, Prime Minister Narendra Modi has created history by adopting an aspect of the presidential system, in which professionals do not need to go through the parliamentary process. A rare chemistry between the Prime Minister and his former Foreign Secretary has led to this step, about which there are dissenting murmurs in political and bureaucratic circles. Therefore, this is likely to be an isolated event. But its significance will be discussed in the days to come.

Diplomatic outcomes are difficult to measure and no one person can claim credit or blame, as many people work over time to ensure that initiatives fructify. For instance, the nuclear deal took several years to accomplish right from the days of the Vajpayee government. Many diplomats, scientists and politicians worked at different levels. But as the point person for the U.S., Mr. Jaishankar was credited with the success of the negotiations. Though much of the 123 Agreement was not implemented, every word was fiercely fought. The deal still remains a major accomplishment of Indian diplomacy. Mr. Jaishankar has a consistent record of successful tenures in Moscow, Colombo, Budapest, Prague, Singapore, Beijing and Washington with intermittent key postings at headquarters. Successive governments rated Mr. Jaishankar high, and finally Mr. Modi appointed him Foreign Secretary by curtailing the tenure of his predecessor. Mr. Jaishankar provided the professional touch to Mr. Modi's disruptive and innovative ideas, which made waves around the globe. It is no wonder that Mr. Jaishankar was inducted as a Cabinet Minister in Mr. Modi's second term.

When Mr. Jaishankar was appointed the Foreign Secretary in 2015, I had written, "The 60th year in Jaishankar's life is just an important landmark and it is too early to assess his lifetime achievements. He has much more to do and to tell before he hangs his diplomatic boots." As predicted, he has to do much more in his new post. Indian foreign policy is at a crossroads. The present trajectory needs to be changed because of the unpredictability of the U.S., and the growth of influence of China and Russia. The spirit of Wuhan and Sochi needs to be nurtured with a view to creating a niche for India in an emerging multipolar world. It is here that Mr. Jaishankar will be an asset to Mr. Modi.

T.P. Sreenivasan is former Ambassador of India and Governor for India of the IAEA



DATA POINT

State of NEET

States with a higher proportion of CBSE schools have a good NEET qualification rate in general. Despite having the lowest student dropout rate by Class XII, Tamil Nadu has a relatively low NEET qualification rate (better by 9 percentage points since 2018), unlike Punjab and Kerala. By **Varun B. Krishnan**

State	Children aged 17-18 (lakh)*	Dropout rate (%)	NEET qualification rate 2019 (%)	Change since 2018	% aged 17-18 who cleared NEET 2019	No. of students per CBSE school
Delhi	6.54	21.4	73.73	-1.19	3.46%	305
Haryana	10.43	14.8	72.59	-0.82	2.16%	628
Andhra Pradesh	29.81	N/A	72.55	1.83	1.31%	9,033
Rajasthan	33.77	20.4	69.66	-4.64	1.92%	2,981
Punjab	10.00	16	68.61	2.68	0.95%	733
Kerala	11.00	14.4	66.74	0.15	6.67%	819
Karnataka	20.74	N/A	63.51	0.26	3.13%	2,121
Bihar	63.08	53.6	60.15	2.54	0.70%	7,119
Odisha	16.90	32.1	59.44	-1.24	1.14%	3,657
West Bengal	35.75	44.9	59.38	0.8	1.03%	10,578
Uttar Pradesh	106.96	25.8	58.61	-1.22	0.79%	3,180
Madhya Pradesh	35.04	28.1	50.15	-0.79	0.76%	2,830
Tamil Nadu	24.30	13.8	48.57	9.01	2.46%	2,500
Gujarat	24.46	31.7	45.09	-1.26	1.44%	5,150
Maharashtra	42.76	14.4	39.26	-0.31	1.90%	4,559

* No. of students aged 17-18 is projected from the 2011 Census. Figures in the table are approximations based on this. Dropout rates for Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh were not available in the District Information System for Education

■ In States such as Andhra Pradesh and Rajasthan, the NEET qualification percentage could be higher because of coaching centres despite the availability of CBSE schools being lower

■ Calculations projected from the Census 2011 figures show that Tamil Nadu and Kerala are among the States where the proportion of 17-18-year-olds who appear and qualify for NEET is high (compared to the total no. of 17-18-year-olds in other States). This is because these States have a low dropout rate

■ Tamil Nadu has shown the highest improvement in NEET qualification percentage since 2018. With comparatively lower dropout rates, States like Tamil Nadu and Maharashtra have the potential to train a higher percentage of 17-18-year-olds

Source: NEET results, Census 2011, DISE, CBSE

FROM The Hindu. ARCHIVES

FIFTY YEARS AGO JUNE 10, 1969

Nixon announces troops withdrawal from Viet Nam

President Nixon yesterday [June 8] announced at his summit talks here [Midway Island] with the South Viet Nam's President Nguyen Van Thieu that 25,000 American troops would be withdrawn from Viet Nam by the end of August and that more pullbacks would take place as events justified. Shortly after Mr. Nixon disclosed the first unilateral U.S. withdrawal in the war, President Thieu denied that he and Mr. Nixon had differences over political problems blocking a peace settlement. The two Presidents displayed a united front when they appeared before reporters to issue a joint communique after their five hours of talks on this desolate mid-Pacific island. The two Presidents rejected any attempt to impose a coalition Government on South Viet Nam, but said they would respect any decision arrived at by the South Viet Namese people through free elections.

A HUNDRED YEARS AGO JUNE 10, 1919.

Education of Mahomedans.

The subject of improving the education of the Mahomedan community is receiving the anxious attention of the Travancore Government. It is reported that the number of Mahomedans of school-going age is about 34,000 and the number attending schools and colleges is 11,106, of which 10,505 are in vernacular schools, and 556 in English schools. The educational opportunities offered to the community, such as free primary education, and half-fees in higher classes of schools and colleges, have not helped to raise the community out of the slough of apathy. The Director of Public Instruction in Travancore was requested to enquire into the reasons for this indifference. He has come to the conclusion, and Government agree with him, that for securing better attendance of Mahomedan pupils, it is necessary to afford facilities for teaching the Koran.

CONCEPTUAL

Miracle of aggregation

POLITICS

This refers to a theory in favour of democracy which states that even when a large number of uninformed people vote in an election, the policy outcomes of such an election can turn out to be rational. This is said to happen because the ignorant choices of some voters, it is believed, will be more than compensated for by the intelligent choices of the rest of the voters who will sufficiently influence the final verdict. The miracle of aggregation theorem is considered to be an example of the wisdom of crowds. It has, however, been criticised by certain political scientists who claim that voting data suggest irrational voters heavily influence election outcomes.

MORE ON THE WEB

Ecologists have 596 reasons to cheer

<http://bit.ly/596species>



अलीगढ़

के टप्पल कस्बे में कुछ लोगों ने मिलकर पड़ोस की ही ढाई साल की एक मासूम के साथ जिस किस्म की हैवानियत का परिचय दिया, वह रोंगटे खड़े कर देने वाली तो है ही, यह घटना प्रशासन-व्यवस्था पर भी प्रतिकूल टिप्पणी है। सहसा विश्वास नहीं होता कि उधारी के दस हजार रुपये के तगादे पर अपमानित महसूस कर कोई इस नृशंसता पर भी उतर सकता है कि एक मासूम बच्ची की जान ले ले। पीड़ित और आरोपियों के घर आसपास ही हैं। दोनों परिवारों में दोस्ती थी, तभी तो लड़की के पिता ने उसे कर्ज दिया था। लेकिन अपमान का बदला लेने के लिए उसने सुनियोजित ढंग से कर्ज देने वाले की मासूम बेटी के साथ जिस बर्बरता का परिचय दिया, और इसमें

उसकी पत्नी, दोस्त और परिवार के दूसरे लोगों की संलिप्तता जिस तरह सामने आई है, वह बेहद स्तब्ध करती है। परिवार वालों ने बेटी के गायब होने के बाद ही थाने में शिकायत की थी, पर उन्हें लौटा दिया गया, जो बताता है कि सरकार बदलने के बावजूद स्थानीय स्तर पर पुलिस के कामकाज में बहुत फर्क नहीं आया है। अगर स्थानीय पुलिस ने शिकायत के बाद ही तत्काल सक्रियता का परिचय दिया होता, तो उस मासूम को बचाया जा सकता था या नहीं, यह तो नहीं कह सकते, लेकिन तब उसके शव की इतनी दुर्गति नहीं होती। गुड़ियों से खेलने वाली ढाई साल की जिस लड़की को अभी दुनिया देखनी थी, वह इतनी बदतर मृत्यु की हकदार नहीं थी। पुलिस की वह शुरुआती निष्क्रियता इसलिए भी अक्षय्य है, क्योंकि उस मासूम के पड़ोसी आपराधिक प्रवृत्ति के थे और उनमें से

एक थोड़े ही दिनों पहले जमानत पर छूटा था। अपराधियों को उनकी बर्बरता के लिए सख्त से सख्त सजा मिलनी चाहिए। इससे पहले कठुआ में भी एक मासूम बच्ची ऐसी ही बर्बरता का शिकार हुई थी, जिससे सांप्रदायिक सद्भाव तार-तार हो गया था। टप्पल की उस मासूम बच्ची के परिजनों को न्याय दिलाने के लिए जगह-जगह लोग जिस तरह सड़कों पर उतर आए हैं, उसे समझा जा सकता है। बच्चियों के साथ ऐसा सुलूक कोई सम्य समाज बर्दाश्त नहीं कर सकता, तिस पर यह सरकार तो 'बेटी बचाओ' जैसा अर्थपूर्ण सामाजिक संदेश भी देती है। अलबत्ता सरकार और प्रशासन को इसका भी ध्यान रखना होगा कि सांप्रदायिक विद्वेष और भय का माहौल न बने, क्योंकि मिली-जुली आबादी वाला अलीगढ़ का यह कस्बा सांप्रदायिक सद्भाव के लिए जाना जाता रहा है।

पहले विदेश दौरों का संदेश

लं

वे समय से भारत के अपने छोटे पड़ोसी देशों के साथ रिश्ते का वर्णन करते हुए उसके साथ बिग ब्रदर शब्द जोड़ा जाता रहा है, मानो वह हमेशा से उन्हें धमकाने की कोशिश करता है। भारत ने जो कुछ किया है, उसके मद्देनजर इसे फिर से परिभाषित करने का समय आ गया है। यह तत्काल जरूरी है, क्योंकि भारत अपने प्रभाव वाले क्षेत्रों में तेजी से चीन से पिछड़ता जा रहा है।

भारत पिछले कई महीनों से राष्ट्रीय चुनाव में फंसा हुआ था और अब यह अपने पड़ोसी देशों पर ध्यान देने के लिए तैयार है। नरेंद्र मोदी अपनी सरकार की 'पड़ोसी पहले' की नीति पर कायम रहते हुए अपने दूसरे कार्यकाल में सबसे पहले मालदीव और फिर श्रीलंका की यात्रा पर गए। इसी तरह वह अन्य पड़ोसी देशों की भी यात्रा करेंगे, क्योंकि उनकी सरकार कूटनीतिक आधार पर चल रही है। पूर्व विदेश सचिव और अब नए विदेश मंत्री एस जयशंकर के आने से इसमें तेजी आई है। वास्तव में यह समय गंवाने का अवसर नहीं है।

श्रीलंका से पहले मोदी ने मालदीव की यात्रा संपन्न की, जहां हाल ही में लोकतंत्र की सुखद बहाली हुई है। वहां न केवल प्रधानमंत्री मोदी को मालदीव के सर्वोच्च सम्मान से सम्मानित किया गया, बल्कि उन्होंने मालदीव की संसद-मजलिस को संबोधित भी किया। वहां की संसद में उन्होंने बिना नाम लिए आतंकवाद को लेकर पाकिस्तान पर जमकर हमला बोला और कहा कि कुछ देश अब भी अच्छे और बुरे आतंकी का फके करने की गलती करते हैं। उन्होंने आतंकवाद को मानवता के लिए सबसे बड़ा खतरा बताया।

मोदी की यात्रा के तीन उद्देश्यों के बारे में विदेश सचिव विजय गोखले ने पहले ही बताया

मां की मौत ने कैंसर पीड़ितों की मदद के लिए प्रेरित किया

मैं बंगलूरु का रहने वाला हूं। मेरे मिशन की शुरुआत मेरी मां की मौत के बाद हुई। वह कैंसर पीड़ित थीं। उनके जाने के बाद यह बात मेरे दिमाग में बैठ गई कि कैंसर पीड़ितों को सहारा और शांति देने के लिए काम करना चाहिए। मैंने पहले कैंसर के शुरुआती लक्षण के प्रति जागरुकता फैलाने के लिए कैप लगाना और मदद देना शुरू किया। लेकिन उस समय मैं नौकरी कर रहा था, जिसकी वजह से इस काम के लिए ज्यादा समय नहीं मिल पाता था। तब मैंने सोचा कि समय से पूर्व रिटायरमेंट ले लेने से इस काम को आगे बढ़ाना आसान हो जाएगा। इसके बाद रिटायरमेंट लेकर कैंसर के अंतिम चरण से जुझ रहे लोगों की देखभाल करने के लिए मैंने खुद को समर्पित कर दिया। उस समय तक कैंसर पीड़ितों के लिए योजनाबद्ध तरीके से प्रयास नहीं किए जा रहे थे। सबसे पहले मैं उन लोगों की पहचान करने में लग गया, जो रोगियों की मदद कर सकते थे। इसके बाद कैंसर के प्रति जागरुकता फैलाने के लिए गठित इंडियन कैंसर सोसाइटी और रोटरी क्लब के सहयोग से मैंने बंगलूरु में होम्सिस ट्रस्ट नाम से एक चैरिटेबल ट्रस्ट की स्थापना की। यहां उन कैंसर पीड़ितों की देखभाल की जाती है, जिनकी बीमारी आखिरी स्टेज पर पहुंच चुकी होती है। मैंने सोचा कि रोगियों की उनके घर में ही देखभाल करना सबसे सही तरीका रहेगा। महीने भर के अंदर ही नर्सों की एक टीम और एक कार्डियलर को रख लिया गया। मेरी टीम ऑटो से रोगियों की घर उनकी मदद करने जाती थी। इस बीच मैं किसी ऐसे संगठन की तलाश में मुंबई गया, जो मेरी इस पहल में सहयोग देने के लिए आगे आए।

मैं बॉम्बे हाउस में टाटा हेड ऑफिस पहुंच गया। पर बिना समय लिए पहुंचने के कारण वहां किसी से बात हो पाना कठिन था। मैं वहां से लौटने के लिए तैयार था, तभी वहां के कार्यकारी निदेशक से बात करने में सफलता मिली। हमें एक सप्ताह के भीतर ट्रस्ट पढ़ा इस काम के लिए 10 लाख की राशि की स्वीकृति दिए जाने की सूचना मिली। इससे हमें बहुत बड़ा सहारा मिला और आगे बढ़ने का एक साधन मिल गया। एक मई 1999 को करुणाश्रय की बिल्डिंग बनकर तैयार हुई, और पहला मरीज लाया गया। अब तक लगभग 23,000 कैंसर मरीजों की मदद की गई है। हम इन्हें जो सेवा देते हैं, वह पूरी तरह से मुफ्त है, चाहे वह बेड, दवाइयां, परामर्श हो या फिर भोजन।

जिम्मेदारी गंभीरता से लेते हैं। दुख की बात बस यह है कि हर दिन औसतन हम दो मरीजों को खो देते हैं, क्योंकि वे हमारे पास बीमारी की अंतिम अवस्था में आते हैं। हर तरह की परिस्थितियों में अलग-अलग लोगों का मुझे सहयोग मिलता रहा। मुझे विश्वास नहीं था कि एक डिनर पर उस समय की प्रसिद्ध आर्किटेक्ट स्व. तारा चंदावरकर के साथ हुई बातचीत से हमें करुणाश्रय के लिए जगह मिलने की संभावना पैदा हो जाएगी। मेरी उनसे काफी लंबी बातचीत हुई और अंत में वह हमारे लिए मुफ्त में एक जगह देने की योजना बनाने के लिए तैयार हो गईं। हम जो कर रहे हैं, उसमें अलग सहयोग बहुत महत्वपूर्ण समय पर मिला। मुझे ऐसा लग रहा था, जैसे अपने तरीके से उन्होंने अपना हाथ मेरी पीठ पर रख दिया हो और मैं जो करना चाहता था, उसकी ओर मुझे आगे बढ़ा रही हो।

जो बात मुझे ताकत देती है, वह यह है कि करुणाश्रय से सभी मरीज शांति और संतोष के साथ इस दुनिया से विदा लेते हैं।

-विभिन्न साक्षात्कारों पर आधारित।

मंजिलें और भी हैं

>>> किशोर राव

चु

नाव तो कब के समाप्त हो गए हैं, लेकिन उत्तर प्रदेश और बिहार की चुनावी रणभूमि पर अभी तक दो शव पड़े हैं, जिनका अंतिम संस्कार करना बाकी है। एक शव है करिश्मा का और दूसरा है जाति आधारित राजनीति का। ये महत्वपूर्ण राजनीतिक मुद्दे हैं, सो इनका अंतिम संस्कार करना हम राजनीतिक पंडितों का काम है। अभी तक हमने ऐसा इसलिए नहीं किया है, क्योंकि यह यकीन करना मुश्किल है कि उत्तर भारत की राजनीति के ये दो सबसे शक्तिशाली खंभे वास्तव में गिर गए हैं। अगर ये खंभे गिरे न होते, तो उत्तर प्रदेश में महागठबंधन इतनी बुरी तरह पराजित न हुआ होता और न ही मायावती इस गठबंधन को तोड़ने की बात करतीं। ऐसे ही बिहार में लालू यादव के राष्ट्रीय जनता दल का इतना बुरा हाल हो चुका है कि वह लोकसभा चुनाव में एक भी सीट नहीं जीत पाया। उनकी बेटी मौसा भारती भी हार गईं।

रही करिश्मे की बात, तो साफ दिखता है कि इस पुराने चुनावी हथियार में ऊर्जा बची होती, तो राहुल गांधी अमेठी में नहीं हारते। सो दोनों शव हमको दिखाते तो हैं, लेकिन यकीन नहीं आता कि ये कभी पुनर्जीवित नहीं होने वाले, क्योंकि ये दशकों से चुनाव जिताते आए हैं। मेरे जैसे वरिष्ठ पत्रकारों ने वे दिन देखे हैं, जब इंदिरा गांधी का चेहरा देखकर मतदाता उनको अपना वोट दे दिया करते थे।

वह दौर देखा है मैंने, जब मूलायम सिंह और लालू यादव की इतनी शक्ति थी मुलायम सिंह ने समाजवादी पार्टी को अपने परिवार की निजी कंपनी में परिवर्तित कर दिया था और फिर भी वह जीत

जातिवाद और करिश्मे का अंत

उत्तर भारत की राजनीति के ये दो शक्तिशाली खंभे अगर न गिरे होते, तो उत्तर प्रदेश में महागठबंधन इतनी बुरी तरह पराजित न होता। करिश्मा अगर बचा होता, तो राहुल गांधी अमेठी में नहीं हारते।



तवलीन सिंह

सकते थे। लालू यादव ने जेल जाने से पहले बिहार सरकार को पत्नी राबड़ी देवी के हवाले कर दिया था। इतने गलत काम करने के बाद भी इन यादव क्षत्रपों को कोई हरा नहीं सकता था। उत्तर प्रदेश में मुलायम सिंह का मुकाबला सिर्फ मायावती कर सकती थीं, जिनकी अपनी राजनीति भी जातिवाद पर आधारित थी।

नरेंद्र मोदी के आने से पहले भारतीय जनता पार्टी अगर उत्तर प्रदेश में जातिवादी राजनीतिक दलों को कभी चुनौती दे पाई, तो राम मंदिर के नाम पर, और वह भी केवल थोड़े समय के लिए। जातिवाद का झंडा तब इतना ऊंचा लहराता था कि दिल्ली के राजनीतिक पंडित उसको देखकर कल तक

भविष्यवाणी कर रहे थे कि प्रधानमंत्री बनने की दौड़ में मायावती सबसे आगे हैं।

हमारे सारे समीकरण इस चुनाव में गलत साबित हुए हैं, तो शायद इसलिए हुए, क्योंकि हम अतीत के किसी गड़बड़े में फंसे रहे, जहां से हमें दिखाई नहीं दिया कि इस देश के मतदाता हमसे आगे निकल गए हैं। दिखाई नहीं दिया हमें कि कभी जो जगह करिश्मा और जातिवाद की होती थी, वह जगह अब विकास और परिवर्तन ने ले ली है। सच तो यह है कि पिछले पांच साल में मैं जब भी चुनाव का हाल जानने दिल्ली के बाहर जाती थी, तो मुझे साफ दिखाई देता था कि मतदाताओं के लिए मुद्दे बदल चुके हैं। स्पष्ट शब्दों में लोग कहते थे कि उनका वोट मोदी को जाएगा, क्योंकि जब से मोदी प्रधानमंत्री बने हैं, उन्होंने परिवर्तन आते हुए देखा है।

फिर दिल्ली वापस लौटकर जब मैं अपने पत्रकार बंधुओं से बातें करती थी, तो मुझे यह यकीन हो जाता था कि जातिवाद की शक्ति अब भी इतनी है कि नरेंद्र मोदी दोबारा किसी हाल में उत्तर भारत में उतनी सीटें नहीं ला पाएंगे, जो उनको वर्ष 2014 में मिली थीं। लेकिन दिल्ली के कई प्रसिद्ध राजनीतिक पंडितों को मुंह की खानी पड़ी है।

हरियाली और रास्ता

राघव, नानी और कहानी

एक युवक की कहानी, जिसे नानी ने ज़िंदगी का महत्वपूर्ण पाठ पढ़ाया।



राघव घर के एक कोने में गुमसुम बैठा था। तभी उसकी नानी आकर कहने लगीं, राघव, तुम इतने गुमसुम क्यों हो? राघव बोला, नानी, हमारे पास तो सब कुछ है। फिर मुझे इतनी मेहनत करने की क्या जरूरत है? मेरा स्कूल में एकदम मन नहीं लगता। मुझे पढ़ने की क्या जरूरत है? नानी बोलीं, बात तो गंभीर है। पर क्या तुम अपने थैले में जरूरत का सामान इकट्ठा कर रहे हो? राघव हैरान होकर बोला, कैसा थैला? नानी बोलीं, मैं तुम्हें एक कहानी सुनाती हूँ। एक राजा था। उसके तीन बेटे थे। एक दिन राजा ने अपने बेटों को आदेश दिया कि थैला लेकर बगीचे में जाएं और अच्छे-अच्छे फल जमा करें। वे तीनों अलग-अलग गाल में चले गए। पहले बेटे ने काफी मेहनत से पिता की पसंद के बढ़िया और ताजा फलों से थैला भरा। इसमें उसे पूरा दिन लग गया। दूसरे बेटे ने सोचा, राजा हर फल का परीक्षण तो करेंगे नहीं, इसलिए उसने जल्दी-जल्दी ताजा, कच्चे, गले-सड़े फल थैले में भर लिए। तीसरे बेटे ने सोचा, राजा की नजर तो सिर्फ हमें हुए थैले की तरफ होगी, वे खोलकर तो देखेंगे भी नहीं कि इसमें क्या है। उसने उस थैले में घास, और पत्ते भर दिए। उसी दिन राज्य पर हमला हुआ और राजा और उनके बेटों को जेल में बंद कर दिया गया। अब जेल में उनके पास सिर्फ वे थैले थे। जिस बेटे ने अच्छे-अच्छे फल जमा किए, वह तो मजे से खाता रहा। पर जिसने सड़े-गले फल जमा किए थे, वह खराब फल खा बीमार हो गया। उसे बहुत तकलीफ हुई। और तीसरा बेटा, जिसने थैले में घास-पत्ते जमा किए थे, कुछ ही दिनों में भूख से मर गया। नानी बोलीं, हमारी ज़िंदगी ही हमारा थैला है। इस कहानी में हम जिन फलों की बात कर रहे हैं, वह है हमारा ज्ञान। हम जितना ज्ञान इकट्ठा करेंगे, उतना आगे तक जा पाएंगे।

ज़िंदगी का हर पल कीमती है। इसका बहुत समझदारी से उपयोग करें।



अंतर्ध्वनि

>>> कुबेरनाथ राय

असत्य भी यथार्थ का चेहरा लगाकर लीला करता है

हमारे दरवाजे की बगल में त्रिभंग-मुद्रा में एक टेढ़ नीम खड़ा है, जिसे राह चलते एक वैष्णव बाबाजी ने नाम दे दिया था, 'कुब्जा-सुंदरी' बाबा जी ने तो मौजू में आकर इसे एक नाम दे दिया था, रात भर हमारे अतिथि रहे, फिर 'रमता योगी बहता पानी'! बाद में कभी भेंट नहीं हुई। परंतु तभी से यह नीम मेरे लिए श्रीमद्भागवत का एक पन्ना बन गया। इसके वक्रयष्टि-छंद में मुझे तभी से एक सौंदर्य बोध मिलने लगा। कैसे भी यह है बड़े फायदे की चीज। अपने आप उगा, बिना किसी परिचयों के बढ़ता गया, पौधे से पेड़ बन गया और अब मुफ्त में शीतल छाँह देता है, हवा को शुद्ध और नीरोग रखता है, हजार किस्म के रोगों के लिए उपचार-द्रव्य के रूप में छाल, पत्ती, फूल, फर्द और तेल

देता है, पशु और मनुष्य के रोगों से जुझता है, सबसे बढ़कर सुबह-सुबह दातुन के रूप में मुँह साफ करता है, बाद में मैं अपना मुँह गंदा करूँ, तो यह बेचारा क्या करे? नाम भले ही वृंदावनी हो पर इसकी भूमिका वैष्णवता के उस साफ-सुथरे संस्करण की है, जिसे संत कबीर ने अपनाया था। इस नीम 'कुब्जा सुंदरी' के नीचे चंद्र-विधौत रात्रियों में मैं कभी-कभी अपनी खाट पर लेटे-लेटे आँखें मूंद कर इसका एकाध पन्ना पढ़ लेता हूँ। आँखें खोलकर तो यथार्थ ही पढ़ा जाता है। परंतु आँखें मूंदकर सत्य भी पढ़ा जा सकता है। आधुनिक साहित्यकार की ट्रेजडी यह है कि वह पेट के बल यथार्थ से बुरी तरह चिपका हुआ रंगता चल रहा है और परा यथार्थ सत्य से उसकी भेंट नहीं हो पाती। उसके पास आँखें मूंदकर आराम से देखने-सुनने की फुरसत कहाँ! फलतः वह विश्वास ही नहीं कर पाता है कि यथार्थ और सत्य दो तरह की बातें हैं और यथार्थ से भी बड़ी सच्चाई है सत्य। 'प्रति सत्य' और 'असत्य' भी यथार्थ का चेहरा लगा कर लीला करता है और खुनी आँखें प्रायः धोखे में आ जाती हैं। दो खुली आँखों से देखने की एक सीमा है। वे एक ही दिशा में देख सकते हैं।

-दिवंगत हिंदी साहित्यकार

खुली खिड़की

नोबेल पुरस्कार

नोबेल को विश्व का सबसे प्रतिष्ठित पुरस्कार माना जाता है। नोबेल फाउंडेशन द्वारा स्वीडन के वैज्ञानिक अल्फ्रेड नोबेल की याद में इसे वर्ष 1901 में शुरु किया गया। वर्ष 2018 तक यह पुरस्कार पाने वालों में सबसे ज्यादा अमेरिकी शामिल हैं।



स्त्रोत : विकीपीडिया, स्पेक्टेटर इंडेक्स

भक्ति के साथ शक्ति

स्वामी विवेकानंद धर्म प्रचार करते हुए एक रियासत में पहुंचे। वहां का राजा धर्म के नियमों को धता बताकर लोगों का उत्पीड़न किया करता था। स्वामी जी का प्रवचन समाप्त होने के बाद कुछ व्यक्ति उनके पास अपना दुखड़ा सुनाने पहुंचे। उन्होंने स्वामी जी से कहा, हम धर्म के अनुकूल जीवन करने का प्रयास करते हैं। लेकिन राजा के लठैत हमें चैन से भगवान की भक्ति और परिवार का पालन करने नहीं देते। हमें क्या करना चाहिए? स्वामी जी ने उनसे पूछा, क्या तुम्हारा राजा पड़ोस के राजा से भी झगड़ा करता है? उन लोगों ने बताया कि पड़ोस का राजा ज्यादा शक्तिशाली है, इसलिए हमारा राजा उनसे डरता है। स्वामी जी ने कहा, यही तो प्रकृति का नियम है। शिकारी हिरण और दूसरे कमजोर प्राणियों का ही शिकार करता है। मछुआरा निरौह मछलियों को ही जाल में फंसाता है। कुछ

अंधविश्वासी लोग देवता के सामने निरौह बकरे की बलि देते हैं। क्या आपने कभी किसी को शेर की बलि देते देखा है? थोड़ा रुककर वह बोले, आप सब भगवान की भक्ति के साथ संगठित शक्ति का परिचय दें। जब राजा का कारिदा धमकी देने आए, तो सब एकजुट होकर उनका मुकाबला करें। स्वामी जी की प्रेरणा से ग्रामीणों ने संगठित होकर राजा के लठैतों का विरोध करना शुरू किया, तो उनके होश ठिकाने आ गए। उन्होंने लाठी के बल पर उन लोगों को सताना छोड़ दिया।

-संकलित

बिज़नेस स्टैंडर्ड

वर्ष 12 अंक 97

बैंकों की बारी

भारतीय रिजर्व बैंक (आरबीआई) ने फंसी हुई परिसंपत्तियों के निस्तारण के लिए नए मानक निर्धारित किए हैं। गत शुक्रवार को जारी किए गए इन नए मानकों के मुताबिक बैंकों को यह अधिकार है कि वे निस्तारण को अंजाम दे सकें। इसके साथ ही उन्हें इस दृष्टि से भी तैयार किया गया है कि संकटग्रस्त खातों को लगातार मदद के इरादे पर अंकुश लग सके।

ऐसे कर्जदारों को कठोर कदमों का सामना करना होगा जिनमें उच्च प्रोविजनिंग और मौद्रिक जुर्माना भी शामिल हैं। आरबीआई ने अपने इस नवीनतम खाके में कहा है कि निस्तारण योजनाओं में असहमत कर्जदार के बकाये के नकदीकृत मूल्य के बराबर भुगतान की व्यवस्था होनी चाहिए।

सर्वोच्च न्यायालय द्वारा आरबीआई के

12 फरवरी के परिपत्र को खारिज किए जाने के बाद आए दबावग्रस्त परिसंपत्ति निस्तारण मानकों में सबसे अहम बात यह है कि अब बैंकों को यह निर्धारित करने के लिए 30 दिन की अवधि दी जा रही है कि कोई खाता गैर निष्पादित परिसंपत्ति (एनपीए) है या नहीं। पहले एक दिन की देरी पर डिफॉल्ट घोषित करने का कठिन और अव्यावहारिक मानक था। संशोधित परिपत्र गैर बैंकिंग वित्तीय कंपनियों, सूक्ष्म वित्त बैंकों, नाबार्ड, एक्जिम बैंक और सिडबी को निस्तारण का मंच देता है।

मूल विचार यह सुनिश्चित करना है कि अधिकांश मामलों को नए तथ मानकों के अधीन निपटना चाहिए और ऋणशोधन अक्षमता एवं दिवालिया संहिता (आईबीसी) की अंतिम

विकल्प के तौर पर अपनाया जाना चाहिए। एक ओर जहां कर्जदारों को सक्रिय रहना होगा वहीं आरबीआई बैंकों को विशिष्ट डिफॉल्टरों के मामले में ऋणशोधन प्रक्रिया शुरू करने के लिए निर्देशित करता रहेगा। कुल मिलाकर बैंकों पर दबाव बढ़ा दिया गया है। अब उन्हें अनिवार्य तौर पर इंटर क्रेडिटर एग्रीमेंट (आईसीए) पर हस्ताक्षर करने होंगे। आईसीए का कोई भी निर्णय मान्य होगा अगर वोटिंग अधिकार के मुताबिक 75 फीसदी या कुल तादाद के आधार पर 60 कर्जदार उस पर सहमत हों। बैंकों को अब अपनी आंतरिक नौकरशाही में बहुत तेजी से काम करना होगा।

अगर निस्तारण योजना बनाने में विफलता हाथ लगती है तो प्रोविजनिंग में 35 फीसदी का इजाफा हो जाएगा, अगर 180 दिन की तथ

अवधि में यह काम नहीं कर पाती तो 20 फीसदी प्रोविजनिंग और अगर एक साल के भीतर कोई निस्तारण नहीं हो पाता तो 13 फीसदी की अतिरिक्त प्रोविजनिंग की जाएगी। अतिरिक्त प्रोविजनिंग के रूप में जो कीमत चुकानी होगी वह उन सरकारी बैंकों के लिए चिंता का विषय होगी जिनमें हाल ही में पूंजी डाली गई है। यह उन बैंकों के लिए भी समस्या बनी रहेगी जो आरबीआई की त्वरित सुधार कार्रवाई योजना के अधीन हैं। परंतु इस बात की संभावना नहीं है कि अधिक विवेक से काम करने वाले बैंक इस बढ़ी हुई प्रोविजनिंग से बिना वजह परेशान होंगे क्योंकि वे तो पहले ही अपने जोखिम के लिए उचित कदम उठा चुके होंगे। एक ओर जहां केंद्रीय बैंक के मानक 2,000 करोड़ रुपये की देनदारी चूकने वालों पर तत्काल लागू होंगे

वहीं 1,500 करोड़ रुपये से 2,000 करोड़ रुपये तक के लिए इसकी शुरुआत एक जनवरी 2020 से होगी। ऐसे रख ने बैंकों के बीच कई तरह की चिंताओं को जन्म दिया है। ये बैंक 2,000 करोड़ रुपये से कम के ऋण के लिए एकल तरह की पहल करेंगे इसे देखना होगा। छोटे बैंक इस पहलू को लेकर काफी चिंतित हैं।

नए मानकों की सबसे बेहतर बात यह है कि वे 12 फरवरी के परिपत्र की मूल भावना को बरकरार रखते हैं और एक ऐसी व्यवस्था की पेशकश करते हैं जो निस्तारण को बहुमत का आधार देती है। अब यह दायित्व बैंकों पर है कि वे निस्तारण की प्रक्रिया को तेज करें क्योंकि पिछले परिपत्र ने 70 बड़े कर्जदारों के करीब 3.8 लाख करोड़ रुपये मूल्य के ऋण को प्रभावित किया।



विनय सिन्हा

यह केवल क्रिकेट नहीं है ‘कैप्टन कूल’

धोनी को अपनी रेजिमेंट को क्रिकेट की पिच पर नहीं ले जाना चाहिए।

खिलाड़ी जीत के लिए खेलकर देश को गौरव दिलाता है, वह सेना

के दूत के रूप में ऐसा नहीं करता।

हम इस पुरानी समझ पर सवाल नहीं उठा सकते कि राजनीति बांटती है और खेल जोड़ता है। विश्वकप के इस मौसम में तो यह उक्ति और सही प्रतीत होती है। भारत दो बार क्रिकेट विश्वकप जीत भी चुका है। परंतु इसके साथ एक शर्त भी जुड़ी हुई है: खेल लोगों को जोड़ता है लेकिन केवल उन्हें जो किसी एक पक्ष के समर्थक होते हैं। हम भारतीय अपनी टीम के पीछे खड़े होते हैं तो अन्य लोग अपनी टीम के। यहीं पर बात आती है महेंद्र सिंह धोनी के विकेट कीपिंग दस्ताओं को लेकर छिड़े विवाद की, जिस पर भारतीय सैन्य बलों में से एक का प्रतीक चिह्न ‘बलिदान’ अंकित था।

खेल की निगरानी करने वाली अंतरराष्ट्रीय क्रिकेट कौंसिल (आईसीसी) ने इस पर आपत्ति जताई। आईसीसी के नियमों के तहत किसी खिलाड़ी द्वारा अपने शरीर या अपनी वस्तुओं पर किसी धार्मिक, राष्ट्रीय या वाणिज्यिक चिह्न या लोगो धारण करने की एक सीमा है।

उदाहरण के लिए प्रायोजकों के लोगो इस्तेमाल किए जा सकते हैं जिन्हें आईसीसी मंजूरी देता है। इसके अलावा संबंधित देश के महासंघ का लोगो लगाया जा सकता है। अनुमति के मुताबिक राष्ट्रीय चिह्न धारण किए जा सकते हैं। इसके अलावा किसी चीज को मंजूरी नहीं है। सैन्य प्रतीक तो कतई नहीं प्रयोग किए जा सकते। यह खेल का मैदान है, जंग का नहीं।

भारतीय क्रिकेट कंट्रोल बोर्ड (बीसीसीआई) का कहना है कि उसने आईसीसी से अपील की है वह धोनी को रियायत दे दे। जनमत धोनी के समर्थन में है। इस बारे में विचार कीजिए: भारतीय टीम विश्वकप में है, धोनी उसका हिस्सा हैं, दूसरी ओर हमारे साहसी सशस्त्र बल हैं जिनकी वीरता को हाल ही में वीकी कौशल का फिल्म

ने परदे पर अमर किया। भला कौन भारतीय होगा राष्ट्रवाद के इस तिहरे चुंबकीय आकर्षण से बचेगा।

परंतु किसी न किसी को कहना होगा कि आईसीसी सही कह रही है। धोनी को यह चिह्न हटाना चाहिए। खेल के प्रतिस्पर्धी मैदान में मरने-मारने के प्रतीक नहीं होने चाहिए। यही कारण है कि हममें से कुछ लोगों को साहस करके धारा के विपरीत तैरना होगा। खासकर उन लोगों को जो इस खेल को पसंद करते हैं और चाहते हैं कि भारत जीते। अगर हमारे खेल संबंधी राष्ट्रवाद पर सवाल उठता है तो उठने दें। ईसा मसीह की पंक्ति यहां सटीक है: पिता, उन्हें माफ कर दो, वे (जो हमें देशद्रोही ठहरा रहे) नहीं जानते कि वे क्या कर रहे हैं।

पहले देखते हैं कि राष्ट्रवादी और उनके समर्थक क्या कह रहे हैं। कमांडोनुमा चैनल पहले ही ऐसे हैशटैग चलाने लगे हैं जिनमें धोनी का समर्थन किया जा रहा है। पहली बात, हमें सशस्त्र बलों का सम्मान करना चाहिए। दूसरी बात, भारत को पाकिस्तान के हाथों नुकसान उठाना पड़ रहा है इसलिए पाकिस्तानी जहां भी हों उन्हें संदेश दिया जाना चाहिए। और तीसरा, आप किसी को उसकी पसंद जाहिर करने से नहीं रोक सकते। धोनी विशेष बल के मानद लेफ्टिनेंट कर्नल हैं और उन्होंने पैराशूट जंपिंग उत्तीर्ण करके यह प्रतीक हासिल किया है। उनसे उनकी रेजिमेंट का प्रतीक नहीं छीना जा सकता है।

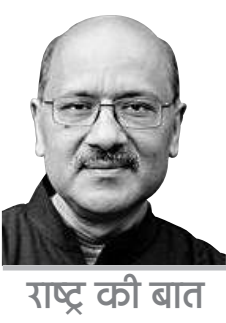
तीसरे का उत्तर आसान है: उनकी रेजिमेंट देश के लिए क्रिकेट नहीं खेल रही है। जब रेजिमेंट देश के लिए लड़ती है तो उसके जवान बीसीसीआई या हॉकी महासंघ या भारतीय

ओलिंपिक महासंघ के प्रतीक नहीं धारण करते।

हमें सशस्त्र बलों और उनके बलिदान का सम्मान करना चाहिए लेकिन यह कहना अनुचित होगा कि कश्मीर में पाकिस्तानी जो कर रहे हैं उसका विरोध हमारे खिलाड़ी लॉर्ड्स, ओल्ड ट्रैफर्ड या ओवल में करें। विरोध राजनेता और राजनयिक तैयार करते हैं, युद्ध जवान लड़ते हैं, खिलाड़ी जीत के लिए खेलकर देश के उन लोगों को जो इस खेल को पसंद करते हैं अपनी सेना का ब्रांड एंजेंसडर बनकर नहीं।

यह खेल दोनों खेल सकते हैं। अगर एक भारतीय सेना की वर्दी में आ सकता है तो पाकिस्तानी भी। क्रिकेट का खेल दोनों में से कोई एक ही जीत सकता है। अगर इसमें सैन्य भावना जोड़ दी जाती है तो उसे जनता तक पहुंचने में देर नहीं लगेगी। इससे खेल दुश्मनी में बदल जाएगा। हम ईरान और इराक के बीच युद्ध की कटुता को याद कर सकते हैं।

जॉर्ज ऑरवेल ने सन 1945 के अपने निबंध द स्पोर्टिंग स्पिरिट (खेल भावना) में लिखा था कि अंतरराष्ट्रीय स्तर का खेल युद्ध के समान ही है। उनके मुताबिक इसमें महत्वपूर्ण बात खिलाड़ियों का व्यवहार नहीं बल्कि दर्शकों का रख है। इन दर्शकों के पीछे पूरे राष्ट्र को देखा जा सकता है। हमारे महिला और पुरुष खिलाड़ियों ने पाकिस्तान के साथ मुकाबले खेले हैं, हालिया दिनों में उन्होंने जुझने का माद्दा दिखाया और उन्हें कहीं अधिक सफलता भी मिली है लेकिन ऐसा केवल खेल में हुआ है। मैदान के बाहर दोनों टीमें मित्रवत रही हैं। यहां तक कि एक दूसरे के परिवार और बच्चों के साथ आनंद लेते हुए भी नजर आए। अच्छी बात है कि अभी कोई युद्ध नहीं



राष्ट्र की बात

शेखर गुप्ता

लिए गौरव लाते हैं, खिलाड़ी की पोशाक में अपनी सेना का ब्रांड एंजेंसडर बनकर नहीं। यह खेल दोनों खेल सकते हैं। अगर एक भारतीय सेना की वर्दी में आ सकता है तो पाकिस्तानी भी। क्रिकेट का खेल दोनों में से कोई एक ही जीत सकता है। अगर इसमें सैन्य भावना जोड़ दी जाती है तो उसे जनता तक पहुंचने में देर नहीं लगेगी। इससे खेल दुश्मनी में बदल जाएगा। हम ईरान और इराक के बीच युद्ध की कटुता को याद कर सकते हैं। जॉर्ज ऑरवेल ने सन 1945 के अपने निबंध द स्पोर्टिंग स्पिरिट (खेल भावना) में लिखा था कि अंतरराष्ट्रीय स्तर का खेल युद्ध के समान ही है। उनके मुताबिक इसमें महत्वपूर्ण बात खिलाड़ियों का व्यवहार नहीं बल्कि दर्शकों का रख है। इन दर्शकों के पीछे पूरे राष्ट्र को देखा जा सकता है। हमारे महिला और पुरुष खिलाड़ियों ने पाकिस्तान के साथ मुकाबले खेले हैं, हालिया दिनों में उन्होंने जुझने का माद्दा दिखाया और उन्हें कहीं अधिक सफलता भी मिली है लेकिन ऐसा केवल खेल में हुआ है। मैदान के बाहर दोनों टीमें मित्रवत रही हैं। यहां तक कि एक दूसरे के परिवार और बच्चों के साथ आनंद लेते हुए भी नजर आए। अच्छी बात है कि अभी कोई युद्ध नहीं

चल रहा है। बालाकोट में एक झड़प हुई थी जिसमें किसी की जान नहीं गई और उस बात को चार महीने बीत भी गए। सन 1971 में जब जंग लड़ी जा रही थी तब सुनील गावसकर और जहीर अब्बास ने ऑस्ट्रेलिया में विश्व एकादश के लिए एक साथ बल्लेबाजी की थी। यह वह समय था जब वायुसेना अकसर कराची पर बमबारी के लिए उड़ान भरती। सन 1999 में जब दोनों टीमें इंगलैंड में विश्वकप खेल रही थीं तब करगिल की लड़ाई चल रही थी। तब भी दोनों टीमें सहज थीं। दोस्ताना रिश्ते थे, यहां तक कि गिरने पर एक दूसरे को उठाने और विरोधी टीम के बल्लेबाज के जूते के फीते तक बांधे गए। वहां कोई टाइगर हिल को लाना नहीं चाहता था।

सैन्य प्रतीक, वर्दियां, बिल्ले, पट्टे, तमगे, बैंड और पेरेड आदि अच्छे लाते हैं और जोश बढ़ाते हैं। उनके साथ एक बोझ यह भी होता है कि सफलता या नाकामी युद्ध में जीत हार के समान लग सकती है। 16 जून को मैनचेस्टर में होने वाले भारत–पाकिस्तान मुकाबले समेत किसी भी खेल में एक ही पक्ष जीतेगा और दूसरा हारेगा। क्या वह जंग में सेना की हार के समान होगा? अगर दोनों टीमें ओल्ड ट्रैफ़ल्ड में सैन्य प्रतीक के साथ मैदान में उमरीं तो? उस स्थिति में उमड़ने वाली भीड़ को नियंत्रित करने के लिए ब्रिटेन की पुलिस कम पड़ जाएगी।

हम ऑरवेल की ओर लौटते हैं जिन्होंने कहा था, ‘जब मैं सुनता हूँ कि लोग कहते हैं कि खेल देशों के बीच सद्भावना बढ़ाते हैं और यह भी कि अगर लोग फुटबॉल, क्रिकेट या अन्य खेलों के मैदान पर मिलें तो आपस में जंग नहीं होगी, तो मुझे हमेशा आश्चर्य होता।’ उन्होंने 1936 के बर्लिन ओलिंपिक का उदाहरण दिया। वह सही भी थे और गलत भी।

मानव सभ्यता विश्व युद्ध और शीत युद्ध से बहुत आगे निकल आई है। खेल के मैदान पर निरंतर मुलाकात ने पुरानी दुश्मनी कम करने में मदद की है। इससे खिलाड़ी, उनके प्रशंसक, परिवार और मित्रों आदि को एक दूसरे के बारे में अधिक जानने को मिलता है। लोगों में आपसी रिश्ते बनते हैं। कई बार वे अपनी हताशा भी निकाल लेते हैं।

अच्छी बात है कि आज उस नजरिये को न तो लोकप्रियता हासिल है, न उसे सही माना जाता है। परंतु ओलिंपिक से लेकर पिंगपंग और बास्केटबाल से क्रिकेट और फुटबॉल से लेकर हॉकी तक अत्यंत प्रतिस्पर्धी खेलों ने सैन्य शत्रुताओं की धार कुंद करने और दिमाग के घाव भरने का ही काम किया है।

यकीनन हम किसी व्यक्ति के सेना के प्रति समर्पण की कद्र करते हैं, खासतौर पर तब जबकि वह मानद रूप से वहां सेवारत रहा। उदाहरण के लिए धोनी पदम पुरस्कार ग्रहण करने विशेष बल की पूरी वर्दी में और मरून रंग की टोपी पहनकर गए थे। यह बहुत अच्छा कदम था। राष्ट्रपति भी सशस्त्र बलों के घाव भरने का ही काम किया है। यकीनन हम किसी व्यक्ति के सेना के प्रति समर्पण की कद्र करते हैं, खासतौर पर तब जबकि वह मानद रूप से वहां सेवारत रहा। उदाहरण के लिए धोनी पदम पुरस्कार ग्रहण करने विशेष बल की पूरी वर्दी में और मरून रंग की टोपी पहनकर गए थे। यह बहुत अच्छा कदम था। राष्ट्रपति भी सशस्त्र बलों के घाव भरने का ही काम किया है। यकीनन हम किसी व्यक्ति के सेना के प्रति समर्पण की कद्र करते हैं, खासतौर पर तब जबकि वह मानद रूप से वहां सेवारत रहा। उदाहरण के लिए धोनी पदम पुरस्कार ग्रहण करने विशेष बल की पूरी वर्दी में और मरून रंग की टोपी पहनकर गए थे। यह बहुत अच्छा कदम था। राष्ट्रपति भी सशस्त्र बलों के घाव भरने का ही काम किया है।

आपका पक्ष

वायु प्रदूषण विश्व की मुख्य चिंता

5 जून को विश्व पर्यावरण दिवस मनाया गया और इस वर्ष की थीम बोट द एयर पलूशन थी। इस दिवस का महत्त्व बढ़ता जा रहा है क्योंकि पर्यावरणीय समस्याओं में वृद्धि हो रही है। संयुक्त राष्ट्र द्वारा 1974 से यह दिवस मनाया जा रहा है जिससे दुनिया में पर्यावरण की रक्षा के लिए जागरूकता लाई जा सके। स्वास्थ्य संगठन के अनुसार 10 में से 9 व्यक्ति प्रदूषित हवा में सांस ले रहे हैं। संयुक्त राष्ट्र ने वायु प्रदूषण से होने वाले कुछ मुख्य कारण बताए हैं जिसमें घरेलू कार्यों से होने वाला वायु प्रदूषण, वाहनों से, खेत में फसल जलाने से, कारखानों से निकलने वाला धुआं आदि हैं। इन वजहों से लोगों को दमा जैसी बीमारी का सामना करना पड़ रहा और वायु प्रदूषण के कारण दमा की बीमारी बच्चों में भी देखने मिल रही है। पर्यावरण रक्षा के लिए ठोस कदम नहीं उठाए गए हैं और बढ़ती आबादी की वजह से वन्य क्षेत्र मानव द्वारा



तबाह किए जा रहे हैं। इससे पृथ्वी का तापमान बढ़ता जा रहा है। पिछले सप्ताह राजस्थान में तापमान 50 डिग्री तक पहुंच गया था। पेड़ों की कमी के चलते हवा में कार्बन उत्सर्जन की मात्रा बढ़ रही है। चीन दुनिया में सबसे ज्यादा कार्बन उत्सर्जन कर रहा है क्योंकि औद्योगिक गतिविधियों के लिए चीन बेहिसाब कोयले को

पर्यावरण को बचाने तथा स्वच्छ वायु के लिए लोगों को पेड़ लगाने की जरूरत है

जलाता है। इसका असर उसके पड़ोसी देशों पर भी पड़ रहा है। संयुक्त राष्ट्र अमेरिका जो सबसे जिम्मेदार देश कहलाता है यह कार्बन उत्सर्जन के मामले में दूसरे

राजकोषीय मोर्चे पर हुए जादू की कुठ और है हकीकत



दिल्ली डायरी

ए के भट्टाचार्य

लेखा महानियंत्रक (सीजीए) द्वारा जारी आंकड़ों के मुताबिक 2019-20 में केंद्र सरकार का पूरे वर्ष का शुद्ध कर राजस्व 13.17 लाख करोड़ रुपये रहने का अनुमान है। यह चार माह पहले सरकार के अंतिम बजट में प्रस्तुत अनुमान से 1.67 लाख करोड़ रुपये कम है। यह कमी मामूली नहीं है बल्कि जीडीपी के 0.9 फीसदी के बराबर है। इसके बावजूद सरकार वर्ष 2018-19 में राजकोषीय घाटे को जीडीपी के 3.4 फीसदी रखने में कामयाब रही। यह चमत्कार कैसे हुआ?

सीजीए के आंकड़े कुछ बातें स्पष्ट करते हैं। सरकार इसलिए बचाव में कामयाब रही क्योंकि ऋण अदायगी हुई और विनिवेश प्राप्तियां बजट से अधिक रहीं। इस प्रकार 2018-19 में कुल गैर ऋण पूंजी प्राप्ति करीब 1.03 लाख करोड़ रुपये रही जबकि संशोधित अनुमान में इसके 0.93 लाख करोड़ रुपये रहने की बात कही गई थी। इससे कर राजस्व कमी 10,000 करोड़ रुपये तक घटी। गैर कर राजस्व में 1,000 करोड़ रुपये की मामूली बढ़ोतरी ने राजस्व में कुल कमी को 1.56 लाख करोड़ रुपये तक घटया। इसके बावजूद लक्ष्य काफी बड़ा था। ऐसे में सरकार ने व्यय में कटौती शुरू की। सबसे पहले उसने पूंजीगत व्यय कम करना शुरू किया। इसमें करीब 13,000 करोड़ रुपये की कमी की गई। अब कमी घटकर 1.43 लाख करोड़ रुपये रह गई थी। इसके बाद सरकार ने बजट से इतर उधारी या अपने ही व्यय को सरकारी संस्थाओं को स्थानांतरित करने और उन्हें राष्ट्रीय अल्प बचत फंड आदि से उधारी लेने की प्रक्रिया अपनाई। सरकार ने ऐसी बजट से इतर उधारी के लिए भारतीय खाद्य निगम, आवास एवं शहरी विकास निगम, राष्ट्रीय आवास बैंक और ग्रामीण विद्युतीकरण निगम जैसे संस्थानों का रख किया। ऐसा करने उसने खाद्य सस्बिडी, सस्ते आवास की योजना, सिंचाई, ग्रामीण आवास और विद्युतीकरण के व्यय की पूर्ति की। ऐसी उधारी की यह राशि 1.32 लाख करोड़ रुपये थी। सीजीए के आंकड़ों में यह उधारी शामिल नहीं है लेकिन इस चतुराईपूर्ण व्यय प्रबंधन को लेकर संकेत अवश्य है।

नुकसान पहुंचाएगा। उदाहरण के लिए अनुमानित और वास्तविक शुद्ध कर राजस्व में 11 फीसदी का अंतर आने के कारण 2019-20 के लक्ष्य की प्राप्ति और टुप्पर हो जाएगी। 15 फीसदी की वृद्धि दर के बजाय अब वांछित वृद्धि दर 29 फीसदी होगी। ऐसे वाले वर्ष में राजकोषीय समावेशन वैसे भी कठिन चुनौती है। एक सवाल यह भी है कि सरकारी कंपनियों की उधारी कैसे चुकता होगी और आने वाले वर्ष के लेखा में इससे कैसे निपटा जाएगा। सरकारी क्षेत्रों की इस उधारी को सरकार के खाते में दर्शाया जाना चाहिए। उदाहरण के लिए अगर सरकार ऐसा नहीं करती तो राजकोषीय घाटा जीडीपी के 4.1 फीसदी तक पहुंच चुका होता।

सरकारी क्षेत्र को ऋण के बोझ तले दबाना स्वयं सरकार को सार्वजनिक क्षेत्र की स्वायत्तता और सुधार की प्रतिबद्धताओं के प्रतिकूल है। बजट से इतर उधारी के ऐसे संसाधन यह भी दर्शाते हैं कि शासकीय क्षेत्र के सरकारी ऋण पर नजर रखने की जरूरत है।

बजट से इतर उधारी सरकार को अतिरिक्त राहत प्रदान करती है और अर्थव्यवस्था की वृद्धि के आंकड़े बेहतर प्रतीत होते हैं। अगर सरकार ने वाकई 2018-19 की अंतिम तिमाही में अपने व्यय में 1.45 लाख करोड़ रुपये की कटौती की होती तो यह चौथी तिमाही के जीडीपी अनुमान में सरकारी व्यय के आंकड़ों में नजर आता।

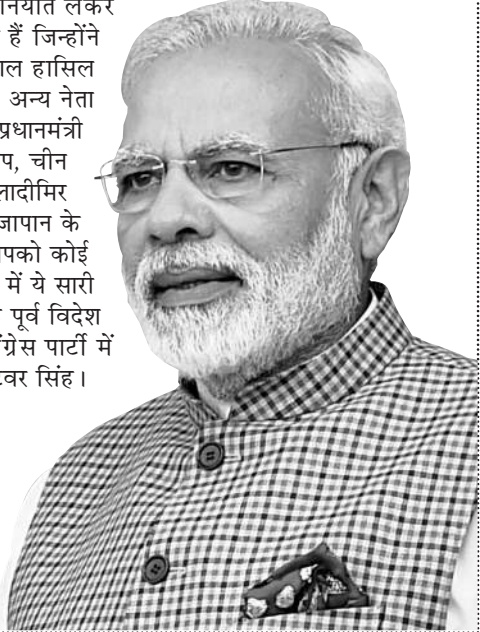
यह सही है कि 13,000 करोड़ रुपये का पूंजीगत व्यय कम किया गया लेकिन शेष 1.32 लाख करोड़ रुपये वाली बात हकीकत नहीं है। इस व्यय को सरकारी संस्थानों पर डाल दिया गया।चौथी तिमाही में सरकारी व्यय 13 फीसदी से अधिक बढ़ा। अगर सरकार ने वास्तव में व्यय में कटौती की होती तो सरकार की वृद्धि इतनी अधिक नहीं होती और जनवरी-मार्च 2019 तिमाही में जीडीपी वृद्धि के आंकड़े 5.8 फीसदी से कम रहते।

इसमें दो राय नहीं कि 2018-19 में राजकोषीय घाटे के लक्ष्य को हासिल करने का जो जादू हुआ है, उसके कई कारक परेशान करने वाले हैं।

कानाफूसी

मोदी की तारीफ

‘23 मई को राजनीतिक मौसम नहीं बल्कि देश की राजनीति की जलवायु ही बदल गई। प्रधानमंत्री नरेंद्र मोदी ने अपने पहले कार्यकाल की शुरुआत एक नौसिखुआ की तरह की थी लेकिन अपनी दूसरी पारी की शुरुआत वह एक राज्याध्यक्ष के रूप में कर रहे हैं। 20वीं सदी का भारत जवाहरलाल नेहरू ने तैयार किया था। मोदी शायद 21वीं सदी के भारत के निर्माता बनने की नियति लेकर आए हैं। मोदी देश के तीसरे ऐसे प्रधानमंत्री हैं जिन्होंने बड़े बहुमत के साथ लगातार दूसरा कार्यकाल हासिल करने में कामयाबी हासिल की है। ऐसे दो अन्य नेता जवाहरलाल नेहरू और इंदिरा गांधी रहे हैं। प्रधानमंत्री मोदी अब अमेरिका के राष्ट्रपति डॉनल्ड ट्रंप, चीन के राष्ट्रपति शी चिनफिंग, रूस के राष्ट्रपति व्लादीमिर पुतिन, जर्मन चांसलर एंगेला मर्केल और जापान के प्रधानमंत्री शिंजो आबे की श्रेणी में हैं।’ आपको कोई अंदाजा है कि प्रधानमंत्री नरेंद्र मोदी के बारे में ये सारी बातें किसने कहीं? ये कहने वाले हैं देश के पूर्व विदेश मंत्री और कम से कम तीन दशक तक कांग्रेस पार्टी में अत्यंत अहम दर्जा रखने वाले नेता कुंवर नडवर सिंह।



आपका पक्ष

मॉनसून की दस्तक उठाने होंगे कदम

मॉनसून ने केरल के तट पर बीते शनिवार को दस्तक दे दी है। इसके साथ ही धीरे-धीरे पूरे देश में बारिश होगी। इससे गम्भी से कुछ राहत मिलने के साथ ही देश के कई जगहों में पेयजल संकट से भी निजात मिलने की उम्मीद है। मॉनसून के आने के साथ ही सरकार ने जल संचयन के लिए वाटर हावैस्टिंग से संबंधित नियम तो बनाए हैं लेकिन नियमों से ऊपर उठ कर लोगों को खुद जल संचयन करना होगा। अगर अगले साल सूखे जैसी स्थिति से निजात पाना है तो लोगों को इस बारिश से जल संचय करना होगा। केवल सरकार की जिम्मेदारी कह कर हम अपनी जिम्मेदारी से मुंह नहीं मोड़ सकते हैं। लोगों को छोटे स्तर पर ही जल संचय करना चाहिए।



दैनिक जागरण

जीवन में कोई ऐसी समस्या नहीं जिसका समाधान न हो

बेलगाम बंगाल

पश्चिम बंगाल में चुनाव बाद भी हिंसा जारी रहने पर केंद्र सरकार ने चिंता प्रकट करते हुए राज्य सरकार को कानून एवं व्यवस्था बनाए रखने और लापरवाह अधिकारियों के खिलाफ कठोर कार्रवाई करने की जो सलाह दी उसके अनुरूप कुछ होने के आसार कम ही हैं, क्योंकि मुख्यमंत्री ममता बनर्जी के अनुसार उनके राज्य में सब कुछ ठीक है और जो गड़बड़ हो भी रही है उसके लिए बाहरी तत्व जिम्मेदार हैं। उनका यह भी मानना है कि ये बाहरी तत्व भाजपा ने बुलाए हैं। आखिर ऐसी सोच के रहते यह उम्मीद कैसे की जा सकती है कि बंगाल में जारी हिंसा थमेगी? बंगाल में चुनाव के पहले से ही शुरू हो गई राजनीतिक हिंसा जिस तरह रुकने का नाम नहीं ले रही उससे प्रदेश ही नहीं देश की भी बदनामी हो रही है। देश में यही एक अकेला ऐसा राज्य बचा है जहां राजनीतिक हिंसा का वीथल रूप देखने को मिल रहा है। निःसंदेह इसका कारण यही है कि हिंसक तत्वों को तुणमूल कांग्रेस का संरक्षण हासिल है। हालात इसलिए नहीं संभल रहे, क्योंकि पुलिस प्रशासन सत्ताधारी दल की शाखा की तरह व्यवहार कर रहा है। बंगाल में राजनीतिक एवं चुनावी हिंसा वामदलों के जमाने से ही हो रही है। माना वह जाता था कि वामदलों की मनमानी से लड़कर सत्ता में आई ममता बनर्जी अन्य अनेक बदलाव लाने के साथ ही राजनीतिक संस्कृति को भी परिवर्तित करने का काम करेंगी, लेकिन ऐसा नहीं लगता कि उन्होंने परिवर्तन के अपने नारे को लेकर तनिक भी गंभीरता दिखाई। इसके बजाय उन्होंने वामदलों वाली ही संस्कृति अपना ली। वामदलों के नेताओं और कार्यकर्ताओं के साथ-साथ उन्होंने अन्य अराजक दलों को भी तुणमूल कांग्रेस का हिस्सा बना लिया। इसके दुष्परिणाम सामने आने ही थे।

समस्या केवल यही नहीं है कि ममता बनर्जी राजनीतिक हिंसा को रोकने के लिए कोई कदम नहीं उठा रही हैं, बल्कि यह भी है कि वह इस हिंसा में लिप्त तत्वों का खुलेआम बचाव कर रही हैं। ऐसा रवैया वही अपना सकता है जो राजनीतिक वैमनस्य से ग्रसित हो और जिसे अपने शासन की छवि की कोई परवाह न हो। पता नहीं क्यों ममता बनर्जी यह समझने को तैयार नहीं कि उनकी ओर से वामदलों वाले तौर-तरीके अपनाने के कारण ही उनकी राजनीतिक जमीन खिसकती चली जा रही है। कोई भी दल अथवा नेता अलोकतांत्रिक तौर-तरीकों को बढ़ावा देकर अपनी राजनीतिक जमीन मजबूत नहीं कर सकता। विडंबना यह है कि लोकसभा चुनावों में आघात लगने के बाद ममता बनर्जी ने पहले से अधिक अलोकतांत्रिक रख-रवैया अपना लिया है। जनादेश को स्वीकार करने से बचने के साथ ही वह मोदी सरकार के प्रति जैसा अनुदार रवैया अपनाए हुए हैं वह मुख्यमंत्री के पद पर आसीन नेता को शोभा नहीं देता। कानून एवं व्यवस्था राज्यों के अधिकार क्षेत्र वाला एक ऐसा विषय है जिस पर ममता बनर्जी बड़-चढ़कर बोलती रही हैं। यह उनकी नैतिक ही नहीं, संवैधानिक जिम्मेदारी है कि बंगाल में जारी राजनीतिक हिंसा पर प्रभावी ढंग से रोक लगे। एक मुख्यमंत्री के रूप में वह अपने दायित्वों का निर्वहन सही ढंग से करें, इसकी चिंता केंद्र सरकार के साथ-साथ अन्य दलों को भी करनी चाहिए।

मोबाइल गेम पर नियंत्रण

बिहार के भागलपुर में हुई घटना एक उदाहरण है कि किस तरह मोबाइल की लत बच्चों की जान ले रही है। मोबाइल पर पबजी गेम खेल रहे 17 साल के एक छात्र ने इसलिए खुदकशी कर ली कि वह हार गया था। वह इंटर की परीक्षा देने के बाद प्रतियोगी परीक्षाओं की तैयारी कर रहा था। उसे मोबाइल पर गेम खेलने की लत लग चुकी थी। खेल में हुई हार को वह बर्दाश्त नहीं कर सका और फांसी लगा ली। तकनीक और तेजी से बढ़ रहे संचार के इस युग में बच्चों को इसके बीच रहते हुए किस तरह उचित मार्गदर्शन और प्रशिक्षण दिया जाए, इस पर चिंतन-मंथन करना जरूरी है। बहुत छोटी उम्र से ही उसकी दुनिया मोबाइल में सिमटती जा रही है। इसके लिए अभिभावक भी दोषी हैं, जो चार-पांच साल के बच्चों के हाथ में भी मोबाइल पकड़ा देते हैं। वह बच्चा इस पर गेम खेलते-खेलते इसकी लत का शिकार हो जाता है। आज अमूमन यही हो रहा है। पिछड़िछाड़पन, असुखा और आत्मविश्वास की कमी उसके जीवन का हिस्सा बनता जा रहा है। एक तरफ स्कूल से लेकर ट्यूशन तक पढ़ाई का दबाव तो दूसरी ओर थोड़ा सा वक्त मिलते ही मोबाइल और इंटरनेट। यह कतई सही नहीं है। ऐसी घटनाएं इसी का परिणाम हैं। इस पर भी विचार करने की आवश्यकता है कि बच्चों के खेलकूद व मनोरंजन के कोई साधन नहीं हैं। कंक्रीट के जंगलों में तब्दील हो रहे शहरों में मैदान तक नहीं हैं, जहां बच्चे खेल सकें। पहले चारों तरफ छोटे-बड़े मैदान हुआ करते थे, जहां बच्चे दोस्तों के साथ खेला करते थे। इससे उनका शारीरिक विकास भी हो सकता था, लेकिन आज के दौर में यह सब तेजी से छिन्ता चला जा रहा है। लाइब्रेरी तक नहीं है, जहां वे बैठकर अच्छी किताबें पढ़ सकें। इस स्थिति में मोबाइल ही उनका सहारा बनता है और वही इनका साथी। किसी भी चीज की एक सीमा होती है। इसका इस्तेमाल भी अब अति की सीमा पार करता जा रहा है। इससे पहले भी मोबाइल पर ऐसे गेम आए हैं, जिसमें बच्चों ने अपने हाथ की नस तक काट ली। मोबाइल गेम पर समय रहते नियंत्रण लगाना होगा, अन्यथा बड़ी कीमत चुकानी होगी।

लगातार बढ़ती प्लास्टिक की पैठ

माइक्रोप्लास्टिक यानी ईंसान के बनाए प्लास्टिक के छोटे छोटे टुकड़े इस वक्त अकेली ऐसी चीज है जो धरती पर हर जगह मौजूद हैं। अब वो चाहे सिंथेटिक कपड़ों से निकले टुकड़े हों, कार के टायरों से या फिर कांटेक्ट लेंस या रोजमर्रा काम आने वाली किसी और चीज से। दुनिया के सबसे ऊंचे इलाकों में मौजूद ग्लेशियरों से लेकर समुंदर की गहरी से गहरी खाइयों तक में यह मौजूद है।

बीते दिनों हुए कई शोधकार्यों से पता चला है कि किस तरह माइक्रोप्लास्टिक ईंसान की खाद्य श्रृंखला में घुस सकता है। यद्यत तक कि पिछले साल कई मशहूर ब्रांड की सीलबंद बोतलों में बिकने वाले पानी में भी प्लास्टिक के टुकड़े मिले। हाल ही में कनाडा के वैज्ञानिकों ने शोध के दौरान माइक्रोप्लास्टिक की मौजूदगी के बारे में तमाम आंकड़ों का विश्लेषण किया और फिर उन्हें अमेरिकी लोगों की खाने पीने की आदतों से तुलना की। उन्होंने पता लगाया है कि एक वयस्क ईंसान एक साल में माइक्रोप्लास्टिक के करीब 52,000 टुकड़े अपने शरीर में डाल सकता है। उदाहरण के लिए जिस तरह की प्रदूषित हवा में हम जी रहे हैं उसमें केवल सांस के जरिये ही 1.21 लाख माइक्रोप्लास्टिक के कण शरीर में जा सकते हैं यानी हर दिन करीब 320 प्लास्टिक



हृदयनारायण दीक्षित

भाषाएं भले अलग हों पर सबका अंतस एक है। तमिल, तेलुगु, मलयालम और कन्नड़ के बिना हिंदी का श्रृंगार अधूरा है और हिंदी के बिना राष्ट्र की अभिव्यक्ति अधूरी है

भारत अद्वितीय राष्ट्र है। सारी दुनिया में बेजोड़। इंद्रधनुषी विविधता। फिर भी एक सांस्कृतिक निरंतरता। यह विश्व का सबसे बड़ा संसदीय जनतंत्र है, लेकिन राजभाषा के प्रश्न पर हम सभी देशों से पीछे हैं। महात्मा गांधी ने लिखा था, ‘पृथ्वी पर हिंदुस्तान ही एक ऐसा देश है जहां माता-पिता बच्चों को अपनी मातृभाषा के बजाय अंग्रेजी पढ़ाना-लिखाना प्रेरित करेंगे।’ संविधान सभा ने 14 सितंबर 1949 को हिंदी को राजभाषा बनाया। पं. नेहरू ने कहा, ‘हमने अंग्रेजी इस कारण स्वीकार की कि वह विजेता की भाषा थी। अंग्रेजी कितनी ही अच्छी हो, किंतु इसे हम सहन नहीं कर सकते।’ सभा में राजभाषा का प्रस्ताव एनजी आयरंगर ने रखा और कहा कि हम अंग्रेजी को एकदम नहीं छोड़ सकते। हमने सरकारी प्रयोजनों के लिए हिंदी को अभिज्ञात किया है। फिर भी मानना चाहिए कि वह समुनत भाषा नहीं है।’ हिंदी राजभाषा बनी। 15 साल तक अंग्रेजी चलाने का भी प्रयाशन बना। हिंदी समृद्धि की जिम्मेदारी अनुच्छेद 351 के तहत केंद्र पर डाली गई। तब से 60 वर्ष हो गए। दक्षिण की राजनीति में राजभाषा हिंदी का विरोध जारी है। वे राष्ट्रीय शिक्षा नीति के मसौदे के निर्भाषा सूत्र को ‘हिंदी थोपना’ बता रहे हैं। केंद्र के सकारात्मक आश्वासन के बावजूद केंद्र सरकार के कार्यालयों के हिंदी नाम पट्ट पोते जा रहे हैं। वे विवेकपूर्ण विमर्श को तैयार नहीं हैं।

भाषा प्रसार का इतिहास ध्यान देने योग्य है। मध्यकाल के अधिकांश बादशाह फारसी

थोपना चाहते थे, लेकिन अरबी-फारसी के विद्वान भारत की भाषाई पहचान के लिए हिंदी शब्द ही प्रयोग करते थे। हिंदी की महफिल में फारसी और अरबी के शब्द याराना ढंग से मिलते रहे। ईस्ट इंडिया कंपनी के कर्ताधर्ता अंग्रेजी भाषी थे। कंपनी के निदेशक मंडल ने एक पत्रक में अपना इरादा बदला और कहा ‘प्रयुक्त भाषा को वादी-प्रतिवादी वकील तथा सामान्य जन भी जाने।’ ऐसी भाषा हिंदी थी। यही तमिलनाडु तब मद्रास प्रेसीडेंसी था। 1937 में सी. राजगोपालाचारी के नेतृत्व वाली मद्रास सरकार ने हिंदी पढ़ाने का आदेश दिया था। आंदोलन हुआ तो आदेश वापस लिया गया, लेकिन हिंदी की आवश्यकता जताई गई। कोई भी भारतीय भाषा थोपी नहीं गई। अंग्रेज सत्ताधीशों ने अंग्रेजी की पक्षधरता अस्वाभाविक होने के साथ ही साम्राज्यवादी खंडहरों की शव उपाना है। भाषाएं थोपने से लोक स्वीकृति नहीं पाती। उपयोगिता के कारण ही हिंदी का क्षेत्र लगातार बढ़ा है। भारत में सौ करोड़ से ज्यादा हिंदी भाषी हैं। काम चलाऊ हिंदी बोलने वालों की संख्या लगभग ढाई करोड़ है। पाकिस्तान, बांग्लादेश, दुबई, सऊदी अरब, ओमान, फिजी, म्यांमार, रूस, कतर, फ्रांस, जर्मनी, अमेरिका और पड़ोसी नेपाल में लाखों हिंदी भाषी हैं। हिंदी प्रसार का कारण उपयोगिता है। बेंगलुरु आइटी का गढ़ है।

अलीगढ़ से निकले खतरनाक संकेत

अलीगढ़ के टप्पल में दो साल की बच्चों के साथ हुई हैवानियत से शायद ही कोई ऐसा ईंसान हो जिसका दिल न पसीजा हो। इस अमानवीय घटना से लोग खुरी तरह आक्रोशित हैं जिसकी अभिव्यक्ति सोशल मीडिया पर देखी जा सकती है। कहीं देश में एक वक्त भी ऐसा भी है जो अमूमन हर बात पर सक्रिय रहता है, लेकिन इस घटना पर शुरुआत में उसने चुपगी साधे रही। इसके लिए उन्हें जब आड़े हाथों लिया गया तभी जाकर उनमें से कुछ ने निंदा की औपचारिकता पूरी की। उसी तबके में कुछ लोग ऐसे हैं जो बच्चों के लिए ईसाफ की मुहिम चलाने वालों पर ही मामले को सांप्रदायिक तुल देने के बहाने सामाजिक तानाबाना विगाड़ने का आरोप लगा रहे हैं। ऐसी उलट प्रतिक्रिया ने लोगों के गुस्से को और उबाल दिया। पुलिस ने कुछ अपराधियों को पकड़ लिया है। उन पर रासुका लगाया जा रहा है। उत्तर प्रदेश सरकार ने एक विशेष जांच दल का गठन किया है। उम्मीद करनी चाहिए कि फास्ट ट्रैक अदालत में इन अपराधियों को जल्द ही सजा मिलेगी।

किंतु मामला यहीं खत्म नहीं होता। इसके कुछ पहलू हैं जो सरकार और समाज दोनों के लिए विचारणीय और भविष्य के लिए सचेत करने वाले हैं। इसमें सबसे पहले हमें स्थानीय पुलिस के व्यवहार को देखना होगा। बेशक, पुलिस की भूमिका अपराध के बाद आरंभ होती है, लेकिन वह भूमिका निभाए ही नहीं तो अपराधियों का हौसला बढ़ता है। बच्चों के परिवार की आर्थिक पृष्ठभूमि बहुत अच्छी नहीं है और पैसे लौटाने की बात पर ही यह विवाद शुरू हुआ था। इस पर आरोपी ने देख लेने की धमकी दी और उसने वाकई ऐसा बीमत्स अपराध अंजाम दिया जिसकी दुःस्वप्न में भी कल्पना नहीं की जा सकती। बच्ची 30 मंई को गायब हुई। परिवार थोप में रपट लिखवाने गया, लेकिन उनमें मायूसी ही मिली। किसी तरह 31 मंई को गुमशुदगी रिपोर्ट लिखी गई। अगर अपराधियों ने शव अपने घर के आसपास कूड़े में दबाके के बजाय 40-50 किलोमीटर दूर ठिकाने लगाया होता तब क्या होता?

बच्चों का शव मिलने के बाद भी जिस तरह पुलिस को सक्रिय होना चाहिए, वह नहीं हुई। लापरवाही के आरोप में अब ईसेक्टर समेत पांच पुलिसकर्मी निर्दोषित किए गए हैं। निर्लंबन पुलिस में सामान्य प्रक्रिया है। दो जून को बच्चों का शव आरोपी के घर के बाहर कूड़े के ढेर में मिला। महिला सफाईकर्मी ने कूड़े के ढेर से कपड़े के एक बंडल को कुत्तों को खींचते हुए देखा। उसने थोरा मचापी तो लोगों की गंढी इकट्ठी हो गई। कपड़े की गठरी खोलकर देखी गई तो उसमें बच्चों का क्षत-विक्षात शव मिला। सूचना पर पहुंची टप्पल पुलिस शव को पोस्टमार्टम के लिए ले गई। इस रवैये से लोग



और भड़क गए, क्योंकि उनका शक यकीन में बदल गया था कि यह किसकी करतूत है और इसके पीछे मार्गसंका क्या है। गुस्साए लोग आरोपी जाहिद और उसके परिवार को गिरफ्तार करने की मांग कर रहे थे। हरकर एसएसपी व अन्य अधिकारियों को डॉंग स्कवाड के साथ आना पड़ा। खोजी कुत्ता सुंघते हुए कोट मोहल्ला निवासी जाहिद के घर तक पहुंचा। इसके बाद पुलिस ने जाहिद को हिरासत में लिया। उससे पूछताछ के बाद अपराध में उसके भागीदार असलम को गिरफ्तार किया गया। राज्य सरकार को इस पर सूचना होगी कि आखिर इतने कड़े निर्देशों के बावजूद पुलिस का रवैया बदल क्यों नहीं रहा? छोटी बच्चियों के साथ जघन्य अपराधों की घटनाएं लगातार सामने आने के बावजूद उसने इसे गंभीरता से क्यों नहीं लिया? शव मिलने के साथ ही अपराधियों तक पहुंचने के लिए डॉंग स्कवाड की मदद क्यों नहीं ली? लोग दबाव नहीं डालते तो हो सकता है कि अभी तक अपराधी पकड़ में ही नहीं आते। निर्लंबन के कई मामले हैं। इन पुलिस कर्मियों के खिलाफ मुकदमा चलना चाहिए।

अब दूसरे पहलू की बात करते हैं। आखिर इन अपराधियों ने बच्चों की ही बदले के लिए क्यों चुना और उसके साथ ऐसा निर्मम व्यवहार क्यों किया? पुलिस का कहना है कि बदले की भावना से जाहिद ने असलम के साथ मिलकर साजिश रची। शव की हालत इतनी खराब थी कि पोस्टमार्टम करने वाले तीन डॉक्टरों के पैनल के सामने समस्या थी कि वे

पोस्टमार्टम कैसे करें? पैनल की राय पर गौर करें तो शव के गलने की स्थिति से उसकी हत्या के साक्ष्य विलुप्त हो चुके थे। यूँकि मामला देशव्यापी हो गया है तो उसकी हकीकत सामने आनी ही थी। रासुका लगाने का निर्णय भी ऐसे ही नहीं हुआ। स्थानीय लोगों को पता चला कि दोनों ने सांप्रदायिक उन्माद की मानसिकता से ग्रस्त होकर इतनी हैवानियत की। अगर यह सच है तो फिर समस्या इस सोच की है। इस सोच का मुकाबला कैसे किया जाए। इस पर पुलिस-प्रशासन, नेताओं के साथ ही एक समुदाय के विवेकशील लोगों को इस पर विचार करना होगा। ऐसी मानसिकता से अपराधों को अंजाम दिया जा रहा है। दुर्भाग्य से जहां बहुसंख्यक समुदाय आरोपी होता है वहां तो देश में खूब हंगामा होता है और पुलिस भी आरंभिक स्तर पर सक्रिय हो जाती है। जहां अल्पसंख्यक समुदाय आरोपी होता है वहां बहुत कुछ स्पष्ट होने के बावजूद न पुलिस जल्दी सक्रिय होती है न स्वयं को संवेतुलर खिगेड का सदस्य मानने वाले एक्टिविस्ट। इस मामले में यह साफ दिख रहा है। हां, आम लोग अवश्य विरोध प्रदर्शन कर रहे हैं, सड़कों पर उतर रहे हैं। मुख्यधारा के मीडिया ने सोशल मीडिया पर आक्रोश और आम जनता के सड़कों पर उतरने के बाद इसका संज्ञान लिया। यह दुर्भाग्यापूर्ण स्थिति है। क्या अपराध का विरोध मजहब देखकर किया जाएगा? ऐसा करके हम भविष्य के लिए कैसे समाज का बीजारोपण कर रहे? इस पर विचार करना होगा।

अगर यह हालत नहीं होता तो शायद पुलिस भी आरंभ में सक्रिय हो जाती। पुलिस पर भी मनोवैज्ञानिक दबाव होता है कि किसी अल्पसंख्यक को उठाकर पूछताछ की और वह अपराधी नहीं निकला तो देश पर के ये एक्टिविस्ट समस्या पैदा कर देंगे। हो सकता है कुछ नामी वकील सीधे उच्चतम न्यायालय चले जाएं। यह स्थिति भी अपराधियों की मदद करती है। खैर इन एक्टिविस्टों से परे समाज के हर तबके ने इसके खिलाफ आवाज उठाई है। कुछ ही घंटे में 70 हजार टवीट हो गए और उसके लाखों रीटवीट होने लगे तो अलीगढ़ पुलिस को पूरी स्थिति साफ करनी पड़ी। उम्मीद है समाज की यह जागरूकता बनी रहेगी। यह अब तक के एकपक्षीय दोहरे चरित्र के एक्टिविज्म से अलग धारा होगी जो न्यायपूर्ण और औचित्यपूर्ण होगी। किंतु घटना घटित होने के बाद की जागरूकता के साथ स्थानीय स्तर पर सर्वत्र संतर्कता और जागरूकता की अधिक आवश्यकता है। इस सोच को खत्म करने के लिए समाज के बीच सक्रियता से काम करना होगा।

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अवधेश राजपूत

बेंगलुरु सहित पूरा कर्नाटक हिंदी भाषी युवाओं से भरा है। तमिलनाडु की नई पीढ़ी में भाषा को लेकर कमीवेश द्वंद्व नहीं है। हिंदी सिनेमा और धारावाहिक सर्वत्र लोकप्रिय हैं। उत्तर भारत में दक्षिण भारतीय फिल्मों के करोड़ों दर्शक हैं। ‘बाहुबली’ ने हिंदी में अरबों रुपये कमाए थे, लेकिन राष्ट्रीय भावना को न समझने वाले दल हिंदी थोपने का शोर मचाकर राजनीति चमकाते हैं। भारती के समय भी यह बहस थी। उन्होंने लिखा था कि ‘राष्ट्रीय शिक्षा का आधारभूत आंदोलन चला था। आरोप था कि भाजपा के नेतृत्व वाली केंद्र सरकार तमिल भावनाओं का सम्मान नहीं करती। तमिलनाडु भारतीय संस्कृति दर्शन का क्षेत्र रहा है। भारत में तमिल भावना का सम्मान है। अंग्रेजी की वरीयता तमिल भावनाओं से संगत नहीं है।

तमिल साहित्य में संस्कृति का दर्शन है। सुब्रहमण्यम भारती प्रख्यात तमिल साहित्यकार व चिंतक थे। अंग्रेज अंग्रेजी को सभी भारतीय भाषाओं से श्रेष्ठ बताते थे। भारती ने लिखा, ‘तमिल में ऐसा जीवंत काव्य और दार्शनिक साहित्य है जो इंग्लैंड की भाषा से कहीं अधिक भव्य है।’ भारतीय साहित्य की श्रध्दता पर जोर

देते हुए भारती ने लिखा, ‘मैं नहीं समझता कि यूरोप की कोई भाषा वल्लुवर के ‘कुरल’, कंबन की ‘रामायण’ और इलंगो की ‘शलपतिहारम’ जैसी रचनाओं जितना गर्व कर सकती है।’ तमिल चिंतक भारती अंग्रेजी से टकरा रहे थे, लेकिन तमिल राजनीति अपनी ही राजभाषा, हिंदी के विरोध में अंग्रेजी की अंगरक्षक बन रही है। अभी राष्ट्रीय शिक्षा नीति पर बहस जारी है। भारती के समय भी यह बहस थी। उन्होंने लिखा था कि ‘राष्ट्रीय शिक्षा का आधारभूत सिद्धांत है-पाठ्यक्रम में राष्ट्रभाषा को प्रमुखता प्रदान करना।’ भारती सांस्कृतिक दिग्गज थे। हिंदी जानते थे। 1908 में उन्होंने तिलक को पत्र लिखा, ‘मुझे पंडित कृष्ण वर्मा की चिट्ठी मिली है। कहा गया है कि हम मद्रास में चेंने जनसंगम के सौजन्य से हिंदी की कक्षा खोलें। हमने पहले से ही ऐसी कक्षा खोल रखी है। उम्मीद है कि भविष्य में हिंदी सीखने वालों की संख्या बढ़ेगी।’

भारती ने राष्ट्रीय शिक्षा नीति का मूल मंत्र घोषित किया था कि ‘अतिहास ही नहीं, वर्तन सभी विषय राष्ट्रभाषा में पढ़ाए जाने चाहिए। राष्ट्रभाषा के अतिरिक्त अन्य किसी भाषा के माध्यम वाली शिक्षा को राष्ट्रीय शिक्षा कहना क्या पूर्ण रूप से

अनुचित नहीं होगा?’ हिंदी प्रसार तमिल क्षेत्र की जरूरत रहा है। 1918 में महात्मा गांधी ने भी दक्षिणी राज्यों में हिंदी प्रसार के लिए ‘दक्षिण भारत हिंदी प्रचार समिति’ बनाई थी। समिति के महासचिव एस. जयराम के अनुसार ‘हिंदी सीखने वालों की संख्या दोगुनी से ज्यादा बढ़ी है। 2009 में 2.68 लाख परीक्षार्थी थे और 2018 में 5.80 लाख।’ इस वर्ष यह संख्या छह लाख हो सकती है। आंकड़ों के अनुसार इसमें तमिलनाडु प्रथम है। तेलंगाना सहित आंध्र दूसरे क्रम पर हैं। कर्नाटक तीसरा है और केरल चौथा है। उद्योग व्यापार की जरूरतों, कला और संस्कृति आदि कारणों से हिंदी का प्रसार बढ़ा है।

भाषाएं संस्कृति को प्रभावित करती हैं, संस्कृति व दर्शन से प्रभावित भी होती हैं। सांस्कृतिक दृष्टिकोण से सारी भारतीय भाषाएं एक जैसी हैं। तमिल कवि कंबन और संस्कृत कवि वाल्मीकि दोनों ने ही रामायण लिखी है। दोनों का सांस्कृतिक मूल एक है। बेशक भारत बहुभाषिक राष्ट्र है लेकिन अमेरिकी विद्वान एमेन्सू ने उसे एक भाषी माना है। प्रत्येक एक की अपनी भाषा है, लेकिन सबका अंतस एक है। तमिल, तेलुगु, कन्नड़ के बिना हिंदी का श्रृंगार अधूरा और हिंदी के बिना राष्ट्र की अभिव्यक्ति अधूरी है। तमिल, कन्नड़ आदि से हिंदी का बंध नहीं। हिंदी सबको जोड़ने वाला रससूत्र है। दक्षिण में हिंदी प्रयोग से राष्ट्रीय एकता मजबूत होगी। हिंदी भाषी भी सजग नहीं जान पड़ते। हिंदी की तमाम बोलियों को आठवीं अनुसूची में शामिल करने की मांगें उठती हैं। भोजपुरी हिंदी का ही प्रेमपूर्ण हिस्सा है। मधुरसा भोजपुरी के बिना हिंदी रसहीन होगी। अवधी या वुजभाषी भी ऐसी ही मांग करें तो राजभाषा हिंदी का गौरव कैसे बना रह सकता है? दक्षिण के मित्र भी विचार करें। अंग्रेजी का मोह छोड़ें। राजभाषा व अपनी भाषाओं से प्यार करें। नया भारत अपनी भाषाओं के अंगहर में ही शोभायमान होगा। (लेखक उत्तर प्रदेश विधानसभा के अध्यक्ष हैं) response@jagran.com



आत्म-सुधार

शरीर विनाशी और आत्मा अविनाशी है। यही शाश्वत सत्य है। ऐसा जानकर आत्म तत्व की ही उपাসना करनी चाहिए। उपनिषदों में भी ऐसा ही कहा गया है कि आत्म-दर्शन करना चाहिए। आत्म-दर्शन ही मानव जीवन का परम लक्ष्य है। लक्ष्य पर लक्ष्य से सांसारिक कर्तव्यों की कोई असंश्लि नहीं है। आशय यह है कि संसार में रहते हुए सांसारिक कार्यों को करना ही है। आवश्यकता मात्र यह है कि ऐसे कार्यों से आसक्ति यानी किसी तरह का कोई लगाव न हो। वास्तव में आसक्ति का अभाव ही तो मुक्ति है। दुख का कारण हमारी अनंत इच्छाएं ही तो हैं। जब इच्छाएं पूरी नहीं होतीं, तब हम दुखी हो जाते हैं। प्रयास करके इच्छाओं को कम करना चाहिए। संसार के समस्त पदार्थ विनाशी हैं। जो अविनाशी है, वह आत्मा है। यह आत्मा ही है, जिसके लिए कहा गया है कि शरीर के नष्ट हो जाने पर भी यह नहीं मरती।

साधकों को इस जीवन में ही सचेत होकर निरंतर आत्मचिंतन करना चाहिए। जीवन की सामान्य बेला आने के पहले ही प्रभु प्राप्ति का मार्ग प्रशस्त करें। प्रभु से प्रार्थना करें कि ‘हे ईश्वर! मेरा मन आपके चरणों में लग जाए।’ जीवन में सत्कर्माँ को अपनाएं। पाप कर्मों से विमुक्त हो जाएं। कर्म सिद्धांत अटूट है। किए गए अपराधों के दुष्परिणामों को तो भुगतना ही होगा। इसलिए प्रयास करना चाहिए कि दुष्कर्म न हों। किसी को मत सताएँ, किसी को पीड़ा मत दीजिए। चेत जाइए। अभी समय है। समय रहते ही स्वयं को सुधार लेना प्रत्येक व्यक्ति का कर्तव्य है। समय नष्ट हो जाने पर दुख करने से कुछ नहीं होगा। जो बीत गया उसे तो नहीं बदला जा सकता, अपितु उससे सबक लेकर आगे बढ़ने समय के आवश्यक बेहतर बनाया जा सकता है। समय रहते सुधार किया जाना अपेक्षित है। अंतकाल में अचानक, कुछ भी न हो सकेगा। तैयारी अभी से होनी चाहिए। शुभ संकल्प अभी से जगाने होंगे। दूसरों का उपकार करें। मेरा तो यह है कि परोपकार से बढ़कर कोई धर्म नहीं है। परोपकार से आपको आत्मिक शांति मिलती है। संतों ने स्पष्ट दिया है कि ‘अच्छे कार्य करते रहें। सदाचार, परोपकार, भक्ति, ध्यान का मार्ग अपनाएँ। आराधना द्वारा भगवान को अपना बनाएँ।’ तभी आपकी मुक्ति सुनिश्चित है।’ इन सभी आदर्शों को आत्मसात करके ही हम अपने जीवन को सार्थक बना सकते हैं।

डॉ. विजय नारायण गुप्त

सुनियोजित विकास की जरूरत

संजय गुप्त ने अपने आलेख ‘उम्मीदों पर खरा उतरने की चुनौती’ में भारत को विकसित राष्ट्र बनाने के लिए जिस सुनियोजित विकास की बात की है, वह अब इस देश की जरूरत है। वर्ष 2014 के मोदी विजन ने भ्रष्टाचार मुक्त विकास का जो सपना जगाया था, उसे फलीभूत करने के लिए देश की जनता ने एक बार फिर उनको प्रचंड बहुमत के साथ प्रधानमंत्री पद पर आसीन किया है। अब यह मोदी की जिम्मेदारी बनती है कि वह सुनियोजित विकास की चुनौती को स्वीकार कर, भ्रष्टाचार मुक्त पारदर्शी कार्य-संस्कृति को विकसित करें। क्योंकि अभी तक विकास योजनाओं के क्रियान्वयन में सरकारी मशीनरी का भ्रष्टाचार आड़े आता रहा है। पूर्व प्रधानमंत्री राजीव गांधी की स्वीकारोक्ति के अनुसार विकास योजनाओं के लिए केंद्र से निकला एक रुपया धरातल तक पहुंचते-पहुंचते 25 पैसे रह जाता है, शेष 75 पैसे भ्रष्टाचारियों की जेब में पहुंच जाता है। देश में व्याप्त आर्थिक भ्रष्टाचार की इस हकीकत को 2014 में प्रधानमंत्री मोदी ने समझा और अपनी युक्तियों से जनहितैषी योजनाओं को भ्रष्टाचार मुक्त तरीके से लाभार्थियों तक पहुंचाया। बावजूद इसके सुनियोजित विकास की बात अभी भी अधूरी है, जिसे पूरा करने की जरूरत है। गांव से शहर तक बढ़ती आबादी के अनुरूप बिजली, पानी और आवास की आवश्यकताओं के साथ सड़कें, नाली, पार्क आदि सुनियोजित रूप से विकसित किए जाएं। सुनियोजित विकास की कमी-संस्कृति हर उस सरकारी विभाग में विकसित की जाए, जिसका सीधा संबंध विकास योजनाओं के क्रियान्वयन से है। स्वास्थ्य, शिक्षा और आंतरिक सुरक्षा जैसे महत्वपूर्ण विभागों को जन-सेवा के मूल मंत्र से समन्वित कर प्रहल्लास से मुक्त किया जाए।

मेलबाक्स

मोदी सरकार के दौरान यदि सुनियोजित विकास का यह ढांचा देश के अंदर खड़ा गया तो 2024 के बाद भारत को विकसित राष्ट्र बनाया जा सकता है।

डॉ. वीपी पाण्डेय, अलीगढ़

आर्थिक सर्वेक्षण के लाभ

देश में बेरोजगारी की समस्या चिंताजनक है। केंद्र सरकार आर्थिक सर्वेक्षण कराने जा रही है। ऐसा अनुमान है कि अगले छह माह में देश का समग्र आर्थिक सर्वेक्षण का काम पूरा कर लिया जाएगा। दरअसल केंद्र सरकार ने इस सर्वेक्षण में रोजगार के आंकड़े जुटाने का खास निर्णय लिया है। सर्वेक्षण में जाय, पकड़ों की रहेड़ी से लेकर पट्टरी पर बैठने वालों तक को सर्वेक्षण के दायरे में लाने का निर्णय लिया गया है। इस सर्वेक्षण में करीब 27 करोड़ परिवारों को शामिल किया जाएगा। इसके साथ ही सात करोड़ स्थापित लोगों को भी इस दायरे में लाना है। सरकार ने अब इस तरह के सर्वेक्षण को प्रत्येक तीसरे साल कराने का निर्णय किया है। हाल के चुनाव में बेरोजगारी बड़ा मुद्दा रहा है। सभी दलों ने अपने-अपने घोषणा पत्रों में बेरोजगारी भत्ता देने का वादा किया था। वास्तव में बेरोजगारी भत्ता इसका कोई समाधान भी नहीं हो सकता, लेकिन रोजगार के अवसर पैदा करना सरकार का दायित्व होता है। सरकार आर्थिक सर्वेक्षण के माध्यम से स्पष्ट व सही डाटा प्राप्त करना चाहती है। इससे सरकार के सामने देशवासियों की आर्थिक तस्वीर सामने आ जाएगी। जब सरकार के सामने वास्तविक आंकड़े होंगे तो लोगों के जीवन स्तर को ऊंचा उठाने, पानी, बिजली, स्वास्थ्य, शिक्षा, परिवहन आदि सुविधाओं के विस्तार में सहायता मिल सकेगी। सर्वेक्षण के आंकड़े आते

ही सरकारी स्तर पर विश्लेषण से लेकर उसके आधार पर आर्थिक विकास की व्यावहारिक योजनाओं को लाना होगा ताकि लोगों के जीवन स्तर में सुधार हो और देश के प्रत्येक नगरिक के पास सम्मानजनक जीवन यापन करने के साधन उपलब्ध हो सकें।

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वास्तविकता का दर्पण

दैनिक जागरण के 8 जून के अंक में क्षमा शर्मा का लेख, वक्त की मांग है परंपरा आयोग का गठन, आज के समाज की वास्तविकता का दर्पण है। कई महिलाएं पुरुषों को बूढ़े मामले में फंसा देती हैं, जिनमें सच्चाई नहीं होती है। इसके पीछे उनका निजी स्वार्थ होता है। ऐसे में पुरुष की प्रेतिष्ठा अपने परिवार और समाज में घृषित हो जाती है। साफ सुथरे चरित्र पर सदा के लिए दाग लग जाता है। झूठा आरोप साबित होने पर ऐसी महिला के खिलाफ सख्त सजा का प्रावधान होना चाहिए। इसमें अब देरी नहीं करनी चाहिए, अन्यथा समाज का एक वर्ग अनावश्यक शिकायतों से त्रस्त होता रहेगा।

बीरसेन सरल, गाजियाबाद

इस संजाम में किसी भी विषय पर राय व्यक्त करने अथवा दैनिक जागरण की 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

सपादकोय प्रभात

महत्वपूर्ण रणनीतिक पहल

प्रधानमंत्री नरेंद्र मोदी ने कूटनीति और वाणिज्य में पड़ोसी देशों के महत्व को हमेशा प्राथमिकता दी है. वर्ष 2014 में अपने शाश्वत ग्रहण समारोह में दक्षिण एशियाई देशों के प्रमुखों को आमंत्रित करणा, आसियान देशों के सदस्य देशों के प्रमुखों को गणतंत्र दिवस समारोह में मुख्य अतिथि के तौर पर बुलाना तथा अपने दूसरे कार्यकाल के शाश्वत ग्रहण समारोह में बिस्मटेक देशों के साथ सहयोग के सात देशों, सार्क के पांच देशों और व्यापार शर्थाईलैंड के नेताओं को मेहमान बनाना उनकी प्राथमिकता के विनिष्ठ उदाहरण हैं. वर्तमान कार्यकाल में अपनी पहली विदेश यात्रा के लिए मालदीव और श्रीलंका का चयन कर उन्होंने स्पष्ट संकेत दे दिया है कि बंगाल की खाड़ी में भारत अपने सामुद्रिक पड़ोसियों से घनिष्ठ संपर्क और सहयोग के लिए संकल्पबद्ध है. हालांकि पाकिस्तान की हेठी के कारण सार्क स्थिती है तथा दोनों देशों के बीच तनाव बना हुआ है, परंतु भारत की ओर से हमेशा ही कहा गया है कि पाकिस्तान अगर आतंकवाद व अलगाववाद को प्रश्रय देने की नीति से परहेज करे, तो संबंध सामान्य हो सकते हैं. हालिया सालों में मालदीव में चीन के वचस्व को जो राजनीति में चुनौती मिली है तथा लोकतांत्रिक प्रक्रिया से छिछले सल्लसिलतंत्र में इब्राहिम मोहम्मद सोलह राष्ट्रपति चुने गये और इस साल अक्टूबर में मालदीव डेमोक्रेटिक पार्टी को बड़ा बहुमत हासिल हुआ, उससे स्पष्ट है भारत के लिए व्यापक समर्थन पैदा हुआ है. भारत ने आंतरिक राजनीति में हस्तक्षेप नहीं करने हेतु राष्ट्रपति सोलह और पूर्व राष्ट्रपति व संसद के वर्तमान स्पीकर नशिद को नैतिक समर्थन दिया है.

संसद ने प्रधानमंत्री मोदी को संबोधन के लिए आमंत्रित किया था. इस यात्रा से भारत ने चीन और मालदीव को इंगित कर दिया है कि वह लोकतांत्रिक मूल्यों और उसके प्रतिनिधित्व के पक्ष में खड़ा है. भारत के सहयोग से एक पहलें से ही चल रही विकास परियोजनाओं के साथ अब प्रधानमंत्री ने एक क्रिकेट स्टेडियम समेत अनेक योजनाओं पर भी सहमति दी है. कर्ज देकर वस्त्र बनाने की चीज की नीति के बरखस भारत इस द्वीपीय देश के विकास में सहभागिता निभा रहा है, लेकिन आज भी वहां राजनीतिक अस्थिरता की आशंका है और इसके निवारण में भारत को निरंतर सकातलक्ष्य भूमिका की आवश्यकता बनी रहेगी. भारतीय हितों के लिहाज से चीन का आयाम श्रीलंका के लिए भी महत्वपूर्ण है, पर विभिन्न समुदायों की आपसी तनानी से उसके लिए से गृहयुद्ध के दौर में लौट जाना का भय भी मंडरा रहा है. ऐसे में प्रधानमंत्री के संदेश पर सभी पक्षों को दृष्टि जमी हुई है. इसमें राजनीति के अलग-अलग पक्ष भी हैं, जिनमें कुछ चीन समर्थक हैं. इस दौर में आतंकवादवाद पर भारत की स्पष्टता को व्यक्त कर उन्होंने एक बड़ा संदेश दिया है. सामुद्रिक हितों के साथ क्षेत्रीय स्थिरता को महत्व देकर प्रधानमंत्री मोदी ने यह भी जता दिया है कि उनको साथ चीन के आर्थिक स्वार्थों की तरह संशय नहीं है. द्वीपीय देशों की यह यात्रा इस क्षेत्र में नये युग का प्रारंभ है.



बोधि वृक्ष

जीवन से प्रेम हो

बुद्धत्व प्रकृति के खिलाफ नहीं होता। वह प्रकृति की परिणति है। वह तो प्रकृति की चरम अभिव्यक्ति है। प्रकृति के खिलाफ होने पर नहीं, बल्कि साथ होने पर ही तुम बुद्धत्व तक पहुँचते हो। तुम्हें उसके खिलाफ तेरेना श्रेष्ठ करने की कोई जरूरत नहीं है, जबकि तुम करते रहते रहो हो। अब तुम पूछोगे कि तो मुझे क्या करना चाहिए ? मैं कहाँ कि दुःख के प्रति अपनी आसक्ति त्याग दो। तुम बुद्धत्व की खोज नहीं कर रहे हो। बल्कि तुम तो दुःख की खोज में लगे हुए हो। बुद्धत्व तो सिर्फ एक बहाना है। दुःख को त्यागो। लाता है कि तुम दुःख में मजा लेने वाले हो। तुम्हें कष्ट से प्रेम है। दुःख से लगाव होना एक रोग है, यह विकृत प्रवृत्ति है, यह एक विक्षिप्तता है। जीवन से प्रेम करो, और अधिक खुश रहो। जब तुम एकदम प्रसन्न होते हो, सोभावना तभी होती है, वरना नहीं। कारण यह है कि दुःख तुम्हें बंद कर देता है, सुख तुम्हें खोलता है। क्या तुमने यही बात अपने जीवन में नहीं देखी ? जब भी तुम दुःखी होते हो, बंद हो जाते हो, एक कठोर आवरण तुम्हें घेर लेता है। तुम खुद की सुरक्षा करने लगते हो, तुम एक कवच-सा ओढ़ लेते हो। वजह यह है कि तुम जानते हो कि तुम्हें पहले से काँटों से काँटों की ओर आगे बढ़ना है और चोट बर्दाश्त नहीं कर सकते। दुःखी लोग हमेशा कठोर हो जाते हैं। उनकी नरमी खत्म हो जाती है, वे चट्टानी जैसे हो जाते हैं। एक प्रसन्न व्यक्ति तो एक फूल की तरह है। उसे ऐसा वरदान मिलता हुआ है कि वह सारी दुनिया को आशीर्वाद दे सकता है, वह ऐसे वरदान से संपन्न है कि खुलने की ज़रूरत नहीं कर सकता। इसलिए खुलने की कोई जरूरत नहीं है, क्योंकि किसी कुछ कितना अच्छा है, कितना मित्रतापूर्ण है। पूरी प्रकृति उसकी मित्र है। वह क्यों डरने लगा ? वह खुल सकता है। वह इस अस्तित्व का आतिथेय बन सकता है। वहीं होता है वह श्रवण, जब दिव्यता तुममें प्रवेश करती है। केवल उसी क्षण में प्रकाश तुममें श्रेष्ठ करता है, और तुम बुद्धत्व प्राप्त करते हो।

- ओशो

कुछ अलग

स्कर्तनुमा ड्रेस में फाइटर

उस पार्टी के अध्यक्ष ने कहा हम घणा संघर्ष करेंगे और उनकी अपनी पार्टी के नेता पंजाब से राजस्थान तक आपसी संघर्ष में जुट लिये. चुनाव के बाद सिर्फ संघर्ष और आग ही बची है, सुरज से भी बरसती हुई.

आलोक पुराणिक

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उस टीवी चैनल की स्क्रीन के बैक ग्राउंड जलती रहती है, एंकर भयंकर अफराकती भांगे दिखते हैं, ऐकदम परम पवित्र टाइटोड सन्न दिखा ले, बैठ कर बात ले. मुझे से पलट स्वावल पूछ लिया- टीवी की क बकवास किये जातें हो. टीवी यानी ए चाहिए. ऐकदम इधर से उधर, उधर से और डाडव लगाते हुए, डाडव लगाकर हुए. फिर उत कर उछलते हुए, मैंने कहा, हा, या सफर! उसने बताया- पूरी दुनिया देखने की ही है, बस हमेशा कामयाब

एकशन चाहिये इस पर मैंने निवेदन किया- स्वर्गीय मनमोहन देसाई की पुरानी फिल्म देखो। तरह तरह के कलाकारों को एकत्रित दिये थे। उनकी एक फिल्म थी धर्मशोर- धर्मेश और जीतेश थे इसमें। धर्मेश कुछ ऐसी ड्रेस पहनते थे जो स्कर्टनुमा लगती थी। फिल्म देखकर समझ न आता था कि देश-काल कौन-सा है, पर धर्मेश स्कर्टनुमा ड्रेस में ऐसी मायादाह मचाते थे कि पब्लिक मगन हो जाती थी। समझ में कुछ न आये,

पूरे देश में जल संकट गहराता जा रहा है. हम सब लोग बेसुरी से मांसपूत का इस्तेमाल कर रहे हैं. केरल से थोड़ी राहत की खबर आयी है कि देश से ही सही, वहाँ मांसपूत पच गया है. दूसरी ओर जल संकट को लेकर देश के विभिन्न हिस्सों से विचलित करने वाली खबरें सामने आ रही हैं. ये खबरें इस बात का संकेत हैं कि आने वाली समय में अंदर ही अंदर परिस्थितियों का सामना करना पड़ सकता है. हाल में महाराष्ट्र के औरंगाबाद के फूलंबरी की महिलाओं का एक वीडियो वायरल हुआ, जिसमें दिखाया गया है कि अपनी बाटरी को भरने के लिए महिलाएँ एक पानी के टैंकर के पीछे कैसे बेतहाशा दौड़ रही हैं. तमिलनाडु के त्रिची से खबर आयी कि पानी को लेकर हुए विवाद में एक युवक की पीट-पीट कर हत्या कर दी गयी. मुकान पानी के एक टैंकर चलाता था. उसे एक परिवार के चार लोगों ने बेकहमी से पीट-पीट कर मार डाला. उसकी मलती महजन इन्हीं थी कि उसने परिवार के लोगों को डेड प्लास्टिक कंटेनर में सार्वजनिक टंकी से पानी भरने से मना किया था और कहा था कि इतना ज्यादा पानी आप ले जाओगे, तो बाकियों को पानी नहीं मिल पायेगा. इन्हीं-सी बात पर उसकी हत्या कर दी गयी. रांची में भी पानी भरने को लेकर हुए विवाद में चाकूबाजी की घटना सामने आयी है. जल विवाद की इस घटना में एक महिला समेत हल लोग घायल हो गये. पानी भरने को लेकर पहला हम-पहले हम के कारण विवाद हुआ और उसी में चाकूबाजी हुई और लोग घायल हो गये. राजस्थान के अलवर जिले के कोरा गांव व घासोली गांवों के लोगों के बीच पानी को लेकर हुई खुन-खुन संघर्ष की खबर है. वहाँ अपरासी को तैनात करना पड़ा. कोल जल के ग्रामीण ने घासोली तक पाइप लाइन डालने का विरोध कर रहे थे. घासोली गांव में जलस्तर नीचे चलने जाने के कारण वहाँ के सभी ट्यूबवेल सूख गये हैं. समझा गहराने पर पड़ोस के कोल गांव में जल विग्राम ने नवी बोरिंग कर घासोली में जल आपूर्ति की व्यवस्था की. इसका

कोल गांव के लोग वियोध कर रहे थे कि पानी निकासी से उनके क्षेत्र में जलस्तर गिर जायेगा. यह विवाद इतना गहरा गया कि दोनों गांवों के लोगों में संघर्ष छिड़ गया और शांति व्यवस्था के लिए आपसी को तैनात करना पड़ा. मम से भी गंभीर जल संकट है. लोगों को कई-कई किलोमीटर का रास्ता तब तक रोक के बाद ही पानी मिल पा रहा है, जिससे संघर्ष की आशंका बढ़ गयी है. इसके संदेन मम गृह विभाग ने जल स्रोतों पर पहरा लगाने के पुलिस अधिकारियों को निर्देश दिये हैं. गृह विभाग ने सभी जिलों के पुलिस अधीक्षकों को निर्देश दिये हैं कि वे कानून व्यवस्था बनाये रखने के लिए जल स्रोतों पर सुरक्षा बलों की तैनाती करें.

गुजरात में भारी जल संकट से जुझ रहा है। वीवीसी की खबर के अनुसार वहां के एक इलाके में तो शादी के मुहूर्त पानी के टैंकर के हिसाब से बच होते हैं। उरर गुजरात के गांव भाखरी में पानी के टैंकर की उपलब्धता के हिसाब से मुहूर्त निकाला जाता है। भाखरी एकमात्र तालाब सूख चुका है। गांव में अगर शादी हो तो 25 किमी दूर से पानी का टैंकर लाना पड़ता है और एक टैंकर पानी चुकोने पर इतने हैं। अगर टैंकर नहीं मिलता, तो शादी इसलिए विवाह टैंकर की उपलब्धता है। भारत-पाकिस्तान की सीमा पर पड़ता है।



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जल संकट से बचने और पर्यावरण संरक्षण के लिए जन भागीदारी बढ़ाने की जरूरत है. नीतियां जनोपयोगी और पर्यावरण के अनुकूल बनें. पानी के लिए धरती का दोहन करने की बजाय सतह के वाटर बॉडी संरक्षित हो.

बारिश नहीं हुई, तो पानी की भारी किल्ल
रहें. केंद्रीय जल आयोग की रिपोर्ट के अ
जलाशयों में सिर्फ 20 फीसदी पानी ही बच
दक्षिण भारत के जलाशयों में पानी तो पि

होनी चाहिए, लेकिन एक भाषा के रूप में, अंग्रेजी के माध्यम से गणित, विज्ञान या समाज विज्ञान को पढ़ाने से बच्चे की समझ कम होगी। यह दस्तावेज भारतीय भाषाओं को ज्यादा मौका देने और उसमें उपलब्ध श्रोत को बेहतर बनाने की कवालत करता है। बहुत सारे बाल कक्षा की सरकारी दस्तावेजों ने शिक्षा में भाषा के सवाल पर गंभीरता और साफगोश से कुछ बातें कही हैं। नयी राष्ट्रीय शिक्षा नीति के इस मसौदे को भाजपा समर्थन या भाजपा विरोध के चरम से देखना जल्द होगा।

विरोधियों की आपत्ति इस प्राप्ति में त्रिभाषा फार्मुले के जंक को लेकर है। इस फार्मुले का मतलब है कि स्कूल में गैर-हिंदीभाषी प्रांतों में बच्चे को प्रदेश की भाषा के अलावा हिंदी और अंग्रेजी पढ़ानी ज़रूरी है। हिंदीभाषी प्रदेश में उसे हिंदी और अंग्रेजी के साथ कोई एक भारतीय भाषा पढ़नी होगी। आपत्ति यह थी कि त्रिभाषा फार्मुले का परिणाम यह होगा कि गैर-हिंदी प्रदेशों में बच्चों को जबनन हिंदी पढ़नी पड़ेगी।

त्रिभाषा फार्मूला कम-से-कम 50 साल पुरानी सरकारी नीति है। यह साट के दशन में भाषाई विवाद को सुलझाने के लिए राजनीतिक-समसमिति से बना था। साल 1968 की पहली राष्ट्रीय शिक्षा नीति में इसका शिमलिका गया था। व्यवहार में इसे बहुत कम राज्यो में लागू किया गया। तमिलनाडु ने इसे सोधे तौर पर खारिज कर दिया था। हिंदीभाषी प्रदेशों ने भी बोरा दरवाजे निकाल लिये, ताकि अपने बच्चों को अन्य भाषाएँ न सिखानी पड़े। संस्कृत शिक्षा के नाम पर औपचारिकता पूर्ण कर दी गयी। लेखन काजज पर त्रिभाषा फार्मूला एक सरकारी नीति के रूप में बरकरार रहा।

आर्य त्रिभाषा फार्मूला व्यवहार में लाया ही नहीं हो रहा, तो उस पर इतनी आपत्ति क्यों? पहली नजर में यह सब मामला लिये कुछ तात्कालिक राजनीतिक पैरेर्यायों का लग सकता है। भाषाओं को तमिलनाडु में घुसने से रोकने का सबसे अच्छा तरीका यही है कि उस पर हिंदीवादी नौति से लेबल चिपका दिया जाय। लेकिन खेल कुछ गहरा है। नयी नीति से त्रिभाषा फार्मूले का जिक्र तक हटवा देना अंग्रेजी के वर्चस्व की औपचारिक स्वीकारोक्ति है। जब तक काजग पर यह फार्मूला रहेगा, तब तक वह हमें देश की बड़भाषी चरित्र की याद दिलावेगा। जिस देश में चारों तरफ इंग्लिश मीडियम स्कूल कुकुरमुते की तरह उह रहे हों, वहाँ त्रिभाषा फार्मूले को बताना अपने आप में एक मजाक है। हमें हमारा शासक वर्ग इस मजाक और अपराध बोध से मुक्ति चाहता है।

सवाल है कि हमारी संस्कृति में गौरव का झंडा उठानेवाली यह 'मजबूत' संस्कार क्यों ही दरखाजों के पक्ष में खड़ी होकर भारतीय भाषाओं को बचाने के लिए अपनो क्यों नहीं आ रही है?

आसत से भी नीचे चला गया है। पानी की कमी की वजह से देश का करीब 42% हिस्सा सूखाग्रस्त है, जो पिछले वर्ष की तुलना में 6% अधिक है। आंध्र प्रदेश, तेलंगाना, महाराष्ट्र, कर्नाटक, गुजरात और राजस्थान सूखे से बुरी तरह प्रभावित हैं। चिंता की बात है कि इस बार मॉनसून की अपेक्षा धीमी है। अभी यह केवल तक ही पहुंचा है। भारत के 30% हिस्से में वर्षा के लिए जमिंदार दक्षिण पश्चिम मॉनसून से वर्ष में से पहुंचेगा और उत्तर पश्चिम भारत और पूर्वी भारत में सामान्य से कम बारिश होनी की अपेक्षा है।

पानी की कमी का बढ़ा कारण जल का अत्यधिक दोहन और जल संरक्षण न करना है। पर्यावरण दिवस के दोहन पर प्रभाव खबर ने रांची में विशेषज्ञों का साथ एक-एक वर्षा किया और एक एंजोड तैयार किया है कि हम और आप इस संकट से कैसे निबट सकते हैं ? पहली बात है कि पर्यावरण संरक्षण और जल संकट से बचने के लिए जल भागीदारी बढ़ाने की जरूरत है। नीतियां जनोपयोगी और पर्यावरण के अनुकूल बनें। पानी के लिए धरती का दोहन करने की बजाय सतह के वाटर बॉडी संरक्षित हो। सिर्फ सरकार के भरोसे पर्यावरण संरक्षण का काम नहीं हो सकता है, इसकी शुरुआत घर से करनी होगी। सिविल सोसाइटी को जल सारकार के साथ मिल कर काम करना होगा। बिहार, राजस्थान और पश्चिम बंगाल में तालाबों का संरक्षण होगा। ब्रेकड जरूरी है। स्कूलों में पर्यावरण संबंधी जानकारी बच्चों को देनी होगी। बच्चों के माध्यम से उनके घरों तक पहुंचना। संकल्प लेना होगा कि न केवल पैदल लगावों, बल्कि बसें, बचावों भी। जल स्रोतों के पुनरुद्धार के लिए कार्य योजना बना कर काम हो। राज्य और केंद्र स्तर पर पर्यावरण संरक्षण के लिए कई नीतियां और कानून हैं। उनका पालन नहीं देगें हो, इसके लिए दबाव बनाना होगा। जनसंख्या बढ़ा पर्यावरण पर दबाव बढ़ता जा रहा है। लिहाजा, इस पानी हमें सोचना होगा। हम सभी को जल से जल का संकल्प लेना होगा, अनूथा यह आपदा का रूप ले लेगा।



आपके पत्र

अलीगढ़ मामले के दोषियों पर हो कठोर कार्रवाई

अलावंग के प्यूसल में एक बालिका को अचानक
आएँ फिर उसकी हत्या की घटना ने मानवता
को शर्मसार किया है। वास्तव में ऐसी घटनाएँ
इंसानियतों के लिए कलंक हैं। समाज को ऐसी
घटनाओं के पीछे छिपे कारणों को जानना बहुत
ज़रूरी है। किसी भी परिवार में बच्चे ही खुशियों
का जरिया होते हैं। उस बालिका के परिवार के
प्रति हमारी संवेदना है, लेकिन इस घटना ने कई
बच्चों को जन्म दिया है। पहला कि बच्चा बड़ों के
सबूबों के आपसी विवादों का निबटारा बच्चों के
माध्यम से न हो। इसके साथ ही पुलिस से भी
इस मामले में लापरवाही बर्ती। अब परत दर
परत इस मामले की जांच होनी चाहिए और दोषी
व्यक्तियों पर कड़ी से कड़ी कार्रवाई होनी चाहिए,
ताकि ऐसी घटनाएँ फिर से न हो सकें।

पंकज शर्मा, इ-मेल से

विवादित बयान की जगह विकास पर हो ध्यान

चुनावी प्रक्रिया खत्म होते ही जुमलेबाजी व विवादित बयानों का सिलसिला थम जाना चाहिए। तत्पश्चात् केंद्रीय कैबिनेट के मंत्रियों के बंटवारे के बाद ही सभा के मंत्रियों को अपने विभागों के जिम्मेदारी सभालते तथा अधिकांश समय जनता के बीच देनी चाहिए, हाल के दिनों में विवादित बयान को लेकर केंद्रीय मंत्री गिरिराज सिंह सुर्खियों में रहे हैं। ईद पर उनके द्वारा दिये विवादित बयान की चर्चा अभी थमी नहीं थी कि फिर से ममता दीदी को किम जाँग के समतुल्य बत कर फिर से विवादों में आ गये हैं। गिरिराज सिंह पहले ही अपने विवादित बयानों के चलते सुर्खियों में रहे हैं। इससे आम जनता के बीच सरकार और मंत्री के प्रति नकारात्मक छवि बनती है, जबकि, विकास करने वाले मंत्री को अपने कामों पर ध्यान देना चाहिए। चुनाव से पहले विकास की बात करने वाले मंत्री को जनता से किये वादों पर खरा उतरना चाहिए।

नितेश कुमार सिन्हा, जानपुल चौक (मोतिहारी)

भारतीय रिजर्व बैंक का सराहनीय कदम

भारतीय रिजर्व बैंक ने आम जनता को बड़ा तोहफा देते हुए फंड ट्रांसफर करने पर सभी तरह के चार्ज को हटाने का फैसला लिया है। रेपो रेट में कमी करने के बाद यह फैसला भी आरबीआइ का मौद्रिक समीक्षा नीति ने लिया है। डिजिटल बैंकिंग को बढ़ावा देने के लिए आरबीआइ ने यह कदम उठाया है। आरबीआइ जल्द ही बैंकों से यह फैसला लागू करने के लिए कहेगा। हाल ही में केंद्रीय बैंक ने आर्टीजीएस का समय बढ़कर शाम के छह बजे तक कर दिया था। अभी ज्यादातर बैंक रिजर्व टाइम ग्रॉस सेलैब्रेट (आर्टीजीएस) और नेशनल इलेक्ट्रॉनिक फंड ट्रांसफर (एनएफटी) करने पर ग्राहकों से चार्ज वसूलते हैं। ऐसे में ग्राहकों के खাতে से अतिरिक्त राशि कटती है। हालांकि अब आरबीआइ के फैसले को बैंकों को मानना पड़ेगा, जिसका फायदा ग्राहकों को मिलेगा।

डॉ अखिलेश कुमार गौरक्षणी, सासाराम (रोहतास)

कार्टून कोना



साभार : कार्टून मूवमेंट

पोस्ट करें : प्रभात खबर, अद्वैता भवन, बोरिंग रोड चौराहा, पटना, **मेल करें :** patna@prabhatkhabar.in

ध्यान रखें, इ-मेल संक्षिप्त व हिंदी में हो. लिपि रोमन भी हो सकती है. **फैक्स करें**: 0612-2540610 पर