

# Mukesh ka time aa gaya

Lutyens’ Delhi, the Khan Market gang and people like us need to shape up or ship out



## OUT OF THE BLUE

ANJALI BHARGAVA

I’m not a Hollywood or Bollywood enthusiast but one of the few and best films I have seen in the last few years is Zoya Akhtar’s *Gully Boy*. The words of the theme song of the film were echoed to me by my cook Mukesh the other day post the 2019 election results. He said, “*Hamara time aa gaya*.”

Mukesh, in his early 30s, is a die-hard Modi fan. His family of 100-odd — all of who live in and around Dehradun — swear by him and the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), although they have been BJP supporters well before Modi burst into the scene. He’s very patriotic — often his WhatsApp display picture is the Indian flag. While maintaining a strict protocol that’s restricted to instructions on food, ingredients and the like, twice a year, he sends me enthusiastic messages for August 15 and January 26. A few days after demonetisation, I asked him how he was coping. He’d had to wait in queues for weeks to withdraw cash but he’d be willing to do it again as he felt this was a move that favoured people like him. While he clarified that he didn’t wish people like me badly, he said there were many wealthy people who didn’t make their money honestly and the PM had tried to check that.

I explained a few months later that the move that thrilled him may not have hit its target and caused more disruption than was anticipated. He heard me out but remained firm: He would be quite happy to go through it all again if need be. He felt it was well-intentioned. Displaying the famed Indian resilience, he pointed out to me that everything cannot work the first time it’s attempted. I asked him if he was aware of the numerous lynchings and unwarranted deaths that have happened in the name of the sacred cow. Yes, he’d heard about a few killings. He blamed the emergence of the “goonda” element among the unemployed exacerbated by the support such elements find through various social media. He didn’t think any specific group was to blame but was puzzled on why the government had condoned these and mildly disappointed with its lack of action.

Pushing my point a bit further, I asked whether the Muslims — there’s a large Muslim population near his house — he knew were feeling particularly persecuted, threatened or insecure in some way. He said that they were, still did and have been feeling all this for the last 70 years ever since India’s independence. He didn’t think the last five years stood out in any manner. “They complain but co-exist,” he added. Moreover, he argued that he’s tired of being apologetic about his own religion. He’s a proud Hindu and there’s no reason why he shouldn’t say it. I asked at another point whether he knew that some institutions of the government had been compromised in some way to cater to the political agenda of the ruling coalition. That four Supreme Court judges had revolted against the interference with the affairs of the highest judicial body of the country. Was he aware that various pillars of the Indian democratic system had been under the threat of subversion? He had heard of some controversy involving the judges but he pleaded ignorance of the rest, arguing that these were matters for “people like me”. He didn’t have the luxury of

worrying about such subjects. He, in turn, pointed out two or three things that had helped improve his and his family’s lot. His wider family in the hilly regions of Kumaon had benefitted from the gas connections that had been handed out. Road access has improved all around, bringing untold benefits to them. Education remained a no-go but health facilities were better. Open defecation had been checked if not eradicated. People who still went out in the open had started feeling “sheepish” about it. Even the need to keep their surroundings cleaner had begun to dawn in his view. When I asked him why he thought the Congress got the drubbing it did, his message was straight forward: “*Hamara time aa gaya*.” In other words, this genie is out of the bottle. Lutyens’ Delhi, the Khan Market gang and people like us have to wake up, smell the latest coffee brew, shape up or ship out. To quote General Eric Shinseki, a former US chief of army staff: “If you don’t like change, you’re going to like irrelevance even less”. **PS:** This Mukesh’s second name is Bhandari, in case you are still wondering...

# Skies clear up for Tata’s airlines business

With Jet Airways out of the picture, the airline is finally ready for take off with a new international flight plan

SURAJEET DAS GUPTA

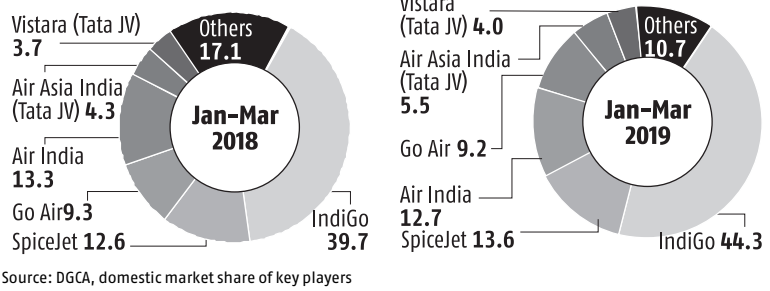
Five years into its aviation journey, the Tata group’s joint ventures are still far from being counted as major players in the market. Vistara and AirAsia India together have cobbled together just 9.5 per cent share of the domestic skies in the first quarter of this calendar year. This was lower than low-cost carrier SpiceJet’s 13.5 per cent, even though it was flying fewer aircraft— 13 of its Max planes were grounded following a safety scare— and a whisker ahead of Go Air’s 8.9 per cent. Aviation analysts blame this lacklust-



re performance on both airlines’ excessively cautious expansion plans, questionable strategies — Air Asia initially decided not to fly from Delhi and Mumbai, the country’s largest markets — and, of course, the adverse impact of controversies that buffeted the airlines. So despite a booming double digit passenger growth year-on-year, Vistara, the 51-49 joint venture with Singapore Airlines (SIA), added only 14 planes over the past five years, taking its fleet to 23. In contrast, IndiGo, the largest airline, added a staggering 123 new planes to its fleet during the period. Two quick changes at the top in AirAsia India (in which Tatas have only recently acquired a majority 51 per cent stake), added to the turbulence. The airlines’ first CEO Mittu Chandilya left in a huff and his successor Amar Abrol went back to AirAsia group headquarters in



## SPREADING WINGS



quick succession. Then, senior executives, including those from the Tatas, were summoned by the Central Bureau of Investigation for allegations of trying to influence government to change norms for international flying. All this definitely slowed growth, but a new phase could be opening up for the airlines aided by the demise of Jet Airways which has left a void in the market. Both Vistara and AirAsia India, along

with their partners, are quietly putting together an aggressive plan to become a formidable force in the skies. At the core of this new push is their plan to go international this financial year. Vistara recently received permission to fly abroad after a delay of over a year due to the investigation in the alleged bribing and lobbying charges against AirAsia India. And AirAsia India is expecting to join the party (it asked

for permission in January) so that it can fly abroad from September this year. To back their plans, the Tatas, according to sources, have lined up ₹4,500 crore for the two airlines. If everything goes to plan, they would be the only player in India to straddle both the low-cost carrier as well as the full-scale service space in the international arena among private players. Aviation analysts expect the two joint ventures to double their fleet to around 80 (Centre for Asia-Pacific Aviation has projected that Vistara would have a fleet of 32 but it has excluded the six planes leased from Jet recently) by April next year. That would bring them closer to SpiceJet (which has crossed 100 planes) and substantially bridge the gap with ailing Air India (109 planes). They also project that in the next two years, the two collectively would capture around 15 per cent of the domestic airlines market (from 10.9 per cent in April). AirAsia India has already pulled the joystick. It plans to double their fleet from 21 to 40 aircraft by April next year. Sanjay Kumar, chief operating officer of the airlines, says, “We are targeting to get a market share of 8-9 per cent in the domestic market in the next two years. We will hopefully also double the number of flights per day by April. And will expand from 19 cities to 21-22.” The airlines are also for the first time focusing on corporate clients, and so flight timings have been changed for key routes like Delhi to Mumbai so that they have a morning and evening option. On the international route, Kumar says, about 5 per cent of their capacity would be deployed in the first year, and gradually increased to 40 per cent in five years. That would bring them in direct competition with IndiGo as well as SpiceJet and even their own partner company AirAsia as they would be flying on the same routes — Kuala Lumpur, Bangkok, Singapore followed by CIS countries as well as China. The other joint venture Vistara will start with A 320 neos flying to short-haul destinations. Yet long-haul destinations are equally important for the airline. A Vistara spokesperson points out: “As we add more aircraft starting next year, such as the Airbus A 321 neo and Boeing B787 -9, we will further expand on medium- and long-haul routes.” With Jet out of the picture, Vistara is well placed to fill in the void in the European market as Air India is embroiled in its own financial problems and therefore not looking at expansion. And if it decides to fly long-haul to the US, it would only have Air India to contend with. The strategy sits well with SIA’s ambition to have a larger share of the Indian market as well. Despite Singapore being the second largest market for international passengers (77 per cent) to and from India, SIA is not even among the top 10 airlines in terms of passenger market share in the country. That is because West Asia accounts for over 45 per cent of international passengers from and to India and SIA has no share in this market. With Vistara, it will get an entry into this lucrative market and compete with the likes of Emirates, Etihad and Qatar Airways. Also, seats between India and Singapore have already been exhausted from both sides, impacting growth despite a growing demand. But once more seats are opened, SIA would be able to grab a part of this from both sides. Then, there is the trump card in Air India. With a new government in place, the terms for buying the state-owned carrier are looking more favorable and many analysts say that the Tatas might put in a bid. Given Air India’s vast reach and size, it could turn out to be a game winner for the Tatas.

## ON THE JOB Comparing PLFS and CPHS estimates



MAHESH VYAS

The government finally released the Annual Report of the Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS) 2017-18 and the Quarterly Bulletin PLFS. The caveat emphasised is that the estimates therein presented in these are not strictly comparable with those obtained by NSSO’s Employment and Unemployment Surveys (EUS) conducted earlier. The differences between the two surveys, as presented in the report, do not make a sufficiently strong case to suggest comparisons would be misleading. And, the report itself makes plenty of comparisons. First, the labour force participation rate (LPR) fell below 50 per cent for the first time. At 49.8 per cent for all people over 14 years of age, it marks a sharp fall from the 64 per cent level in 2004-05. Male labour participation rate fell from 84 per cent to 76 per cent and from 43 per cent to 23 per cent for females. The reference period for classifying a person as part of the labour market above is a year. This is the Usual Status (ps+ss), which is a relaxed definition. If the reference period is reduced to a week, called the Current Weekly Status (CWS), the LPR drops to 48 per cent; 75 per cent for men and 21 per cent for women. LPR is the proportion of the adult population that offers itself for employment. What the official data are telling us is that an increasing proportion of people appar-

ently do not want to work. This column has chronicled the fall in LPR since demonetisation in November 2016. We have used CMIE’s Consumer Pyramids Household Survey (CPHS) to demonstrate this fall. This is a good time to compare CPHS estimates with PLFS estimates although there are minor differences in definitions. The closest comparison can be of the CWS estimates of PLFS with the “Greater” measures of unemployment from CPHS. We explain the concept of “Greater” below. CPHS considers only those people to be unemployed who actively seek employment and still do not get employment. Merely being available for work, but not actively seeking work, is not a sufficient condition to be considered unemployed in the CPHS definition of unemployed. However, those who are available for work (called “willing to work” in the CPHS parlance) but are not actively looking for employment is also measured separately by CPHS. If we add the unemployed who are actively looking for employment to those who are willing to work but not actively looking for employment we get what CPHS calls the “Greater Unemployed”. This definition is comparable to the PLFS’s definition of the unemployed. Finally, to make appropriate comparisons, we need a matching time reference. PLFS 2017-18 refers to the period July 2017 through June 2018 when the survey was carried out. According to CPHS, the comparable labour participation rate during July 2017-June 2018 was 44.5 per cent (48 per cent PLFS); 73 per cent for men (75 per cent PLFS) and 12.9 per cent for women (21 per cent PLFS). We believe that female labour participation is much lower than reflected in the PLFS. The popular unemployment rate quoted from the PLFS is 6.1 per cent. This is

based on the highly relaxed Usual Status definition. The CWS definition of the PLFS shows the unemployment rate to be much higher at 8.7 per cent. Rural unemployment rate was 8.4 per cent and urban unemployment rate was 9.5 per cent. These are very high unemployment rates by any standard. The comparable CPHS rates were a Greater unemployment rate of 9.1 per cent; rural at 8.6 per cent and urban at 10 per cent. According to the Quarterly Bulletin, the urban unemployment rate during April-June 2018 was 9.7 per cent. The comparable estimate from CPHS places this at 9.1 per cent. In the next quarter, the estimates from PLFS and CMIE are 9.6 per cent and 9.5 per cent, respectively. And in the October-December 2018 quarter, the estimates from PLFS and CPHS are 9.7 per cent and 10.3 per cent, respectively. These estimates are close. CPHS estimates are likely to be more robust than the PLFS estimates because CPHS uses a much larger sample. PLFS has a sample size of just a shade less than 45,000 households in a quarter. The CPHS has a sample of about 130,000 households in a quarter. The PLFS is a rich source of data on employment characteristics in India. It includes detailed tabulations on employment by status, industry, occupation, conditions of employment, earnings, hours worked, etc. We look forward to its regular annual release and also to the quarterly releases on the unemployment rate in urban India. CPHS, it appears, will continue to provide such indicators with much greater speed and based on a much larger sample. Users of employment/unemployment statistics can enjoy the benefits of — initially the speed of private enterprise and then, the stamp of official statistics with a hopefully small time lag. Disclosure: The author is the MD& CEO of CMIE

## LETTERS

### You can do it, Mr Modi



This refers to “Tentative trust in mantra of *sabka vishwas*” by Radhika Ramaseshan (June 3). If Prime Minister Narendra Modi (*pictured*) implements his advice to the newly elected members of the Parliament about winning the trust of all including the minorities, he will be heralded as the most adorable prime minister of India. However, the task itself faces many hurdles. Modi has to first establish that he is sincere about this call — he reacted very late on anti-minority incidents like cow vigilantism and attacks on people over the alleged consumption of beef during Modi’s first tenure. Second, he has to persuade the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh to change its stance on sensitive and emotional issues such as removal of Article 370 and 35A, the construction of a Ram temple in Ayodhya. The solutions should be achieved through consensus and not simply by the rule of majority. Third, Modi should increase the representation of the minorities in his party -- there is only one Muslim minister from the National Democratic Alliance so far. Four, the government should act firmly as soon as any act of violence against minority takes place. Five, he should hold elections in Jammu and Kashmir and partner with a Muslim party there while contesting elections. There, he should also offer

.an olive branch to the aggrieved while dealing with the terrorists with a firm hand. Last and not the least, Modi should befriend media so that it understands him better and avoids exaggerating every any misdemeanour towards the minority by his party persons. Among today’s leaders, Modi alone has the capacity to bring and hold all sections of the society together. If he succeeds, India will become the most powerful and prosperous nation in the world. **YG Chouksey** Pune

### Wait and think

Before taking any drastic step, Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar (*pictured*) should weigh the pros and cons of his action. He has to ask himself whether he can go back to Lalu Prasad Yadav’s Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD) to recreate the “bonhomie” that his Janata Dal

(United) shared with the RJD in 2015. If not, the other option is to dissolve the Assembly and face a mid-term poll. What is the guarantee that he will be able to single-handedly form the government in the state? A third choice is to join either the mahagathabandhan or the United Progressive Alliance and wait for the 2024 general elections to see whether his dreams can become a reality. **Arun Malankar** Mumbai

### Tread cautiously

The Centre has sought to assuage the concerns of the people of Tamil Nadu over the Draft National Education Policy’s recommendation on the three-language formula and mandatory Hindi teaching in schools by assuring that the policy will be implemented only after a public hearing. All Opposition parties in Tamil Nadu have taken up the cudgels against the recommendations. To add fuel to the fire, Karnataka Chief Minister H D Kumaraswamy has joined the chorus against teaching Hindi in non-Hindi speaking states. The Centre would do well to tread cautiously on this sensitive issue. **N J Ravi Chander** Bengaluru

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## CHINESE WHISPERS

### Impersonating spokespersons

After the Lok Sabha results, the Congress has stopped sending its spokesperson to debates on television news channels. The Trinamool Congress is beset with a different kind of problem. It finds that news channels invite people not associated with the party to present views on behalf of the party. On Monday, the Trinamool said it had only “six approved national spokespersons” — Derek O’Brien, Sudip Bandyopadhyay, Saugata Roy, Kakoli Ghosh Dasdidar, Mahua Moitra and Dinesh Trivedi. “We have noticed that some channels are inviting guests on shows and referring to them as Trinamool supporters when they are not authorised to speak on behalf of the party to the national media,” said O’Brien. He added: “If you still choose to invite any other person on the show other than an approved spokesperson, please do not call them Trinamool supporters, or use TMC, Trinamool, AITC or any other term related to the party to describe the panellist”.

### ‘Transfer-posting industry’



The Kamal Nath (*pictured*)-led Congress government in Madhya Pradesh has been transferring officials with unfailing regularity. So much so that members of the opposition Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) have branded his government a thriving “transfer-posting industry”. In about 165 days that it has been in office, the Congress establishment has transferred its IAS and IPS officers more than 450 times. Some of these officers have been transferred four times in the period. If the lower rungs of the bureaucracy are included, the number of transfers would cross 15,000. The BJP had made such frequent transfers an issue during the just concluded Lok Sabha polls. Time and again, Prime Minister Narendra Modi had referred to the “transfer industry” in Madhya Pradesh and linked it to the recovery of ₹281 crore during raids carried out by the income tax department.

### A migratory bird

In 2009, the Communist Party of India (Marxist) expelled A P Abdullahkuty from the party for praising Narendra Modi, who was then Gujarat chief minister. Abdullahkuty then joined the Congress. On Monday, the Congress expelled Abdullahkuty from the party days after he praised Modi for the Bharatiya Janata Party’s massive Lok Sabha win. In a Facebook post, Abdullahkuty said the NDA’s victory was an acceptance of Modi’s development agenda and the secret of his success was that he had adopted Gandhian values. Kerala Pradesh Congress Committee President Mullapally Ramachandran said the Congress party had sought an explanation from Abdullahkuty for praising Modi and got a “mocking reply”. Abdullahkuty was making “insulting” remarks against senior Congress leaders through the media, thus violating party rules. Criticising Abdullahkuty, the Congress party mouthpiece *Veekshanam* said, “Like a migratory bird, Abdullahkuty came to Congress from CPI(M) riding on hopes of being in power. He is pinning his hopes on the saffron party to migrate there.”



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## A new high

Stock markets live on hope

Given the flurry of bad news over the weekend, there was little reason for the stock markets to rally the way they did on Monday. The Sensex closed above the 40,000-point mark for the first time and the Nifty went past 12,000, also for the first time. The March quarter GDP data was weak, suggesting an overall slowdown; auto sales for May continued to be poor and corporate earnings for the fourth quarter of 2018-19 were disappointing. India Inc's leaders are also almost unanimous in their view that consumption, the only engine fuelling the economy, is slowing. Yet, the BSE Sensex is now trading at a two-decade- high price-earnings multiple of 29 times trailing earnings, as foreign portfolio investors (FPIs) keep faith in Indian markets. After being net sellers to the tune of ₹34,000 crore in 2018, FPIs have brought in ₹78,000 crore so far in 2019, fuelling the rally.

The change in stance began in February when FPIs started pumping in dollars, with March 2019 being the second-highest net investment in the history of the Indian markets. The reason for their change in stance was the US Federal Reserve calling it the end of a rising interest rate cycle. As a result, US bond yields have declined from a decade-high of 3.24 per cent in November 2018 to 2.12 per cent now, which is nearly a five-year low. A lower bond yield and, by corollary, lower interest rates make equities attractive compared to fixed-income assets.

With US bonds no longer being a high-yield safe haven and the Fed's benign rate outlook, the risk-on trade took shape, and India was one of the highest beneficiaries of the flows. Along with the dropping yields in the US, the Indian 10-year benchmark yield too has fallen from its September high of 8.18 per cent to under 7 per cent on Monday. Brent crude oil prices are also down 14 per cent since mid-May, which brightens prospects for Indian companies as it will translate into lower input costs for Indian manufacturers and reduce the current account deficit for the country as a whole. From FPIs' perspective, India is an attractive market, which still promises growth despite the weak Q4 GDP. Moreover, several global markets have been roiled by the US-China trade war but India is relatively insulated. Global brokerages, which had reduced the extent of their overweight position on India in 2018, have also increased it, attracting more money.

India's valuation may be rich compared with its historical multiples, but the index earnings yield of around 3 per cent is still higher than US bond yields, providing enough incentive for foreign investors to make additional bets on Dalal Street. Also, periods of overvaluation supported by liquidity are not new to the Indian stock markets. Besides the fund flow, there are also other expectations built into the recent bull run. On an immediate basis, the market is factoring in at least a 25 basis point rate cut, to be a given at the monetary policy committee meeting this week. The market is also expecting some stimulus and higher spending from Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman's Union Budget on July 5, which could revive demand and growth. A disappointment on any front from foreign flows, crude oil, demand conditions, or government policy could mean a nasty surprise for investors, as current valuations appear unsustainable.

## Musk's mega bet

Starlink throws up many questions about use of space

SpaceX's Starlink project has kicked up a controversy even though it is still in the early pilot stage. The concept of delivering Internet services via saturation satellite coverage is innovative, and could positively disrupt global data transfer capacity and coverage. But it also will cause lots of light and radio pollution and may pose a serious potential hazard in terms of space debris. Astronomers claim that Starlink may render astronomical equipment worth billions useless, or at the least, severely impair the efficiency of both visual telescopes and radio telescopes. The scale of Starlink is typical of SpaceX founder-CEO Elon Musk's ambitious thinking. Starlink intends to put nearly 12,000 satellites into space, creating a grid to deliver high-speed internet everywhere. The project will cost \$10 billion and it will have the capacity to handle around 50 per cent of all global backhaul traffic, and 10 per cent of local high-density Internet traffic.

SpaceX launched the first 60 satellites on May 23. Reports indicate that all these 225-kg satellites have deployed solar panels, and linked to ground communications. Astronomers have complained that the new satellites are very bright, with many visible to the naked eye even in daylight. These bright, moving objects leave large streaks in the long-exposure pictures astronomers must take, thus causing severe disruption. Musk has acknowledged the issue and said that SpaceX will redesign the next series of satellites to reduce the albedo (the amount of light reflected off an object). However, as more of these new satellites go up, they will inevitably interfere with telescopes.

What is more, interference will also occur across the invisible parts of the electromagnetic spectrum. Starlink will broadcast radio signals that make it harder for radio telescopes to function. One solution is relocating telescopes into space. But replacing all terrestrial instruments would be a tall task. The other issue is a traffic jam with possibly catastrophic consequences. There are approximately 5,500 satellites orbiting the Earth and Starlink will triple that number. There could be a "knock-on" effect if any satellite malfunctions, or suffers a meteor hit, and falls out of orbit.

Both these risks must be taken seriously. Technological advancement should not come about at the cost of crippling huge investments in blue skies research, which is ultimately foundational for future technology. The potential for dangerous space debris is also exponentially increased by Starlink. Moreover, OneWeb, Telesat and Amazon have similar plans to provide Internet via satellite, which means the traffic jam will surely increase. Starlink presents an interesting case study. On the one hand, it and similar projects could trigger a jump in global data transfer capacity, with the positive implications of lower costs and better access for all. But on the other hand, it might seriously impede astronomical research and could potentially lead to dangerous accidents. There are rules for putting satellites into space under the Outer Space Treaty but there isn't any international system for real enforcement, or imposing penalties. A project like Starlink should trigger a review of the processes. This is urgent since competitors will undoubtedly follow suit. How policymakers around the world respond to this project will help shape the way space is utilised.

ILLUSTRATION: BINAY SINHA



## After neoliberalism

Progressive capitalism represents the best chance we have of escaping our current economic and political malaise

What kind of economic system is most conducive to human wellbeing? That question has come to define the current era, because, after 40 years of neoliberalism in the United States and other advanced economies, we know what doesn't work.

The neoliberal experiment — lower taxes on the rich, deregulation of labour and product markets, financialisation, and globalisation — has been a spectacular failure. Growth is lower than it was in the quarter-century after World War II, and most of it has accrued to the very top of the income scale. After decades of stagnant or even falling incomes for those below them, neoliberalism must be pronounced dead and buried.

Vying to succeed it are at least three major political alternatives: far-right nationalism, center-left reformism, and the progressive left (with the center-right representing the neoliberal failure). And yet, with the exception of the progressive left, these alternatives remain beholden to some form of the ideology that has (or should have) expired.

The center-left, for example, represents neoliberalism with a human face. Its goal is to bring the policies of former US President Bill Clinton and former British Prime Minister Tony Blair into the twenty-first century, making only slight revisions to the prevailing modes of financialisation and globalisation. Meanwhile, the nationalist right disowns globalisation, blaming migrants and foreigners for all of today's problems. Yet as Donald Trump's presidency has shown, it is no less committed — at least in its American variant — to tax cuts for the rich, deregulation, and shrinking or eliminating social programmes.



JOSEPH E STIGLITZ

By contrast, the third camp advocates what I call progressive capitalism, which prescribes a radically different economic agenda, based on four priorities. The first is to restore the balance between markets, the state, and civil society. Slow economic growth, rising inequality, financial instability, and environmental degradation are problems born of the market, and thus cannot and will not be overcome by the market on its own. Governments have a duty to limit and shape markets through environmental, health, occupational-safety, and other types of regulation. It is also the government's job to do what the market cannot or will not do, like actively investing in basic research, technology, education, and the health of its constituents.

The second priority is to recognise that the "wealth of nations" is the result of scientific inquiry — learning about the world around us — and social organisation that allows large groups of people to work together for the common good. Markets still have a crucial role to play in facilitating social cooperation, but they serve this purpose only if they are governed by the rule of law and subject to democratic checks. Otherwise, individuals can get rich

by exploiting others, extracting wealth through rent-seeking rather than creating wealth through genuine ingenuity. Many of today's wealthy took the exploitation route to get where they are. They have been well served by Trump's policies, which have encouraged rent-seeking while destroying the underlying sources of wealth creation. Progressive capitalism seeks to do precisely the opposite.

This brings us to the third priority: Addressing the growing problem of concentrated market power. By

## Unanswered questions about global finance

With the 14th G20 Summit scheduled in Osaka later this month, it is time to take stock of what the G20 itself saw as one of the ultimate causes of the 2008 Global Financial Crisis (GFC), namely the failure of financial regulation.

Financial regulatory reform, like most G20 initiatives, was attempted through advisories to multilateral institutions, such as the Basel Committee on Bank Supervision (BCBS) for commercial banks, and the International Organisation of Securities Commissions (IOSCO) for non-banks and shadow banking. Monitoring of these reforms is being done by the G20 through the restructured Financial Stability Board (FSB). These reforms were supplemented by national initiatives, such as the Dodd Frank Act in the US, the Vickers Commission in the UK, and the Liikanen Report of the European Union.

The reforms for commercial banking to make the regulatory structure less pro-cyclical, known as Basel III, have been completed and their phase-in is in progress. The source of the last crisis, however, lay not in commercial banking, but shadow banking. While the FSB appears sanguine that the exposure of commercial banks to shadow banking has been contained, and the latter is now being monitored, it remains outside the regulatory umbrella.

With commercial banking reined in through Basel III, shadow banks have seized this regulatory arbitrage to grow faster. They no doubt have an inclusive aspect, penetrating markets that commercial banks cannot reach, shadow banking nevertheless remains the most innovative and riskiest component of the financial system. New financial technologies only magnify complexity and risk.

While shadow banking is still a small segment of financial systems in EMDEs, its fastest growth since the crisis is not in advanced economies but in China. It is only a matter of time that its role in EMDEs grows. Can shadow banking be regulated? Are regulators taking adequate steps to educate and protect consumers of complex opaque products emanating in shadow banking?

At the outset of the crisis, the Alan Greenspan view that central banks cannot, and should, not call asset bubbles was challenged. There was a sense that central banks would wipe the dust off their original raison d'être

namely financial stability. This challenge appears to have petered out, with monetary policy instruments considered too blunt, the mantle falling instead on macroprudential policies. Are these reining in asset bubbles? And is it still the view that asset bubbles are too difficult to call?

It is now recognised that the financial sector is a public utility. Some financial institutions are too big to be allowed to fail and bring down the financial system. But in the reconstruction that followed, big banks have become bigger. Systemically important financial institutions (SIFIs) are now better monitored by regulators, are required to hold more capital and draft "living wills" with a resolution framework in the event of their demise. Have these measures abated the threat of major tax-funded bailouts?

Excessive leverage underlies all financial crises, and the GFC was no exception. While financial sector debt has shrunk, the reforms have been unable to rein in the pre-crisis growth in leverage because most of

the growth since has been in the public sector. Non-financial corporates in both advanced economies and EMDEs also took advantage of low rates to lever up. The overall debt/GDP ratio remains virtually the same. The underlying liquidity driving this leverage prior to the crisis was global imbalances. After the crisis, it is central banks. What does this mean for financial stability and monetary policy, going forward, especially when rates rise?

There is apprehension that as memory of the crisis recedes, and animal spirits return, regulatory reforms are being gradually rolled back, as in the post Great Depression era. No matter how comprehensive the reforms, nobody is making the case that there will be no more financial crises. In a globalised world, domestic and regional crises can be triggered simply by policy spillovers, and despite good macroeconomic management.

Purely domestic financial crises can be handled through fiscal and monetary policies. But when crises spill over regionally or globally, where a country cannot fund its external liabilities, either as a result of a sudden shock, or unsustainable external debt, the robustness of the safety nets of the International Financial Architecture (IFA) will be tested.

These safety nets have expanded dramatically in



ALOK SHEEL

exploiting information advantages, buying up potential competitors, and creating entry barriers, dominant firms are able to engage in large-scale rent-seeking to the detriment of everyone else. The rise in corporate market power, combined with the decline in workers' bargaining power, goes a long way toward explaining why inequality is so high and growth so tepid. Unless government takes a more active role than neoliberalism prescribes, these problems will likely become much worse, owing to advances in robotisation and artificial intelligence.

The fourth key item on the progressive agenda is to sever the link between economic power and political influence. Economic power and political influence are mutually reinforcing and self-perpetuating, especially where, as in the US, wealthy individuals and corporations may spend without limit in elections. As the US moves ever closer to a fundamentally undemocratic system of "one dollar, one vote," the system of checks and balances so necessary for democracy likely cannot hold: Nothing will be able to constrain the power of the wealthy. This is not just a moral and political problem: Economies with less inequality actually perform better. Progressive-capitalist reforms thus have to begin by curtailing the influence of money in politics and reducing wealth inequality.

There is no magic bullet that can reverse the damage done by decades of neoliberalism. But a comprehensive agenda along the lines sketched above absolutely can. Much will depend on whether reformers are as resolute in combating problems like excessive market power and inequality as the private sector is in creating them.

A comprehensive agenda must focus on education, research, and the other true sources of wealth. It must protect the environment and fight climate change with the same vigilance as the Green New Dealers in the US and Extinction Rebellion in the United Kingdom. And it must provide public programmes to ensure that no citizen is denied the basic requisites of a decent life. These include economic security, access to work and a living wage, health care and adequate housing, a secure retirement, and a quality education for one's children.

This agenda is eminently affordable; in fact, we cannot afford not to enact it. The alternatives offered by nationalists and neoliberals would guarantee more stagnation, inequality, environmental degradation, and political acrimony, potentially leading to outcomes we do not even want to imagine.

Progressive capitalism is not an oxymoron. Rather, it is the most viable and vibrant alternative to an ideology that has clearly failed. As such, it represents the best chance we have of escaping our current economic and political malaise.

*The writer, Professor at Columbia University, is the co-winner of the 2001 Nobel Memorial Prize, former chairman of the President's Council of Economic Advisers, and former Chief Economist of the World Bank. His most recent book is People, Power, and Profits: Capitalism for an Age of Discontent. ©2019 Project Syndicate.*

## Rebuilding the reform consensus



### BOOK REVIEW

AVINASH M TRIPATHI

India is among the world's fastest growing economies. Yet, many economic challenges remain. Corporate investment and exports — twin engines that typically propel growth in most economies — are sputtering. The labour market is tepid. Jobs are scarce. Tax buoyancy has failed to materialise. Banks are undercapitalised. Increasingly, Non Banking Finance Companies (NBFCs) have started showing signs of stress. And the debt-fuelled consumption binge has come to an end.

How did we reach this "growth without

story"? The question is both important and urgent. To paraphrase Nobel Laureate Paul Romer, once one starts thinking about these questions, it is difficult to think about anything else. Puja Mehra's *The Lost Decade* chronicles the policy choices that provide a coherent explanation of some of these puzzles.

The first interesting thing about the book is its periodisation. There is a strong temptation to see economic outcomes solely through the lens of electoral politics. The author admits that she was asked initially to write a book on the economic performance of the National Democratic Alliance (NDA) government, starting from the swearing-in of Narendra Modi in 2014. This temptation should be resisted. Given the institutional continuity in key ministries, economic cycle rarely coincides so neatly with the electoral cycle.

By taking a longer horizon like a decade as the unit of study, and by subdividing

this decade into four sub-periods — which roughly coincide with the change of guard at the finance ministry — this book has captured the policy regime switches more cogently.

The periodisation pays off not only in explaining the growth dynamics, but also in the discussion of the policy-making process. A discussion of nearly every major policy decision in the last decade follows. Without being exhaustive, the list of topics discussed includes management of the global financial crisis and the taper tantrum, fiscal stimulus, food inflation, policy paralysis during United Progressive Alliance (UPA) regime, Goods and Services Tax (GST) and the inflation targeting monetary framework, twin balance sheet crisis and last but not the least, demonetisation.

In each case, the discussion is at once panoramic and detailed. Complex issues are elucidated. For example, the way

issues surrounding GST are summarised is a treat to read. In any case, the book is a ready reckoner of sorts for students of contemporary economic history.

Development economists have an idea called path dependence. It explains how minor chance events end up having a disproportionately large impact on macro outcomes. For want of a nail, the kingdom is lost. Ms Mehra argues, convincingly in my view, that similar chance events — such as the bypass surgery of the then Prime Minister Manmohan Singh — had a large impact on the policy choices during the second UPA government. It affected the ongoing V-shaped economic recovery and ultimately proved to be the undoing of the UPA regime. This is a provocative and sharp hypothesis which future historians would like to revisit and debate.

Some observations go beyond the cut and dried world of economics textbooks. My favourite anecdote is about the erstwhile Planning Commission. When Prime Minister Narendra Modi decided to dismantle this relic of the planning era, he held a meeting with the chief ministers to

discuss the role of the institution and the possible alternatives.

One would have assumed that much of the discussion would revolve around the relevance of planning in a liberalised economy. Chief ministers would discuss pros and cons of the institutions such as the Planning Commission and Finance Commission for distributing resources in a federal polity. No such luck. In reality, the most pressing complaint chief ministers made to the prime minister concerned the seating arrangement in Planning Commission meetings! Apparently, the seating arrangement had placed non-elected officials centre stage, which chief ministers, being elected representatives, thoroughly resented!

Ms Mehra notes: "When a big institution cracks, it doesn't crack on its big failures. It cracks on bruised egos and status symbols." An interesting, yet understudied insight. Perhaps the time is ripe for some behavioural economist to write a treatise on the role of such ego management devices in institution-building. *The Lost Decade* tells a story that is riv-

eting and worrisome in equal measures. It is well documented, analytical and interspersed with delightful nuggets. At the same time, the thrust of the book is that the economic reforms that steered the Indian economy towards the growth turnpike have run their course. As the author notes, "We need to rebuild the consensus for a steady stream of reforms." Incrementalism is not sufficient and there is no time to lose.

One hopes this book not only generates debate about the issues it discusses but also leads to the ideation about future policies. Only then could a sequel to this book be written with a more hopeful title. Millions of young men and women entering the labour market each year deserve as much.

*The reviewer is associate research fellow (economics) at Takshashila Institution. Views are personal*

### THE LOST DECADE (2008-2018)

Puja Mehra

Penguin Random House, 0599, 340 pages.



## India needs education, not Hindi chauvenism

Even progressive proposals of the education policy got eclipsed by the proposal to impose Hindi in non-Hindi speaking states

IT IS JUST AS WELL that the government has junked a proposal in the K Kasturirangan education panel's report—the official line is that this was a 'draft', not the final policy—that suggested reviving the three-language formula with a focus on mandatory Hindi in non-Hindi-speaking states. Protests, spearheaded by Tamil Nadu, against the “imposition of Hindi”, could have quickly spiralled into the kind of radical anti-Hindi agitation that rocked Tamil Nadu intermittently between the late 1930s to 1986 after the education policy first proposed this; not surprising then that two Tamil ministers in the government—Nirmala Sitharaman and S Jaisankar—tweeted on this being just a proposal on Monday, not the policy when there was a furore over the proposal. Indeed, given the many challenges India's education sector faces, it is not clear how this proposal even came into play. What makes this even more unfortunate is that, while the first Narendra Modi-government spoke of sweeping higher-education reforms—including scrapping UGC and AICTE—this hasn't really got translated into action.

That said, the Kasturirangan panel has some interesting suggestions, though it is not clear that all of them are either practical or even implementable. Given the perennial problem relating to both rampant cheating in some school boards, as well as the uneven standards, asking the National Testing Agency to conduct separate all-India examinations for entrance to universities is a good idea; whether the political class will allow this to happen is open to question. Related to this, allowing students to give their secondary examinations in phases rather than in one shot—Chemistry and Physics in one semester, Maths in the other—also gives a much-desired flexibility; as does allowing students multiple entry and exit points in their undergraduate education. The idea of 'teaching' universities being distinct from 'R&D' ones is a very good idea, but quite unrealistic in a shortage situation. When India has an acute shortage of quality universities, which politician will allow an existing university to scale back the number of students it admits on grounds of wanting to focus exclusively on research? Also, if a university is going to want to reduce the intake of students, will the government-grant system still provide it the same level of funding? When, for instance, the last Modi government was talking of scrapping UGC, this was to be replaced by an independent grant-giving body; but when the policy finally got formulated, the grant-powers remained mostly with the government-run UGC. Allowing various colleges to grant their own degrees sounds problematic in India where most feel university certification is better—indeed, till recently, even the prestigious IIMs couldn't offer 'degrees' but gave 'diplomas'—but this is sensible since, sooner rather than later, as in most developed countries, employers will be able to distinguish between good, bad and dubious degrees.

The recommendations that need to be examined with a lot more caution are the incorporation of Indian knowledge systems into all levels of education; as long as this focus is on Charaka, Patanjali and Aryabhata, and not on furthering propaganda (interstellar vehicles and head transplants in ancient India), the effort would be indeed merited. Like earlier panels, the Kasturirangan panel also talks of having separate regulators for different aspects of higher education—one for standards setting, another for funding, and a third for accreditation and another for regulation. Given how the panel is quite forward-looking in its recommendations—save for the unfortunate one on the compulsory use of Hindi—it is odd that it wanted to regulate the fees set by private schools; politicians plugging this makes sense given its appeal to voters, but how do eminent scientists and educationists fall in the same trap?

## FY 20 rebound not certain

In a business-as-usual scenario, GDP growth may not be higher

IT IS NOT SURPRISING GDP grew at just 6.8% in FY19. The poor corporate results in the first two quarters had made it amply clear that the economy was in trouble, with the clinching evidence coming during the festive season—one of the duller ones. Even as the government continued to spend, private consumption was slowing, as the high frequency data showed. Private consumption in the March quarter decelerated to 7.2% year-on-year (y-o-y), the slowest in four quarters, and, together with a sharp moderation in gross fixed capital formation to just 3.6% y-o-y, dragged down the GDP for Q4 FY19 to an embarrassing 5.8% y-o-y.

Looking ahead, there are a couple of reasons why the growth momentum will stay lethargic for another six months. First, private sector investments are unlikely to pick up until there are clear signs that demand will revive and until credit becomes a lot more affordable. Right now, real interest rates are still very high and corporate cash flows aren't big enough to fund new ventures. Again, demand won't rebound meaningfully until many more new and well-paying jobs are created and until incomes rise fast enough for consumers to be able to spend more. Apart from the government sector, it is not clear where exactly the job opportunities are going to be—other than a few spaces such as IT, e-commerce and financial services. Therefore, it is hard to see demand rebounding simply on the back of more liquidity and lower interest rates; disposable incomes need to grow, too. Government expenditure in FY19, at ₹21.35 lakh crore, was up 13.2%, but, as a share of GDP, rose just 20 basis points. So, unless there is a much bigger jump in spends, the economy can get only a limited push. Central government expenditure in FY20 is expected to be constrained by limited resources, since tax collections are expected to grow only modestly; the shortfall in tax collections in FY19 was ₹1.68 lakh crore. To be sure, the government will resort to extra-budgetary resources to meet expenses and this will no doubt boost employment and incomes. However, it is possible this could crowd out private sector investments unless the resources are not mopped up from the bond markets but raised from elsewhere, such as from the sale of public sector companies. Given how the growth engine is sputtering, the government must resort to both stake sales and outright sales of PSUs and also monetise as many projects as it can. At the same time, it must streamline and simplify the personal income tax structure so as to minimise the leakage. It must also come up with ways to rejuvenate real estate, undoubtedly the biggest catalyst for the economy. By current indications, however, a 7% GDP growth in FY20 is a tall ask, despite the low base of 6.8%.

## Extreme VETTING

The US now wants to see what you post on Facebook, etc, before giving you a visa

THE US GOVERNMENT wants those applying to it for visa to submit their social media information for five years to the date of the application. This comes after US president Donald Trump's promise of "extreme vetting". The US state department has always asked for personal details like, family member information, travel history and certain contact information. It maintains that the new rule is for better scrutiny in view of national security. This will require around 14.7 million people annually to submit their detail. 'Extreme vetting' was an important plank in Trump's massaging of his core electorate's xenophobia. Since 2017, various US departments have had to provide a 'uniform baseline' to curb illegal immigration. A drop-down menu in the department of state website asks for details from your Facebook, Flickr, LinkedIn, Google+, Youtube, Twitter and Instagram accounts, as of now—its scope shall be extended further. The applicant will have to provide her user-name or user handle, if used for the last five years from the date of application. However, she will not have to provide passwords, and privacy settings will not be tampered with. Though, unless the state department is able to hack into the accounts or arm-twist the social media companies into sharing data, it is hard to see how this helps the US's scrutiny. Also, what is the parameter of acceptability for entry to the US—will sharing/liking *American Idiot* scuttle the chances of one landing a US visa or will it be criticising Trump's policies and statements? Also, will the policy make room for a later-day nuancing of one's political stand, from a radical to a moderate position? In any case, it will always be a violation of the US's First Amendment principles, one that can be challenged in a court of law in that country.

MODI SARKAR 2.0

TIMING OF THE ASSUMPTION OF REINS BY THE GOVERNMENT HAS COME WITH DISAPPOINTING NEWS ON ECONOMIC FRONT. THE LAST QUARTER GDP GROWTH AT 5.8 PER CENT WAS THE LOWEST

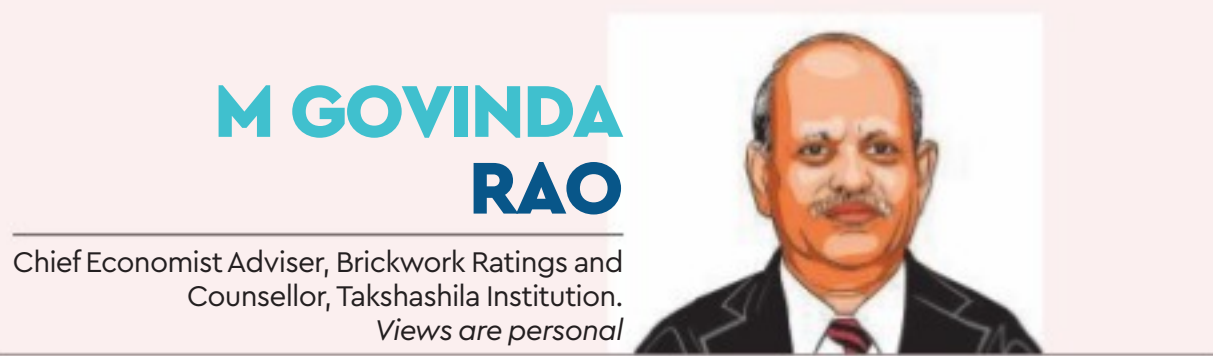
# Reformist government? Walk the talk

THE SPECTACULAR MANDATE for the BJP and the NDA government back in power for the next five years has brought in a lot of hope, that the new government will fast track the reforms agenda to accelerate growth and increase employment in the country. Congratulations to the new Finance Minister on her well-deserved elevation. She has the job cut out, to immediately focus on getting the sagging economy back on track.

Unfortunately, the timing of the assumption of reins by the new government has come with disappointing news on economic front. The last quarter GDP growth at 5.8 per cent was the lowest in the last five years. In addition, the unemployment rate at 6.2 per cent was the worst since 1972-73. The core sector growth at 2.8 per cent has shown a five-month low. The withdrawal of the Generalised System of Preferences (GSP) by the United States comes as an additional setback.

The growth estimate of GDP for 2018-19 at 6.8 per cent is lower than the 7 per cent estimated earlier, and is much below the 7.2 per cent recorded in the previous year. Since the last five quarters, the gross value added (GVA) has shown a systematic deceleration from 7.9 per cent in Q4 of 2017-18 to 5.7 per cent in the Q4 of 2018-19. The agricultural sector has decelerated from 6.5 per cent to -0.1 per cent during the period, and the manufacturing sector recorded a low 3.1 per cent growth in the last quarter. On the demand side, the only functioning engine of growth seems to be private consumption. With substantial cut in the capital expenditure by the government to conform to the fiscal deficit target and with private investment not picking up, capital formation too is showing deceleration. Exports too have been stagnant and with the withdrawal of GSP, the prospects do not look very optimistic.

These formidable challenges also present great opportunities for the new government. On the agricultural sector, the government should unshackle the subsidy-transfers syndrome and embark



on big bang reforms. On agriculture, in addition to the prevailing distress, there is a lurking fear of a subnormal monsoon. The Skymet predicts the monsoon at 93 per cent of the long period average and the IMD prediction is 96 per cent. Both point towards an uneven spread across regions. Therefore, the first priority for the government will have to be, to prepare itself for the bad monsoon situation and immediately unleash the reform agenda. The most important is the expansion and deepening of the crop insurance scheme—the Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana. It is necessary to cover more crops and penetrate more regions. This should be done on a war footing and the final budget outlay should be increased substantially from ₹14,000 crore provided in the interim budget.

The time is also opportune to embark on the long-awaited reforms in the farm sector. There is clearly a need for making a shift from consumer to producer orientation in policies, which implies, that the measures will have to be taken to reverse the worsening terms of trade in the farm sector. Frequent changes in trade policy must be avoided and quick exporting of surplus production should be facilitated. The subsidy regimes should give way to investment in agriculture. Distorting policies, such as enforcing stock-holding limits and frequent export bans should be corrected. Repeal of Essential Commodities Act and breaking the monopoly from Agricultural Produce Marketing Committees too are important. In fact, policy focus in enhancing investment in storage, processing and marketing, and timely information on both input and output prices to the farmers through up-scaled extension will help them to enhance their yield and get remunerative prices.

The GDP growth in the manufacturing sector has shown a sharp deceleration in the last quarter to 3.1 per cent. The capacity utilisation in the industrial sector is at an all-time high, and that means, additional growth will have to come from additional investments. The gross fixed capital formation (in constant prices) has declined from 33.4 per cent in Q3 to 30.7 per cent in Q4. Therefore, acceleration in growth of manufacturing requires changes in the investment climate. The twin balance sheet problem is still a major factor. There is considerable laxity in the bad debt resolution process after the Supreme Court struck down the February 12 circular, and the RBI had to postpone putting out a new circular due to the Code of Conduct. Now that the elections are over, the revised circular should be put in place quickly so that the process is activated. The real interest rate in the country is extremely high and perhaps, MPC should make a substantial reduction in the policy rate instead of a token reduction of 25 basis points. The transmission of lower policy rate will depend on liquidity, and that has dried up mainly, due to virtually complete appropriation of household sector's financial savings through large public sector borrowings of over 9 per cent of GDP.

Is there a scope for fiscal stimulus? It is reported that there has been no further slippage in the fiscal deficit from the revised estimate of 3.4 per cent presented in the interim budget. However, this has been achieved with

considerable off-budget borrowing and creative accounting. Any further laxity would only hurt the revival of the private sector. However, one important window for increasing capital expenditure for the government is to activate strategic disinvestment. The NITI Aayog has done considerable work in identifying the companies for disinvestment and the government should start the process by completely shedding Air India. Hopefully, it will muster the courage to overcome the stalling process by special interest groups. Active disinvestment process will buoy the markets and will make the process smoother.

The major problem faced in the country is in the factor markets. It is time that the government came out with the law and regulations regarding land consolidation and leasing, to allow for non-exploitative contract farming. Similarly, land acquisition has been a major problem for expanding highways. Relaxation of labour laws has been on the table for considerable period, and with such an overwhelming mandate, this is the time to impart flexibility to the labour market to enhance labour-intensive industrialisation and exports.

Another immediate area of action is to fast-track the negotiations with the US to regain GSP in trade. The protectionist stance for 'make in India' is self-defeating as India's experience over the years has shown, and after a concerted effort at dismantling the protectionist regime, the last few years have seen some reversal. Our current account deficit is not too large and the oil prices, which claim a bulk of imports, are relatively stable. This is the time to dismantle and show seriousness on our negotiations with the US to win them back. Surely, with such an overwhelming mandate, the time is opportune to walk the talk of being a reformist government.

## Trump's trade threat to India

De-escalating the trade crisis calls for cool heads. Investment in India is anemic, consumption is faltering, and all domestic balance sheets stressed

PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP just piled another problem on to the already-full slate of Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi. By removing zero-duty access for \$6.3 billion of Indian goods, the U.S. leader threatens growth at a time when India's economy can least afford it.

The country's unemployment rate was at a 45-year high of 6.1% in the year to June 2018, while economic growth in the March quarter of 2019 slowed to a five-year low of 5.8%; data released Friday showed. Publication of the jobless statistic was held back until after Modi won last month's general election and took his oath for a second term on Thursday, though it had leaked anyway.

Demand for Indian goods in the rest of the world needs to perk up to create space for GDP growth and job creation. Trump's trade action is, therefore, bad news. With the domestic auto industry in a tailspin, losing duty-free access to the U.S. could lead to closures of some of India's less-competitive small engineering firms. India is the largest beneficiary of the so-called generalised system of preferences, or GSP, under which developed countries encourage developing economies to industrialise.

By targeting India, Trump isn't opening another front in the trade war, after China and Mexico. He is sending a warning shot that the U.S. expects New Delhi to do more to prove it's a Washington ally.

The U.S. has a history of wielding the GSP privilege as a stick, as I wrote in March when the tariff action against India was first announced, most famously using it to effect regime

change in Chile in the 1980s. In India's case, Washington's goals could range from arm-twisting New Delhi to stay away from Iranian crude oil to pressuring it to tone down the growing rhetoric—and regulatory action—around data sovereignty. The Trump administration will be loath to see India mimicking China's strategy of building its own e-commerce, search and fintech champions, keeping out Amazon.com Inc., Google and Paypal Holdings Inc.

Another long-standing friction between the two countries involves cheaper generic drugs. India meets almost 40% of U.S. demand. Should Trump drive a hard line around poor quality and price fixing, the consequences for India's economy could be serious.

By appointing Subrahmanyam Jaishankar, a former ambassador to both the U.S. and China, as his new foreign minister, Modi has acknowledged the gravity of the trade war. Being in the camp of either superpower is risky. On the one hand, India has to reduce its \$53 billion bilateral trade deficit with the People's Republic; on the other, it has to squeeze itself on to the shortlist for a non-China-centred global electronics supply chain. India's 5G network rollout will see the government grappling with the question of whether it should join Trump's ban of Huawei Technologies Co., or strike a more conciliatory tone with its neigh-

bour and largest trading partner. Just as any new deal with the U.S. will be multifaceted, any bargain to be struck with China will also have to include a long-simmering border dispute, and getting Beijing to influence India's relations with Pakistan, currently at their nadir.

The loss of GSP privileges is an economic challenge, but it's also a diplomatic opportunity. Having won a landslide electoral victory, the Indian leader doesn't need to respond in kind to the White House's machismo just to please voters. On the contrary, this is a chance to reconsider some of India's sillier regulatory decisions of the last six years, such as curbing the maximum price of heart stents and knee implants by as much as 70%. That was an own goal because it kept the more U.S. innovative versions out of India, and gave a windfall to Chinese device producers.

India's economic situation calls for cool heads. Investment is anemic, consumption is faltering, and all domestic balance sheets—for households, companies, banks, shadow financiers and the government—are stressed. Trump has thrown down the gauntlet. Modi should respond by instilling more pragmatism into India's trade and investment policies.

*This column does not necessarily reflect the opinion of the editorial board of Bloomberg LP and its owners*

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### The case against Hindi imposition

It needs no great intelligence to identify the 'third language' in the three language formula, and see through the ploy to make Hindi learning compulsory through the back door. What is required, is a roll-back of the three language policy BJP's perennial obsession with Hindi drives it to try and foist it on non-Hindi speaking people. BJP subscribes to "Hindu, Hindi, Hindustan", a motto not at all suitable for a vast, diverse, disparate and heterogeneous country like ours. The three-language policy jibes with the BJP government's stance on the language issue, but it jars with the sentiment of the southerners. DMK President, M.K. Stalin, likened the move to impose Hindi to 'stoning a beehive'. In seeking to replace the existing two language policy with the much resented, and resisted three language policy, the Modi government is seeking to renege on Jawaharlal Nehru's assurance on the prickly language issue given on the floor. If the Modi government is so keen on 'greater cognitive development of children' by means of 'multilingualism', it can well start with introducing Tamil, Kannada, Marathi or any one of the 'official' languages in Hindi-speaking states. The party that never tires of speaking '*Akhand Bharat*', should conduct itself in a manner befitting it. Tinkering with India's pluralism or linguistic diversity is not the way to hold *Akhand Bharat* together. People are intelligent enough to understand the inextricable link between language and culture, and the hidden cost of allowing Hindi in non-Hindi-speaking states. — G David Milton, Maruthancode

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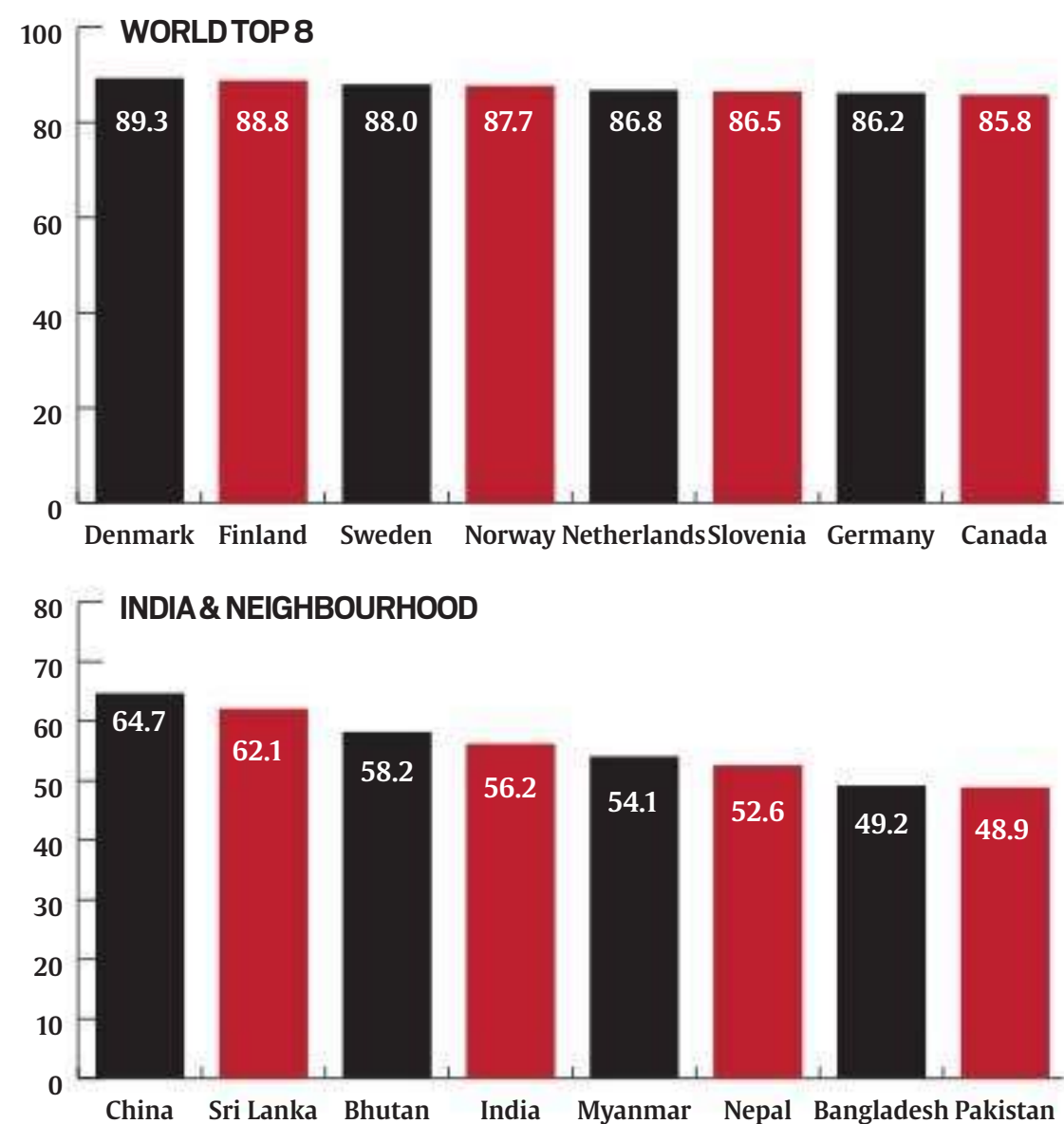


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## TELLING NUMBERS

## On new gender equality index, India is 95th in 129 countries



A NEW index to measure global gender equality, launched on Monday, ranks India at 95th among 129 countries. The SDG Gender Index comes close on the heels of the gender gap index of the World Economic Forum where India was ranked 108th.

### How the ranking works

The SDG Gender Index has been developed by Equal Measures 2030, a joint effort of regional and global organisations including African Women’s Development and Communication Network, Asian-Pacific Resource and Research Centre for Women, Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, and International Women’s Health Coalition. It accounts for 14 out of 17 SDGs (sustainable development goals) that cover aspects such as poverty, health, education, literacy, political representation and equality at the workplace.

A score of 100 reflects the achievement of gender equality in relation to the targets set for each indicator. It means, for example, that 100% of girls complete secondary education, or that there is around 50-50 parity for women and men in Parliament. A score of 50 signifies that a country is about halfway to meeting a goal.

### The big picture

The ranking found that the world is far from achieving gender equality with 1.4 billion girls and women living in countries that get a “very poor” grade. The global average score of the 129 countries — which represent 95% of the world’s girls and women — is 65.7 out of 100 (“poor” in the index). Altogether, 2.8 billion girls and women live in countries that get either a “very poor” (59 and below) or “poor” score (60-69) on gender equality. Just 8% of the world’s population of girls and women live in countries

that received a “good” gender equality score (80-89) and no country achieved an “excellent” overall score of 90 or above.

“We are failing to deliver on the promises of gender equality,” said Alison Holder, Director of Equal Measures 2030. Renu Khanna, joint-national convener of the Jan Swasthya Abhiyaan, one of the partners of EM2030, said that not all countries’ scores on the index correlate with national income-some countries perform better than would be expected based on their GDP per capita, and others underperform. India performs about as expected based on GDP per capita.

### Key findings for India

India’s highest goal scores are on health (79.9), hunger & nutrition (76.2), and energy (71.8). Its lowest goal scores are on partnerships (18.3, in the bottom 10 countries worldwide), industry, infrastructure and innovation (38.1), and climate (43.4).

On indicators that define such goals, India scored 95.3 on the percentage of female students enrolled in primary education who are over-age. Some of India’s lowest scores on indicators include the proportion of seats held by women in national parliaments (score 23.6; women made up 11.8% of Parliament in 2018). On seats held by women in the Supreme Court (4%), India has a score of 18.2. On gender-based violence, indicators include proportion of women aged 20-24 years who were married or in a union before age 18 (27.3%), women who agreed that a husband/partner is justified in beating his wife/partner under certain circumstances (47.0%), and women aged 15+ who reported that they “feel safe walking alone at night in the city or area where she lives” (69.1%).

**ANURADHA MASCARENHAS**

**ASTHA SAXENA**  
NEW DELHI, JUNE 3

A RECENT study led by a group of researchers at the University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center has found that adding a drug, ribociclib, to hormone therapy significantly increased the overall survival in relatively younger women suffering from advanced breast cancer.

The study covered women who had not yet reached menopause or were still going through it. They were suffering from hormone receptor-positive (HR+) breast cancer and HER2-negative disease. HR+ cancer involves tumours that are receptive to anti-estrogen (endocrine) treatments aimed at blocking hormones while HER2-negative means that the patient lacks a protein of that name.

### What the study found

Described as “one of the greatest advances in breast cancer in recent decades”, the study was conducted on 672 pre-menopausal women under age 59 years who had advanced HR+. After 42 months, 70% of the patients treated with combination therapy were alive as compared to 46% of those who received only the hormone therapy.

“Younger patients have been a particular concern, because breast cancer is known to be more aggressive and to be associated with poorer prognosis in younger women than in older women,” the researchers wrote in *The New England Journal of Medicine*, which will publish the article online on Tuesday, when the results are presented at the annual meeting of the American Society of Clinical Oncology, in Chicago.

### Why it is significant

At the All India Institute of Medical Sciences, almost 35% of patients diagnosed with HR+ breast cancer and HER2-negative disease are under age 40. For such women, the standard treatment involved hormonal treatments such as tamoxifen to premenopausal patients and drugs called aromatase inhibitors to post-menopausal women.

One in every 28 Indian women — 1 in 22 in urban areas, 1 in 60 in rural areas — is likely to develop breast cancer during her lifetime. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), breast cancer is the most frequent cancer among women, impacting 2.1 million women each year, and also causes the highest number of cancer-related deaths among women — 6.27,000 or 15% in 2018. In India, breast cancer accounts for 14% of all cancers



At a run for breast cancer awareness in New Delhi in 2015. One in 22 women in urban India is likely to be hit by the disease in her lifetime. *Ravi Kanojia/Express Archive*

in women.

### The drug in India

The drug was first approved by the Food and Drug Administration in 2017 for post-menopausal women with advanced breast

cancer, and then in 2018 for younger women. Since then, several private hospitals are already advising the drug to a few patients.

“Private hospitals may be using it, but the drug is not available at any government hospital. If any patient opts for the treatment,

## THIS WORD MEANS | PARTHENOGENESIS

# How an anaconda gave birth without a male

**ABANTIKA GHOSH**  
NEW DELHI, JUNE 3

ABOUT A WEEK ago, the New England Aquarium in the US announced that a “virgin” anaconda had given birth during the winter. The aquarium does not have a male anaconda. Yet Anna, a green anaconda, gave birth to a few babies in January, two of which have survived. This is Immaculate Conception in Catholicism; in scientific terminology, it is parthenogenesis.

### How it happens

The *Encyclopedia Britannica* defines parthenogenesis as “a reproductive strategy that involves development of a female (rarely a male) gamete (sex cell) without fertilisation. It occurs commonly among lower plants and invertebrate animals (particularly rotifers, aphids, ants, wasps and bees) and rarely among higher vertebrates”. A gamete is the egg in females and the sperm in males. In animals,



The babies are the product of parthenogenesis, or non-sexual reproduction. *New England Aquarium*

parthenogenesis means development of an embryo from an unfertilised egg cell.

Many species that reproduce through parthenogenesis do not reproduce sexually.

Others switch between the two modes taking cues from the environment. Anna is a higher vertebrate, which is why the birth of her two babies has been met with so much surprise.

The term parthenogenesis is a amalgam of the Greek words parthenos meaning virgin and genesis meaning origin. About 2,000 species are known to reproduce through parthenogenesis, which is one of the known means of asexual reproduction. Grafting (of plants) is also a type of asexual reproduction.

### Clones of mother

Babies born through parthenogenesis are clones of the mother, as has now been confirmed by the aquarium through DNA tests. Parthenogenetic offspring tend to be clones of the parent because there has been no exchange and rearrangement of genetic information with another individual as happens in case of a sexual reproductive process. Each of Anna’s babies is a tiny Anna in every possible way. Many of the babies,

though, were stillborn. Since the birth in January, only two have finally survived. Stillbirth is common in parthenogenesis. In some species, offspring born by parthenogenesis from a mother can also be male but it lacks one X chromosome.

### Rare in snakes

This is only the second known case of parthenogenesis in green anacondas. It is not unknown in snakes, but undocumented enough to make it to scientific journals. In 2018, researchers from the University of Adelaide reported in the *Royal Society Open Science Journal* about facultative (optional) pathenogenesis in elapid snakes (*Elapidae*), which include well-known taxa such as cobras, mambas, taipans and sea snakes. In 1998, researchers from the Kansas State University reported that a copperhead snake that had been in captivity and without any male contact for three years had given birth to two female offspring by parthenogenesis.

# In bettering 2014 showing, BJP kept out ‘dynasts’, leveraged central schemes



**CHRISTOPHE JAFFRELOT & PANKAJ SINGH**

THE BJP has swept Madhya Pradesh, winning 28 out of the 29 Lok Sabha seats and increasing its vote share to 58% from the 54.2% it had in 2014. The victory stands in sharp contrast to the results of the Assembly elections held less than six months ago, in which the Congress had dethroned the BJP after 15 years. In the close contest, the Congress had won 114 seats against the BJP’s 109, with the BJP winning a slightly bigger vote share (41.9%) than the Congress (41%). The Congress had formed the gov-

ernment with the help of two BSP, one SP, and four Independent MLAs.

The striking aspect of the Lok Sabha election results is the overwhelming rejection of the senior leaders of the MP Congress, including several “dynasts”. The Congress in the state has been traditionally dominated by prominent families such as those of the Scindias, Digvijaya Singh, Arjun Singh, Kamal Nath, Shri Niwas Tiwari, Subhash Yadav, and Kantilal Bhuria. They have their traditional Vidhan Sabha and Lok Sabha seats, and lead factions in the party in the state, with their own loyalist workers and MLAs. Nearly all these families lost heavily in the elections — among the tall leaders to fall were former Chief Minister Digvijaya Singh (Bhopal), four-time parliamentarian Jyotiraditya Scindia (Guna), and the former Leader of Opposition in the Assembly Ajay Singh (Sidhi). They all lost by huge margins; in contrast, the only successful Congress candidate, the Chief Minister’s son Nakul Nath,



could win his family’s seat of Chhindwara by only 37,536 votes.

While the BJP too, has powerful dynasties in Madhya Pradesh, it did not give too many tickets to the members of these traditional political families. In the Vidhan Sabha elections, Babulal Gaur, Shivraj Singh Chouhan, Sundar Lal Patwa, Prahlad Patel, Kailash Vijayvargiya, Narendra Singh Tomar, and Harsh Narayan Singh had succeeded in

getting nominations for their relatives, several of whom were elected MLAs.

In the Lok Sabha election, Chouhan could not get a ticket for his wife Sadhna Singh Chouhan (Vidisha). Leader of Opposition Gopal Bhargav could not get a ticket for his son (Sagar), and former Agriculture Minister Gaurishankar Bisen failed to secure his daughter’s nomination in Balaghat.

Instead, the BJP nominated more newcomers and played the Hindutva card in the most radical manner, as was evident in the campaign of Pragma Singh Thakur, who was fielded in Bhopal against Digvijaya Singh, one of the prominent secular faces of the Congress. Thakur, who faces charges of terrorism in the 2008 Malegaon blast case, fought a very active electoral battle, even canvassing for other BJP candidates, and giving a strident communal overtone to her party’s campaign.

The narrative of Hindu nationalism worked well in the context of the Pulwama terrorist attack and India’s response to

Pakistan, which had already helped the BJP shift the political discourse to national security from issues like unemployment and the agricultural crisis. That the Congress could not capitalise on these issues was due also to the flawed implementation of its promises on these fronts at the state level. At the time of the Vidhan Sabha elections, Rahul Gandhi had promised to waive agricultural loans within 10 days of the Congress forming the state government; however, despite having signed the loan waiver file on the day he took oath, Chief Minister Kamal Nath failed to implement the decision on the ground.

On the other hand, central government welfare schemes like the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana, Swachh Bharat Abhiyaan, and Ujjwala Yojana seemed to have nudged backward caste voters towards Narendra Modi and the BJP. Some 36.6 lakh houses in rural areas, and 5.5 lakh in urban areas, were sanctioned under the PMAY. Under the Swachh Bharat scheme, more than 54 lakh toilets





IF THOUGHT CORRUPTS LANGUAGE, LANGUAGE CAN ALSO CORRUPT THOUGHT.  
— GEORGE ORWELL

The Indian EXPRESS

FOUNDED BY

RAMNATH GOENKA

BECAUSE THE TRUTH INVOLVES US ALL

TONGUE TWISTED

There is no need to paint English-speakers as oppressors in order to promote the use of languages of Indian origin

THE DRAFT NATIONAL Education Policy (2018) may have narrowly missed rekindling the language wars, when a sentence was read by the southern states to suggest that Hindi would be imposed upon schools in the region under the three language formula. That was averted by some swift damage control, but an impression that English is being demonised lingers. Besides, it appears that English-speakers must bear the burden of corrective action, to arrive at a level playing field in education and in professional life. It is suggested that English has been privileged by the “economic elite”, and has been turned into a “criterion” of education and a “prerequisite” for professional success. These phenomena do indeed exist on the ground, and contribute significantly to inequality in access to education, resources and jobs, but it is not the result of a nexus or conspiracy. English was first valued as a product of empire, and then it rapidly became a world language that is understood in almost all countries. It is now an instrument of access globally, and not only within the power structures of the country. To devalue it in the course of supporting the other Indian languages would amount to reducing access for a generation of students. English usage grew organic, and while language has indeed economically divided the people, a top-down firman, however well-meaning, is not a practical antidote.

The draft policy puts the onus to correct the imbalance upon “the elite and the educated”, who are called upon to value languages native to India, and to increase their use in the workplace, educational institutions, and daily conversation. The last category may be redundant, because only an infinitesimal minority converses exclusively in English. Languages of Indian origin are already valued and it is implicitly acknowledged by the boom in literature in translation, which uses English as a bridge language. The exhortation to value languages other than English in the workplace, especially in hiring, is perplexing. Companies are answerable to shareholders, not to the government, and managers follow the dictates of the marketplace, not political imperatives. If proficiency in English brings in better returns in a connected world, managers will hire accordingly. Lastly, the suggestion that languages other than English must be promoted in education is known to be disastrous. Such a political intervention was attempted in state-run schools in West Bengal, and it harmed the employment prospects and professional mobility of a generation of students.

The use of languages of Indian origin can be promoted without painting the English-speaking community as the overweening oppressor. Students should be allowed to take a number of languages, including the mother tongue. Languages widen access, and the more tongues a student can speak, the better she will do in life.

COMING UP SHORT

Tax collection targets presented in the interim budget now appear to be too optimistic

ALMOST TWO YEARS after the shift to the goods and services tax (GST) regime, tax collections continue to underwhelm. For 2018-19, the Centre had initially pegged the central goods and services tax (CGST) collections at Rs 6.03 lakh crore. This was subsequently lowered to Rs 5.03 lakh crore in the interim budget, as revenue during the year came in well below expectations. But, actual collections were even lower at Rs 4.57 lakh crore, according to recent data released by the Controller General of Accounts (CGA). The extent of the shortfall is worrying. Based on the CGA data, CGST collections would have to grow by 33.5 per cent in FY20, for the interim budget target of Rs 6.1 lakh crore to be met. And though there has been a modest improvement in collections in the first two months of FY20, the interim budget target appears to be too optimistic, going by current trends.

At the aggregate level, total GST collections have been pegged at Rs 13.7 lakh crore for FY20. This includes CGST and SGST collections of around Rs 6.1 lakh crore each, Rs 1 lakh crore which is expected to be mopped up through the compensation cess route and another Rs 50,000 crore of IGST collection, that is expected to remain unallocated at the end of the year. These numbers imply a monthly CGST run rate (including IGST settlement) of around Rs 50,833 crore. But, so far, collections have averaged Rs 41,721 crore per month, well below the required run rate. Further, one must also point out that this estimate does not include refunds. The net of refunds, actual collections will be even lower, increasing the collection deficit. As a result, the required run rate for the remaining part of the year has already jumped to Rs 52,830 crore, according to a report by Kotak Institutional Equities. Achieving this is a tall order, especially considering the slowdown in economic growth.

And then there's the shortfall on the income tax side to consider as well. As against a target of Rs 5.29 lakh crore in FY19, collections stood at Rs 4.61 lakh crore, implying that collections would have to grow by a staggering 34.8 per cent in FY20 to meet the interim budget target of Rs 6.2 lakh crore. Considering that nominal GDP is likely to grow around 10.5-11 per cent, the tax collection targets for FY20, presented in the interim budget, do appear to be too optimistic. The new finance minister should consider revising the estimates to present a more accurate picture of the government's accounts.

ENGLISH STRIKE

English Premier League trumps its European counterparts, but it misses a Messi or a Ronaldo of its own

FOR THE FIRST time in European football, clubs from one country featured in the continent's two major competitions. Liverpool defeated Tottenham Hotspur in the Champions League final, while Chelsea won the Europa League, beating Arsenal. The English Premier League proved its on-pitch dominance, along with its supremacy in the game's money league. The two are correlated. The Deloitte Football Money League for 2017-18 has six English clubs in the list of top 10. The Uefa's Benchmark Report for the year 2017 showed how the Premier League's aggregate revenue, north of £4.77 billion, dwarfed its nearest rival, Li Liga's £2.56 billion. The record £8.4 billion TV deals give the Premier League its pulling power and competitive edge. It's a result of aggressive global marketing, where the Premier League has trumped its European counterparts.

Because of its popularity and financial might, English top-flight football can woo the world's finest coaches and expensive players. Three coaches — Pep Guardiola, Jurgen Klopp and Mauricio Pochettino — have given English football a facelift. Guardiola has made the biggest impact. His style and philosophy, his occasional use of the Libero in a 4-3-3 formation, have inspired a revolution right down to the age-group levels. Two years ago, the England colts claimed the Fifa U-17 and U-20 World Cup titles, while the U-19s annexed the European U-19 Championship. The England senior team under Gareth Southgate reached the semifinal in the 2018 Russia World Cup. At St George's Park, the FA headquarters, they have taken a leaf out of Guardiola's book. The hurly-burly long ball is now dead and buried. Creativity and entertainment have become the buzzwords.

The Premier League has the world's most expensive goalkeeper in Kepa Arrizabalaga (£71.6 million) at Chelsea. It has the world's costliest defender in Virgil van Dijk (£75 million) at Liverpool. But English football is still bereft of a player like Lionel Messi or Cristiano Ronaldo.



SANJAYA BARU

UNITED STATES PRESIDENT Donald Trump's trade policy action against India suggests the narrative of a Rising India may well have met its comeuppance. The action has been explained away by some as collateral damage with the main targets being China and the trade-surplus enjoying OECD economies, especially Germany and Japan. The Federation of Indian Export Organisations has estimated that only \$6.35 billion worth of trade, out of a total bilateral trade of \$51.4 billion, benefits from US trade preferences. India can absorb that shock. The point is not that. How is it “fair” for the world's richest nation to target a poor one in the name of “fair trade”?

India is a lower middle income developing economy and will remain so for the foreseeable future. According to the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the per capita national income (gross domestic product, GDP) of the US, in purchasing power parity (PPP) terms was US\$62,606 in 2018, compared to \$7,874 for India. Most European Union countries have a per capita income in the range of \$40,000 to \$50,000 and China's PPP-adjusted per capita income is \$18,110. Despite her low income, India remains an open economy. The share of external trade (exports plus imports) in national income is 40.7 per cent for India but only 26.6 per cent for the US.

India does not hide behind high tariff walls, as charged by President Trump, since it has consistently run a trade deficit with the rest of the world. The US, too, has long run a trade deficit with the rest of the world, but for very different reasons and at a very different level of development. At any rate, the US conducts all its trade in its own currency that it prints at will. China, Japan and Germany are the ones that enjoy a trade surplus with the rest of the world.

India has a trade surplus with the US, but Trump's complaint on that count is like a rich man complaining that he always gives gifts to his poorer friends, and they never give him

Part of the reason why India is at the receiving end of Trump's trade tantrums is because he may have fallen into the trap we created of projecting India as a “Rising Power” and the “World's Fastest Growing Economy”. In his rush to stop China in its tracks and get European and Asian allies to stand by him, Trump has mistakenly identified India as a target for corrective action. Apart from a couple of sectors, like pharmaceuticals, Indian industry does not pose a significant competitive challenge to US business.



SHONAR LALA

IN THE RUN up to the elections, a plethora of redistributive programmes, including farm loan waivers, cash transfers and minimum income guarantees came to the forefront as campaigners sought to balm rural distress. Amongst these is a proposal to launch a revised NREGA 3.0, in which 150 days of employment would be guaranteed to the rural poor. Almost 15 years after it was enacted, the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (NREGA) still makes waves in the news, but very little is known about its impact on the poor. Has the world's largest workfare programme worked?

To elicit a fair answer to this question begs another question. What does the NREGA intend to do? Enacted as a legal right, the NREGA's primary goal is social protection for the most vulnerable. But like all good things, expectations of the programme have ballooned — with some believing it could even enable most poor households in rural India to cross the poverty line. Measured against such ambitious objectives, any workfare programme would most likely not live up to its expectations. But India has had relative success with workfare, with the Maharashtra Employment Guarantee Scheme being the most important precursor to the NREGA.

The primary advantage of workfare programmes over farm loan waivers, cash transfers and minimum income programmes is that the poor self-select themselves into the programme, thus reducing the identification costs. The ability of a programme to parsimoniously target the ultra-poor without elaborate means testing is critical for its long-

SAFETY NET THAT WORKS

Before contemplating new rural programmes, government must expand MGNREGA

term success, particularly when fiscal resources are scarce. Crucially, the most basic tenet of the NREGA — its self-targeting mechanism — does work. Poorer and disadvantaged households are more likely to seek NREGA work. In practice, however, not all those who demand NREGA work receive it. In 2009/10, almost half the households in rural India wanted NREGA jobs but only a quarter received them, according to estimates by Liu and Barrett (2016). More recently, employment provided under NREGA in 3,500 panchayats in 2017/18 was a third less than that demanded. Given the enormous, though sometimes unmet, demand, has NREGA enabled the rural poor to cross the poverty line? Whilst the three available national counterfactual-based studies show modest increases in household per capita expenditures and consumption in the first few years of the programme, the picture is entirely different for marginalised groups, who have benefited greatly due to NREGA. A study by Klonner and Oldiges in 2014 find that Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe recipients increased their real monthly per capita expenditure by 37 per cent in the lean season of 2008, cutting poverty by almost half. Likewise, state-level studies show NREGA favours the most disadvantaged. In Andhra Pradesh, monthly per capita food consumption amongst the very poor who received work under NREGA increased by estimates of 9-10 per cent in the first year of implementation (Ravi and Engler 2015, Deininger and Liu 2019). The poorest SC/ST households and those with a disabled mem-

ber saw even higher growth in consumption and nutritional intake in the short-run, and in the medium-term, substantially increased their non-financial assets. In Bihar, Dutta et al (2014) estimate that NREGA reduced poverty by roughly 1 percentage point in 2009, a figure that could be closer to 8 percentage points if it was rolled out to all those who wanted it. Aside from its impact on the poorest, NREGA also plays a critical role in reducing vulnerability. Research indicates that NREGA provides employment after an adverse rainfall shock, enables workers to smoothen their consumption with variations in rainfall, and reduces risk during the lean season. Despite being severely rationed, NREGA acts, as per its mandate, as a very desirable social protection mechanism amongst the most disadvantaged classes. Compared to other proposals on the table, NREGA efficiently allows the most disadvantaged to spur their consumption in times of rural distress. As a new administration weighs policy options at a time of rural unemployment and weakening consumption, pre-monsoon, it would be prudent not to eschew this proven pro-poor programme. Instead, they should quickly and substantially ramp up NREGA so all those who demand jobs, receive them. Why reinvent the wheel when NREGA would provide a vital safety net — and the dignity of rightful employment — to those who are most vulnerable?

The writer is a development economist who has previously worked at the World Bank and consults at 3ie



JUNE 4, 1979, FORTY YEARS AGO

ARMY IN BARODA THE ARMY was called out and a 12-hour curfew from 8 pm imposed in Baroda today as the city was rocked by large-scale violence and arson following a hike in milk prices by the Baroda Dairy. The police control room said late in the night that army jawans were posted at vulnerable points. Assistance of three companies was sought, it was officially learnt. Baroda is the second city in Gujarat to come under army control within a span of four days. Ahmedabad is already under army control as the police agitation turned violent there. Agitating policemen, with black ribbons, had earlier apparently failed to control the increasing violence. By early night, al-

most all the milk booths of the dairy were destroyed and a milk van and three state transport buses were up in flames.

CAMBODIA VIOLENCE HEAVY FIGHTING BETWEEN forces loyal to the ousted Cambodian Premier, Pol Pot, and the Vietnamese-led forces of Heng Samrin erupted last night south of the Cambodian border town of Poipet. Thai military sources said today. In the past several days Thai military observers in Aranyaprathet have reported that guerrilla forces loyal to Pol Pot have moved back into an area about 15 to 20 km south of Poipet. After the fighting erupted last night, continuing this morning, Thai army re-

inforcements supported by tanks were sent into the border area near Klong Nam Sai, south of Aranyaprathet, in case fighting spilled over into Thailand, the sources said.

HEAVY WATER SOME DISTURBING FACTS have come to light which do not rule out the possibility of a deliberate hampering of Indian efforts to manufacture heavy water in adequate quantity. In the last couple of years, there has been startling frequency in the set back to manufacture heavy water plants at Baroda and Tuticorin. Work at the other plants at Kota and Talcher had also slowed down due to various reasons.





# 15 THE IDEAS PAGE

## Sound the secular bugle

As the new government takes its oath of office, it is necessary to restore to public discourse the passionate advocacy and practice of secularism



MANI SHANKAR AIYAR

WHILE FOR TACTICAL electoral reasons, the Congress and other Opposition parties chose to eschew the word “secularism” in the election campaign, M K Stalin in Tamil Nadu boldly altered the name of the alliance he was leading in his state from “United Progressive Alliance” (UPA) to “Secular Progressive Alliance”. SPA won. UPA lost.

This certainly throws up the challenge as to whether the century-old rift between the forces of Hindutva and the forces that reject Hindutva continues to require the bold and uninhibited advocacy and practice of “secularism”, as hitherto understood, or whether the time has come for old-style secularists to throw in the towel and seek political accommodation with the Hindutvawadis. Additionally, but most germane, do Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s soothing references to the minorities in his post-election remarks amount to his abandoning the ideological space in order to bridge the divide between him and his opponents? In other words, has Hindutva, as hitherto understood, now embraced the “secularism” of its traditional ideological foes?

I ask: Has the blot of the Gujarat pogrom of 2002 been wiped out? Are we resigned to the destruction of the Babri Masjid? Have Modi and his cohort given up their “infinite appetite to quarrel with the past” as journalist-historian Ashutosh put it in his recently published treatise, *Hindu Rashtra*? Has Modi caught in his throat the poison of V D Savarkar’s assertion that only those who regard Bharat as their “pitribhu” (fatherland) and their “punyabhu” (holy land) are true Bharatis? Has Modi repudiated M S Golwalkar who “in the major compilation of what he has said and written about Hindu nationalism, has chapters identifying Muslims and Christians as internal threats to national unity” (Andersen and Damle: *The RSS: A View to the Inside*, p.250)? Is Modi 2.0 going to stamp out “love,jihad”, “ghar wapsi”, the lynching of Muslims by “gau rakshaks”? Is hate speech, not just by kar sevaks, and assorted sadhus and sadhvis, but also by senior BJP office-bearers, central and state ministers and members of legislatures, even governors, going to be reined in through condign punishment of the perpetrators, however high they might rank in the party or the sangh parivar or government? Are quasi militias like Yogi Adityanath’s Hindu Yuva Vahini going to be dismantled? Will the safe-fronisation of education and encroachment on the autonomy of the independent institutions that keep our democracy vibrant be ended? Are charges of sedition going to be pressed on those regarded by the establishment as “anti-national” because these dissidents recommend policies that are at cross-purposes with the convictions of the ruling dispensation? Is the vicious equating of Muslims with Pakistanis, especially by prominent spokespersons of Hindutva, going to get terminated? If no, what is the meaning of the prime minister’s pledge to secure “sabka vishwas”?

A host of knowledgeable commentators have, on the eve of the counting of votes and in its immediate aftermath, expressed their apprehension of India “walking towards electoral authoritarianism” or, to vary the metaphor, as “sliding towards non-theocratic majoritarianism” (Yogendra Yadav, IE May 22). Was or was not the electoral outcome “a



C R Sasikumar

victory for electoral Caesarism... a victory for majoritarianism... a desire to openly marginalise minorities and assert the cultural hegemony of Hindutva... a victory for the politics of fear and hate” (Pratap Bhanu Mehta, IE, May 24)? Did not the verdict amount to India taking “another step towards re-inventing itself as a de facto “ethnic democracy” (where) India continues to be a secular state on paper but, in practice, the minorities are becoming second-class citizens” (Christophe Jaffrelot, IE, May 24)? Nobel Laureate Amartya Sen (IE, May 29) has drawn pointed attention to “the ways and means of securing BJP’s victory, including instigation of hatred and intolerance of groups of Indian citizens, particularly Muslims”? And, finally, most tellingly, does the assessment of academic Vinay Sitapati of Ashoka University — “there is no Hindu rashtra down the road from here. It has already arrived” — hold?

Consider the contrasting views of two renowned Indian Muslim intellectuals, Zoya Hasan and Faizan Mustafa, on the one hand, and Ram Madhav, leading RSS intellectual and general secretary of the BJP, on the other. Hasan, professor emerita, JNU, attributes the “Modi landslide” to “Hindutva consolidation and majoritarian triumphalism, powered by a hyper-nationalist agenda” while Mustafa, an eminent jurist serving as the vice-chancellor of the NALSAR University of Law at Hyderabad, drawing attention to the numerous communal crises that nationalist Indian Muslims have survived over the last century and a half, argues that “if a government shows authoritarian tendencies, suppresses dissent and keeps mum on the violations of fundamental freedoms of its citizens” (IE, May 28) that is not an issue for the minorities alone but “should worry the whole country as it will equally affect all citizens not just its minorities”. That is true. It underlines the threat that “Hindutva, which is a political ideology and a political project” (Hasan) presents to the Idea of India as manifested in our Constitutional order.

BJP General Secretary Ram Madhav, at this juncture of heady electoral triumph, perhaps unwittingly, reveals the ugly reality of Modi’s “ideology in action” which he portrays as an admixture of Bonapartism, citing Napoleon, “What counts is what the people think is true”

This is not the time for pious hopes. It is time to sound again the bugle of secular fundamentalism. We need to revert to the language of Rajiv Gandhi when in the Lok Sabha on May 3, 1989, he began his speech in a debate on communalism with the ringing proclamation, ‘A secular India alone is an India that can survive. Perhaps an India that is not secular does not deserve to survive’. That is the ideological idiom and unambiguous language of the secularism espoused by Gandhi and Jawaharla Nehru, Lal Bhabadur Shastri, Indira Gandhi and Rajiv Gandhi, and all their successors till Modi, including Atal Bihari Vajpayee. Each in his or her own way ‘discovered’ that India was fundamentally a secular nation and reflected in their ‘Idea of India’.

and, curiously, considering the sangh parivar’s dread of the Red, a Marxist scholar, William Davies, as pronouncing “the leader becomes the truth”. Gandhiji, of course, held that “God is Truth and Truth is God”.

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That is the ideological idiom and unambiguous language of the secularism espoused by Gandhi and Jawaharla Nehru, Lal Bahadur Shastri, Indira Gandhi and Rajiv Gandhi, and all their successors till Modi, including Atal Bihari Vajpayee. Each in his or her own way “discovered” that India was fundamentally a secular nation and reflected in their “Idea of India” the aspiration of Indians through the “trackless centuries” to live in a secular country. Hindutvists have tried to posit an “Idea of Bharat” as against the “Khan Market” gang’s “Idea of India”. There is only one “Idea of India, that is Bharat” and it is written into the letter and spirit of our Constitution. It constituted the national consensus, especially in the wake of the horrors of Partition and lasted till the rise of Modi. Do these elections signal, in the words of a secular, liberal Pakistani Muslim intellectual, F S Aijazuddin, writing in the *Dawn*, “the fading away of the hieroglyphics of Nehruvian ‘secularism’”?

In the final decade of his life, M A Jinnah propagated the utterly un-Indian theory of “two nations”. For seven decades, independent India proudly refuted that proposition by remaining a secular nation despite break-away Pakistan becoming a Muslim nation. Under Modi, we are being taken towards the fulfillment of Jinnah’s dream. Now, more than ever, as the new government takes its second oath of office, it is necessary to restore to the public discourse the passionate advocacy and practice of “secularism”, as understood hitherto. We have lost the secular battle. We must win the secular war.

The writer is a former Union minister

### WHAT THE OTHERS SAY

“The Organisation of Islamic Cooperation has, in particular, been ineffectual in promoting unity and the common interests of over a billion Muslims across the globe.” —DAWN

## From Tiananmen to digital dystopia

Rise of the all-knowing surveillance state has reinforced Deng Xiaoping’s model of open economy and closed polity in China



RAJA MANDALA

BY C RAJA MOHAN

THREE DECADES AGO this week, the Chinese Communist Party cracked down hard on student protests demanding the liberalisation of China’s political system. The movement that began on a small scale in the early summer of 1989 in Beijing’s Tiananmen Square spread rapidly to many towns and cities and gained significant popular support. During the night of June 3–4, troops of the People’s Liberation Army fought their way into the heart of Beijing against civilian resistance and cleared the square of thousands of citizens who gathered there.

The bloody crackdown at Tiananmen remains a deep and unhealed scar in the evolution of modern China and the reign of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) that began seven decades ago in 1949. The CCP, under the leadership of the supreme leader, Deng Xiaoping, characterised the protests as a counter revolutionary rebellion, ousted the party secretary Zhao Ziyang and other communist leaders seen as empathetic to the students, and unleashed a wave of political repression.

The Tiananmen protests have endured as a powerful symbol of the popular struggles for political liberalisation and the capacity of authoritarian rulers to crush them. Nothing captures this enduring tension more than the image of the “tank man” — a lone citizen trying to stop a column of tanks in the Tiananmen Square on the morning of June 5. Over the last three decades, that balance appears to have shifted in favour of the state, at least for now.

Accelerating that shift has been the revolution in digital technologies that has allowed states to exercise unprecedented control over their citizens. There seems to be less and less need to deploy massive numbers of troops and tanks to put down large-scale protests as the CCP had to do in June 1989. New technological systems based on mass surveillance, data analytics and artificial intelligence are helping modern authoritarians to prevent the emergence of not just large-scale protests, but stamp out individual dissent. But back to Tiananmen for a moment.

Chairman Deng leavened China’s political repression that followed after the Tiananmen protests with a counter-intuitive initiative. He unleashed a massive economic reform in 1992. Deng blocked the CCP’s return to ideological conservatism by decisively shifting China’s economic orientation to liberalisation and globalisation. Deng’s strategy limited the international opprobrium that followed the Tiananmen crackdown. It opened up expansive possibilities for Western capital in China and renewed political engagement with the US, Europe and Japan.

Deng’s 1992 reforms put China on the path to rapid economic growth. A decade later, China was on its way to becoming the second-largest economy in the world and well on track to overtake the United States. Deng’s strategy seemed to offer Chinese citizens a new compact — economic prosperity in return for political obedience. Rapid economic growth over a prolonged period, to be sure, triggered social turbulence and political discontent.

Some analysts of China were convinced that the contradictions of “red capitalism” — a communist party building capitalism — will inevitably undermine CCP rule. Others hoped that economic prosperity will generate a middle class that will seek greater freedoms and the state in China, as elsewhere in East Asia, will slowly but certainly evolve towards liberalism.

Both would be disappointed as the CCP rule looked far more resilient and stable than anyone had anticipated. One reason, arguably, is the new means of control that the party had acquired. The post-Tiananmen era in China had a third element that reinforced Deng’s model of “open economy and closed polity” — the rise of the all-knowing surveillance state with enormous potential for digital repression.

A quarter century ago, the internet era was heralded with the hope of expanded freedoms — individual and collective. Instead, it opened the door for unprecedented state control over citizenry. No other nation has demonstrated the new possibilities for digital control of society as China has in the last few years.

Beijing employed a number of means — including the erection of a “great wall” of censorship over the internet, monitoring of the physical movement of individuals through omnipresent surveillance cameras, analysing the digital activity of individuals and investment in technologies such as facial recognition. The construction of the surveillance state in China, many believe, rules out any protest movement of the kind we saw at Tiananmen three decades ago.

The Chinese-model of mass surveillance is now being exported to countries in Asia, Africa and Latin America. It is, therefore, tempting to frame the debate in terms of authoritarian versus democratic states. But caution is in order. The rise of the “surveillance state” in China and other states has its version in the democratic world — the rise of “surveillance capitalism”. US technology giants, for example, have been accused of collection, manipulation and monetisation of consumer data. Some of them have also been charged with facilitating the rise of the surveillance state in China and its global diffusion.

However, there is a difference. In most democracies, there is a big push back against surveillance capitalism and the search for means to protect individuals and communities against corporate greed and state repression in the digital age. But we are at the very beginning of a challenging project to prevent the emergence of a digital dystopia.

The writer is director, Institute of South Asian Studies, National University of Singapore and contributing editor on international affairs for The Indian Express

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### FEDERAL MATTERS

THIS REFERS TO the report, ‘Draft NEP: Elite used English to marginalise large sections of the society’ (IE, June 3). India is not a homogeneous nation and attempts to impose a homogeneous policy is likely to trigger reactions. That means we should re-visit the question of federalism in India. This includes issues such as appointment and powers of governors, central ownership of the IAS and IPS and matters in the Concurrent List.

P Datta, Kolkata

### ODE TO RAMADAN

THIS REFERS TO the article, ‘On a month to reflect’ (IE, June 3). The piece is a spiritual ode to the fasting month of Ramadan. This Ramadan was spiritually the most moving in recent times. The scorching heat and the anti Muslim election rhetoric posed the ultimate test for our bodies and souls. Muslims appear to have passed that test. The challenge will be to turn the political challenge to the larger good of the country, and of the Muslims, through quality education, business and respect for women’s rights.

J.S.Bandukwala via e-mail

### A NEW MINISTRY

THIS REFERS TO the editorial, ‘The water test’ (IE, June 3). Like electricity and LPG connections, piped water supply

### LETTER OF THE WEEK AWARD

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to all households is critical for their welfare. The Prime Minister deserves credit for taking the first step towards providing piped water supply to all households. With per capita water availability expected to reduce, water conservation has become non negotiable. Hopefully, the new ministry will work in tandem with other ministries to ensure the same.

Bal Govind, Noida



K P KRISHNAN AND ROOPA KUDVA

## For skilling India

It requires tapping of technology and creation of conducive governance

OVER THE LAST 10 years, the Indian government has undertaken significant efforts in improving both the scale and quality of skilling, like setting up the National Skills Development Corporation (NSDC) in 2009, launching the Skill India mission in 2015, and the flagship skilling initiative, the Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana (PMKVY) in 2016. This, in turn, is expected to drive economic gains and social mobility for individuals as well as trigger a productivity dividend for enterprises.

Despite the progress made so far, today, learners face a multitude of challenges on their skilling journey. Two ecosystem barriers contribute directly to this: Informational asymmetries and limited quality assurance.

As far as the first barrier is concerned, there is a fundamental lack of awareness around why skills matter at the individual level. There is also a paucity of timely and reliable data on the supply of and demand for jobs, which makes it difficult for those seeking employment to identify what opportunities they should pursue. There also exists limited access to impartial and credible sources of information on high-quality service providers and high-potential opportunities, which means that jobseekers and learners end up relying on personal networks or prox-

imate training providers. As a result, they end up training in skills that are not responsive to the local and changing market needs.

Regarding quality assurance, currently, there are three primary overseeing bodies that manage the quality assurance process. The National Council for Vocational Training (NCVT) manages long-term skilling programmes while the National Skills Development Agency (NSDA) and the NSDC regulate short-term programmes. There is also an imbalance at various levels of the process that need correction, for example, incentives for different service providers are misaligned leading to situations where outcome-based disbursement models favour assessment agencies over training providers.

To unlock the potential of the skills ecosystem, these frictions must be smoothened through technology-led change, as well as through market-enabling governance. Until now, technology has played an enabling role in making existing systems and processes become smoother and more efficient (for example, digitisation of course curriculums). Moving to a technology-led transformation will help reach scale, promote inter-operability and create digital public goods for all to use, that is, the internet equivalent for skills.

Automated and scalable forms of interactions can help improve trust and credibility in the ecosystem and enable better decision-making by learners, service providers and employers. Two leading initiatives in this direction are (i) creating and adopting digital certificates that allow consent-based sharing of information in a machine-readable format, to ensure better security and authenticity and ii) open APIs that can enable stakeholders in the ecosystem to tap into large, centralised sets of information (e.g. public registries of trainers, students etc.) and build market solutions (e.g. ratings for training centres).

Consolidated and market-enabling governance can also help create the right incentives for service providers to cater to the needs of learners and employers effectively. A seminal step in this direction has been the creation of an overarching skilling regulator, the National Council for Vocational Education and Training (NCVET) by merging NCVT, NSDA and regulatory functions of NSDC. Over the next year, it is expected that NCVET will develop minimalistic and user-friendly guidelines to recognise and regulate two of the most important stakeholders in the skilling ecosystem — the awarding bodies, who accredit training institutions, and, the assess-

ment agencies, who assess learner performance. In turn, it will be incumbent upon the awarding bodies to monitor and regulate the functioning of affiliated training providers. NCVET will be a forward-looking regulator and will support disruptive innovation in the ecosystem like models that reduce the gap in market-based data between learners and service providers. NCVET will be a presence-less and paper-less regulator: It will take decisions that are rooted in evidence and real-time data driven, and, adopt a spirit of disclosure and transparency in its interactions. Most significantly, NCVET will adopt a learner-centric lens to its decision making.

To push the skilling agenda forward, it is important for the government to adopt the role of an ecosystem facilitator. This can foster informed decision-making by learners and employers, increase employer trust, and, enable upward and horizontal mobility of skilled workers. Technology and governance must work closely together to drive this transformative change.

Krishnan is secretary, ministry of skill development and entrepreneurship, government of India. Kudva is managing director, Omidyar Network India







## Crisis defused

Compulsory learning should be limited to the child's mother tongue

The Centre has moved quickly to defuse a potentially volatile controversy over the charge of Hindi imposition. It is quite apparent that the Narendra Modi government did not want the language issue to acquire disproportionate importance at a time when it is embarking on its second innings with a huge mandate. Further, given the impression that the ruling party does not have much of a presence in South India, barring Karnataka, it did not want to be seen as being insensitive to the concerns of southern States, especially Tamil Nadu. The reference in the newly unveiled draft National Education Policy to mandatory teaching of Hindi in all States was withdrawn following an outcry from political leaders in Tamil Nadu, a State that is quite sensitive to any hint of 'Hindi imposition' by the Centre. The modified draft under the heading 'Flexibility in the choice of languages', has omitted references to the language that students may choose. However, the broader recommendation regarding the implementation of a three-language formula remains, something Tamil Nadu, which will not budge from its two-language formula, is averse to. The gist of the original sentence in the draft NEP was that students could change one of the three languages of study in Grade 6, provided that in Hindi-speaking States they continued to study Hindi, English and one other Indian language of their choice, and those in non-Hindi-speaking States would study their regional language, besides Hindi and English. The revised draft merely says students may change one or more of their three languages in Grade 6 or 7, "so long as they still demonstrate proficiency in three languages (one language at the literature level) in their modular Board examinations some time during secondary school". It may not amount to a complete reversal, but is still important in terms of conciliatory messaging.

However, there is a larger issue here. Ever since the Constitution adopted Hindi as the official language, with English also as an official language for 15 years initially, there has been considerable tension between those who favour the indefinite usage of English and those who want to phase it out and give Hindi primacy. In Tamil Nadu, it is seen as a creeping imposition of Hindi in subtle and not-so-subtle forms. The tension has been managed based on the statesmanship behind Jawaharlal Nehru's assurance in 1959 that English would be an associate language as long as there are States that desire it. One would have thought that with the ascent of coalition politics the instinct to stoke differences based on language would die out. Unfortunately, it keeps coming up, especially in the form of imposing the three-language formula on States. Language is primarily a utilitarian tool. While acquisition of additional tools can indeed be beneficial, compulsory learning should be limited to one's mother tongue and English as the language that provides access to global knowledge and as a link language within India. It is time attempts to force Indians proficient in their mother tongue and English to acquire proficiency in a third are given up.

## Behemoth's shadow

Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar is clearly sensing the BJP breathing down his neck

Constituents of the National Democratic Alliance are feeling the weight of the BJP's dominance. With 303 seats, the BJP is not dependent on any party for its survival in government, an objective that Prime Minister Narendra Modi and party president Amit Shah, now also Union Home Minister, had publicly set even while they were scouting for regional allies ahead of the election. Alliance politics as India knew it, whereby partners bargained for political power, has been rendered redundant by the BJP. It has offered little more than symbolic representation to them in the government. While parties such as the Shiv Sena and the Lok Janshakti Party accepted one Cabinet berth each and joined the government, the Janata Dal (United) led by Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar considered such symbolic representation meaningless and perhaps even humiliating. The JD(U) turned down the offer of a single berth, and expanded the Council of Ministers in Bihar offering the BJP one berth, which it has, in turn, refused to accept. The BJP and the JD(U) have been partners for long, with a brief interlude beginning 2013, in which time the JD(U) formed the government in Bihar in alliance with the RJD and the Congress. By 2017 Mr. Kumar did an about-turn, parting with the two parties and taking the BJP's support to continue in office.

Another moment of reckoning is upon Mr. Kumar, almost. Bihar should have Assembly elections in 2020. Used to the indulgent style of an earlier generation of BJP leaders such as A.B. Vajpayee and L.K. Advani, the Chief Minister has never quite adjusted to the abrasive style of the current, far stronger BJP. Mr. Kumar, from the backward castes that hold considerable political heft in Bihar, has been a link between them and the upper castes drawn to the BJP and hassled by the RJD's more assertive form of social justice politics. Projecting himself as a backward caste leader and blunting social justice politics with Hindutva, Mr. Modi has brought about a realignment of social groups in Bihar. With the BJP's own leadership in the State now packed with several backward caste faces, the party is hoping to flip its equation with the JD(U) and take the dominant role, as it did with the Shiv Sena in Maharashtra. Mr. Kumar senses the ground under his feet slipping away even as his administrative adventurism of prohibition, after initial political dividends, has turned out to be a drag on the State's revenues and policing. To be an opponent of the BJP under Mr. Modi and Mr. Shah is not easy; as it turns out, being an ally isn't necessarily easier either.

# A rocky road for strategic partners

With decisions that adversely affect India, the Trump administration fails to distinguish friend from foe



MOHAMMED AYOUB

The Donald Trump administration's recent actions threaten the foundation of trust and flexibility on which India-U.S. relations are premised. However, they seem to be part of a pattern progressively visible in American foreign policy in which bullying friends has become the name of the game. The Trump administration's insensitive approach towards its allies in Western Europe by denigrating the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation and the European Union (EU), threatening to impose tariffs on EU goods in connection with trade disputes and Europe's relations with Russia, and Washington's unilateral withdrawal from the Iran nuclear deal that roiled its European partners are all evidence of this policy.

### Bookends of stability?

The same paradigm explains Washington's recent moves *vis-à-vis* India. These stand in sharp contrast to the first year of the Trump administration when the U.S. was actively wooing India as a strategic counterweight to China and because of its rapidly expanding market that was seen as providing great opportunities for American business. In a major foreign policy speech in October 2017, then U.S. Secretary of State Rex Tillerson declared that India and America were "two bookends of stability – on either side of the globe" and that the "emerging Del-

hi-Washington strategic partnership" was essential to anchor the rules-based world order for the next hundred years.

Even before Mr. Tillerson's speech India had come to be seen as a pillar of American policy in Asia. The term 'Indo-Pacific region' appeared prominently in the joint statement issued by Mr. Trump and Prime Minister Narendra Modi at the end of the latter's visit to the U.S. in June 2017. Since then, it has come to replace the term 'Asia-Pacific region' in American foreign policy jargon. In May 2018, the Pentagon changed the name of the U.S. Pacific Command to U.S. Indo-Pacific Command, emphasising not only the strategic linkage between the Indian and Pacific Oceans but also the geopolitical prominence of India in the U.S.'s Asian strategy.

However, the Trump administration seems to have reversed course in recent months. U.S. unilateral actions on three fronts have simultaneously demonstrated what amounts to downgrading India in American strategy. The announcement on April 22 by U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo that Washington would not renew after May 2 the exemption that it had granted India and seven other countries regarding import of Iranian oil was one sign that American unilateralism had trumped coherent strategic thinking.

The Iranian share of Indian oil imports stood at 10%. While it would not be impossible for India to replace Iranian oil, the American announcement failed to consider the strategic importance of Iran in Indian foreign policy and the damage it could do to India-Iran relations. Iran's strategic location and the common concerns of



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both countries regarding the future of Afghanistan and the threat of terrorism emanating from Pakistan make Tehran an ideal geopolitical ally of New Delhi. India is also engaged in building the Chabahar port in southeastern Iran, which could act as the gateway for India to Central Asia, bypassing a hostile Pakistan. Moreover, by forcing India to tamely accept the American diktat on Iranian oil, it has torn off the veneer of "strategic autonomy" that Indian policymakers had long touted as the fundamental creed of Indian foreign policy.

The second leg of this tripod is the U.S. threat to impose sanctions on India if it buys the S-400 missile defence system from Russia for which a deal had been signed in October 2018 by Russian President Vladimir Putin and Mr. Modi. The U.S. has argued that India's purchase of the S-400 systems will violate the Countering America's Adversaries Through Sanctions Act (CAATSA), a U.S. federal law that requires the country to impose sanctions on states entering into major military deals with Russia.

This puts India in a Catch-22 position. If it defies U.S. threats and

# The sum and substance of the jobs data

Rising unemployment must also be seen as a function of rising education and aspirations



SONALDE DESAI

The report from the Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS) is finally out, garnering a lot of attention based on selective reading of tables and spurring partisan debates. In particular, the staggering increase in the unemployment rate, from 1.7% in 2011-12 to 5.8% in 2017-18 for rural men and from 3.0% to 7.1% for urban men, has generated wide ranging hand-wringing. However, a more nuanced picture emerges if we are to look beyond the partisan debates to policy implications of the data on employment and unemployment. Three takeaway points from these data are of particular policy relevance.

### Three pointers

First, while the unemployment rate is a frequently used measure of poor performance of the economy, under conditions of rising school and college enrolment, it paints an inaccurate picture. Second, the reported unemployment rate is dominated by the experience of younger Indians who face higher employment challenges and exhibit greater willingness to wait for the right job than their older peers. Third, the unemployment challenge is greatest for people with secondary or higher edu-

cation, and rising education levels inflate unemployment challenges. These three conditions, taken together, suggest that part of India's unemployment challenge lies in its success in expanding education while not expanding formal sector jobs.

Comparison of male employment and unemployment data from the National Sample Survey Office's (NSSO's) 68th round Employment survey conducted in 2011-12 and the new PLFS of 2017-18 illustrates each of these points. The unemployment rate is calculated by dividing the number of unemployed by the number in the labour forces, that is, the sum of employed and unemployed. This statistic ignores people who are out of the labour force – students, homemakers and the disabled.

### Unemployment rate data

As long as the proportion of the population out of the labour force is more or less stable, the unemployment rate is a good indicator of the changes in the employment situation. However, India has seen massive changes in proportion of individuals enrolled in an educational institution over the past decade. For 15-19-year-old rural men, the proportion primarily engaged in studying increased from 64% to 72% between 2011-12 and 2017-18. As a result, while the proportion of the population aged 15-19 that is unemployed doubled from 3% to 6.9%, the unemployment rate tripled from 9% to 27%. Leaving the numerator (proportion of population unemployed) same while the



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denominator changes by removing students from the labour force can overstate job losses.

The proportion of the population that is unemployed has increased only slightly for population aged 30 and above but increased substantially for younger men. For rural men (30-34), the proportion of unemployed increased from 1% to 2.3% while that for men (20-24) increased from 4.6% to 16.1%. Much of the increase in male unemployment is located among ages 15-29. It is important to recognise that in a country dominated by informal sector work, remaining unemployed is possible only for individuals whose families can survive without their immediate contributions. While a 25-year-old may spend his time diligently applying for a formal sector and be supported by his parents during this period, a 30-year-old with a wife and children may have no option but to take any work available to him, even if it pays poorly and offers little job security.

Finally, the unemployment rate has been traditionally high for men with secondary or higher level of education and this is the segment in which most of the in-

crease in unemployment is located. The unemployment rate for illiterate rural men increased from 0.5 to 1.7 between 2011-12 and 2017-18 but the absolute increase was substantially larger, from 3.8 to 10.5 for rural men with at least secondary education. Similar trends are evident for urban men.

This increase in unemployment for educated youth comes at a time when education has expanded substantially. Among rural men (15-29 years), the population with secondary or higher education increased from 43% to 53% between 2011-12 and 2017-18; in urban areas there was a five percentage point increase, from 61% to 66%.

These three observations taken together suggest that the roots of India's present day unemployment challenges lie in its very success. Educational expansion affects the unemployment debate by skewing the unemployment statistics and by creating greater competition for well-paid jobs among a rising population of educated youth. Rising prosperity allows young graduates to wait for well-paying jobs, creating an army of educated unemployed, before being forced to accept any work, frequently returning to family farms or starting small shops.

Recognition of rising unemployment as a function of rising education forces us to grapple with different issues than a simple focus on unemployment statistics. If public policies such as demonetisation are responsible for rising unemployment, we would see across-the-board increase in unemploy-

ment, thus allowing the new government time to reflect on the issue.

Taken together, these three decisions indicate that Washington is impervious to Indian strategic concerns and economic interests despite its earlier pronouncements that it considers India a valued "strategic partner". These decisions are part of a unilateralist syndrome that currently afflicts American foreign policy. Mr. Trump and his advisers, principally National Security Adviser John Bolton and Mr. Pompeo, no longer seem to discriminate between friend and foe when making important policy decisions. Such an attitude does not bode well for the future of America's relations with its friends and allies. Washington appears to have overlooked the fact that even the "indispensable nation" needs reliable friends and allies.

### Other options

S. Jaishankar, India's new Minister of External Affairs and an outstanding diplomat with a wealth of experience in dealing with Washington, will have to convince American policy-makers that this maxim is relevant to the U.S.'s relations with India. Mr. Jaishankar should subtly communicate to his interlocutors that this is especially true now that the international system is becoming progressively multipolar, thus increasing foreign policy options available to Indian policymakers.

Mohammed Ayoub is University Distinguished Professor Emeritus of International Relations, Michigan State University and Non-Resident Senior Fellow, Center for Global Policy, Washington DC

Modern India is an aspirational society. After decades of economic stagnation, the 21st century has seen massive growth in aspirations. Parents invest their hearts and souls along with their rising incomes in educating their children. Children hope to make rapid economic progress well beyond the modest gains achieved by their parents' generation. The unemployment statistics based on PLFS data document the challenges these young people are likely to face.

### Meeting aspirations

The Bharatiya Janata Party-led National Democratic Alliance has returned to power with a mandate that allows it the freedom to focus on key challenges facing modern India. Creating jobs for an increasingly educated workforce and ensuring that the new workers are well equipped to enter the labour force are twin challenges that deserve greatest priority. One hopes that leaders of the present government who made their political debut during the student movement in the 1970s will meet this challenge head-on.

Modern India is an aspirational society. After decades of economic stagnation, the 21st century has seen massive growth in aspirations. Parents invest their hearts and souls along with their rising incomes in educating their children. Children hope to make rapid economic progress well beyond the modest gains achieved by their parents' generation. The unemployment statistics based on PLFS data document the challenges these young people are likely to face.

Sonalde Desai is Professor, University of Maryland and the National Council of Applied Economic Research (NCAER). The views expressed are personal

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

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

### Assessing 2019

The writer (Editorial page, "Depths of field, defined and blurred", June 3) seems to have donned the mantle of a modern Cassandra to prophesy doom and gloom for the nation merely because the people have favoured a second term for the Narendra Modi government. With the writer's imagination running riot, what was intended as a caricatured critique of the 2019 verdict seems to have ended up as a needless and unapologetic exercise of 'catastrophising', notwithstanding his conclusion that "everything in the future is out of focus". One expects the government's critics to forecast dire things but also suggest the means to realise possible positives and desirable ends. To write a

government's scorecard based on worst case scenarios instead of considering what it proposes to do is embracing political adversary-ism for its own sake. Commentators who seem displeased with the people's verdict should realise that unwarranted scaremongering about the nation's future is an implied belittlement of the popular will.

V.N. MUKUNDARAJAN,  
Thiruvananthapuram

### Congress's strategy

As a political party, the Indian National Congress has failed miserably due to its policy of 'opposing for the sake of opposing' and disrupting the functioning of Parliament. Congress president Rahul Gandhi's advice to his party's MPs to "shout more" against the

government and ensure that the BJP does not have a walkover in Parliament and its administration is indecorous as far as the leader of a national party is concerned. This strategy will further erode people's faith in the party. Instead, Congress MPs should be magnanimous in co-operating with the government, help it pass welfare schemes and offer constructive criticism when something is going wrong.

V.P. DHANANJAYAN,  
Chennai

### Language formula

It is indeed ideal if "we can create a situation where every person can study in the language he dreams in, and live in an atmosphere where all in India can understand one common language". But in a country with well-defined linguistic

diversity and consequent chauvinism this is an impossible dream. As a Tamilian born and brought up in Kerala, I recollect quite a few of us voluntarily joining Hindi classes after school hours, and conducted by the Dakshin Bharat Hindi Prachar Sabha. Our national feeling brightened as Hindi was not imposed on us and it did no harm to our mother tongue. If one follows the Kerala model, there do not seem to be problems with Hindi.

In some districts in Kerala, buses have route names in Hindi written in Devanagari to help the large numbers of migrant labourers. However, the Central government in no case can impose Hindi in Tamil Nadu.

C.V. VENUGOPALAN,  
Palakkad, Kerala

### Politics of food

It is clear that the Akshaya Patra Foundation (TAPF) will not use onions and/or garlic in preparations in mid-day meals for children ('Magazine', "The politics of food", June 2). And the TAPF knows pretty well that it is next to impossible for the government to get a replacement NGO to supply 4.5 lakh meals overnight. So what is to be done to overcome the impasse? For a start, the government must award new contracts to NGOs which will strictly comply with mid-day meal preparations that are not bland and include onion, garlic and eggs. Independent surprise tests need to be carried out to verify the charge that the food is "bland". Instead of "talking", "debating" and "protesting" about the lack

of onion and garlic, the government may request schools to come forward on a voluntary basis and provide these in some form or other. Egg can be added and a nutrition expert may even suggest providing an omelette, scrambled egg and/or mix these with rice to make the meal more palatable. There should also be a gradual reduction in dependence on the TAPF while ensuring that schools which "volunteer" to introduce this get a subsidy from the government or let the school management impose a nominal charge for this on students. Finally, all this should be done without any scope for malpractice.

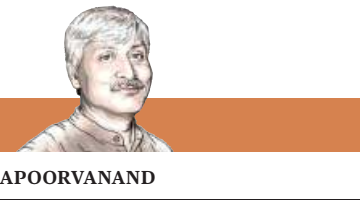
Dr. A.K. RAMIDAS,  
Bengaluru

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# The changing idea of a university

Why the education system in India is staring at a dismal future



The first proposal of this government to be made public was the 100-day action plan for education. It includes framing a new National Education Policy, replacing the University Grants Commission (UGC) with another body, and adding 10 more Institutions of Eminence. This is merely a continuation of what the previous government was doing. This comes as no surprise; after all, it is well known that the Bharatiya Janata Party is deeply interested in education and culture. The last five years of the Modi government have shown us the nature of interventions made in the field of education.

### The purpose of education

While the media has extensively covered the attacks on institutions such as Jawaharlal Nehru University and Hyderabad Central University, and the violence unleashed by the Akhil Bharathi Vidyarthi Parishad, the student arm of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh, in some places, what is more long lasting is the way the BJP has instrumentalised education by binding it to the objective of creating skills and employment and making education useful for the market. By doing this, it has hollowed out the whole purpose of education, which is to preserve and disseminate knowledge and generate new knowledge. This is the first time in the history of independent India that common people have started looking at universities as spaces where their hard-earned money is being mis-spent. The business of knowledge creation itself is being perceived as extravagant and unnecessary. So, if you look for the word 'knowledge' in the policy documents of the government, you are bound to be disappointed.

The very idea of pursuing truth and developing critical thought, which were seen as the role of universities, has gone into disuse. Universities were spaces where all kinds of ideas, however dominant, were constantly examined. The only aim



"The very idea of pursuing truth and developing critical thought, which were seen as the role of universities, has gone into disuse." Students of Hyderabad Central University at their convocation in Hyderabad in 2012. ■ M. SUBHASH

of education, as propounded by the BJP, seems to be to mainly inculcate nationalism, as prescribed by the government, among students as well as teachers. Vice chancellors and directors of institutes are going out of their way to prove their nationalistic credentials to the government. Where is the utility of criticality then? And what then becomes the role of research? The government even circulated a list of research areas and topics to be kept in mind while preparing and approving research proposals. This essentially means that there is no space for free inquiry in the field of higher education any more. If we look at the research proposals approved by the Indian Council of Social Science Research, the Indian Council of Historical Research and even scientific bodies, we realise the thinning of this area. Even the All India Institute of Medical Sciences recently held a seminar on 'astrology and the medical sciences'. This means that the very idea of science is under severe stress. Also, the stories of the pressure that independent research institutions are facing in the name of appraisal and scrutiny have not come out in the open for obvious

reasons.

Universities are supposed to keep alive the idea of excellence before the people at large. However, people look at some universities with suspicion today as students and scholars have been branded 'elitist', 'leftist' and 'anti-national' by the ruling party. If mediocre people are made to head top institutions of higher education, it becomes clear that all that matters is ideology. Mediocrity at all levels is seen as the democratisation of a space which was earlier the preserve of the 'elites'. In short, developing intellect is seen as unnecessary and even dangerous. All we need to do is conform to prevailing common sense. So, it is only logical that state resources are not wasted on activities which are seen as 'extra'.

### Withdrawal of state support

Apart from all this, public universities are being systematically weakened by the steady withdrawal of state support to them. This is ironically at a time when the number of first-generation learners in the university space has reached a satisfactory level. Universities needed more

support to improve access to higher education. Unfortunately, they are now facing a fund crunch. This leaves these students at a great disadvantage.

The government is firming an unequal hierarchy in the field by promoting the idea of Institutions of Eminence and keeping autonomy reserved for a privileged set of institutions. Most public universities with a long tradition are kept out of it, thus demoralising their teachers and students. Autonomy to such institutions has also been linked to withdrawal of state support.

The regulatory mechanism for the field of higher education had started to weaken during the UPA regime itself. The Modi government only furthered the process. Directives from the government became frequent and regulatory agencies were used to route them to universities. Directives from bodies like the UGC kept disrupting the functioning of universities. From reservation in faculty appointments to norms for doctoral research and framing of undergraduate and postgraduate courses and syllabi, it has been a story of over-reach and encroachment of the university space by the UGC. Universities have also failed to assert their autonomy and have allowed the UGC to enter areas it is not supposed to.

Along with this we have seen a campaign to purge campuses of dangerous 'anti-national' elements. Meetings and seminars have been held exhorting students to identify such elements. Independent scholars are now being shunned by universities and the nationalism check is applied almost everywhere.

Publishing is part of the academic ecosystem. Major publishing houses have started getting manuscripts legally vetted to avoid litigation and attack by 'nationalist' elements. We can expect publishing to take a right turn under the new regime.

We have not talked about school education. The RSS ran thousands of schools even when the NDA was not in power. The BJP's return to power provides a golden opportunity for the RSS to dictate syllabi, train teachers and even select them. All these developments over the last five years show that the education system is staring at a dismal future.

Apoorvanand teaches at Delhi University

# The anatomy of an image

The colossal information machine that helped create a winning narrative for the BJP is yet to be acknowledged



VAISHNA ROY

After the extraordinary mandate the BJP won, two ideas have been put forth: that Indians have suddenly adopted Hindutva and that they want the country "saved" by a strong leader. What nobody seems ready to acknowledge yet is the colossal nudge that social media and partisan mainstream television gave to creating this twin narrative in the popular consciousness.

If a fundamentally shrewd and pragmatic electorate was ready to ignore its own problems caused by demonetisation, agrarian distress and a stumbling economy, we must ask if it did this by its own volition or if it was steered into it by a PR blitz fabulously orchestrated by television and social media.

### The suppression of data

A report leaked in January showed unemployment at a 45-year high of 6.1%, but the government disowned it then and a Union Minister called it "fake news". Across channels, this stance was faithfully reiterated. The next month, there was a near-total absence of any examination of the security lapses that might have enabled the attack in Pulwama. Instead, only one note was struck hysterically: retaliation. Any attempt to scrutinise the Balakot air strikes was shouted down as 'anti-national', and television covered it as one might a war film.

Now, when the government releases the same unemployment figures or confirms that friendly fire brought down an Indian Air Force chopper, there's barely any protest. The suppression of data and the stalling of reports has already been normalised.

Crores are being spent in propaganda to ceaselessly create urban legends, films, web series, comic books, memes and jingles that incessantly shore up the Modi narrative. For this to work, it must be unchallenged – not only must Prime Minister Narendra Modi be shown as a great leader, he must be shown as a *flawless* leader. So when he goes off script with an erroneous comment about radar, a stream of quasi-scientific messages are released simultaneously to prove the comment wasn't wrong. Facts are constantly overta-

ken by fables fed directly into people's smartphones.

This disinformation network, running parallel to the hectoring and fawning of television, is the nerve centre of the BJP's propaganda machine. With dedicated cells of thousands of drone bees, it reaches millions every minute to disseminate its own post-truth version of facts. Eminent economists can point out the failure of demonetisation or the stagnation of exports or the decline in GDP growth, but it makes no difference because each critique is met with a social media forward that says the opposite.

### Disinformation deluge

We are guilty of underestimating the incalculable harm that fake news has done to how and what the country thinks. The entire political arena has been turned into a room of mirrors where nothing is as it seems. Phoney 'government' documents regularly do the rounds with statistics about terrorism or GDP figures that are dramatically different from the data even on government websites. Photographs of a teenage boy who committed suicide in Belagavi are circulated with captions claiming he was lynched for protecting cattle from cow smugglers. Let's understand this: Indians did not suddenly adopt militant Hindutva; they have been assiduously conditioned into doing so by a carpet-bombing of disinformation.

The websites that bust fake news are doing a magnificent job, but their reach is just not enough because verification takes far longer than the creation of fake news; and because it's nearly impossible to compete with an army of bots and keyboard warriors. Even after

being exposed, the Belagavi travesty continues to be circulated.

Instead of applauding the BJP's social media strategy as some disembodied and arcane political craft, we need to worry about the repercussions of such massive manipulation of thought. And we need to worry that television is playing wingman.

Behind the razzle-dazzle of the landslide victory lurk uneasy queries about the reliability of government data and the country's growing democracy deficit. If the nation is supposed to have become both insecure and intolerant overnight, it would be interesting to know how such a mammoth exercise in manufactured consent has been executed. Because at some point the illusion is going to break and we will have to pick up the pieces.

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MEETA AHLAWAT

### SINGLE FILE

## Monkeypox scare

How the spread of the virus can be limited

R. PRASAD



AFP

On May 9, the Ministry of Health in Singapore confirmed that a Nigerian who had arrived in the city on April 28 had the rare disease, monkeypox. The monkeypox virus is similar to human smallpox and belongs to the virus family Poxviridae. It is transmitted primarily

ly through infected animals (rodents and primates). The man is suspected to have eaten bushmeat before arriving in Singapore, which could be the source of the virus.

Human-to-human transmission of monkeypox is possible but limited. The virus is transmitted to those in close contact through secretions of the respiratory tract and skin lesions. While the disease is largely self-limiting, in some cases it does cause complications leading to death. During monkeypox outbreaks, fatality varies from 1-10%, with most deaths seen in younger people.

The symptoms of monkeypox showed two days after the Nigerian arrived in Singapore, but he remained in his hotel till May 7. He was transferred to a public hospital on that day and tested positive for monkeypox the next day, when he was referred to the National Centre for Infectious Diseases, Singapore. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), he is now in a stable condition.

To limit the spread of the disease, Singapore has already identified 23 persons who were in close contact with the patient and offered smallpox vaccination. The WHO notes that prior smallpox vaccination is highly effective in preventing monkeypox. Data from Africa suggest that smallpox vaccine offers at least 85% protection against monkeypox if the vaccine is administered before exposure to the virus.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, U.S., vaccination after exposure to monkeypox "may help prevent the disease or make it less severe". In Singapore, at least 14 persons have been vaccinated. Close contacts have also been quarantined, while other contacts are under active surveillance.

Monkeypox occurs sporadically in Central and West Africa; cases have been reported from 10 African countries. It was first identified in humans in 1970 in the Democratic Republic of Congo, where the disease has now become endemic. There were three confirmed cases in 2016 from the Central African Republic. In late 2017, 61 laboratory-confirmed cases were reported from Nigeria. One confirmed case and 15 suspected cases were reported in 2018 from Cameroon. Outside Africa, the first case was reported from the U.S. in 2003. In 2018, monkeypox was documented in three people in the U.K. and in one person in Israel.

Since the majority of monkeypox virus transmissions to humans are from animals, the WHO advocates "restricting or banning the movement" of small mammals and monkeys from countries where the virus is prevalent to limit the spread of the virus.

The writer is the Science Editor of The Hindu



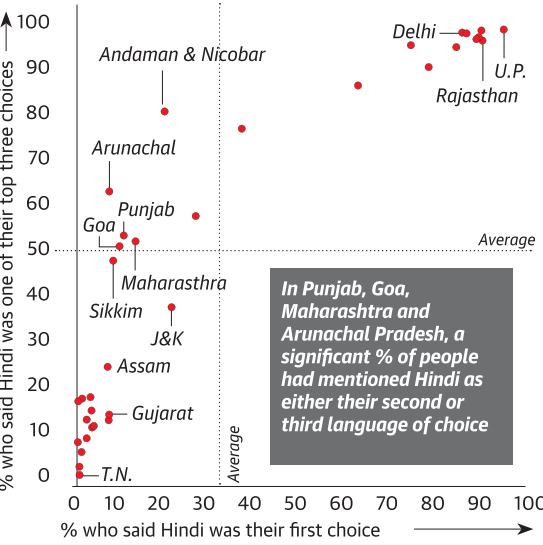
### DATA POINT

## Most for many

During the 2011 Census survey, people in only 12 of the 35\* States and UTs had overwhelmingly chosen Hindi as their first choice for communication. Among the rest, while a few chose Hindi as their second or third language of choice for communication, a majority of them chose English. By **Sumant Sen**

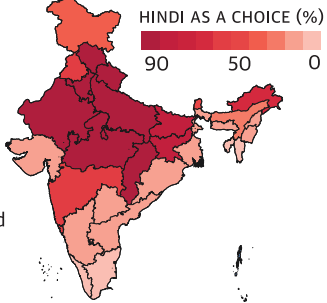
### Prevalence of Hindi

The chart plots the % of people who chose Hindi as their first choice against the % who chose Hindi as one of their top three choices. In 23 States and UTs Hindi was not the first choice of language. Of those 23, in 16 States, a very low percentage had chosen Hindi as a second or third choice



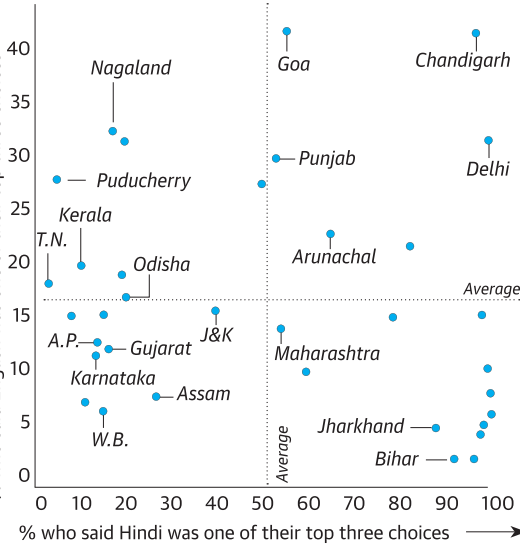
### Northern skew

The map shows the State-wise percentage of people who stated Hindi as their first, second, or third choice of language. Most of the 12 States and UTs that chose Hindi as their first choice were located in northern and central India. The south had the least % of such people



### A matter of choice

The graph plots the % who chose Hindi as one of their top three choices against the % who chose English as one of their top three choices. In general, States which chose Hindi predominantly as one of their top three choices had the least % of people choosing English



### FROM The ~~1947~~ Hindu. ARCHIVES

FIFTY YEARS AGO JUNE 4, 1969

## Curfew in Hyderabad, Warangal

Within 24 hours after the Army was called out to assist the civilian authorities to maintain law and order a seven-hour curfew, ending at 5 a.m. to-morrow, was clamped in Hyderabad city. A 24-hour curfew was also imposed on Warangal. The curfew in both places followed unabated violence and arson for almost the entire day to-day [June 3]. The police opened fire at 11 places in Hyderabad for the second day to-day resulting in the death of six persons and injuries to 32, as violent Telengana agitators went on a rampage. The police also fired on riotous mobs at Warangal and at Kodangal in Mahbubnagar District. Attendance in many centres was thin, and at least at one centre not a single student turned up. No examinations could be held in five centres because the examination papers did not reach them. Hyderabad City to-day witnessed large-scale arson, looting and vandalism.

A HUNDRED YEARS AGO JUNE 4, 1919.

## Madras Fisheries.

H.E. Lord Willingdon who is in charge of Fisheries and Industries portfolios, to-day [June 3] at 'Stone House' [in Coonoor], accorded Rao Bahadur Govindan, Assistant Director of Fisheries, an interview. The latest development of the west coast fish industry is of inaugurating schools for the children of fishermen and a school for training teachers for these schools is to be opened at Calicut with Mr. G. Menon, B.A.,B.L., late of Zamorin's College as headmaster. Sir Frederick Nicholson, who originated the fisheries in 1905 and held the post of Honorary Director, has resigned. He has consented to act as Superintendent of Fisheries on the West Coast, periodically inspecting them and to advise the fishermen of the latest scientific appliances. Mr. Hornell, Marine Biologist and who was Superintendent of Shank and Pearl fisheries in Tuticorin, is now the Director on a salary of Rs. 1,200.

### CONCEPTUAL

## Regret theory

ECONOMICS

This refers to the theory that while making decisions under uncertainty, apart from the possible benefits of their decisions, people also take into account the likely regret that they will experience in case their decisions fail to yield the expected benefits. Further, the delayed feedback that people receive about what they should have done after failing to achieve the desired benefit can cause them to experience regret. Regret theory was first developed by British economists Graham Loomes and Robert Sugden in their 1982 paper "Regret theory: An alternative theory of rational choice under uncertainty".

### MORE ON THE WEB



The Hindu Explains: What is Section 376E and how does it affect the Shakti Mills gang rape case?

bit.ly/Section376E





उत्तर प्रदेश में सपा-बसपा के गठबंधन में पड़ी दरार की सूचना बताती है कि ठोस जमीनी आधार के बजाय तात्कालिक चुनावी लाभ के लिए बने गठजोड़ अंततः अस्थायी ही होते हैं।

## गठबंधन में दरार?

नीति, सोच और वैचारिकता के साझा के बजाय तात्कालिक चुनावी लाभ को ध्यान में रखकर राजनीतिक गठबंधन किए जाते हैं, तब उसका वही हश्र होता है, जैसा उत्तर प्रदेश में दिख रहा है, जहां सपा और बसपा के बीच हुए महागठबंधन में दरार पड़ने के संकेत हैं। गठबंधन के खत्म होने का औपचारिक एलान तो अभी नहीं हुआ है, पर बसपा की समीक्षा बैठक में मायावती ने गठबंधन के प्रयोग की विफलता पर जैसी निराशा और नाखुशी जताई, वह इसका भविष्य बताने के लिए काफी है। उनका कहना था कि बसपा का वोट सपा में जिस तरह स्थानांतरित हुआ, सपा का वोट उस तरह बसपा में नहीं आया और सपा यादव मतां में हुए बंटवारे तक को नहीं रोक पाई। जाटों

का वोट बसपा प्रत्याशियों को न मिलने की बात कहकर उन्होंने रालोद के प्रति भी अपनी नाखुशी जताई। बसपा सुप्रीमो ने सूबे की ग्यारह विधानसभा सीटों पर होने वाले उपचुनावों में अकेले लड़ने की जो बात कही है, वह भी चौंकाने वाली है, क्योंकि बसपा आम तौर पर उपचुनाव नहीं लड़ती। लोकसभा के उपचुनाव में भाजपा के खिलाफ सपा-बसपा गठबंधन के सफल प्रयोग से उत्साहित होकर अखिलेश और मायावती ने लोकसभा चुनाव में इसे दोहराने का फैसला तो कर लिया, पर वे भूल गए भिन्न राजनीतिक धरातलों पर खड़ी दो क्षेत्रीय प्रतिद्वंद्वी पार्टियों के बीच गठजोड़ स्वाभाविक नहीं हो सकता। बसपा ने 38, सपा ने 37 और रालोद ने तीन सीटों पर चुनाव लड़ा था और अमेठी व रायबरेली की सीटें कांग्रेस के लिए छोड़ दी थीं। अखिलेश ने तब कहा था कि यह

गठबंधन 2022 के विधानसभा चुनाव तक चलेगा। सिर्फ यही नहीं कि भाजपा को रोकने के एकमात्र लक्ष्य पर बने इस गठबंधन पर सपा-बसपा के नेता, कार्यकर्ता सहमत नहीं थे, बल्कि इसमें गठबंधन धर्म का पालन भी नहीं किया गया। बेशक बसपा नाराज है, लेकिन वह शून्य से दस सीट पर पहुंच गई है, जबकि सपा न सिर्फ पांच सीट पर बनी रही, बल्कि कन्नौज, बदायूं और फिरोजाबाद जैसे अपने गढ़ में उसकी हार हुई। यानी सीटों के चयन में पारदर्शिता नहीं बरती गई और बसपा के वोट भी सपा में नहीं गए। लेकिन जमीनी आधार के बगैर बने हवाई गठबंधनों का यही हश्र होता है। उत्तर प्रदेश में पिछले विधानसभा चुनाव के समय हमने सपा और कांग्रेस का गठबंधन बनते और चुनाव के बाद उसे टूटते हुए देखा ही था।

# दक्षिण में भाजपा की परीक्षा



लोकसभा चुनाव में कर्नाटक और तेलंगाना में शानदार प्रदर्शन करने के बावजूद भाजपा उस केरल में अभी तक सफल नहीं हो पाई है, जहां संघ की मजबूत उपस्थिति है।



जी श्रीदत्तन, वरिष्ठ पत्रकार

राजशेखर रेड्डी के नेतृत्व में कांग्रेस ऐतिहासिक जीत दर्ज करने में कामयाब रही, पर आंध्र प्रदेश के विभाजन के बाद उसका अस्तित्व खत्म हो गया। भाजपा हमेशा तेंदपा के सहारे वहां कुछ सीटें जीतती रही। इस बार भाजपा ने वहां गठबंधन नहीं किया था, इसलिए उसका वोट प्रतिशत घटकर 0.96 फीसदी रह गया।

तमिलनाडु की राजनीति में भाजपा एवं कांग्रेस जैसी राष्ट्रीय पार्टियां सीमांत भूमिकाएं ही निभाती

हैं, जहां दो द्रविड़ पार्टियां-अन्नाद्रमुक और द्रमुक लगातार मुख्य भूमिका में रहती हैं। हालांकि इस बार भाजपा ने प्रमुख साझेदार के रूप में अन्नाद्रमुक और छह अन्य जाति आधारित पार्टियों के साथ गठजोड़ किया था, लेकिन द्रमुक की अगुवाई में बने गठबंधन ने राज्य में भाजपा की दाल नहीं गलने दी। 39 लोकसभा सीटों में से द्रमुक ने 23 सीटें और कांग्रेस ने आठ सीटें जीतीं। भाजपा से अलग रहकर अन्नाद्रमुक ने 2014 के

लोकसभा चुनाव में भारी सफलता हासिल की थी, वह इस बार मात्र एक सीट जीत पाई। भाजपा का वोट शेयर जो 2014 में 5.56 फीसदी था, वह इस बार घटकर मात्र 3.66 फीसदी रह गया।

तमिल अभिमान और हिंदी विरोधी और उत्तर भारत विरोधी भावनाओं ने ही द्रविड़ राजनीति की आधारशिला रखी। तमिलनाडु की राजनीति में भाजपा अपने लिए कोई जगह नहीं बना पाई है। अगर उसे अपना विस्तार करना है, तो ताकतवर क्षेत्रीय नेता तैयार करने होंगे, जो मतदाताओं के सामने एक नई कहानी पेश कर सकें। केरल में संघ के मजबूत संगठन के बावजूद भाजपा क्यों नहीं बढ़ पा रही, इस सवाल का जवाब देते हुए संघ प्रमुख मोहन भागवत ने कहा कि पार्टी एक दुर्जय नेतृत्व का निर्माण करने में सफल नहीं हुई, जो अवसरों का लाभ उठा सके।

केरल में भाजपा जिस स्थिति का सामना कर रही है, उसका यह सटीक विश्लेषण है। पार्टी मोदी सरकार की उपलब्धियों को लोगों तक पहुंचाने में विफल रही है। राष्ट्रीय स्तर पर बेहद लोकप्रिय होने के बावजूद वह राज्य के सबसे कम लोकप्रिय नेताओं में से एक हैं। आंध्र प्रदेश और तमिलनाडु के विपरीत केरल संघ परिवार के लिए उर्वर भूमि रहा है। राज्य में संघ परिवार की अधिकतम संख्या में शाखाएं हैं। फिर भी भाजपा को राज्य में एक बड़ी चुनावी जीत अब तक नहीं मिली है। इस बार पार्टी के वोट प्रतिशत में मामूली इजाफा हुआ है।

व्यापक रूप से देखा गया कि भाजपा को अंततः सबरीमाला मुद्दे के रूप में अयोध्या जैसा मौका मिल गया, लेकिन अप्रत्याशित हिंदू लामबंदी से पार्टी फायदा उठाने में विफल रही। इस लामबंदी का सबसे ज्यादा फायदा कांग्रेस की अगुआई में यूडीएफ को मिला। चूंकि भाजपा जीतने वाली पार्टी के रूप में मतदाताओं के बीच

अपनी छवि नहीं बना सकी, तो हिंदुओं ने देखा कि कांग्रेस ही माफका के नेतृत्व वाले एलडीएफ को हरा सकती है, जो सबरीमाला विवाद और अन्य मुद्दों के कारण भारी सत्ता विरोधी रुझान का सामना कर रहा था।

केरल की जनसांख्यिकी भी भाजपा के लिए चुनौती पेश करती है। 2011 की जनगणना के मुताबिक, वहां 56 फीसदी हिंदू, 26 फीसदी मुस्लिम और 18 फीसदी ईसाई हैं। वहां की जनसांख्यिकी एवं सामाजिक समीकरण भी भाजपा को तीसरे विकल्प के रूप में उभरने नहीं देते। जब भी भाजपा की संभावनाएं उज्ज्वल होती हैं, विरोधी दल उसे हराने के लिए क्रॉस वॉटिंग करते हैं।

भाजपा को अपना आधार बढ़ाने के लिए अल्पसंख्यकों का विश्वास जीतना पड़ेगा। कुछ ईसाई समूहों ने पार्टी और मोदी के प्रति अपना झुकाव दिखाया है। ईसाइयों का भरोसा जीतने के लिए भाजपा ने नौकरशाह से राजनेता बने अल्फोंस कन्नमथमन को नियुक्त किया और दशकों से पार्टी के लिए काम कर रहे अन्य ईसाई नेताओं को छोड़ दिया। लेकिन वह पार्टी के लिए बोझ बन गए, क्योंकि वह पार्टी कार्यकर्ताओं और जनता के भरोसे को प्रेरित नहीं कर सके। यहां तक कि वह अपने समुदाय का समर्थन भी पार्टी के लिए नहीं अर्जित कर सके। चुनाव में उनकी जमानत भी जब्त हो गई। पार्टी सोनिया गांधी के पूर्व सहयोगी टॉम वडक्कन (जो रोमन कैथोलिक हैं) को ले आई। लेकिन वडक्कन को भी स्थानीय समर्थन नहीं है।

हाल ही में प्रधानमंत्री नरेंद्र मोदी ने 'सबका साथ, सबका विकास' के साथ 'सबका विश्वास' भी जोड़ा है। दक्षिण के इन राज्यों में पार्टी को जीवंत बनाने के लिए हो सकता है कि भाजपा इस मंत्र को कार्यरूप दे।

## खत्म होते बाग-बगीचे

रोज बढ़ रही गर्मी से बचने का कोई उपाय हमारी चिंता में नहीं है। नदी-नाले सूख रहे हैं। हवा की तपन को नियंत्रित करने वाले बड़े-बड़े बाग-बगीचे और झाड़ियों को हम निर्दयतापूर्वक समाप्त करते जा रहे हैं।



सुभाष चंद्र कुशावाहा

समझने के लिए हमें देहरादून के वर्तमान को देखना होगा। कभी पुरा देहरादून शहर बागों से ढका रहता था। लीची के मशहूर बाग और हरे-भरे पेड़ शहर की शोभा बढ़ाते थे। बीती सदी के साठ के दशक तक बने देहरादून के मकानों में पंखों का प्रावधान नहीं होता था। ढाई बीघे के प्लॉट में एक छोटा मकान बना होता, शेष में बाग और फूल-पौधे होते थे। गर्मियों में एक-दो दिन गर्मी पड़ती और अगले दिन बारिश से मौसम सुहाना हो जाता। आज स्थिति बदल चुकी है। पुरा राजपुर रोड शांति कॉम्प्लेक्स से भरा पड़ा है। पेड़ गायब हो चुके हैं और दिन का तापमान 45 डिग्री सेल्सियस पांर रहा है। आखिर हमारे विकास मॉडल में कुछ तो खोत है,

जो प्रकृति को नष्ट कर धरती का तापमान बढ़ा रहा है। धरती पर जीव का अस्तित्व इसके टंडा होने से ही संभव हुआ था। अब अगर धरती फिर तपती जा रही है, तो निश्चय ही धरती से जीवों के खत्म होने का समय करीब है।

वाहनों की बढ़ती संख्या और घरों में लगे एसी भी गर्मी बढ़ा रहे हैं। हरे-भरे बागों और जंगलों में गर्मी को नियंत्रित करने और मानसून को बरसने के लिए बाध्य करने की जो क्षमता होती थी, वह अब नहीं रही। बगीचों से गुजरती गर्म हवा, पेड़ों के पत्तों को छूकर ठंडी हो जाती थी। पत्तियां तापमान को नियंत्रित करती थीं। आज हम धरती को बेपर्दा करते जा रहे हैं। नंगी धरती की हवा रूखी-सूखी हो गई है। गर्मी को नियंत्रित करने के लिए बाग और तालाबों का जो महत्व समाज में पहले था, हमने उसे नकार दिया। हमारे लोकगीतों में भी बागों और तालाबों का काफी जिक्र हुआ है।

गर्मी बढ़ाने और बाग-बगीचों को नष्ट करने में हमारी तथाकथित विकास नीतियां और कॉरपोरेट की धनलिप्सा जिम्मेदार है, क्योंकि प्रकृति का भोग वही अधिक करता है। उसने अपने लिए हर चीज वातानुकूलित बना ली है। जब तक इन नीतियों की समीक्षा नहीं होगी, तब तक गर्मी बढ़ेगी और धरती झुलसती रहेगी।

### मां की निर्भीकता

रामकृष्ण परमहंस की स्त्री शारदा देवी उन दिनों जयरामबाटी स्थित अपने मायके में रह रही थीं। उनकी इच्छा हुई कि गांव से कोलकाता जाकर गंगा स्नान तथा पति के दर्शन किए जाएं। कुछ ग्रामीण गंगास्नान के लिए जा रहे थे। वह भी कुछ महिलाओं के साथ चल पड़ीं। रास्ते में तेलो-मेलो नामक स्थान पड़ता था। मां शारदा विश्राम के लिए एक वृक्ष के नीचे बैठी ही थीं कि डाकुओं ने उन्हें घेर लिया। एक ने कड़कती आवाज में कहा, तुम्हारे पास जो सामान हो, सामने रख दो। मां शारदा काली की परम भक्त थीं। भला वह क्यों भयभीत होतीं। उन्होंने हंसते हुए कहा, पिताजी, मैं जयरामबाटी के रामचंद्रजी की बेटी हूं। आपके जंवाई दक्षिणेश्वर के काली मंदिर के पुजारी हैं। उनके पास जा रही हूं। सरदार को पिताजी शब्द ने झकझोर डाला। वह उन्हें अपने घर पर ले गया और पत्नी से बोला, हमारी कोई संतान नहीं है। भगवान ने हमें यह सुंदर पुत्री दी है। कुछ देर आराम करने के बाद शारदा ने कहा, बाबा, यदि मैं कोलकाता नहीं पहुंची, तो आपके जंवाई चिंता में पड़ जाएंगे। मुझे जल्दी-से-जल्दी वहां पहुंचना दीजिए। सरदार ने कहायों से पालकी मंगाई। हरे मटर, चिबड़ा व बताशे विदाई में दिए और स्वयं पालकी के साथ मंदिर तक पहुंचाने गया। इस घटना से सरदार का हृदय परिवर्तन हुआ। उसने डाका डालना छोड़ खेती करना शुरू कर दिया।

-संकलित

वा ईएसआर कांग्रेस के प्रमुख जगन मोहन रेड्डी ने आंध्र प्रदेश के मुख्यमंत्री के रूप में शपथ ले ली है। आंध्र के विभाजन के बाद वह दूसरे मुख्यमंत्री बने हैं। वह ऐसे समय में राज्य के मुख्यमंत्री बने हैं, जब उत्तर, पूर्व, पूर्वोत्तर, पश्चिम और मध्य भारत में प्रधानमंत्री नरेंद्र मोदी की लहर चल रही है, लेकिन दक्षिण भारत मोटे तौर पर उस लहर से अछूता है। दक्षिण भारत में मात्र एक राज्य कर्नाटक है, जहां भाजपा ने जद (एस) और कांग्रेस के लिए मात्र दो सीट ही छोड़ी।

हालांकि तेलंगाना में भाजपा चार लोकसभा सीटों पर कब्जा जमा कर भारी फायदे में रही, लेकिन वहां सत्तारूढ़ तेलंगाना राष्ट्र समिति (टीआरएस) लोकसभा की नौ सीटें जीतकर प्रमुख पार्टी बनी है। भाजपा के नेतृत्व में राजग को आंध्र प्रदेश और केरल में लोकसभा की एक भी सीट नहीं मिली, जबकि अन्नाद्रमुक से गठबंधन के कारण तमिलनाडु में एक सीट मिली। यह तथ्य है कि भाजपा दक्षिण भारत के आंध्र प्रदेश, तमिलनाडु और केरल जैसे राज्यों में अपनी मौजूदगी नहीं जता पाई है।

आंध्र प्रदेश में भाजपा संगठनात्मक कमजोरी के कारण अपने पांव नहीं पसार सकी। वह इस राज्य में उत्तर भारतीय पार्टी होने की अपनी छवि को नहीं तोड़ पाई, जहां मजबूत क्षेत्रीय भावनाओं ने राजनीतिक आंदोलनों को हवा दी है। अभिनेता से राजनेता बने एन टी रामा राव ने तेलुगु देशम पार्टी (तेदेपा) का गठन ही 'उत्तर भारत की भ्रष्ट पार्टी' कांग्रेस को राज्य से उखाड़ फेंकने के लिए किया था। इंदिरा गांधी की हत्या के बाद दक्षिण में एकमात्र पार्टी जो बड़ी जीत हासिल करने में सक्षम रही, वह थी तेदेपा। हालांकि, बाद में वाईएस



मंजिलें और भी हैं

>> कपिल सहगल

## गरीबी में मिली मदद से जगी सहयोग की ललक

मैं उत्तर प्रदेश के इलाहाबाद का रहने वाला हूं। मेरा बचपन बेहद गरीबी में बीता। मेरे पिताजी सीए के पद से कार्यमुक्त थे। परिवार में 12 सदस्य थे। पिताजी अक्सर बीमार रहते थे। गरीबी का आलम यह था कि कभी-कभार मैंमें भूखे सो जाना पड़ता था। मैं पढ़ाई करना चाहता था, लेकिन इंटरमीडियट की पढ़ाई के लिए मेरे पास 20 रुपये तक नहीं थे। मैंने कई रिश्तेदारों से मदद मांगी। हालांकि मेरे रिश्तेदार हमसे काफी धनवान थे, लेकिन बुरे वक्त में कोई मेरे काम नहीं आया। फिर मेरे पिताजी के एक मित्र ने मेरी मदद की, तब जाकर मैं पढ़ पाया। उस घटना का मेरे जीवन पर गहरा प्रभाव पड़ा और मैंने ठान लिया कि जीवन में कुछ बन पाया, तो किसी भी जरूरतमंद को कभी मदद के लिए मना नहीं करूंगा। इंटरमीडिएट पास करने के बाद घर को आर्थिक सहयोग पहुंचाने के उद्देश्य से मैं सबजी बेचने लगा। लेकिन उससे इतनी आमदनी नहीं होती थी कि मैं घर का खर्च संभालने के बाद दूसरों की मदद कर सकूं। एक दिन मेरे एक परिचित व्यक्ति ने मुझसे कहा, पढ़े-लिखे होकर सबजी बेचते हो, नौकरी क्यों नहीं कर लेते? मैंने उनसे नौकरी न मिलने की बात कही। इस पर उन्होंने मेरी मदद की और मैं इलाहाबाद विश्वविद्यालय में क्लर्क हो गया। कुछ दिन बाद मुझे इलाहाबाद उच्च न्यायालय में सेवशन ऑफिसर की नौकरी मिल गई। तब तक मैं इस स्थिति में आ चुका था कि दूसरों की मदद कर सकूं।



## बिज़नेस स्टैंडर्ड

वर्ष 12 अंक 92

## नई ऊंचाई

**सप्ताहांत** पर आई बुरी खबरों के बाद सोमवार को शेयर बाजारों के पास तेजी की वजह थी और वह देखने को मिली भी। सेंसेक्स पहली बार 40,000 अंक के ऊपर बंद हुआ और निफ्टी ने पहली बार 12,000 का आंकड़ा पार किया। मार्च तिमाही का जीडीपी आंकड़ा कमजोर है और मंदी का संकेत देता है। मई में वाहनों की बिक्री में मंदी रही और वर्ष 2018-

19 की चौथी तिमाही में कारोबारी आय निराशाजनक रही। कारोबारी जगत के दिग्गज इस बात को लेकर एकमत हैं कि अब तक अर्थव्यवस्था को गति देती आई खपत भी कमजोर पड़ रही है। इसके बावजूद चूंकि विदेशी पोर्टफोलियो निवेशक भारतीय बाजार में भरोसा बनाए हुए हैं इसलिए सेंसेक्स भी रिकॉर्ड ऊंचाई पर कारोबार कर रहा है। वर्ष

2018 में 34,000 करोड़ रुपये की विशुद्ध बिकवाली के बाद विदेशी पोर्टफोलियो निवेशकों ने 2019 में अब तक 78,000 करोड़ रुपये का निवेश किया है। इस निवेश ने बाजार को गति दी है।

रुख में यह बदलाव फरवरी में देखने को मिलने लगा जब विदेशी पोर्टफोलियो निवेशकों ने डॉलर में निवेश शुरू किया। मार्च 2019 भारतीय बाजारों के इतिहास का दूसरा सबसे अधिक शुद्ध निवेश वाला महीना रहा। उनके रुख में इस बदलाव की वजह थी अमेरिकी फेडरल रिजर्व द्वारा बढ़ती व्याज दरों के चक्र के अंत की घोषणा। इसके परिणामस्वरूप अमेरिकी बॉन्ड प्रतिफल नवंबर 2018 के 3.24 फीसदी के उच्चतम स्तर से घटकर अब 2.12 फीसदी रह गया है। यह पांच वर्ष के निचले

स्तर के करीब है। बॉन्ड और ब्याज दरों में कमी के कारण इक्विटी में निवेश, तयशुदा आय परिसंपत्तियों की तुलना में कहीं अधिक आकर्षक हो जाता है।

अमेरिकी बॉन्ड अब उच्च प्रतिफल वाला सुरक्षित निवेश नहीं रह गए और फेडरल रिजर्व की ब्याज दरों संबंधी घोषणा के बाद भारत इस धन की आवक की दृष्टि से सबसे बड़ा लाभार्थी बनकर उभरा। अमेरिकी बॉन्ड प्रतिफल में गिरावट के साथ-साथ भारत में 10 वर्ष के मानक प्रतिफल में भी गिरावट आई और यह सितंबर के 8.18 फीसदी से गिरकर सोमवार के 7 फीसदी हो गया। ब्रेंट क्रूड ऑयल की कीमत भी मई के मध्य से 14 फीसदी कम है। इससे भारतीय विनिर्माताओं के कच्चे माल की लागत आने वाले दिनों में घट सकती है और

देश के चालू खाते का घाटा कम हो सकता है। विदेशी पोर्टफोलियो निवेशकों की दृष्टि से भारत का बाजार आकर्षक है और चौथी तिमाही के कमजोर जीडीपी आंकड़े के बावजूद इसमें वृद्धि की संभावनाएं हैं। कई वैश्विक बाजार अमेरिका और चीन के बीच कारोबारी जंग से प्रभावित हुए हैं लेकिन भारत अपेक्षाकृत सुरक्षित है। वैश्विक ब्रोकरेज जिनने 2018 में भारत को लेकर सावधानी बरतनी शुरू की थी उन्होंने भी अपनी स्थिति मजबूत की है जिससे धन की आवक हो रही है।

ऐतिहासिक चरों से तुलना करें तो भारत का मूल्यांकन ज्यादा है लेकिन 3 फीसदी का आय प्रतिफल अभी भी अमेरिकी बॉन्ड प्रतिफल से अधिक है। यह भी एक कारण है कि विदेशी निवेशक भारत पर दांव आजमा

रहे हैं। नकदी के कारण अधिमूल्यन की अवधि भी भारतीय शेयर बाजारों के लिए नई नहीं है। डॉलर की आवक के अलावा हालिया तेजी के लिए कई अन्य कारक उत्तरदायी हैं। तात्कालिक बात करें तो बाजार आशा कर रहा है कि इस सप्ताह मौद्रिक नीति समिति की बैठक में 25 आधार अंकों की कटौती देखने को मिल सकती है। बाजार वित्त मंत्री निर्मला सीतारमण के 5 जुलाई को आने वाले बजट से भी कुछ प्रोत्साहन और व्यय में इजाफे की अपेक्षा कर रहा है। इससे मांग और वृद्धि को गति मिल सकती है। विदेशी निवेश, कच्चा तेल, मांग की स्थिति या सरकारी नीति, किसी भी मोर्चे पर निराशा निवेशकों को चौंका सकती है क्योंकि मौजूदा मूल्यांकन में स्थायित्व नहीं दिख रहा है।



विलय सिन्हा

# देश की नई वित्त मंत्री के लिए 6 सुझाव

## प्रचंड बहुमत के साथ सत्ता में आई राष्ट्रीय जनतांत्रिक गठबंधन सरकार और नई वित्त मंत्री को सलाह दे रहे हैं तमाल बंधोपाध्याय

देश में आगामी पांच वर्ष के लिए एक अत्यंत मजबूत सरकार बन चुकी है। केंद्रीय बैंक में भी एक व्यावहारिक गवर्नर है। यही कारण है कि में देश की नई वित्त मंत्री के समक्ष छह अनचाही सलाह प्रस्तुत करने का उत्साह जुटा सका हूं। उनमें से कुछ सलाह कठोर प्रतीत हो सकती हैं लेकिन भाजपा की यह सरकार भी निर्णय लेने में सक्षम और मिशन मोड पर काम करने वाली है।

**सरकारी बैंकों का निजीकरण:** बैंकिंग अधिनियम के अधीन सरकार को ऐसे बैंकों में 51 फीसदी चुकता पूंजी रखना अनिवार्य है। सरकार के अलावा ऐसे बैंकों तथा अन्य सरकारी उपक्रमों में भारतीय जीवन बीमा निगम भी अच्छी खासी हिस्सेदारी रखता है। कुछ बैंकों की आपस में क्रॉस होल्डिंग भी है, यानी सरकार का पूरा नियंत्रण सुनिश्चित है।

इसमें बदलाव करने की आवश्यकता है। बीते दो वर्ष में सरकार ने सरकारी बैंकों में करीब 2 लाख करोड़ रुपये की पूंजी डाली है। सरकार 2009 से करीब 3.3 लाख करोड़ रुपये की पूंजी इनमें डाल चुकी है। अगर उसने इतना पैसा बैंक निफ्टी में निवेश किया होता तो उसकी काफी आय हुई होती।

एक पैनल ने सभी सरकारी बैंकों के संचालन के लिए एक होल्डिंग कंपनी की बात कही थी और कहा था कि उनको किफायती तरीके से चलाने के लिए सरकारी हिस्सेदारी उसमें स्थानांतरित कर दी जाए। यह मुश्किल हो सकता है क्योंकि सरकार

के लिए नियंत्रण छोड़ना आसान नहीं। इससे समस्या हल नहीं होगी। सरकारी बैंकों में 70 फीसदी हिस्सेदारी आवश्यक नहीं है। कुछ छोटे सरकारी बैंकों के निजीकरण से शुरुआत हो सकती है।

**प्राथमिकता क्षेत्र के ऋण मानक का समापन:** देश में संचालित विदेशी बैंकों समेत सभी वाणिज्यिक बैंकों को अपने कुल ऋण का 40 फीसदी तथाकथित प्राथमिकता वाले क्षेत्र को देना होता है। इसमें छोटे उपक्रम, किसान आदि शामिल हैं। यहां क्षेत्र की परिभाषा समय-समय पर बदलती रहती है। अधिकांश बैंक लक्ष्य पूरा नहीं कर पाते। वे सूक्ष्म वित्त संस्थानों को पैसा देते हैं या चुनिंदा बॉन्ड में निवेश करते हैं। यकीनन इन क्षेत्रों को ऋण की आवश्यकता है लेकिन नाबार्ड, सिडबी या राष्ट्रीय आवास बैंक (एनएचबी) के माध्यम से यह काम सीधे भी हो सकता है। उपरोक्त तीन में से दो पुनर्वित्त एजेंसियां हैं और उन पर कुल नियामकीय दायित्व भी है। उन्हें किसानों, छोटे उद्यमियों, सस्ते आवास आदि की वित्तीय जरूरत पूरी करने देनी चाहिए।

**एनएचबी को विराम:** एनएचबी को बंद क्यों किया जाना चाहिए? केवल इसलिए क्योंकि कुछ बड़ी मॉर्गेज कंपनियां संकट में हैं? अगर यह कारण है तो आरबीआई को भी बंद कर दिया जाना चाहिए क्योंकि गैर बैंकिंग वित्तीय कंपनी आईएलएंडेएफएस तथा एक बड़े सरकारी बैंक (पंजाब नैशनल बैंक) में धोखाधड़ी सामने आई? सन 1988 में एनएचबी की स्थापना इसलिए की गई थी

ताकि देश में मॉर्गेज बाजार बन सके। उस वक्त देश में बैंक आवास ऋण नहीं देते थे। इससे परिसंपत्ति और देनदारी का असंतुलन हो गया था। एनएचबी का काम था आवास ऋण के लिए लंबी अवधि का ऋण मुहैया कराना और इसका बाजार तैयार करना। यह अपने उद्देश्य में सफल रहा और अब वक्त है इसे आराम देने का।

आरबीआई ने एनएचबी में 1,450 करोड़ रुपये की संपूर्ण पूंजी डाली थी, उसने मार्च में अपनी हिस्सेदारी समाप्त कर दी। समय की पुरिभाषा समय-समय पर बदलती रहती है। एनएचबी की नियामकीय भूमिका अख्तियार कर ली और यह केवल रीफाइनैस एजेंसी बन गई। मामला जटिल इसलिए हो गया क्योंकि लाइसेंस देने में उदारता बरती गई। अब देश में 98 एचएफसी कंपनियां हैं जो तीन साल पहले की तुलना में दोगुना है।

इन एचएफसी ने एनएचबी से लंबी अवधि के लिए सस्ता पुनर्वित्त लिया और उसे अचल संपत्ति कारोबारियों को कर्ज के रूप में दे दिया। एनएचबी अधिनियम कहता है कि एक एचएफसी का आवास ऋण संपत्ति की पुनर्वित्त में अहम भूमिका है लेकिन यह नहीं बताया गया है कि कितनी? इससे आरबीआई द्वारा विनियमित एनबीएफसी और एनएचबी द्वारा नियमित एचएफसी के बीच की रेखा कमजोर पड़ी। दोनों नियामक एक साथ इन कंपनियों के बहीखाते की निगरानी नहीं कर सकते।

एनएचबी की वेबसाइट बताती है कि कैसे वह मानक उल्लंघन करने पर एचएफसी

को दंडित करती है। उसने 9 अगस्त, 2018 को जमा लेने वाली एचएफसी दीवान हाउसिंग फाइनेंस कॉर्प लिमिटेड पर 6,500 रुपये का जुर्माना लगाया क्योंकि उसने एनएचबी के एक नियम का पालन नहीं किया था। दरअसल यह अधिनियम एचएफसी को केवल एक बार फंसी परिसंपत्ति के पुनर्गठन की इजाजत देता है लेकिन बोर्ड की इजाजत से। इस मामले में ऐसा बिना बोर्ड की मंजूरी के किया गया था। इन तमाम बातों के बीच जब तक एनएचबी और आरबीआई ने मिलकर बहीखातों की जांच का निर्णय किया तब तक बहुत देर हो चुकी थी। 100 से भी कम एनएचबी कर्मियों को एचएफसी की 6 लाख करोड़ रुपये की परिसंपत्तियों की निगरानी का काम दिया गया। हमें अलग मॉर्गेज नियामक नहीं चाहिए। एनएचबी और आरबीआई का विलय करके भी एचएफसी के नियमन के लिए नई शाखा बनाई जा सकती है।

**दिवालिया संहिता में सुधार:** देश का दिवालिया कानून अन्य देशों की तुलना में आक्रामक है। बीते कुछ वर्षों के दौरान नया कानून आने के बाद बैंकरोज और कॉर्पोरेट दोनों की भंगिमा बदली है। प्रवर्तक अब अपने साम्राज्य को हल्के में नहीं ले रहे और न ही बैंक। परंतु जमीन पर बदलाव नहीं आ रहा। बुनियादी सुविधाओं की कमी के चलते ही ऐसे मामले तय अवधि में नहीं निपट पा रहे।

राष्ट्रीय कंपनी लॉ पंचाट और अपील पंचाट के पास अनेक मामले लंबित हैं क्योंकि प्रवर्तक अपना वर्चस्व त्यागना नहीं चाहते। अगर यह रुझान बना रहा तो दिवालिया कानून मजाक बन जाएगा।

**राजकोषीय निगरानी परिषद का गठन:** राजकोषीय जवाबदेही एवं बजट प्रबंधन समिति के राजकोषीय निगरानी समिति गठन के प्रस्ताव पर विचार करना श्रेयस्कर होगा। ताकि किसी भी वर्ष सरकार की राजकोषीय घोषणाओं की निगरानी कर विश्लेषण किया जा सके। अमेरिका में सन 1975 से ही कांग्रेस का बजट कार्यालय बजट और आर्थिक मसलों का स्वतंत्र विश्लेषण करता आया है। यह नीतिगत अनुशंसाएं नहीं करता लेकिन इसकी रिपोर्ट में समुचित विश्लेषण रहता है।

घाटे के आंकड़े और सरकारी उधारी से पूरी तस्वीर नहीं नजर आती। आधिकारिक सरकारी उधारी के अलावा सरकारी एजेंसियां मसलन नाबार्ड, एफसीआई, पॉवर फाइनेंस कॉर्पोरेशन, रूरल इलेक्ट्रिफिकेशन कॉर्पोरेशन ऑफ इंडिया, राष्ट्रीय राजमार्ग प्राधिकरण आदि ने सरकार के समर्थन से निरंतर ऋण लिया है। ऐसी राशि लाखों करोड़ रुपये में है। आरबीआई बीते दो साल से सरकार को अंतरिम लाभांश का भुगतान भी कर रही है। पारदर्शिता के लिए हमें अंतरराष्ट्रीय मुद्रा कोष के तर्ज पर राजकोषीय निगरानी करनी होगी। **आरबीआई की स्वायत्तता:** शक्तिकांत दास के गवर्नर पद संभालने के पहले आरबीआई की बीती कुछ बोर्ड बैठकों से निरंतर ऋण के कामकाज का बहुत अच्छा चित्रण नहीं हुआ। जवाबदेही भी स्वायत्तता के साथ आती है। क्या सभी निदेशक बैंकिंग में विशेषज्ञ हैं? क्या ऐसे निदेशक भी हो सकते हैं जिनकी कंपनियां हों और उनके हितों में टकराव हो? व्यापक प्रबंधन वाला आरबीआई अच्छा है बशर्ते कि उसमें सक्षम पूर्णकालिक निदेशक हों। ऐसा करने की तत्काल आवश्यकता है।

# नई सरकार और पर्यावरण से जुड़े हुए मसले

**वर्ष** 2019 के आम चुनाव के नतीजे आ चुके हैं और पुरानी सरकार एक बार फिर चुनी गई है। ऐसे में पर्यावरण और विकास का एजेंडा क्या होना चाहिए?

कृषि क्षेत्र का संकट ऐसी अहम समस्या है जिससे तत्काल निपटने की आवश्यकता है। सच तो यह है कि खेती तेजी से अलाभकारी व्यवसाय बनती जा रही है और इससे लाखों लोगों की आयोत करना पड़ता है। बीते पांच वर्ष में सरकार ने दो अहम पहलुओं पर काम किया। पहला, फसल के नुकसान से परेशान किसानों को बीमा सुरक्षा और मूलभूत आवश्यकताओं की पूर्ति के लिए सबसे गरीब परिवारों को आवास, शौचालय तथा गैस सिलिंडर के रूप में बुनियादी सुविधाएं मुहैया कराना।

परंतु किसानों की खेती की लागत उनके उपज मूल्य से अधिक न हो, यह सुनिश्चित करने के लिए अभी काफी कुछ किया जाना है। उन्हें उपज बढ़ाने के लिए सिंचाई की समुचित सुविधा मुहैया करानी होगी और उनकी फसल को आवारा और जंगली पशुओं द्वारा नष्ट किए जाने से भी बचना होगा। बीमा योजना में ऐसे बदलाव होने चाहिए कि किसानों के हाथ में नकद राशि आए और वे जलवायु परिवर्तन के जोखिम के समय से निपट सकें।

दूसरा, वानिकी को लेकर नीतियों में तत्काल बदलाव की आवश्यकता है। बीते पांच वर्ष में इस क्षेत्र को लेकर सरकार की नीतियां किसी काम की नहीं थीं। गरीब आदिवासियों को वानिकी से किस प्रकार जीविका मुहैया कराई जानी चाहिए इसे लेकर कोई स्पष्टता नहीं है। एक ओर सरकार ने बांस को घास घोषित कर उसे उगाने की इजाजत देने वाला नियम बनाया



### जमीनी हकीकत

सुनीता नारायण

और उसने लघु वन उपज के लिए मूल्य समर्थन भी बेहतर किया तो वहीं दूसरी ओर उसने एक मसौदा वन नीति प्रस्तुत की जो वानिकी और उससे जुड़े कारोबार का पूरा नियंत्रण विभाग के हाथ में सौंपता है। उसने वन अधिकार अधिनियम 2006 के क्रियान्वयन की दिशा में कोई पहलकदमी नहीं की। अगर ऐसा किया जाता तो उन गरीब समुदायों को आर्थिक मदद मिलती जो इन संसाधनों पर निर्भर हैं।

यह भी सच है कि पिछली सरकारों की तरह इस सरकार ने भी वन्यजीव संरक्षण के लिए खुलकर कोई दिक्कत नहीं पैदा की। उसने वन्यजीवों के संरक्षण के लिए एवााज उठाना जारी रखा लेकिन दूसरी सरकारों की तरह इस दौरान वह भी वनों को सड़क, खनन और जलविद्युत परियोजनाओं के लिए खोलती रही। कुल मिलाकर वानिकी और आजीविका के लिए उसका विकास कभी सरकार की प्राथमिकता में नहीं रहा। अब इसमें बदलाव का वक्त आ चुका है।

इसके बाद स्थानीय प्रदूषण यानी जल एवं वायु प्रदूषण का मसला आता है। ये दोनों स्वास्थ्य पर गहरा असर डालते हैं। इसमें दो राय नहीं कि वायु प्रदूषण संकट एकदम आसान है और साफ नजर आ रहा है। बीते कुछ वर्षों में सरकार ने ईंधन की गुणवत्ता पर काम किया है और वाहन प्रौद्योगिकी मानकों में सुधार किया है। किसानों को उपकरण खरीद पर सब्सिडी दी जा रही है ताकि वे फसल अवशेष जलाएं नहीं। परंतु ये कदम उठाने में देर हो चुकी है। सरकार स्वच्छ हवा चाहती है लेकिन इसके लिए वह कोई कड़ा कदम उठाना नहीं चाहती।

## कानाफूसी

### अनूठा रिकॉर्ड

आंध्र प्रदेश और तेलंगाना के राज्यपाल श्रीनिवासन लक्ष्मी नरसिंहन के नाम पर एक दिलचस्प रिकॉर्ड है। वह देश के इकलौते ऐसे राज्यपाल हैं जिन्होंने नौ वर्ष में पांच मुख्यमंत्रियों को शपथ दिलाई है यानी हर दूसरे वर्ष उन्होंने किसी न किसी मुख्यमंत्री को शपथ दिलाई है। आंध्र प्रदेश का राज्यपाल बनने के बाद उन्होंने सबसे पहले कांग्रेस के किरण कुमार रेड्डी को शपथ दिलाई। उसके पश्चात चंद्रबाबू नायडू का नंबर आया। वर्ष 2015 में जब आंध्र प्रदेश और तेलंगाना अलग-अलग हो गए तब उन्होंने तेलंगाना के एक होल्डिंग कंपनी की बात कही थी और कहा था कि उनको किफायती तरीके से चलाने के लिए सरकारी हिस्सेदारी उसमें स्थानांतरित कर दी जाए। यह मुश्किल हो सकता है क्योंकि सरकार

### ममता की तरकीब

ममता बनर्जी को हाल ही में सार्वजनिक स्थानों पर जय श्री राम के नारे सुनने पड़े। इस पर उनकी नाराजगी का वीडियो भी सार्वजनिक हुआ। ये घटनाएं भाजपा के प्रभाव वाले बैरकपुर क्षेत्र के भाटपाड़ा और नैहाती में घटीं। यहां से भाजपा के अर्जुन सिंह सांसद हैं जो चुनाव के पहले तृणमूल कांग्रेस का दामन छोड़कर भाजपा में शामिल हुए। अब ममता बनर्जी ने प्रदेश की महिलाओं और युवाओं से अनुरोध किया है कि वे बंग जननी वाहिनी और जय हिंद वाहिनी का गठन करें ताकि प्रदेश में बाहरी प्रभाव का मुकाबला किया जा सके। उन्होंने राज्य के लोगों से अनुरोध किया कि वे सार्वजनिक अभिवादन के समय जय हिंद का प्रयोग करें। वहीं उन्होंने अपने पार्टी सहयोगियों से कहा कि वे आधिकारिक संवाद में जय बांग्ला कहकर अभिवादन करें।

### बढ़ती गर्मी में बढ़ी बिजली समस्या

गर्मी बढ़ने के साथ-साथ बिजली कटौती की समस्या बढ़ने लगी है। देश के विभिन्न स्थानों में बिजली की लोड शेडिंग की जा रही है। गर्मी के दिनों में बिजली की मांग बढ़ जाती है। गर्मी से राहत पाने के लिए एसी, पंखों का इस्तेमाल अधिक हो जाता है। इससे आम दिनों के मुकाबले बिजली की मांग बढ़ जाती है। हालांकि काफी पहले ऐसी खबरें आई थी कि बिजली उत्पादन मांग से अधिक हो रहा है। ऐसा शायद इसलिए कि घरों में बिजली की कम खपत वाले उपकरणों का इस्तेमाल किया जा रहा हो। एलईडी बल्ब के आने से भी बिजली की खपत कम हुई है। पहले जहां रोशनी के लिए 100 वाट का बल्ब जलता था अब 7 वाट का एक एलईडी बल्ब से काम चल रहा है। बिजली में कटौती की कई वजहें हो सकती हैं। बिजली परीषण लाइन में गड़बड़ी, बिजली के तार टूटने या फिर किसी ट्रांसफॉर्मर के खराब होने से बिजली



काटी जाती है। राजधानी दिल्ली के कई जगहों में बिजली कटने की खबरें आ रही हैं। यहां बिजली कटने का कारण लाइन में खराबी या कुछ और हो सकता है। वहीं बड़ी-बड़ी सोसाइटी में बिजली काटे जाने की खबरें भी आ रही हैं। इन बड़ी सोसाइटी में निर्बाध बिजली की आपूर्ति के लिए जेनेरेटर सेट लगाए जाते हैं। यहां बिजली

#### गर्मी बढ़ने के साथ-साथ बिजली कटने की समस्या भी बढ़ने लगी है

की सामान्य दर से करीब तीन गुना दर जेनेरेटर के लिए जाते हैं। कई सोसाइटी से ऐसी खबरें आती हैं कि बिजली नहीं कटने के बावजूद जेनेरेटर से आपूर्ति की जाती है।

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

### पश्चिम बंगाल में

### राजनीतिक हिंसा

पश्चिम बंगाल में राजनीतिक हिंसा थमने का नाम नहीं ले रही है। आए दिन तृणमूल कांग्रेस और भाजपा कार्यकर्ताओं के बीच झड़प खबरें आती रहती हैं। कई बार झड़प के दौरान किसी कार्यकर्ता की मौत भी हो जाती है। राजनीति हिंसा दिन प्रतिदिन बढ़ती जा रही है। राज्य में शांति व सुरक्षा की जिम्मेदारी राज्य सरकार की होती है। राज्य में तृणमूल कांग्रेस की सरकार है और खबरों के मुताबिक उसके कार्यकर्ता द्वारा भाजपा कार्यकर्ताओं को निशाना बनाया जा रहा है। ऐसे में राज्य सरकार की भूमिका संदिग्ध हो जाती है। एक दौरे के समय मुख्यमंत्री ममता बनर्जी भी भाजपा कार्यकर्ताओं के नारे सुन कर भड़क उठीं थीं। इस मामले में सच्चाई को जानने के सामने लाना चाहिए।
राज्य में हिंसा रोकने के लिए केंद्र सरकार को हस्तक्षेप करने की जरूरत है जिससे लोग अपने आप को सुरक्षित महसूस कर सकें।



## दैनिक जागरण

माता-पिता ईश्वर का साक्षात स्वरूप हैं

# न्याय की बात

अपना पदभार ग्रहण करते हुए कानून मंत्री रविशंकर प्रसाद ने अपनी यह पुरानी प्रतिबद्धता एक बार फिर दोहराई कि न्यायाधीशों की नियुक्ति के मामले में उनके मंत्रालय की भूमिका सीमित नहीं रहेगी, लेकिन इसकी अनदेखी नहीं की जा सकती कि फिलहाल ऐसी ही स्थिति है। न्यायाधीशों की नियुक्तियों के मामले में सरकार कोलेजियम की सिफारिशों पर मुहर लगाने तक ही सीमित है। यह अभी हाल में देखने को भी मिला। उच्चतम न्यायालय में न्यायाधीशों की नियुक्ति के लिए कोलेजियम की ओर से भेजे गए दो नामों पर सरकार ने आपत्ति जताई तो उसे खारिज कर यही दो नाम फिर से आगे बढ़ा दिए गए। चूंकि सरकार के सामने और कोई उपाय नहीं था इसलिए उसने वही किया जो कोलेजियम की ओर से चाह जा रहा था। एक तरह से कानून मंत्रालय ने पोस्ट ऑफिस जैसा ही काम किया। यह स्थिति बदली जानी चाहिए, क्योंकि दुनिया के किसी भी श्रेष्ठ लोकतांत्रिक देश में न्यायाधीश ही न्यायाधीशों की नियुक्तियां नहीं करते। बेहतर हो कि सुप्रीम कोर्ट भी यह समझे कि न्यायाधीशों की नियुक्तियों के मामले में कोलेजियम व्यवस्था लोकतांत्रिक मूल्यों और मान्यताओं के अनुकूल नहीं है। निःसंदेह न्यायापालिका को स्वतंत्र एवं स्वायत्त होना चाहिए, लेकिन इसका यह मतलब नहीं कि वह न्यायाधीशों की नियुक्तियों के मामले में खुद को जवाबदेही और पाददर्शिता से परे रखे। इसका औचित्य इसलिए भी नहीं बनता, क्योंकि खुद सर्वोच्च न्यायालय यह मान चुका है कि कोलेजियम व्यवस्था दोष रहित नहीं है। क्या कोई बताएगा कि आखिर इस व्यवस्था के दोष कब दूर होंगे?

समस्या केवल यही नहीं है कि न्यायाधीशों की नियुक्तियां उस कोलेजियम व्यवस्था के तहत हो रही हैं जिसकी विसंगतियां सामने आ चुकी हैं। समस्या यह भी है कि न्यायिक क्षेत्र की अन्य अनेक विसंगतियां भी दूर होने का नाम नहीं ले रही हैं। न्याय हासिल होने के बजाय तारीख पर तारीख का मिलसिला कामपन रहना एक हकीकत है। यह हकीकत निचली अदालतों से लेकर उच्चतम न्यायालय तक है। आखिर न्याय के लिए प्रतीक्षारत करोड़ों लोगों की चिंता कौन कर रहा है? यह ठीक नहीं कि चिंता के नाम पर कार्यपालिका और न्यायपालिका एक-दूसरे को नसीहत देती दिखें। आखिर दोनों पक्ष मिलकर न्यायिक क्षेत्र की समस्याओं को दूर करने के लिए कोई ठोस रूपरेखा तैयार करने के लिए आगे क्यों आते? यह आवश्यक ही नहीं, अनिवार्य है कि कानून मंत्री के रूप में रविशंकर प्रसाद इस बार न्यायिक सुधारों की गति देने के मामले किन्हीं ठोस उपायों पर अमल करते हुए दिखें। चूंकि उनके पास कानून मंत्रालय के साथ-साथ सूचना-प्रौद्योगिकी और दूरसंचार मंत्रालय भी है इसलिए उन्हें यह अवश्य देखना चाहिए कि आधुनिक तकनीक और विशेष रूप से आर्टिफिशियल इंटेलिजेंस का इस्तेमाल करके न्यायिक तंत्र के उस मकड़जाल को कैसे काटा जाए जो करोड़ों लोगों की परेशानी का कारण है और जिसके चलते हमारी न्याय प्रणाली अपनी सुस्ती के लिए बदनमा है। एक वकील होने के नाते कानून मंत्री इससे अनभिज्ञ नहीं हो सकते कि मुकदमों को लॉबित रखने के तौर-तरीके किस तरह न्याय प्रणाली का अलिखित हिस्सा बन गए हैं। यह ठीक नहीं कि जब हर क्षेत्र में सुधारों पर जोर है तब न्यायिक क्षेत्र में सुधार बहस तक सीमित हैं।

## युवाओं को जगाएं

नशे को लेकर बिहार में काफी जागरूकता बढ़ रही है, यह सुखद संकेत है। इस मामले में दूसरे राज्यों के लिए भी बिहार प्रेरक बन रहा है। पहले की तुलना में बिहार के गांव-निगंर, कस्बों और शहरों में लोग तंबाकू, तंबाकू निर्मित उत्पादों और शराब-गांजे जैसी नशीली वस्तुओं से होने वाले नुकसान के प्रति जागरूक हो रहे हैं। शराबबंदी ने बिहार में नशे को लेकर जो माहौल बनाया है, उसका सकारात्मक असर दिखाई दे रहा है। अध्ययन के मुताबिक 2009-10 में राज्य में 53.5 फीसद लोग तंबाकू का सेवन करते थे, जबकि 2016-17 में मात्र 25.9 फीसद लोग ही तंबाकू का सेवन करते पाए गए। राज्य के 13 जिले पटना, मुंगेर, दरभंगा, कटिहार, समस्तीपुर, लखीसराय, वैशाली, मधेपुरा, जहानाबाद, मधुबनी, गोपालगंज, सहरसा एवं खगड़िया को तंबाकूमुक्त घोषित किया जा चुका है। जिले का तंबाकूमुक्त घोषित होना, दरअसल प्रतीकात्मक है। ऐसा नहीं कि इन जिलों में एक भी व्यक्ति तंबाकू का सेवन नहीं कर रहा होगा, लेकिन सरकार का अपना पैमाना है, जिसके आधार पर यह घोषणा की गई है। सौ प्रतिशत न सही, लेकिन बड़ी संख्या में लोग तंबाकू से होने वाले नुकसान को लेकर जागरूक हुए हैं तो यह बड़ी बात है। इसे और बढ़ावा दिया जाना चाहिए। विशेषज्ञ कहते हैं कि देश में तंबाकू के सेवन करने से प्रतिवर्ष 12 लाख लोगों की मौत हो रही है। मुंठ के कैन्सर का मुख्‍य कारण तंबाकू का सेवन है। तंबाकू से गला, फेफड़े, मूत्राशय, गुर्दा आदि का कैन्सर हो रहा है। हृदय और रक्त संबंधी परेशानी हो रही है। कई मरीजों में प्रजनन संबंधी समस्या भी तंबाकू के सेवन से बढ़ रही है। पिछले दिनों राज्य के स्वास्थ्य मंत्री ने भी कहा था कि स्कूलों एवं बच्चों को तंबाकू से दूर रखने के कई स्तर पर प्रयास किए जा रहे हैं। चिकित्सक एन पारा मेडिकल कर्मचारी विद्यालयों में जाकर बच्चों को तंबाकू से होने वाले नुकसान से अवगत करा रहे हैं।

# जहरीली शराब का धंधा

**अंशुमाली रस्तोगी**

सूरत के कोचिंग सेंटर में लगी भीषण आग की लपटें अभी शांत भी नहीं हो पाई थीं कि उत्तर प्रदेश के बाराबंकी में जहरीली शराब ने 23 लोगों की जान ले ली। कोई तीन माह पहले भी इसी जगह जहरीली शराब 91 लोगों का जीवन लील चुकी है। शराब समाज और ईसान के लिए नासूर है। न जाना कि कितनी मौतें शराब के सेवन से देश में होती हैं फिर भी न तो इसकी बिक्री में कहीं कोई कमी आई है न पीने वालों में। खुद को संभत कहने वाला तबका तो शराब पीने-पिलाने को अपनी शान समझता है। वह यह सोचने की भी जहमत नहीं फरमाता कि जिस जहर को वह पी रहा है उसके नुकसान कितने भयाभय हैं। जहरीली शराब का धंधा उत्तर प्रदेश में ही नहीं, हर जगह जोरों पर है। यह तब है जब अनेक शराब के धंधे पर लगाम कसने के लिए सरकार ने आबकारी अधिनियम में बदलाव करते हुए नकली शराब से हुई मौत के मामले में आरोपी को सजा-ए-मौत तक का प्रावधान किया है। साथ ही अधिकारियों की मिलीभगत और लापरवाही पाए जाने पर खर्बिसंगी का भी प्रावधान है, लेकिन यहां नियम-कानून को मानता कौन है? हर बड़ी

**ए. सूर्यप्रकाश**

जनादेश से स्पष्ट है कि कांग्रेस ने चुनाव अभियान में जितनी बदजुबानी की उसका प्रदर्शन उतना ही खराब रहा। धीर असंवेदनशीलता पर मतदाताओं ने उसे कड़ा सबक सिखाया

लोकसभा चुनाव में भाजपा ने बेहद शानदार प्रदर्शन किया है। भाजपा की यह भारी-भरकम जीत जितनी प्रधानमंत्री नरेंद्र मोदी के मजबूत और निर्णायक नेतृत्व के पक्ष में सकारात्मक मतदान की परिचायक है उतनी ही कांग्रेस अध्यक्ष राहुल गांधी और उनके साथियों द्वारा प्रधानमंत्री के खिलाफ अभद्र और अमर्यादित भाषा में चलाए गए अभियान के खिलाफ नकारात्मक वोटिंग की भी प्रतीक है।

नेहरू-गांधी परिवार दशकों से लुटियन दिल्ली के बंगले में रहता आया है। इस बीच ऐसा दौर भी आया जब इस परिवार के पास कोई अधिकार नहीं बचा कि वह यहां मिले बंगले में रहे। फिर भी यह सिलसिला चलता रहा। नेहरू-गांधी परिवार अपने भीमानी धनी और उनके साथियों द्वारा प्रधानमंत्री के खिलाफ अभद्र और अमर्यादित भाषा में चलाए गए अभियान के खिलाफ नकारात्मक वोटिंग की भी प्रतीक है। नेहरू-गांधी परिवार दशकों से लुटियन दिल्ली के बंगले में रहता आया है। इस बीच ऐसा दौर भी आया जब इस परिवार के पास कोई अधिकार नहीं बचा कि वह यहां मिले बंगले में रहे। फिर भी यह सिलसिला चलता रहा। नेहरू-गांधी परिवार अपने भीमानी धनी और उनके साथियों द्वारा प्रधानमंत्री के खिलाफ अभद्र और अमर्यादित भाषा में चलाए गए अभियान के खिलाफ नकारात्मक वोटिंग की भी प्रतीक है। नेहरू-गांधी परिवार दशकों से लुटियन दिल्ली के बंगले में रहता आया है। इस बीच ऐसा दौर भी आया जब इस परिवार के पास कोई अधिकार नहीं बचा कि वह यहां मिले बंगले में रहे। फिर भी यह सिलसिला चलता रहा। नेहरू-गांधी परिवार अपने भीमानी धनी और उनके साथियों द्वारा प्रधानमंत्री के खिलाफ अभद्र और अमर्यादित भाषा में चलाए गए अभियान के खिलाफ नकारात्मक वोटिंग की भी प्रतीक है।

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एटीएम के आने से बैंक में कैशियर की नौकरियां कम हो गईं। मोबाइल फोन के आने से एसटीडी बुथ का धंधा चौपट हो गया। कसी अंतहीन मिसालें हैं। मगर इसकी हकीकत यही है कि नई तकनीक अपने साथ जहां कुछ पुराने रोजगारों को समाप्त करती है वहीं कुछ नई किस्म की नौकरियां भी सृजित करती है। यानी तकनीक के साथ रोजगार पर बड़ा संकट नहीं आया है। ममलन एटीएम आया तो उसके रखरखाव और संचालन के क्षेत्र में नौकरियां सृजित हुईं तो मोबाइल फोन के आने से उनकी परम्परा का काम कई लोगों की आजीविका चला रहा है। कुल मिलाकर नई तकनीक हमेशा कुछ न कुछ हलचल भी मचाती है और आने वाले समय में इससे जुड़ी उठापटक और तेज होने के आसार हैं। इस कड़ी में आर्टिफिशियल इंटेलिजेंस यानी एआई का नाम बड़े जोर-शोर से लिया जा रहा है। इसमें शोध के लिए वैज्ञानिकों की जरूरत कम होगी। स्वचालित गाड़ियों से वाहन चालकों का रोजगार चौपट हो सकता है। यह इन नए अविकारों को रोक नहीं सकते हैं और उन्हें रोकना भी नहीं चाहिए। प्रश्न इन तकनीकी आविष्कारों को रोकने का नहीं है। प्रश्न है कि नए कार्यों में नए रोजगारों का पयांज मात्रा में सृजन हो। एम्प्लॉयमेंट एनालिसिस नाम की वेबसाइट के अनुसार 1900 में अमेरिका में 1,09,000 घोड़ा गाड़ी चलती थीं और बिजली मिस्त्री नगण्य थे। 2002 में घोड़ा गाड़ी शून्य प्राय हो गई जबकि बिजली मिस्त्रियों की संख्या 8,82,000 हो गई। यानी जितना पुराने रोजगार का हनन हुआ उससे दस गुना नए रोजगार सृजित हुए।

अर्थशास्त्रियों के बीच सहमति नहीं है कि नई हलचल से कितने रोजगारों का हनन होगा। कार्ल बेर्नेडट्टर द्वारा किए गए एक अध्ययन में आकलन किया गया कि अमेरिका के 47 प्रतिशत रोजगार संकट में पड़ सकते हैं। विश्व बैंक ने इस आकलन का गहन अध्ययन कराया और अनुमान लगाया कि केवल नौ प्रतिशत रोजगार का हनन होगा। यदि 47 प्रतिशत रोजगार का हनन होता है और 60 प्रतिशत रोजगार नए बनते हैं तो सुखद है। यदि नौ प्रतिशत का हनन होता है और केवल चार प्रतिशत नए बनते हैं तो दुखद है। अतः हमारा ध्यान होना चाहिए कि नए रोजगार सृजित हों।

मैं आशावादी हूं। मुझे भरोसा है कि कितने भी पुराने रोजगारों का हनन हो, उससे ज्यादा नए रोजगार बन सकते हैं। मान लीजिए कोई किसान अपनी फसल के लिए सपाहल में छह दिन काम करता था अब बिजली, ट्रैक्टर और इंटरनेट ने उसके लिए संभव बना दिया है कि वह चार दिन के काम से भी उतना ही उत्पादन कर सकता है। इससे दो दिन अतिरिक्त मिल गए। इन दो दिनों में वह कोई नया काम सीखकर उससे

**हम नए तकनीकी आविष्कारों को नहीं रोक सकते तो हमें यह देखना होगा कि उनमें पर्याप्त रोजगार सृजित हो सके**



फायदा उठा सकता है। यानी समय के सदुपयोग से नए रोजगारों का सृजन होगा।

अंतरराष्ट्रीय श्रम संगठन के एक अध्ययन के अनुसार नई तकनीकों के कारण उच्च क्षमता के इंजीनियरों के रोजगार का भारी मात्रा में सृजन होगा। मध्यम क्षमता के कर्मियों की जरूरत बहुत कम हो जाएगी और निम्न क्षमता के कर्मियों के रोजगार में भी वृद्धि होगी। आने वाले समय में केवल उच्च और निम्न वर्ग रह जायेंगे। माध्यम वर्ग का सफाया हो जायेगा। अतः चुनौती इस बात की है कि हम उच्च क्षमता के अधिक संख्या में रोजगार बनाएं।

उच्च रोजगार नई तकनीकों पर आधारित होते हैं। वैश्विक अर्थव्यवस्था में अमेरिकी दबदबे का मूल कारण है कि अमेरिकी सरकार ने नई तकनीकों के विकास को व्यापक आर्थिक समर्थन दिया है। जैसे इंटरनेट का आविष्कार अमेरिकी वाणिज्य विभाग द्वारा दिए गए अनुदान से हुआ था। परमाणु ऊर्जा का आविष्कार द्वितीय विश्व युद्ध के समय अमेरिकी सेना द्वारा किया गया था, लेकिन अपने देश में सरकार अनुदान उन लोगों को देती है जो नई तकनीक से हतोत्साह को छोड़कर देश के किसी हिस्से में कोई सैनास्त्रियुक्त प्रोफेसर से चर्चा हुई। मैंने उससे पूछा कि आपका मन कैसे लगता है? वह बोले कि मैं तो 40 साल से ‘कुछ न करने’ का आदी हो गया हूं। उन्हें 1.50 लाख रुपये प्रति माह का वेतन

**देश में आया चुनावी बदलाव**

‘मुस्लिम महिलाओं ने भी मुमकिन बनाई जीत’ शीर्षक से लिखे अपने लेख में एमजे अकबर ने मोदी सरकार की जगहिरेंपी नीतियों के प्रति मुस्लिम महिलाओं के बढ़ते आकर्षण को जिस चुनावी बदलाव के रूप में रेखांकित किया है, वह अब इस देश की हकीकत बनता जा रहा है। वस्तुतः ‘बांटो और राज करो’ की नीति का अनुसरण करने वाली कांग्रेस ने बहुत दिनों तक अल्पसंख्यक के नाम पर मुस्लिम वर्ग को इस देश की बहुसंख्यक जनता से अलग करते हुए यही दोहराया कि इस देश के संसाधनों पर पहला हक अल्पसंख्यकों का है। जबकि 2014 में पूर्ण बहुमत से आने वाली मोदी सरकार ने सबका साथ, सबका विकास की समावेशी नीति के अनुरूप केंद्र सरकार की विकास योजनाओं को बिना किसी भेद-भाव के देश की सवा सौ करोड़ जनता के लिए लागू किया और उसको भ्रष्टाचरामुक्त तरीके से धरातल तक पहुंचाया। कश्मीर में पाक-पोषित आतंकवाद पर प्रहार करते हुए उन्होंने देश के शांतिप्रिय मुसलमानों का उत्पीड़न नहीं होने दिया। पहली बार आतंकग्रस्त कश्मीर घाटी को छोड़कर देश के किसी हिस्से में आतंकी बम विस्फोट नहीं हुए। छिटपुट घटनाओं को छोड़कर देश के किसी हिस्से में कोई सांप्रदायिक दंगा भी नहीं हुआ। इस बदलाव ने देश के मुस्लिम वर्ग को यह सीखने के लिए प्रेरित कर दिया कि मुस्लिम वर्ग का हित देश की मुख्यधारा से कटकर अल्पसंख्यक के झूठे तमगे में नहीं है, बल्कि देश के साथ जुड़कर मोदी की विकासपरक नीतियों को आत्मसात करने में है। मुस्लिम वर्ग का यह मानसिक बदलाव मोदी की प्रचंड जीत का कारण बना। इस बदलाव ने विपक्ष की चुनावी रणनीति को ध्वस्त करते हुए मोदी के सुरासन के प्रति जैसा विश्वास व्यक्त किया, वह परिणामजनक रहा। यह



अबधेश राजपूत

सत्ता में आई। वर्ष 2009 में उसे 28.55 प्रतिशत वोट मिले और 206 सीटें हासिल हुईं। इस तरह सोनिया गांधी अप्रत्यक्ष रूप से प्रधानमंत्री रहीं और औसतन 28 प्रतिशत लोकप्रिय वोटों के साथ देश पर दस साल शासन किया। फिर भी इस पार्टी के नेता 2014 में मोदी सरकार के औचित्य पर सवाल उठाते रहे कि उसे मजबू 31.34 फीसद मत मिले हैं जबकि हकीकत में भाजपा को 282 सीटें हासिल हुईं थीं। वे फिर भी मोदी की हालिया जीत पर सवाल उठा रहे हैं जबकि भाजपा ने 37.40 प्रतिशत वोटों के साथ 303 सीटें हासिल की हैं। उसका कहना है कि 60 प्रतिशत मतदाताओं ने मौजूदा सरकार का कांग्रेस पार्टी और उस पर काबिज नेहरू-गांधी परिवार के लिए क्या निहितार्थ है?

ये दलीलें बहुत संदिग्ध हैं। यहां तक कि जवाहरलाल नेहरू को भी 1951-52 में हुए पहले आम चुनाव में केवल 45 प्रतिशत वोट मिले थे। उस समय लोकसभा की 489 सीटों में से कांग्रेस ने 364 सीटें हासिल की थीं। पार्टी को विपक्ष की ओर से कोई चुनौती भी नहीं मिली थी। उस समय छोटे-छोटे दलों वाला विपक्ष पूरी

तह छिन्न-भिन्न था। तब भाजपा के पूर्व स्वर्ण भारतीय जनसंघ को मात्र तीन सीटें मिली थीं। यानी कांग्रेस को मिली सी सीटों पर जनसंघ को एक सीट हासिल हुई थी। 1957 में कांग्रेस की सीटें बढ़कर 371 हो गईं और उसे 48 फीसद मत मिले। 1962 में फिर 45 प्रतिशत मत मिले और सीटों भी घटकर 361 रह गईं। अब मौजूदा हालात पर गौर करें तो भाजपा के नेतृत्व वाले राज ने लोकसभा में 358 सीटें हासिल की हैं जिनमें से 303 अकेले भाजपा की हैं। दूसरे पावदान पर रही कांग्रेस 52 सीटों के साथ उससे बहुत पीछे है जिसकी स्थिति में पिछली लोकसभा की 44 सीटों की तुलना में मामूली सुधार हुआ है।

अभी तक के सभी चुनावों में कांग्रेस की पहचान अस्थिर भारतीय पार्टी की रही जो देश के सभी कोनों से जीतकर आती रही। अब उसकी यह जगह भाजपा ले रही है। मतदाताओं की परिपक्वता इस चुनाव का सबसे खास पहलू बनकर उभरी है। ओडिशा, राजस्थान, मध्य प्रदेश और छत्तीसगढ़ के मतदाताओं ने अपनी पसंद को लेकर परिपक्वता का पुरा परिचय दिया। पांच महीने पहले ही भाजपा हिंदी पट्टी के तीन राज्यों में चुनाव हार गई थी,

मिलता होगा। वैज्ञानिक बताते हैं कि यदि कोई वैज्ञानिक वास्तव में शोध करना चाहता है तो पूरी व्यवस्था उसका विरोध करने लगती है। कारण कि यदि एक वैज्ञानिक ने नई खोज कर ली तो बाकी तमाम शिथिल पड़े वैज्ञानिकों के कार्य पर प्रश्न निम्न लग जाता है। सभी वैज्ञानिक कार्य न करें तो किसी को भी परेशानी नहीं है, लेकिन 100 में से यदि दो काम करें तो 98 की नौकरी पर संकट आता है। इसलिए हमारी सरकार उन 98 लोगों के हितों की रक्षा करती है जोकि तकनीकी आविष्कार नहीं होने देते हैं। यही कारण है कि देश में इतने सस्ते मूल्य पर उच्च वैज्ञानिक उपलब्ध होने के बावजूद हम तकनीकी आविष्कार में पीछे हैं। भारतीय वैज्ञानिक अमेरिका में जाकर अच्छा कार्य करते हैं और अपने देश में अपनी ही सरकार उन्हें अच्छा कार्य करने से रोकती है।

राजग सरकार वाईफाई को पूरे देश में फैलाएगी जो कि सही दिशा में कदम है, लेकिन रोजगार सृजन तभी हो पाएगा जब शिक्षा व्यवस्था में सुधार होगा। पहली बात है कि विश्वविद्यालयों में गजनीतिक दबाव में कुलपतियों की नियुक्ति पर रोक लगानी चाहिए। सरकार को अधिकार है कि अपनी विचारधारा के अनुरूप लोगों को नियुक्त करें, पर अपनी विचारधारा के अक्षम लोगों की नियुक्ति उचित नहीं है। हमारी शिक्षा व्यवस्था वैचारिक भ्रष्टाचर से ग्रस्त हो गई है। सरकार को चाहिए कि पहले सक्षम लोगों का पैल बनाए। उसके आधार पर ही नियुक्ति का निर्णय ले।

दूसरा काम यह है कि सभी विश्वविद्यालयों और वैज्ञानिक संस्थाओं में अध्यापकों एवं वैज्ञानिकों को स्थायी नौकरी देने के स्थान पर पांच वर्षीय अनुबंध पर रखा जाए। मैं फ्लोरिडा विश्वविद्यालय में पढ़ता था। हमारे 40 में से केवल दो प्रोफेसरों को स्थायी नियुक्ति दी गई थी। बाकी सभी का पांच वर्ष पर मूल्यांकन होता था और उसी आधार पर नवीनीकरण। मूल्यांकन में छात्रों, एक बाहरी संस्था और अपने ही सहयोगियों तीनों की सहभागिता होती चाहिए। तीसरा कदम है कि शैक्षिक संस्थाओं को दी जा रही रकम को उनके द्वारा किए गए कार्य से जोड़ देना चाहिए। अंतरराष्ट्रीय संस्थाओं में प्रोफेसरों के कितने पचें प्रकाशित हुए, सेलेफ फाइनर्सिंग कोर्स से कितनी रकम जुटाई, इत्यादि को देखते हुए ही इन संस्थाओं को रकम देनी चाहिए। इन कदमों को लागू कर नई सरकार भारत में उच्च कोटि के तमाम रोजगार का सृजन भी कर सकेगी और भारत वास्तविक मायने में महाशक्ति भी बन सकेगा।

(लेखक वरिष्ठ अर्थशास्त्री एवं आइआइएम बैंगलूर के पूर्व प्रोफेसर हैं)
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**मेलबाक्स**

चुनावी बदलाव विपक्ष के लिए अकल्पनीय था। कर्नाटक की तरह चुनाव के बाद एकजुट होने की प्रक्रिया में जुटने वाले विपक्ष को यह उम्मीद नहीं थी कि इस बार के चुनावी बदलाव से उनके सभी जातीय और सांप्रदायिक समीकरण धराशायी हो जाएंगे। यह चुनावी बदलाव देश के हित में रहा, क्योंकि इससे देश के लिए जरूरी पूर्ण बहुमत की केंद्र सरकार बन गई। डॉ. वीपी पाण्डेय, अलीगढ़

**सौदेबाजी स्वीकार नहीं**

भाजपा गठबंधन के सहयोगी दलों को साथ लेकर चल रही है, लेकिन सहयोगी दल उसकी मजबूरी नहीं हैं। मजबूत और पूर्ण बहुमत वाली सरकार के तात्पशाही रवैया अखिराण करने की अशंका रहती है, लेकिन देश के लोकतंत्र में ऐसा हो पाना न तो सरल है और न ही अच्छा। पूर्ण बहुमत की सरकार अपनी नीतियों को ठीक से लागू कर पाती है। गठबंधन की सरकारों में सौदेबाजी ज्यादा होती है। भाजपा सभी सहयोगी दलों को साथ लेकर चल रही है। इसके साथ ही दबाव की राजनीति वह स्वीकार नहीं करेगी। यह भी पार्टी ने साफ कर दिया है। युधिष्ठिर लाल कक्कड़, गुरुग्राम

**विकास के नाम पर वोट**

23 मई का दिन भारतीय लोकतंत्र के इतिहास में स्वर्ण अक्षरों से लिखा जाएगा। उस दिन भारत की जनता ने यह सिद्ध कर दिया कि वह धर्म-जाति बंधन से मुक्त होकर विकास के मुद्दे पर वोट करती है। उसने न केवल जातिवाद के आरोप को नकारा, बल्कि वंशवाद एवं परिवारवाद की ध्जिन्यां भी उधेड़ दी। जातिवाद गठबंधनों को निरुत्साहित किया। भाजपा ने

लेकिन लोकसभा चुनाव में वहां मतदाताओं ने भाजपा को निर्णायक जनादेश दिया। यह राज्य और राष्ट्रीय स्तर के चुनावों में स्पष्ट रूप से अंतर को निर्धारित करता है। इस मायने में ओडिशा का जनादेश तो और भी अलग है जहां मतदाता लोकसभा और विधानसभा के लिए एक साथ दो अलग-अलग मशीनों पर मतदान कर रहे थे। राज्य की 21 लोकसभा सीटों में वहां की जनता ने 12 सीटों पर बीजू जनता दल को कामयाबी दिलाई तो आठ सीटें भाजपा के खाते में गईं हालांकि राज्य विधानसभा में स्थिति एकदम उलट रही जहां 146 में से 113 सीटें बीजू जनता दल को मिलीं जो 75 फीसद सीटों से भी अधिक है। यहां भाजपा को केवल 23 सीटों के साथ ही संतोष करना पड़ा। इस प्रकार लोकसभा में जहां मोदी के पक्ष में हवा चल रही थी तो राज्य के नेतृत्व के लिए नवीन पटनायक स्पष्ट रूप से जनता की पहली पसंद थे।

ऐसी परिपक्वता हमारे लोकतंत्र के लिए बेहतर है, क्योंकि राज्य और स्थानीय स्तर के चुनाव अक्सर जाति और अन्य विभाजनकारी मुद्दों पर लड़े जाते हैं जबकि लोकसभा चुनाव एक नेता, एक पार्टी और एक ऐसे विचार के इद्दगिर्द केंद्रित होते हैं जो इन दरारों को भरता है। इससे जीतने वाली पार्टी के लिए कहीं अधिक उदार मतदाताओं का आधार तैयार होता है।

भाजपा स्पष्ट रूप से अपना विस्तार कर रही है। अगर उसके विस्तार की यही गति बरकरार रही तो अगली बार चुनावी नक्शों में वह कांग्रेस का वही करिश्मा दोहराती नजर आएगी जो 1957 और 1962 में नेहरू के दौर में कांग्रेस ने किया था। तब लगभग हर राज्य में उसके सांसद थे। अब कांग्रेस को आत्मसंभन में जुटना चाहिए जिससे वह पार्टी को नए सिरे से खड़ा करने के उपाय तलाशे। बिल्कुल वैसे जैसे 1984 में दो सीटों पर सिमरने के बाद भाजपा ने किया था। (लेखक प्रसार भारती के चेयरमैन एवं वरिष्ठ स्तंभकार हैं)

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**ऊर्जा**

**अहिंसा**

अहिंसा का अर्थ प्रेम होता है। किसी को न सताना, न मारना। प्राणिमात्र को दुख न देना ही अहिंसा है। हिंसा दो प्रकार की होती है-स्थूल और सूक्ष्म। स्थूल हिंसा है-किसी को मार डालना, अंग-भंग कर देना, शोषण एवं अपमानित करना, व्यंग्य एवं ताते मारना, शस्त्रों का प्रयोग करना आदि। सूक्ष्म हिंसा है-मन में किसी के प्रति दुर्भाव रखना, घृणा करना, राग-द्वेष रखना, किसी को मानसिक रूप से सताना। दूसरे शब्दों में कहें तो मन में सूक्ष्म हिंसा भरी रहना, जो जरा सी निगिरी देखते ही बारूद की भांति भस्म हो जाय। आज सर्वत्र हिंसा का दानाबल सुलग रहा है। इसी स्थिति से त्राण पाने का उपाय है-अहिंसा।

योग की आठ सीढ़ियों में प्रथम सीढ़ी अहिंसा है। हम परिवार में रहते हैं। समाज में, व्यक्तिगत जीवन में, पारिवारिक जीवन में हमारा सैकड़ों लोगों से संपर्क होता है। व्यवहार में अहिंसा की साधना का श्रीगणेश यहीं से किया जा सकता है। घर-परिवार, समाज, पड़ोस में, जहां कहीं भी किसी व्यक्ति के संपर्क में हम आए तो लोगों से प्रेम से मिलें, प्रेम का व्यवहार करें। हमारा आचरण प्रेममय हो। व्यवहार-बातचीत प्रेममय ही हो। यह सत्य है कि प्रेम का मार्ग जटिल होता है। उसमें त्याग करना होता है, बलिदान करना पड़ेगा, निजी स्वार्थ छोड़ना होगा। उसमें सहनशीलता, उदारता, क्षमा, करुणा, दया और नम्रता जैसे सदगुणों का विकास करना होता है। अर्थात् प्रेम को जीवन में उतारना ही अहिंसा का प्रत्यक्ष-पाठ है। यदि हमारे हृदय में प्रेम भर जाए, फिर तो हिंसा अपने आप चली जाएगी।

किसी को मारने की, सताने की, कष्ट पहुंचाने की भावना तभी बढ़ती-पनपती है, जब हम उसे ‘परायण’ समझने लगते हैं। क्या अपनों को कोई सताता या कष्ट पहुंचाता है? यदि हम सभी लोगों को ‘अपना’ स्वीकार कर लें तो अहिंसा की साधना सफल हो जाएगी। फिर तो समस्त विश्व एक कुटुंब बन जाएगा। ‘मेरा’-‘तेरा’ का कोई भाव नहीं होगा। हम विश्व परिवार के सदस्य बन जाएंगे। हमारा किसी से झगड़ा, घृणा और विरोध नहीं होगा। हमारे जीवन, वाणी, व्यवहार से अहिंसा-धर्म स्वयमेव मुखरित होने लगेगा। कठिन तो है, फिर भी यह साधना करने जैसी है। आइए, सच्चे मन से हम, सच्चे हृदय से इस अहिंसा धर्म के पालन का व्रत ले लें।

डॉ. विजय प्रकाश त्रिपाठी

अपने बलबूते दोबारा पूर्ण बहुमत प्राप्त किया। सहयोगी दलों को भी अधिक सफलता प्राप्त हुई। मध्य प्रदेश, राजस्थान एवं छत्तीसगढ़ के विधान सभा चुनावों में अपनी पराजय से भी भाजपा को फायदा ही हुआ। कांग्रेस को इतने अल्प समय के शासन में ही सत्ता विरोधी क्रोध का शिकार होना पड़ा। उत्तर प्रदेश में लोकसभा के उपचुनावों में भी भाजपा को हार का सामना करना पड़ा था, लेकिन उससे सीख लेते हुए पार्टी ने कारगर उपाय किए और वहां भी जीत हासिल की। dharmendranath.rastogi@gmail.com

**ई-रिक्षा चालकों की मनमानी**

दिल्ले मनमन

नार्थ कैपस के मेट्रो स्टेशन पर ई-रिक्षा वाले हैं। आमतौर पर यहां से किसी भी कॉलेज में एट्रिप्ट व्यक्ति 10 रुपये निर्धारित है, लेकिन ैं से 20 रुपये वसूल रहे हैं। इतना ही नहीं, स्थान पर पांच-छह सवारी बैठा रहे हैं। इस पुलिस व अन्य संबंधित विभाग सज्ञान लेकर हैं, जिससे उनकी मनमानी पर रोक लग सके। विजय कुमार धनिया, नई दिल्ली

कसी भी विषय पर राय व्यक्त करने अथवा 1 के राष्ट्रीय संस्करण पर प्रतिक्रिया व्यक्त पाठकगण सादर आमंत्रित हैं। आप हमें पत्र ई-मेल भी कर सकते हैं। अपने पत्र इस पते पर भेजें : निक जागरण, राष्ट्रीय संस्करण, -210- 211, सेक्टर -63, गेजडा मेल : mailbox@jagran.com

गण्य प्रकाश त्रिपाठी \* आईएसओ अतिरिक्त।





# नापाक हरकत

पाकिस्तान में बात शनिवार को इस्लामाबाद में भारतीय उच्चायोग की ओर से दी गई इफ्तार पार्टी के दौरान जो अशिष्टतापूर्ण हरकत की गई है, वह हैरान करने वाली तो है ही, निन्दनीय भी है। आज तक ऐसी घटना शायद ही किसी मुल्क में देखने-सुनने में आई होगी जब इफ्तार पार्टी में पहुंचे मेहमानों को जबरन वापस लौटा दिया गया हो। भारतीय उच्चायोग ने इस्लामाबाद के सेरेना होटल में इफ्तार की दावत रखी थी। इसमें पाकिस्तान के तीन सौ से ज्यादा राजनीतिकों, सांसदों, राजनयिकों, सरकारी अधिकारियों, सेवानिवृत्त सैन्य अधिकारियों, मीडिया से जुड़े दिग्गजों, कारोबारियों और गणमान्य नागरिकों को आमंत्रित किया गया था। लेकिन सुरक्षा के नाम पर पाकिस्तान ने भाईचारे और सौहार्द के इस आয়োजन को एक अप्रिय घटना में बदल डाला। जो मेहमान सेरेना होटल पहुंचे थे, उन्हें गंभीर शारीरिक और मानसिक उत्पीड़न से गुजरना पड़ा। ज्यादातर को तो होटल के भीतर प्रवेश ही नहीं करने दिया। सुरक्षा जांच के नाम पर सुरक्षाबलों, पुलिस और आइएसआइ के कारिंदों ने मेहमानों से धक्का-मुक्की की और उन्हें धमकाया भी जा रहा। कई मेहमानों को सुरक्षाकर्मियों की गालियां सुननी पड़ीं, जांच के नाम पर कुछ के मोबाइल तक छीन लिए गए। पूरा होटल एक तरह से छावनी बना दिया गया। इस घटना ने पाकिस्तान की मंशा और उसके चेहरे को उजागर करके रख दिया है। साफ है, वह इस आয়োजन को किसी सूत्र में नहीं होने देना चाहता था।

लेकिन मैं सोचता नहीं हूँ। हमारा कितना ज़माना के बायब्रेर में ही नहीं पड़ता। देश भारत की ओर से दी जाने वाली इम्पार्त पार्टी एक दुखदवाली घटना में बदल जाणगी। यह घटना बता रही है कि आने वाले दिनों में पाकिस्तान भारत के साथ कैसे 'दोस्ताना' रिश्ते रखना चाहता है। जब तनाव होती रहने वाली इस तरह की घटनाएँ दोनों देशों के बीच रिश्तों में और कड़वाहट पैदा करती रही हैं। यह कोई पहला मौका नहीं है जब पाकिस्तानी सुरक्षाबलों ने यह किया हो। पिछले दो-तीन साल में ऐसा कई घटनाएँ हुई हैं जब पाकिस्तान ने भारतीय राजनयिकों के साथ दुर्व्यवहार किया। राजनयिकों के आवासीय परिसरों की जासूसी, बिजली-पानी की आपूर्ति बंद कर देने, संदिग्ध रूप से पीछा करने, राजनयिकों के यहाँ आने-जाने वालों को पूछताछ के नाम पर परेशान और प्रताड़ित करने जैसी घटनाएँ अक्सर होती रही हैं। इन सारी घटनाओं के बावजूद भारत ने बहुत ही धैर्य और संयम का परिचय दिया और ऐसा कोई कदम नहीं उठाया, जिससे तनाव बढ़के और रिश्ते खराब हों। भारत ने हर ऐसी घटना पर राजनयिक प्रक्रियाओं और मर्यादाओं के तहत ही विरोध दर्ज कराया। लेकिन पाकिस्तान ने तो राजनयिक आचरण और मर्यादाओं को ताक पर रख दिया है!

इस तरह की घटनाओं का जगजनित दूरदर्शन कार्यक्रमों आखिर तब तक नहीं दिखाना चाहता है? क्या वह इस तरह बात से अच्छे रिश्तों की उम्मीदवादी बनकर जाता है? पिछले साल पाकिस्तान की सत्ता संभालने के बाद प्रधानमंत्रीनवाज शरीफ ने रिश्ते सुधारने की दिशा में बड़ी-बड़ी बातों की थीं। कहा जाता था, अगर भारत एक कदम बढ़ाएगा तो पाकिस्तान दो कदम बढ़ेगा। लेकिन हुआ इसका उल्टा। इस साल फरवरी में पुलवामा में सीआरपीएफकर्मियों के जवानों पर हमला हो गया। क्या ऐसा संभव है कि बिना पाकिस्तानी सरकार या आइएसआइ के इशारे के इस तरह की घटना हो जाए? ताजाना शरीफ घटना से तो यही संकेत मिलता है कि पाकिस्तान ने बौखलाहट में ऐसीसी प्रतिक्रिया देकर कदम की है। भारत की मजबूत सरकार के सख्त रवैए से उसकी नींदों में उड़ो हुई है और वह इस तरह की घटनाओं की आड़ में शांति की प्रक्रियाओं की बाधित करना चाहता है। अगर इरादे नेक हैं तो पाकिस्तानी प्रधानमंत्रीनवाज शरीफ को क्या इस घटना की जांच करा कर हकीकत सामने नहीं लानी चाहिए।

# माँ की चढ़ाई

एवरेस्ट की चढ़ाई दुनिया के सबसे साहसिक पर्वतारोहण अभियानों में से एक मानी जाती रही है। भौगोलिक स्थिति से लेकर मौसम तक को देखते हुए वहां जाने के पहले कई तरह की तैयारियां अनिवार्य होती हैं। साहस के साथ पहाड़ों की चढ़ाई का हौसला रखने में कोई हर्ज नहीं है। लेकिन पिछले कुछ सालों के दौरान कई तरह के खतरों से भरे उस सफर को एक सामान्य खेल की तरह मान लिया गया है। यही वजह है कि जानलेवा जोखिम की अनदेखी करके ऐसे लोग भी एवरेस्ट की चढ़ाई के लिए निकल पड़ते हैं, जिन्हें पर्वतारोहण की बुनियादी जानकारी प्राप्त नहीं होती। जबकि किसी भी पहाड़ पर चढ़ने के लिए विधिवत प्रशिक्षण से गुजरना और पूरी तरह प्रशिक्षित होना अनिवार्य है। लेकिन महज शौक के साथ दुनिया की सबसे ऊँचाई वाली चोटी पर चढ़ाई के लिए लोगों की भीड़ जिस तरह एवरेस्ट और उसके आसपास बढ़ रही है, वह न केवल कई लोगों के लिए जानलेवा साबित हुई है, बल्कि खुद एवरेस्ट और वहां के पर्यावरण तक के सामने कई तरह की मुश्किलें खड़ी हो गई हैं। इस साल हालत यह है कि कुछ दिनों पहले एवरेस्ट की चढ़ाई करने वाले रास्ते में भीड़ की वजह से जाम लग गया और लोगों को आगे बढ़ने के लिए घंटों लाइन में खड़ा रहना पड़ा। इसलिए है कि क्या यह किसी दुस्साहसिक अभियान की तस्वीर हो सकती है कि खतरे के सफर में इस तरह भीड़ हो जाए!

दरअसल, हाल के वर्षों में एवरेस्ट पर जाने के लिए जैसे-जैसे लोगों के बीच आकर्षण बढ़ा है, वैसे-वैसे इसने कारोबारी शक्ल अख्तियार करने पर मजबूर भी है। दूसरी वजह यह है कि इस मौसम में एवरेस्ट पर जाने के लिए एवरेस्ट हासिल करने से नेपाल को बड़े पैमाने पर विदेशी मुद्रा जमा करने का मौका होता है। गौरतलब है कि एक व्यक्ति को वहां जाने के लिए एवरेस्ट हासिल करने के बदले ग्यारह हजार डॉलर चुकाने पड़ते हैं। इस साल तीन सौ इक्व्यासी लोगों को एवरेस्ट चढ़ाई के लिए परिमित संख्या में जारी किया गया। जबकि वहां जाने के लिहाज से मौसम की अवधि भी छोटी थी। नतीजतन, एक समय हालत यह हो गई कि एवरेस्ट की चढ़ाई के रास्ते पर ही लंबा जाम लग गया था। अंदाजा लगाया जा सकता है कि रातें तरफ बर्फ के बीच पंद्रह किलोमीटर की रफ्तार से बहती बर्फनीली हवा और ऑक्सीजन की कमी के बीच खतरनाक रास्ते पर आगे बढ़ने के लिए घंटों खड़े लोगों की हालत कैसी होती होगी।

एक बड़ी मुश्किल यह है कि जिन लोगों के पास पर्वतारोहण के लिए पर्याप्त प्रशिक्षण नहीं होता है, वे भी स्थानीय गाइड के सहारे चोटी पर चढ़ाई की कोशिश करने हैं। ऐसे लोगों के प्रशिक्षण के अभाव के बावजूद एवरेस्ट फतह करने के शौक और विपरीत मौसम के दबाव के चलते इस साल अब तक ग्यारह लोगों की मौत की खबर आ चुकी है। सवाल है कि क्या पर्वतारोहण के शौक में इतनी संख्या में लोगों की जान जाने की संझौत माना जा सकता है? एवरेस्ट पर चढ़ाई के शौक के कारोबार बनते जाते हैं न सिर्फ वहां जाने वाले लोगों की जान की जोखिम में डाला है, बल्कि वहां लगने वाले कचरे के ढेर की वजह से खुद एवरेस्ट का पर्यावरणिकीय संतुलन बुरी तरह प्रभावित हुआ है। ऐसे में यह जरूरी है कि न केवल एवरेस्ट फतह करने की इच्छा रखने वाले लोगों, बल्कि खुद एवरेस्ट को प्राकृतिक रूप में बचाए रखने की लिए वक्त पर जरूरी कदम उठाए जाएं। महज शौक या कारोबारी मुनाफे के लिए एवरेस्ट को जानलेवा चोटी के रूप में तब्दील नहीं होने दिया जाना चाहिए।

# कल्पमेधा

लोकतंत्र इस धारणा पर आधारित है कि साधारण लोगों में असाधारण प्रतिभाएं होती हैं।  
-हेनरी एमर्शन फास्टिडक

संजीव पांडेय

ट्रंप प्रशासन के दबाव में भारत ने ईरान से तेल आयात बंद कर दिया। भारत ईरान से रोजाना साढ़े चार लाख बैरल तेल आयात करता था। ईरान भारत को तेल आयात के बिल भुगतान के लिए साठ दिन का समय देता था। यह छूट दूसरे तेल निर्यातक देश नहीं देते हैं। लेकिन ट्रंप की नजर सिर्फ भारतीय तेल बाजार पर नहीं है, वे भारत के रक्षा बाजार पर भी नजरें गड़ाए हुए हैं।

पहले कुछ समय में अमेरिकी प्रशासन का यह दूसरा झटका है। ट्रंप प्रशासन ने व्यापार में वरीयता की सामान्य व्यवस्था के तहत भारत को मिलने वाले प्रशुल्क छूट के लाभ को समाप्त दे दिया है। भारत को यह छूट अमेरिका सामान्य तरजीहीयता (जीएसपी) के तहत विकासशील देशों को मिलने वाली छूट के तहत देता था। ट्रंप के इस फैसले से भारत का लगभग छह अरब डॉलर का निर्यात प्रभावित होगा। अमेरिकी प्रशासन का यह फैसला भारतीय उद्योग जगत को झटका है। इससे भारत के कई उत्पाद अमेरिका में शुल्क लगने के कारण महंगे हो जाएंगे। इनकी प्रतिस्पर्धा की क्षमता कम होगी। ट्रंप ने कहा है कि भारत अपने बाजार को अमेरिकी निर्यात के लिए खोले। अगर नहीं खोलेंगे तो भविष्य में भारत की मुफ़्त और बढ़ेंगी। ट्रंप को कहना है कि भारत अपने बाजार को अमेरिकी सामान के लिए नहीं खोल रहा है। इसलिए पांच जून से भारत का

चंदन कुमार चौधरी

कुछ समय पहले दसवीं और बारहवीं कक्षाओं के विद्यार्थी पठित पाठ्यक्रम में रहे। इस तरह की परीक्षाओं में कुछ विद्यार्थी काफी अच्छे नंबरों से, कुछ साधारण नंबरों से पास होते हैं और कुछ फेल भी हो जाते हैं। परीणामों पर कुछ दिनों तक चर्चा-परिचर्चा होती है, फिर सब शांत हो जाता है। लेकिन सब यह है कि, साधारण दिखने वाली ऐसी घटनाएं दरअसल, साधारण नहीं होती हैं, बल्कि इनका दूरगामी परिणाम होता है। आमतौर पर यहाँ से लोगों के मन में धीरे-धीरे असफल और असफल विद्यार्थियों को लेकर एक मानसिकता पैदा होने लगती है। भले ही यह एक मानसिकता का परिणाम होना हो, लेकिन इसे लोग जीवन में सफलता और असफलता का प्रमाण-पत्र मान कर चलने लगते हैं और तब यह बहुत खतरनाक हो जाता है। इसका जो ठप्पा विद्यार्थियों पर एक बार लग जाता है तो इससे वह शायद ही जीवन में किसी उबर पाता है। ऐसे विद्यार्थी जीवन में पढ़ाई-लिखाई से इतर कोई दूसरा काम भी करें तो लोग सफल बच्चों को सफल मानें और असफल को असफल मान कर ही चलने लगते हैं। हालाँकि वास्तव में ऐसा होता नहीं है। अगर

# खेती की खातिर

मई में किसान और उसका परिवार खेत जोतने से लेकर अन्य कृषि कार्यों में काफी व्यस्त रहता है। खरीफ फसलों के लिए इस महीने में खेत जोतना जरूरी होता है क्योंकि जून के मध्य में मानसून भारत में प्रवेश करता है जिसके बाद वज्रवह बुआई में जुट जाता है। खेत जोतने से लेकर बुआई तक किसान और उसके सहायक मामलों में पसीना बहाते हैं लेकिन अधिकतर मामलों में किसान को उम्मीद के अनुसार अपने प्रेम कीमत नहीं मिलती। इस वजह से वह अपने खेत बेचने या आत्महत्या करने को मजबूर हो जाता है। राष्ट्रीय अपराध रिकॉर्ड ब्यूरो के अनुसार वर्ष 2015 में 8007 किसानों और 4595 खेतिहर मजदूरों ने आर्थिक तंगी के चलते आत्महत्या की थी। वहीं 2014 में 5650 किसानों और 6710 खेतिहर मजदूरों ने आत्महत्या कर ली थी मगर 2015 के बाद किसान आत्महत्या की रिपोर्ट जारी नहीं की गई। आज भी किसान आत्महत्या देश के लिए गंभीर समस्या है। हमारे देश में जो मध्यम और छोटे किसान हैं उनके पास जरूरी संसाधनों की कमी रहती है। जहां बाढ़ किसान ट्रैक्टर के जरिए असीमित से अपने विशाल खेत जोत लेते हैं वहीं मध्यम और छोटे किसान बैलों की सहायता से खेत जोतते हैं या ट्रैक्टर ट्रैक्टर किए पर लेकर खेत जुतावाते हैं जिससे खेत जोतना और भी महंगा हो जाता है। गर्मियों में खेती की सीढ़ी हाथों में होती है जिससे उसे अपने बैलों को महंगा चारा खिलाना पड़ता है। बीज कंपनियों के अपने बीजों की उत्पादन क्षमता के बड़े-बड़े दावे करती हैं लेकिन अक्सर ये दावे खोखले फसल होने हैं। कई मामलों में तो बीज बोने के बाद फसल ही नहीं उगती। मध्यम और छोटे किसानों के पास

# ट्रंप के निशाने पर भारत

लाभार्थी विकासशील देश का दर्जा समाप्त करना उचित है। चीन के बाद अब भारत अमेरिका के निर्यातन पर है। वैसे तो अमेरिका को एशिया-प्रशांत क्षेत्र में अपना सहयोगी बताता रहा है। लेकिन ट्रंप प्रशासन का यह फैसला भारतीय अर्थव्यवस्था को चुनौतियों को और बढ़ाएगा। यह शुरुआत है ईरान से तेल आयात पर अमेरिकी प्रतिबंध के कारण भारत की मुश्किलें पहले से ही बढ़ी हुई हैं।

भारतीय निर्यात को हतोत्साहित करने की नीति अपनाए जाने के संकेत ट्रंप प्रशासन ने पहले ही दे दिए हैं। चीन के साथ ही ट्रंप के निशाने पर यूरोपीय यूनियन, भारत, जापान, कनाडा जैसे देश हैं। ट्रंप ने जब चीन से व्यापार युद्ध शुरू किया तो यूरोपीय यूनियन और भारत जैसे मुलुक खुश थे। इन्हें लग रहा था कि अमेरिकी बाजारों में चीनी निर्यात कम होने पर उनका हिस्सेदारी बढ़ेगी। यूरोपीय यूनियन का निर्यातन सरर अरब डॉलर और जापान और कनाडा का निर्यातन बीस-बीस अरब डॉलर तक बढ़ने की संभावना थी।

मार्गोन्मुख न्यायता में बा साक्ष्य तीन फीसद के इजाजत की उम्मीद थी। लेकिन भारत की यह खुशी सामान्य तरजीही व्यवस्था से बाहर होने के साथ ही खत्म हो गई। इसके संकेत पिछले दिनों भारत दौरे पर आए अमेरिकी वाणिज्य मंत्री विल्बर रोस ने दे दिए थे। उनका कहना था कि भारत अमेरिका से आयात होने वाले सामान पर उच्च शुल्क लगा रहा है। भारत में नई सरकार के गठन के बाद अमेरिका इस मुद्दे की उठाएगा। भारत में आयात होने वाले अमेरिकी फीसद पर औसत शुल्क 13.8 फीसद है। जबकि ऑटोमोबाइल पर सात फीसद और मोटरसाइकिल पर पचास फीसद शुल्क है। कुछ अमेरिकी उत्पादों पर डेढ़ से से तीन सौ फीसद तक शुल्क भी लगाया जाता है। इससे अमेरिका खासा नाराज है।

जन्मका दृष्ट्या भारत का परमाणु क्रांति वाला है। हालाँकि अमेरिका को खुश करने के लिए भारत ने अमेरिकी तेल उद्योग से सालाना पाँच अरब डॉलर के तेल और गैस आयात करने का फैसला किया। अमेरिकी उद्युग उद्योग से भी भारत ने विमान खरीदना का फैसला किया है। भारत अगले कुछ वर्षों में चालीस अरब डॉलर के विमान को खरीद करेगा। दुनिया के कई देशों पर दबाव बना कर अमेरिकी रक्षा उद्योग के बाजार का विस्तार कर रहे हैं। वे इससे भी व्यापार संतुलन भी अमेरिका के पक्ष में करना चाहते हैं। उत्तर कोरिया के लगातार मिसाइल परीक्षणों में परेशान जापान ने अपनी सेना के लिए अगले पाँच



रखा उच्चकरणा की खातिर पर अमेरिका न प्रोतबंध लागू करेग। अगर भारत इसे खरीदगा तो अमेरिका कानूनों के तहत उसे भी प्रतिबंध डेलना पड़ेगा। अमेरिका की नियात के पांच बड़े बाजारों में कनाडा, मेक्सिको, चीन, जपान और ब्रिटेन हैं। आबादी के हिसाब से भारत दुनिया का दूसरा बड़ा देश है। इसके बावजूद भारत अमेरिका के नियात बाजार की रैंकिंग में तेरहवें नंबर है। अमेरिका कनाडा की सालाना टॉलन सौ अरब डॉलर, मेक्सिको को ढाई सौ अरब डॉलर, चीन को एक सौ सौ अरब डॉलर, जपान को सतर अरब डॉलर और ब्रिटेन को साठ अरब डॉलर का सामान नियात करता है। जबकि भारत को सालाना सैंतीस अरब डॉलर का सामान बेचना है। अमेरिका की नजर भारत के मध्यवर्ग पर है। दरअसल, टंप ने

# धारणाओं की धुरी

व्यक्ति पढ़ाई में सफल होता है तो वह जीवन की हर  
तह में सफल होगा, इसकी कोई गारंटी नहीं है। दूसरी  
तह जो व्यक्ति एक बार असफल हो गया, वह इसमें  
काम में भी असफल ही होगा यह भी जरूरी नहीं है।  
एक साल अच्छा नंबर लाने वाला विद्यार्थी अगले  
साल आठवां नंबर नहीं ला सकता है। जीवन में  
उतार-चढ़ाव लगा रहता है। सफलता और असफलता  
स्थायी नहीं होती। ऐसा लगता है कि अच्छे नंबर लाने  
वाले विद्यार्थियों पर हमेशा  
बेहतर करने का दबाव बन

# दुनिया मेरे आगे

रहती हूँ। घण्टा-घण्टा बार तो ऐसा  
भी होता है। अचानक को मिलती हैं कि अगर वह फिर  
अच्छा नंबर नहीं ला पाता है तो वह धीरे-धीरे अवसादग्रस्त  
की दुनिया में भी चला जाता है। आए दिन विद्यार्थियों  
की खुबसूरती की खबरें आती ही रहती हैं।  
वास्तव में समाज को खतरा प्रमाण-पत्र बांटने  
वाले ऐसे लोगों से है जो अपने निहित स्वार्थ और  
ईर्ष्या-द्वेष के कारण लोगों को निशाना बनाते हैं और  
उन्हें एक दायरे तक सीमित रखना चाहते हैं। ऐसे  
लोग अकेले या कई बार गुट में काम करते हैं।  
वास्तव में एक व्यक्ति की क्षमता असीम होती है और  
वह अगर चाहे तो अपनी मेहनत के दम पर बहुत  
कछ हासिल कर सकता है। इसके लिए अगर एक

सिंचाई की व्यवस्था न होने से उन्हें अनिश्चित मानसुनुत पर निर्भर रहना पड़ता है। ऐसे में खेती उनके लिए एक जुआ बन जाती है जहां वे हजार्द रुपए के बीज बोकर मानसुनुत पर निर्भर रहते हैं।

ग्रामीण इलाकों में सत्तर फीसद लोगों की जीविका खेती पर निर्भर है। उनकी आय बढ़ेगी तो ही ग्रामीण अर्थव्यवस्था अच्छी तरह चलेगी। इसके मदेनजर सरकार को कृषि क्षेत्र के विकास और किसानों की बढहाली दूर करने वाली नीतियां बना कर उन्हें ईमानदारी से लागू करना चाहिए।

बेमयम, ओछे देवासनों के लिए सिंचाई, खाद, बीज, यंत्रमा, मिट्टी की जांच आदि की सुगम

कुशल प्रशिक्षक और मार्ग बताने वाला व्यक्ति मिल जाए तो इंसान बहुत कुछ कर सकता है। लेकिन आमतौर पर उसे मिलता है कुंठित व्यक्ति और समाज, जो उसे हतोत्साहित करने में लगा रहता है।

सच यह है कि हम लोग एक पूर्वधारणाओं या पूर्वाग्रहों से भरे समाज में जीते हैं। महिला है तो ऐसी ही होगी, दलित है तो ऐसा होगा, हिंदी माध्यम का विद्यार्थी है तो ऐसा ही होगा, दक्षिण भारत का है तो जरूर ऐसा होगा, पूर्वोत्तर का है तो ऐसा होगा आदि। समाज के लोग अपनी धारणा से सामने वालों के मनोभाव से खेलते हैं और जाने-अनजाने में उसे मानसिक पीड़ा दे जाते हैं। सामाजिक जागरूकता के लिए जरूरी है कि हमें हर तरह पर इससे लड़ने के लिए तैयार होना होगा।

ज्यादातर लोग अपने जीवन में किसी न किसी बात को लेकर एक धारणा बनाए रखते हैं। यह धारणा वे अपने अनुभव के आधार पर नहीं, बल्कि सुनी-सुनाई बातों के आधार पर बनाते हैं। धारणा बनाना और उससे निकलना आसान काम नहीं है, बल्कि धारणागत चीजों के कारण लोगों को कई बार अपने जीवन में खुद ही नुकसान उठाना पड़ता है। ऐसे में नुकसान उठाने से बचने के लिए लोगों को धारणा बनाने से बचना

सिंचाई की व्यवस्था न होने से उन्हें अनिश्चितता मानसून पर निर्भर रहना पड़ता है। ऐसे में खेती उनके लिए एक जुआ बन जाती है जहां वे हजारों रुपए के बीज बोकर मानसून पर निर्भर रहते हैं।

ग्रामीण इलाकों में सत्तर फीसद लोगों की जीविका खेती पर निर्भर है। उनकी आय बढ़ेगी तो तभी ग्रामीण अर्थव्यवस्था अच्छी तरह चलेगी। इसके मधेनजर सरकार को कृषि क्षेत्र के विकास और किसानों की बहाली दूर करने वाली नीतियां

उसकी अपेक्षाएं बढ़ रही हैं तब राजनीति के तौर-तरीकों में बुनियादी बदलाव की सख्त जरूरत है। सबसे अधिक जरूरत संसदीय कामकाज में बदलाव लाने की है। इस बदलाव से राजनीति का भी भला होगा। पुराने, घिसे-पिटे और निष्प्रभावी तौर-तरीकों के कारण ही भारतीय लोकतंत्र श्रेष्ठ रूप नहीं ले पा रहा है। निरसंदेह भारत दुनिया का सबसे बड़ा लोकतंत्र है, लेकिन जरूरत तो इसकी है कि वह श्रेष्ठ और सशक्त लोकतंत्र बने।

● **हमर्त कुमार, गाराडाह,  
भागलपुर, बिहार**

रा पता है : ए-8, सेक्टर-7,  
र, उत्तर प्रदेश

सुन सकते हैं। आइडी है : [india.com](http://www.india.com)

## अभद्र बोल

हमारी आम बोलचाल की भाषा में कुछ ऐसे बेहूदा शब्द शामिल होते जा रहे हैं जिन्हें कभी जवान पर लाने पर व्यक्ति को बुरा समझा जाता था। अनेक अभद्र शब्द फिल्मों, सोशल मीडिया और आम व्यवहार में इस्तेमाल हो रहे हैं। और भी हैरानी की बात है कि ये शब्द लड़कियों और महिलाओं द्वारा भी धड़ल्ले से बोले जा रहे हैं। कई फिल्मों में जब ये शब्द बोले जाते हैं तब पूरे सिनेमा हॉल में हंसी के फव्वारे फूट पड़ते हैं, लेकिन उस समय अनेक सभ्य व्यक्ति अपने परिवार की उपस्थिति में शर्मिंदगी से नजर न झुका लेते हैं। कैसी संस्कृति होती जा रही है शब्दारी ? हम अपनी मां-बहन-बेटियों के सामने ऐसी भाषा कैसे कह-सुन सकते हैं ? फिल्म सेंसर

अमेरिकी नियात को बढ़ाने के लिए अमेरिका में  
आयात होने वाले स्टील, अल्युमीनियम सहित हजारों  
वस्तुओं पर लाने वाले शुल्क में बढ़ोतरी कर  
इससे दुनिया भर के स्टील, अल्युमीनियम, कपड़ा  
उद्योग के अलावा कई उद्योगों को भारी नुकसान  
पहुँचता है। ट्रंप का तर्क है कि अमेरिकी कारपोरेश-  
न सबसे श्रम के लोभ में दुनिया के दूसरे देशों में निवेश  
कर रहे हैं। इससे अमेरिका में बेरोजगारी बढ़ी है। ट्रंप  
की कोशिश है कि अमेरिकी पूंजी का निवेश अमेरिक  
में ही हो, ताकि ज्यादा रोजगार पैदा हो। अमेरिक  
विश्वविद्यालय भारतीय छात्रों की संसद बन रहे हैं  
भारतीय छात्रों से अमेरिकी शिक्षा जगत को सालाना  
पाँच अरब डॉलर की आय हो सकती है।

कूटनीतिक कारण भी है। टुपू भारत से एशिया-प्रशांत क्षेत्र में सिर्फ सहयोग ही नहीं चाहते, बल्कि चीन और रूस से भारत को दूरी भी बढ़ाना चाहते हैं। दरअसल टुपू एक तीरे से कई स्थिति कर रहे हैं। ईरान के तेल निर्यात पर प्रतिबंध लगा कर वे चीन और भारत दोनों की अर्थव्यवस्था को प्रभावित करना चाहते हैं। ईरान से तनाव बढ़ने की स्थिति में तेल की कीमतें बढ़ेंगी। इससे दोनों मुलकों की अर्थव्यवस्था को चोट पहुंचेगी। भारत अपनी जरूरत का अरबी फ्रीडम तेल आयात करता है। इसके अतिरिक्त टुपू एशिया में मजबूत हैं। रहे शेंडाई सहयोग संगठन (एससीओ) को भी कमजोर करना चाह रहे हैं।

दिमाग है। एससीओ बीते कुछ समय में काफी मजबूत बन कर उभरा है, इससे अमेरिकी खासा परेशान है। यह संगठन मध्य एशिया से लेकर यूरोप तक आर्थिक सहयोगी ही नहीं, बल्कि एशियाई देशों के ऊर्जा संकट को भी दूर करेगा। इसमें दुनिया के दो बड़े देश चीन और भारत आपस में सहयोग बढ़ा रहे हैं, इससे भी अमेरिका की परेशानी बढ़ गई है। हालांकि कई मुद्दों पर चीन और भारत के बीच आपसी तनाव है, पर आर्थिक सहयोगों को लेकर दोनों मुल्कों में एक सहमति बन रही है। ट्रंप की परेशानी यह भी है कि तमाम प्रतिबंधों के बावजूद चीन और रूस ईरान के साथ खड़े हैं। तुर्की भी ईरान के साथ है। इसलिए वे इन कूटनीति संबंधों के बीच एससीओ की मजबूती को कम करना चाहते हैं। भारतीय नियात पर मिली शूल्ड छूट को समाप्त करने के पीछे ट्रंप प्रशासन की एक मंशा एससीओ को कमजोर करना भी हो सकती है।

चाहिए। आमतौर पर गांव के चौक-चौराहों पर, शहर के नुक्कड़ों पर एक व्यक्ति किसी बात को लेकर अपनी धारणा पेश करता है और दूसरा व्यक्ति भी उसी तरह स्वीकार कर लेता है और उसकी पुष्टि करना भी जरूरी नहीं समझता। ऐसे में हो सकता है कि दूसरे व्यक्ति को इसका खमियाजा भगतना पड़े।

आखिर हम कैसे दुनिया में जो रहे हैं? हमें कुटित, विकृत, रूग्ण समाज चाहिए या फिर एक खुशहाल, समृद्ध और दुराग्रहों से मुक्त समाज चाहिए, जिसमें सभी लोग खुल कर सामान्य जीवन व्यतीत कर सकें और अपनी प्रतिभा के अनुसार प्रदर्शन कर सकें? प्रतिभा को निखार सकें। आखिर हम सभी दूसरे तरह के समाज को लेकर ही सहमत होंगे। अगर हम एक बेहतर समाज और परिवेश का निर्माण करना चाहते हैं तो हम लोगों को मिल कर विकृति, रूग्णता, कुंठा, मनोरोग फैलाने वाले लोगों की पहचान करनी होगी और ऐसी लोगों का एक संकेतिक विरोध करना होगा। उन लोगों को मुंह बंद कराना होगा, ताकि वे अपने पूर्वग्रहों को दूसरों तक नहीं पहुंचाएं और दुष्प्रचार न कर सकें। ऐसा होने से बेहतर में तित नई प्रतिभा सामने आएगी और समाज में निरंतर समज का निर्माण होगा, जिसमें हम सभी खल कर सांस ले सकेंगे।

बोर्ड इन शब्दों को कैसे मान्यता दे सकता है ?  
आज कुछ लोगों को अपनी बदन-बेटी को  
सेक्समी कहने में कोई हिचकिचाहट नहीं होती बल्कि  
इसे ऐसे से कहा जा रहा है, लेकिन जरा गंभीरता से  
सोचा जाए तो उन्हें इस शब्द से घिन होने लगे। इन  
अप्रभु शब्दों की सूची बड़ी है और दिनों-दिन बढ़ती  
जा रहा रही है। कुछ समय बाद हो सकता है। सार्वजनिक  
मंचों, पत्र-पत्रिकाओं, फिल्मों, सोशल मीडिया आदि  
पर खुलेआम ऐसे शब्द, मां-बहन की गलियाँ और  
अश्लील शब्द कहे जाने लगे। समाज का निर्माण  
हम स्वयं करते हैं और अपनी आत्मी पीढ़ी को  
सौंप देते हैं। अब यह फैसला सभी अभिभावकों,  
शिक्षकों और बुद्धिजीवियों को करना है कि अपने  
बच्चों को इन भौंडे शब्दों से कैसे बचाए रखना है,  
बचाना रखना है। या इन शब्दों पर चुप्पी साध  
लेनी है अथवा इन्हें प्रोत्साहन देना है।

● सतारकाश सनाठिया, गांधीगा, दिल्ली

## गुस्से पर काबू

लोकसभा चुनाव संयम हो चुके हैं। नई केंद्र सरकार ने अपना कार्य भी आरंभ कर दिया है। पर लंगता है कि पश्चिम बंगाल को मुख्यमंत्री अभी भी 'इलेक्शन मोड' में चल रही हैं। ममता बनर्जी के सामने जब भी जय श्रीराम का नारा लगता है तो वे भड़क जाती हैं। इस तरह की घटनाओं की खबर पश्चिम बंगाल में लगातार से लगातार आ रही है। ममता बनर्जी ने नारा बंगाले वालों की खाल उधेड़ने की समय की दी। कुछ लोगों को पुलिस ने गिरफ्तार भी किया है। सवाल है कि क्या पश्चिम बंगाल में जय श्रीराम का नारा लगाना कानूनन अपराध है? ममता बनर्जी को संयम से काम लेते हुए अपना गुस्सा पर काबू रखना चाहिए। इस तरह से तो वे अपना ही नुकसान कर रही हैं।

● वृजश श्रावास्तव, गाजयाबाव

## नई दिल्ली



