

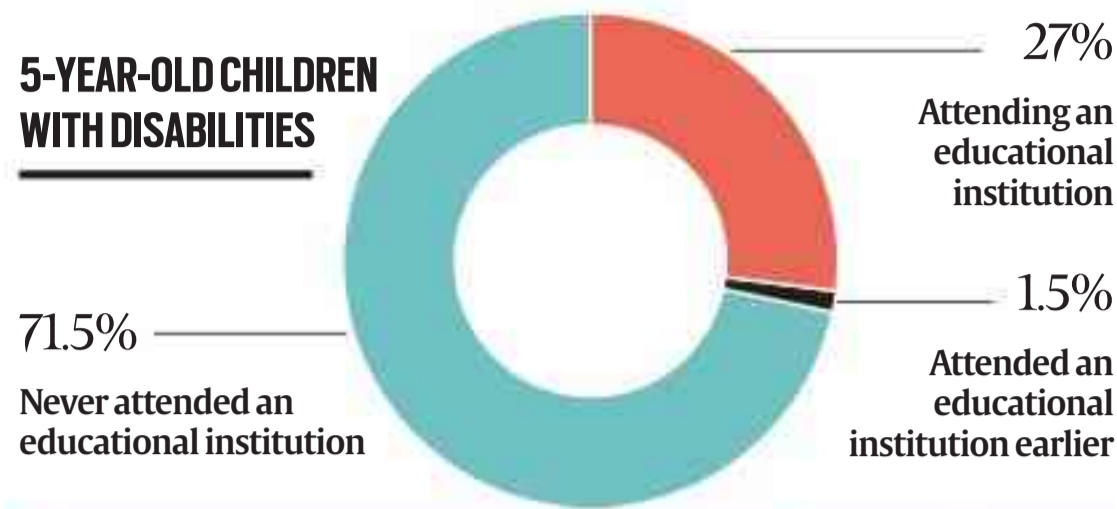


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TELLING NUMBERS

Counting children living with disabilities, in or out of school



	TOTAL	BOYS	GIRLS
Attending an educational institution	99,259	54,521	44,738
Attended one earlier	5,472	3,030	2,442
Never attended one	2,63,966	1,46,319	1,17,647
5-year-old CWD population	3,68,697	2,03,870	1,64,697

CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES AGED 5-19

	TOTAL	BOYS	GIRLS
ATTENDING AN EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTION			
Children with disabilities	61.18%	61.75%	60.45%
All children	70.97%	72.26%	69.55%

ATTENDED ONE EARLIER

Children with disabilities	12.14%	12.34%	11.89%
All children	11.82%	11.70%	11.96%

NEVER ATTENDED ONE

Children with disabilities	26.68%	25.92%	27.66%
All children	17.21%	16.04%	18.49%

A UNESCO report notes how children living with disabilities are disproportionately left out of the education system in India as compared to the overall proportion of out-of-school children (*The Indian Express*, July 3). Some of its highlights: **78,64,636** children living with disabilities in India, making up 1.7% of the total child population. Proportion among boys (1.81%) than girls (1.58%). **3,68,697** five-year-olds living with disabilities. Of them, 27% attend educational institutions, 72% have never attended any; 1% have dropped out. **61%** of CWDs aged 5-19 are attending an educational institution, compared to overall figure of 71% when all children are considered. 27% of CWDs never attended any educational institution, as opposed to the overall 17% for the entire child population.

There is variation among states in school attendance of 5-19-year-olds. Goa and Kerala have a higher percentage of children with disabilities attending schools. Odisha and West Bengal have more children with disabilities dropping out of school than the national average. Over a third of the children with disabilities in the Northeastern states of Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Meghalaya and Nagaland have never attended an educational institution.

THE STATES: CWDs AGED 5-19

ATTENDING EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTION

Goa	73.4%
Kerala	73.2%
Maharashtra	70.3%
Lakshadweep	69.5%
Manipur	69.4%
Himachal	67.7%

ATTENDED EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTION EARLIER

Daman & Diu	21.1%
Odisha	16.5%
Gujarat	15.8%
Karnataka	15.5%
West Bengal	14.3%
Tamil Nadu	13.7%

NEVER ATTENDED AN EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTION

Nagaland	38.9%
Assam	36.4%
Meghalaya	35.4%
Daman & Diu	34.3%
Bihar	33.8%
Arunachal	33.2%

Source for all data: UNESCO report, which attributes data to Census 2011



UDIT MISRA
NEW DELHI, JULY 4

ON FEBRUARY 1 this year, Prime Minister Narendra Modi had said: "This is an interim Budget. This is just a trailer of the Budget which, after elections, will take India on the path to development." As Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman rises to present the full-fledged Union Budget for the current financial year, she faces the arduous task of showing the complete picture. On the one hand, voters who have returned the BJP-led government with a resounding majority expect that the full-year Budget would further expand the welfare measures announced in the interim Budget. On the other, India's economic growth has faltered further since the presentation of the interim Budget, making it that much more difficult to come through on those promises.

Lower than expected tax revenues are a spoiler

The first key variable to watch out for is the Fiscal Deficit (as a percentage of GDP). Fiscal Deficit reflects the total borrowing requirement of the government. The previous Modi government had done a reasonable job of limiting fiscal deficit. For the current financial year too, the fiscal deficit had been budgeted at the 3.4% level. However, this number may see some change given the adverse revenue deficit (the excess of revenue expenditure over revenue receipts) for the last financial year.

As the table alongside shows, actual (A) revenue deficit for 2018-19 is worse than the revised estimates (RE) for the last financial year. That, in turn, is largely because of a massive gap of Rs 1.67 lakh crore between the expected tax revenues for the past year and the actual figures. This gap is mainly on account of lower revenues from GST, customs duty and corporation tax. The fall in revenues meant that both the actual revenue expenditure and capital expenditure were lower than the revised estimates for the last financial year.

It is clear that the finance minister would have to shore up total revenues, especially tax revenues, if she wants to meet increased expenditure demands. Without this balancing act, the fiscal deficit for the current year would likely suffer.

Nominal GDP growth is a worry

What makes this job more difficult for her is the fact that India's economic growth seems to be decelerating; India has already lost its cherished "fastest-growing" major economy tag to China at the end of the fourth quarter in 2018-19 when the real GDP grew by just 5.3% — the slowest in 20 quarters. Almost across the board, observers, including the RBI, have rolled back India's real GDP forecast for the current year. A crucial variable in this regard is the finance ministry's assumption of the nominal GDP growth for the current year. The nominal GDP growth (that is GDP growth at current prices) is the most fundamental building block of the Budget-making exercise. The government's assumption of the nominal GDP growth decides the revenue buoyancy, which, in turn, provides clarity about the possible level of expenditure it can afford, given a pre-stipulated fiscal deficit target. In the interim Budget, then finance minister Piyush Goyal had assumed a nominal GDP growth rate of 11.5%. However, if growth is faltering, this may have to be revised down. Doing so, in turn, would further bring down revenue projections, and by extension, curtail the government's capacity to spend more. As such, the assumption about the nominal GDP growth is another key variable to watch out for in this Budget.

What about the welfare schemes?

Apart from these major macroeconomic variables, there are four key categories of data that would be keenly observed given the political economy surrounding them.

The first relates to the expected dividends from India's central bank. For while

SIMPLY PUT

What to look for in the Budget

After welfare measures in interim Budget, how far will full Budget be influenced by slow growth and lower than expected revenues? How to read the key variables that will indicate what is in store

LAST YEAR'S ESTIMATES AND ACTUAL FIGURES

	FY18	FY19 (RE)	FY19 (A)*	FY20 (BE)
Fiscal Deficit (%)	3.5	3.4	3.4	3.4
Revenue Deficit (as % of GDP)	2.6	2.2	2.34	2.2
Revenue Receipts (as % of GDP)	14.35	17.30	15.64	19.78
Tax Revenues (in Rs lakh cr)	12.42	14.84	13.17	17.05
Revenue Expenditure (in Rs lakh cr)	18.79	21.41	20.08	24.48
Capital Expenditure (in Rs lakh cr)	2.63	3.17	3.03	3.36

*A = actual Source: Budget documents, Controller General of Accounts and CARE Ratings

now, the government and the RBI have been at loggerheads about the level of dividends that the RBI needs to provide the national exchequer.

The second relates to the overall disinvestment proceeds the government hopes to raise this year. This is crucial not just because of the monies that any disinvestment would bring but also for the signal it provides about the new Modi government's intent to reduce government ownership in the broader economy.

The third and related category is the overall budgetary allocation towards the recapitalisation of public sector banks. Again, not only will it have a bearing on the overall fiscal deficit and the government capacity to fund social welfare scheme, but also provide a window into the mind of the new government's approach towards reforming inefficient public sector banks.

The last category would have to be the allocations to the flagship schemes of the first Modi government. In the last five years, and especially in the last two, the previous government had announced several welfare schemes such as PM-KISAN (direct income transfers for small farmers), income tax exemptions (for the lower middle class), pensions for the workers in the unorganised sector as well as the Ayushman Bharat scheme for providing healthcare cover to the poor. However, the allocations in many such schemes were considered inadequate in relation to the ambitious targets that had been set for them. For instance, for Ayushman Bharat, which is arguably the world's largest health insurance scheme as it seeks to provide health insurance of Rs 5 lakh to 10 crore poorest families (that is 50 crore individuals), the current Budget allocation of Rs 6,400 crore is hardly enough.



Illustration: Suvojit Dey

What Pak hopes to convey with cases against Saeed, why India unconvinced

SHUBHAJIT ROY
NEW DELHI, JULY 4

ON SEPTEMBER 30 last year, a week after India cancelled the proposed bilateral meeting with Pakistan's foreign minister in New York, a minister in the Imran Khan government shared the stage with Lashkar-e-Taiba and Jamat-ud-Dawa founder Hafiz Saeed.

It was India's moment to say "I told you so" about Pakistan's sincerity in cracking down on terrorist groups and their leaders. But, a larger takeaway for India was that this exposed Pakistan's new Prime Minister — who had won the elections that July and been sworn in the following month — as cosy up to anti-India groups and leaders even as he talked peace and pushed for dialogue.

So, Pakistan's latest moves against Saeed has not impressed many in South Block.

Pak action, India reaction

On Wednesday, Pakistan lodged 23 cases on charges of terrorist financing and facilitation against 26/11 mastermind Saeed and a dozen members of his groups, as well as five banned outfits showing themselves as charity organisations. Pakistan's Punjab Counter-Terrorism Department (CTD) said it has registered the cases in Lahore, Gujranwala and Multan for collection of funds for terror financing through assets or properties in the names of trusts or non-profit organisations.

"Large scale investigations launched into financing matters of proscribed organisations Jamat ud Dawa & Lashkar-e-Taiba in connection with the implementation of UN Sanctions

against these Designated Entities & Persons as directed by NSC (National Security Committee) in its Meeting of 1st January 2019 chaired by the PM Imran Khan for implementing National Action Plan," the CTD said in a statement.

According to CTD, on July 1 and 2, it registered the 23 cases against the leadership of JuD (Jamat ud Dawa), LeT (Lashkar-e-Taiba) & FIF (Falah-i-Insaniyat Foundation) for making assets from terror financing through the following trusts and non-profit organisations: Dawat ul Irshad Trust, Muaz Bin Jabal Trust, Al-Anfaal Trust, Al Hamd Trust and Al Madina Foundation Trust.

Apart from Saeed, CTD also named other leaders of JuD & LeT who have been booked, including his aides Abdul Rehman Makki, Malik Zafar Iqbal, Ameer Hamza, Muhammad Yahya Aziz, Muhammad Naeem, Mohsin Bilal, Abdul Raqeeb, Ahmad Daud, Muhammad Ayub, Abdullah Ubaid, Muhammad Ali and Abdul Ghaffar.

India has reacted sharply, unimpressed by Pakistan's moves. The Ministry of External Affairs' official spokesperson Raveesh Kumar said on Thursday, "Pakistan is trying to hoodwink the international community on taking action against terror groups. Let us not get fooled by cosmetic steps against terror groups by Pakistan."

Having learnt from past experience, India is much more cautious this time.

Held, released, held...

Saeed was, possibly for the first time, detained in December 2001, after the Parliament attack. Pakistan took Saeed into custody on December 21, 2001 after India

had built pressure and asserted that he was involved in the December 13, 2001 attack. Saeed was held until March 31, 2002, released, then taken back into custody on May 15. He was placed under house arrest until October 31, 2002 after his wife Maimoona Saeed sued the province of Punjab and the Pakistan federal government for what she claimed was an illegal detention.

After the July 11, 2006 Mumbai train bombings, the provincial government of Punjab (Pakistan) arrested him on August 9 and kept him under house arrest but he was released on August 28 after a Lahore High Court order. He was arrested again the same day by the provincial government and was kept in the Canal Rest House in Sheikhupura. He was released after a Lahore High Court order on October 17, 2006.

After the November 2008 Mumbai terror attacks, India submitted a request to the UN Security Council to put JuD and Saeed on the UN list of global terrorists. On December 11, 2008, he was again placed under house arrest when the UN declared JuD as an LeT front.

Saeed was held in house arrest under the Maintenance of Public Order law, which allowed authorities to detain temporarily individuals deemed likely to create disorder, until early June 2009 when the Lahore High Court, deeming the detention unconstitutional, ordered his release.

On July 6, 2009, Pakistan's government filed an appeal against the court's decision. Deputy Attorney General Shah Khawar told the Associated Press that "Hafiz Saeed at liberty is a security threat."

On August 25, 2009, Interpol issued a Red



Hafiz Saeed in Islamabad in 2011. AP file

Come Notice against Saeed, along with Zakir Rehman Lakhvi, in response to Indian requests for his extradition. Saeed was again placed under house arrest by the Pakistani authorities in September 2009. On October 12, 2009, the Lahore High Court quashed all cases against him and set him free.

Frustrated with what it saw as Pakistan's lack of seriousness, New Delhi even disclosed a list of 50 most wanted fugitives in May 2011.

In April 2012, the US announced a bounty of \$10 million on Saeed for his role in the 2008 Mumbai attacks. After the bounty, Saeed gave an interview and said, "I am living my life in the open and the US can contact me whenever they want." Throughout, he

has been giving anti-India speeches and rooms around freely in Pakistan.

He was once again put under house arrest in January 2017, as the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) started scrutinising Pakistan's record against terrorism. In an unusual move, Pakistan's Army said at that time that the detention was a "policy decision in the national interest" as the government announced that Saeed's 90-day house arrest could be extended if required.

On November 24, 2017, Pakistani authorities announced that Saeed had been released from house arrest earlier in the week after the Lahore High Court concluded that there was "nothing tangible" in the evidence presented against him in a government request to extend his detention. The US and India released statements criticising the move.

So, much of the Indian establishment sees the latest FIRs as a replay of the past.

Why act now

Pakistan began its latest moves on July 1, the date when its all-weather ally China took over as the chair of FATF.

The moves came days after the G-20 declaration at the Osaka summit on June 28-29 gave primacy to the FATF's "essential role" and called for the effective implementation of its standards. On June 21, at the FATF plenary session in Orlando, the US (the then FATF chair) had told Pakistan that it could face blacklisting at its next session in October if it did not adhere to its commitments to stop access to funds for terror groups.

Pakistan's CTD statement said: "Large scale investigations have been launched into

matters of JuD, LeT & FIF regarding their holding & use of Trusts to raise funds for terrorism financing. They made these assets from funds of terrorism financing, they held & used these assets to raise more funds for further terrorism financing. Hence, they committed multiple offences of terrorism financing & money laundering under Anti-Terrorism Act 1997. They will be prosecuted in ATCs (Anti Terrorism Courts) for commission of these offences. These Assets/NPOs have already been taken over by the government in compliance with UN Sanctions."

The FATF once again takes up Pakistan's case in September-October, and Pakistan's action is being seen as a move to avoid being blacklisted and even come out of the grey-list. Its nod to Beijing, so that China lifted its technical hold and let Azhar be listed as a global terrorist, is also seen as a move in this direction. With China as the new FATF chair, Pakistan is building a case of good behaviour for itself in front of the international community.

That is the reason India has been demanding "credible, sustainable, visible and irreversible" action against these terror groups and their leaders. It believes Pakistan is taking these measures so that China can show to the world that its all-weather ally is serious about taking action against terrorists.

Until it is convinced of Islamabad's and Rawalpindi's sincerity, India will keep pushing for Pakistan to be blacklisted, which will have a debilitating effect on Pakistan's economy. And Imran Khan and Pakistan's Army - which is aware of these risks - are perceived to be taking these steps to ward off blacklisting and possibly get out of the grey-list.



I AM FAVOUR OF CUTTING TAXES UNDER ANY CIRCUMSTANCES AND FOR ANY EXCUSE, FOR ANY REASON, WHENEVER IT'S POSSIBLE.
— MILTON FRIEDMAN

The Indian EXPRESS

FOUNDED BY
RAMNATH GOENKA

BECAUSE THE TRUTH INVOLVES US ALL

THE GROWTH DRIVER

Economic Survey rightly recognises the main challenge:
Reviving private investment

FOR AN ECONOMY in slowdown mode, the key to reviving the growth momentum is private investment, which is a function of the “animal spirits” of entrepreneurs. One must give credit to the Finance Ministry’s Economic Survey, unveiled a day before the presentation of the Narendra Modi government’s first Union Budget in its second innings, for recognising this basic truth. Although it does not explicitly admit it, the Indian economy is, indeed, today caught in a vicious cycle of investments not happening on the ground, jobs drying up and, in turn, impacting income and consumption. This is the opposite of what happens in a virtuous cycle, where “investment, productivity growth, job creation, demand and exports feed into each other and enable animal spirits in the economy to thrive”. The Survey is right that the macroeconomic stability indicators — whether pertaining to inflation, external current account or even fiscal balances — are much better than they were five years ago and it is time to “shift gears” to enable an average annual real GDP growth of 8 per cent for India to become a \$5 trillion economy by 2024-25. But the key driver for it is investment — more specifically, private investment.

But how does one get firms to invest, which is ultimately a forward-looking activity? It basically requires the upfront costs of a project to be less than the present value of the expected rewards from the investment. The Survey has pointed out — which may not be in sync with the Reserve Bank of India’s views, at least till recently — that real rates of interest in India have increased significantly over the years and are high even on cross-country comparison. There is, therefore, need to lower the cost of capital. Further, it has argued that the country only needs a “mildly positive real rate”, which will not necessarily lead to lower savings. Savings are driven primarily by demographics and income growth: Both of these are favourable for India, given a rising proportion of its working population that will both earn more and save more.

There are other useful suggestions by the Survey that may be worth considering. The first is a redesign of tax policy, including for start-ups. High tax rates on corporate profits and notices received by new economy companies on angel funding from venture capital investors are certainly not a good idea. They need a complete review, especially in the current context where animal spirits are low. Reviving those spirits will present the biggest and most immediate challenge for the Modi government as it begins its second term.

MUMBAI’S TRAGEDY

Another monsoon takes a heavy toll, spotlighting corruption and incompetence in infrastructure planning and governance

ANOTHER MUMBAI MONSOON tragedy has yielded another high-level inquiry, this time to probe the circumstances in which at least 26 Mumbai-kars died when a wall along a suburban hillock collapsed on two shanty colonies. A technical experts’ committee will also probe if the quality of construction and design of the wall along the slope was appropriate. Meanwhile, the first week of rains left thousands with flooded and damaged homes and vehicles. The suburban railway and bus transportation systems are counting their losses, running into crores, from flood water ingress. Thousands of underground water tanks in suburban residential colonies are contaminated, and municipal authorities are bracing for an impending round of viral and water-borne diseases. Incidentally, even as rains battered the financial capital earlier this year, a CAG report tabled in the Maharashtra state legislature slammed agencies for incomplete works on flood preparedness.

After every major tragedy in Mumbai, inquiry reports point to blinkered urban planning and moribund municipal governance. Meanwhile, the tiresome trope about Mumbai’s resilience almost appears to be its undoing — the city that never stops returns to business as usual and long-term corrective measures are forgotten. At least two near-stampedes on stations on the suburban railway system were reported this past week, almost as if 23 Mumbai-kars headed to work never died in the September 2017 Elphinstone Road station stampede. After the 2005 deluge that claimed over 700 lives in the city after a 944 mm downpour in a single day, not only were large parts of a fact-finding committee’s recommendations never implemented, but 14 years and several hundred crores later, a project to rejuvenate the Mithi River, Mumbai’s mother drainage system, remains incomplete. Faced with citizens’ anger, top officials and the Shiv Sena’s heir apparent Aaditya Thackeray parried, saying this week’s record rainfall must be looked at in the context of climate change. But very recent lessons on sustainable development are already a hazy memory. Just last monsoon, the marooning of satellite towns, Vasai-Virar, following a three-day deluge suggested that the devastating results of Mumbai’s development trajectory were playing out in a suburb, not in a distant future. The peculiarity of Vasai-Virar’s relatively inexpensive housing market is the widespread construction on flood plains, reclaimed wetlands and former salt pan lands — all buffers against flooding.

Corruption and incompetence in infrastructure planning and governance cannot be brushed under the climate change carpet. Various agencies responsible for Mumbai’s ramshackle systems must do both — fix accountability for the dereliction and simultaneously mandate scientific sustainability studies to inform all development planning, zoning initiatives, real estate development and mass transit projects.

TRUMP’S PARADE

US President has upped the firepower of the annual Fourth of July celebration, and the Democrats think it’s just narcissism

AMERICA HAS ALWAYS celebrated the Fourth of July with things that go bang. But this year, President Trump is shooting for bigger bang for buck than mere fireworks can offer. The parade in Washington, which is generally associated with marching bands and warm feelings of togetherness, features Bradley armoured personnel carriers and Abrams tanks this year, at the very spot where Martin Luther King declared that he had a dream. That spells BAE Systems and General Dynamics, companies at the heart of the military-industrial complex. And the high point, according to Trump, is a “flyover” by F-18 Hornets, which means Boeing. The Americans are very accurate in terming it a flyover, rather than a flypast, as we do, despite the evidence of our senses. For us, a flyover signifies urban infrastructure, which regularly comes crashing down. Not a good omen for a parade.

Trump was apparently inspired to launch a Salute to America parade bristling with military hardware after seeing tanks roll down the Champs-Élysées in a French parade. But India could have served as an even finer model, for our Republic Day parade was inspired by the world-beating Victory Day parade in Moscow’s Red Square. Russia’s annual display of military hardware, which has traditionally featured gigantic ballistic missiles on their launchers, has rivalled Soviet monumental statuary as the most forceful expression of revolutionary triumphalism and continues to perplex and awe the world.

In India, though, some diffidence is sometimes expressed over the public display of weaponry. The parade down Rajpath, it is argued, was an important element of the self-assertion of a young nation, but may have outlived its usefulness. In America, the Democrats have dismissed Trump’s extravaganza as yet another symptom of his narcissism, and a means to politicise the forces. But obviously, Trump will not let them rain on his parade.



KHALED AHMED

WHEN AN “UNDER pressure” Pakistan initiated “23 cases against Hafiz Saeed and his 12 aides over terrorism-financing”, the news was immediately flashed on the front pages of all the major Indian newspapers. In Pakistan, only *Daily Times* carried the story on July 4: “The counter-terrorism department (CTD) said it had launched 23 cases against Hafiz Saeed and 12 of his aides for using five trusts to collect funds and donations for Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT). Two banned LeT-linked charities, Jamaat-ud-Dawa (JuD) and Falah-e-Insaniat Foundation (FIF), were also targeted, the department said in a statement. ‘All the assets of these organisations and individuals will be frozen and taken over by the state’, said a counter-terrorism senior official, speaking on the condition of anonymity because he was not authorised to speak publicly.” The counter-terrorism department said the action is in accordance with UN sanctions against the individuals and entities.

According to the CTD press release, those booked include Hafiz Saeed, Abdul Rehman Makki, Malik Zafar Iqbal, Ameer Hamza, Yahya Aziz, Naem Sheikh, Mohsin Bilal, Abdul Raqeeb, Ahmad Daud, Muhammad Ayub, Abdullah Ubaid, Muhammad Ali and Abdul Ghaffar. The cases were registered in Lahore, Gujranwala and Multan on July 1-2 “for collection of funds for terrorism financing through assets/properties made and held in the names of trusts/non-profit organisations (NPO)”, including Al-Anfaal Trust, Dawat ul Irshad Trust, Muaz Bin Jabal Trust, Al Hamd Trust and Al Madina Foundation Trust.

No mention was made of the courts Hafiz Saeed had been running across the country. In 2016, the daily, *The News* (April 9, 2016), had disclosed that Saeed had been doing something unforgivable: Running stealth courts in violation of the constitution of Pakistan: “The supra-constitutional Sharia courts, established by Jamaat-ud-Dawa

As Pakistan initiates 23 cases against him and his aides for terrorism financing, a look at the fraught context

The pressure this month to ‘do something’ has come from the Paris-based Financial Action Task Force (FATF), which, last year, placed Pakistan on its ‘grey list’ of countries with inadequate controls over money-laundering and terrorism-financing. The international watchdog gave Pakistan an October 2019 deadline ‘to improve its efforts against terrorism-financing’ if it didn’t want to end up on the black list. The United States had offered \$10 million for Hafiz Saeed’s head; Pakistan finally offered it on a platter and, as quid pro quo, got the US to declare the Balochistan Liberation Army (BLA) a terrorist organisation.

(JuD), operate across the country and only the Lahore court of this parallel judicial system has issued verdicts in 5,550 cases, including murder trials”.

Working for *The Friday Times* in 2002, the writer of this column had written something for which Hafiz Saeed had issued a legal notice to him “for denigrating the Companions of the Prophet”. After discovering that neither the Punjab government, nor the legal establishment, were prepared to defend him in court — lawyers had refused to take the case — he was forced to present himself at the stately office of Hafiz Saeed on Lake Road, Lahore, and abjectly beg him for mercy, which he gracefully bestowed on him. The “offending article” had contained the following paragraph in *The Friday Times*.

“Very little has appeared in the press about the politics of Hafiz Saeed’s Lashkar-e-Taiba and its mother organisation, Dawat wal- Irshad, because of the close coordination it enjoyed with its ‘handlers’. Hafiz Saeed in his early heady days took on Ahle Hadith (with whom he shared his Wahhabi creed) and criticised their inertia with regard to jihad. Ahle Hadith (Sajid Mir faction) hit back and discussed details about Lashkar-e-Taiba that no one in Pakistan dared discuss for fear of the state. One 1993 cassette containing the khutba-e-juma in Faisalabad of Qari Abdul Hafeez of Ahle Hadith (Sajid Mir faction) described the activities of Lashkar-e-Taiba that could only be condoned in deference to its effective participation in the covert war in Kashmir.”

The charges levelled by Qari Hafeez can be summarised as follows. “Despite the fact that the leaders of Lashkar-e-Taiba held that a boy going for jihad did not need the permission of his parents, their own sons did not go to jihad because ‘their mothers did not give permission’; that the Abu Jandal Group of the Lashkar looted banks in Pakistan in the

(wrongly attributed) tradition of a Companion of the Prophet (PBUH) who used to loot caravans to strengthen Islam; that members of the Lashkar abducted Barelvi girls and kept them as slaves, claiming that Hafiz Saeed had allowed the custom of keeping slave girls; and that colossal sums of money gathered in the name of jihad were pocketed by the leaders of Lashkar.”

The pressure this month to “do something” has come from the Paris-based Financial Action Task Force (FATF), which, last year, placed Pakistan on its “grey list” of countries with inadequate controls over money-laundering and terrorism-financing. The international watchdog gave Pakistan an October 2019 deadline “to improve its efforts against terrorism-financing” if it didn’t want to end up on the black list. The United States had offered \$10 million for Hafiz Saeed’s head; Pakistan finally offered it on a platter and, as quid pro quo, got the US to declare the Balochistan Liberation Army (BLA) a terrorist organisation. The BLA has been India’s tit-for-tat response for the Pakistani “nonstate actors” attacking inside India.

The “case” Pakistan pretended to run against Hafiz Saeed’s strongman, Lakhwi, had come to nothing for “lack of evidence”. Yet, Geo TV’s anchor, Kamran Khan, in his November 12, 2012 programme had revealed that Pakistani officials had told the anti-terrorism court judge, Chaudhry Habibur Rehman, on November 10, 2012, that terrorists who attacked and killed over 166 innocent people in Mumbai on November 26, 2012, belonged to Lashkar-e-Taiba and that they had trained in various cities of Pakistan. The mastermind of this attack, Zakiur Rehman Lakhvi, was under trial at Adiala Jail in Rawalpindi.

The writer is consulting editor, Newsweek Pakistan



ARCHNA SHUKLA

THE ALLEGATIONS of plagiarism against Trinamool Congress MP Mahua Moitra with regard to her maiden speech in Parliament are puerile. Moitra’s speech is not a piece of literature or a research paper to which originality is sacrosanct. She made a political speech in which she used some arguments to establish a premise. That her arguments were borrowed neither weakens her premise nor delegitimises it.

For the uninitiated, Moitra mounted a spirited attack on the Prime Minister Narendra Modi-led government in her speech in Parliament on June 25. She argued that fascism was on the rise in India under PM Modi’s reign and listed seven points to substantiate her argument.

It wasn’t the first time the Modi government was called fascist. It wasn’t the first time issues such as a rise in nationalism, an increase in hate crimes, subjugation of the media, and disdain for intellectuals were raised in Parliament. Yet, Moitra’s sharp articulation of these points along with her gutsy call — that her voice of dissent be defended against that of “professional hecklers” — inside Parliament, caught people’s attention.

Two days later, some eager beaver found a 2017 article published by the US-based *Washington Monthly* that cited a poster in the US Holocaust Museum that had listed 12 early signs of fascism in a country. Indeed, Moitra had picked seven of her points from this poster. Post this discovery, Moitra’s detractors went on a rampage, alleging her speech was plagiarised and called it an unprecedented incident in the history of Parliament.

A CONVENIENT DISSENT

Mahua Moitra’s critique of PM Modi is selective, would fit CM Mamata Banerjee

It is the stark similarities — between what Moitra described as the signs of fascism in Modi’s India and Banerjee’s West Bengal — that make her speech puzzling and beg the question: Why would Moitra let out a war cry against Modi’s fascism and remain a flag bearer of Banerjee’s brand of politics when, inherently, the two are the same? It is her selective condemnation that makes her speech dishonest and hurts the spirit of dissent she invoked in Parliament. Raising dissent when convenient is unprincipled opportunism.

While the allegations of plagiarism do seem like a desperate attempt to discredit a bright and young MP, who definitely stood out in the midst of a largely dull and weak Opposition, there is a fundamental problem with her speech.

There is nothing in Moitra’s entire oration that would seem out of place if it were to be repeated, as it is, in the West Bengal Assembly against her current political mentor and Trinamool Congress president Mamata Banerjee.

From using the state’s entire administrative machinery as an extension of her party to perpetrating a culture of sub-nationalism, from complete intolerance to dissent to calls for extreme revenge against rivals, from attacks on artists and cultural organisations to sustained political violence, the numerous chit fund scams, and, Banerjee’s alleged patronage to those behind the scams — all these would qualify as signs of fascism, as listed in the poster in the Holocaust Museum that Moitra took inspiration from for her speech.

The most ironic among these was Moitra’s forceful accusation with regard to the subjugation or the controlling of mass media by “one man”, a reference to Modi, in the country. She comes from a state that can be a textbook case in how the media is used to serve politics. The Rose Valley and Saradha scams in West Bengal, which have financial fraud and diverse news businesses at their core, are instances of a dangerous nexus between corporate power, media and the state.

It is the stark similarities — between what

Moitra described as the signs of fascism in Modi’s India and Banerjee’s West Bengal — that make her speech puzzling and beg the question: Why would Moitra let out a war cry against Modi’s fascism and remain a flag bearer of Banerjee’s brand of politics when, inherently, the two are the same?

It is her selective condemnation that makes her speech dishonest and hurts the spirit of dissent she invoked in Parliament. Raising dissent when convenient is unprincipled opportunism.

Also, it can’t be her case that only the robber with the bigger heist be hanged. If robbery is a crime, then big or small don’t matter.

Moitra, however, was unerring in claiming the space the Opposition has got inside the current Parliament. To borrow her words, the totality of the mandate the BJP has in the House does demand that the Opposition’s right to speak and be heard are unconditionally defended.

At the same time, the Opposition needs more than well-structured speeches to defend its space. A professionally brilliant speech invoking ideal political principles might tug at the mind-strings of those who get easily taken in by attributes such as clear articulation and a polished persona — add to that, impeccable English. But it won’t cut ice with those whose world is more real and removed from ideal philosophies.

If Parliament is not a space for professional hecklers, it shouldn’t become a refuge for professional orators either.

The writer is a Delhi-based journalist

JULY 5, 1979, FORTY YEARS AGO

URS’S CONGRESS

The convention of Congressmen convened by Devaraj Urs scored a striking success in fusing the hearts of all Congressmen opposed to Indira Gandhi and paved the way for an early session of the pre-1978 split session of the AICC. This will in turn formalise the unity of the two Congresses and prepare the ground for former Congressmen — now in other parties — also to come under the banner of the Indian National Congress. Sceptics who doubted the success of the convention were surprised as speaker after speaker not only upheld the unity idea but also showered praise on Urs for taking the lead in making this fusion possible.

ALCOHOL AS FUEL

A TEAM OF experts is going to Brazil to study various aspects of the use of alcohol as fuel for automobiles in place of petrol. The petroleum and chemicals ministry has decided to try to find substitutes for gasoline following the steep rise in crude prices and the problem of its availability. Brazil has successfully experimented with blending alcohol with petrol for use in automobiles without any engine renovation or adaptation of the carburetors. According to reports, a blend containing upto 20 per cent alcohol can give good results and lead to saving of fuel. The ministry has intensified research within India to examine the best combination for the blend. IIT Delhi and

the Faridabad Research and Development Centre of the Indian Oil Corporation have been entrusted with this task.

CHINA SLOWDOWN

IN AN UNUSUAL fit of frankness, China’s leaders have told the nation’s 960 million people that they face three years of tight budgets, hard work and economic readjustment before they can resume the “new leap forward” towards industrial modernisation. However, Premier Hua Guofeng delivered a glowing report to the second session of the fifth National People’s Congress as to how well the economy had recovered from the near-collapse of 1976.



The IDEAS PAGE

A new deal for Kashmir

Constitutional concessions have failed to facilitate the Valley’s assimilation with India. The rules of engagement need to change



ABHINAV KUMAR

IT HAS BEEN nearly three decades since the separatist movement in Kashmir, simmering beneath the surface right from the accession of Kashmir in 1948 itself, turned into a full-blown armed insurgency. It is a conflict that has led to three-and-a-half wars as well as this insurgency that is well into adulthood. Kashmir has been the stage for two nuclear armed neighbours to play their own 21st-century blood-soaked version of the Great Game. It is a game that has been encouraged by, and has in equal measure, exasperated the great powers that have jostled for space and primacy through the Cold War and the post Cold War international order. Like Berlin, Beirut and Afghanistan, Kashmir too has come to occupy a strange place in geopolitics. Each one of us imagines and inhabits a different version of Kashmir. Not just geographically, but metaphorically too, Kashmir stands at the intersection of many different forces. Any solution that aspires for lasting peace has to grapple with this complexity. In the middle of this strategic and historical jigsaw puzzle, we who fight for the idea of India in Kashmir face some tough choices.

To get a first-hand feel of its contradictions, all one has to do is drive through the length and breadth of the Valley. There are daily traffic jams in Srinagar. The major highways and other arterial roads are choked with traffic. The entire Valley, especially the metropolitan area of Srinagar, is buzzing with construction activity. Barring the most remote mountains, all the dwellings that I have seen are twin storeys and made from construction materials that signal a minimum standard of economic well-being. Whatever is driving the militancy in Kashmir, it is certainly not economic deprivation.

On the flip side, armed personnel are in a grid in Kashmir, is the different shades of the uniform a reflection of all possible scenarios. According to all major intersections and at major junctions, there is a pool of thought, India can easily live on the national highways. Every 15-20 days, current level of casualties and eco-fierce gun battles take place in the most remote parts of South Kashmir. The mood is bleak. Kashmir. Eventually, the expectation spewing bile against India by reading out a tirade from a book, and a traumatised population from sermons scripted for them by the imams. It is further hoped that the dlers in the ISI. The Joint Res of local support caused by weariness will Leadership keeps calling for peace. The jihadi separatists and their men- However, post Pulwama and Balakot, the Pakistan to back off and the insurgency sponse to these bandhs has been will be away.

almost as if there is a collective, the second approach is one advocated by muted, realisation that pushing the very local section of our intelligentsia and yond the brink between India and Pakistan. I call it the abdication approach. would be a disaster for the Valley. According to this view, India has a very weak of the militant struggle appears to have a moral case in Kashmir. It sees shifted to social media. As on date, the jihadis as perpetual victims and the in Kashmir is 90 per cent virtual and in part real. And in part, it is a permanent cent real. This has to be the most unrealistic. Therefore, lasting peace in Kashmir zone that has seen almost three decades of violence and unrest. It is a puzzle where the Kashmiri separatists, which may pieces are constantly changing shape. From complete autonomy to outright they never quite fit together.

Undoubtedly, these years of independence or merger with Pakistan. This have extracted a terrible toll in human lives. Jammu and Ladakh. It also ignores the per official records, nearly 50,000 people have died. The secession of Kashmir have on lost their lives. This includes nearly 23,000. The secession of Kashmir have on militants, nearly 6,000 security forces and 20,000 civilians. Clearly, this is a tragedy. The ideology has been a key driver of the cial and economic, on all sides. The military in Kashmir, what would it do to status quo, with its high levels of defence expenditure. The Muslim relations in the rest of the by Indian security forces, and the occasional spectacular terror strike by jihadi groups. The original Partition of India, cannot be our final destination in Kashmir. The million casualties, look like a picnic.

Broadly speaking, there are three options. The third approach is one that was com- before us in Kashmir. The first is what we call the attrition-driven approach. In this approach, India does not make any changes to the constitution. It rests tutional relationship with Kashmir. The belief that the separatist sentiment that maintains an unrelenting security posture in the Valley. That is to say the current state of the state since 1990, both draw sustenance from



Suvajit Dey

the constitutional arrangements, namely Articles 35 A and 370, that have defined Kashmir’s relationship with India. Without dismantling this structure, separatism and militancy will always strike a chord among a large section of the population in the Valley. Together, these Articles have frozen the demography and politics of the state and skewed it in favour of the Muslim majority from the Kashmir Valley. Some of them favour azadi, some favour a merger with Pakistan. And almost all of them have an issue accepting the idea of India. Unless this structural dominance of the Valley is dismantled, no amount of operational successes can end the raging fire of insurgency in Kashmir.

I would argue that the time has come to seriously consider the merits of the third approach. Could it lead to a period of extremely violent public protests in Kashmir? Probably. Does the Indian nation-state have the economic heft, the military resources and the international clout to get a grip on this prolonged period of unrest? Most certainly. It is heartening that for the first time in our general elections, the legal status of Kashmir occupied centrestage in public debate. The resounding mandate given to the government also appears to be a clear preference for altering the fundamentals of Kashmir’s relationship with India. The concessions agreed upon at the time of accession of Kashmir to India were given in the expectation that they would facilitate Kashmir’s complete assimilation. The four decades of separatist politics and three decades of violence that have followed prove that it was an unrealistic expectation. The time has come to change the rules of engagement, not just militarily, as we saw with Balakot, but also constitutionally. The idea of India cannot be held indefinitely hostage to the petulant fantasies of azadi.

The writer is an IPS officer serving in Kashmir. Views are personal

WHAT THE OTHERS SAY

“The fact is, while Pakistan has gone the extra mile to open channels for peace, the Indian side has shown an arrogant indifference to resuming bilateral talks.” —DAWN

On the edge of the big league

Geopolitical leverage is no more limited to a few countries. India too can project its soft power, take smart, fast decisions



JANMEJAYA SINHA

TILL THE SOVIET Union collapsed in 1989, it was a simpler world. There were two superpowers. Militarily, it was clear that no country could challenge either of them and the superpowers were very wary of each other. Both the countries competed ceaselessly in space and their nuclear might was unassailable. Economically, the US’s strength was on display but till the early Eighties, the economic power of Soviet Union was largely assumed, till it imploded. The US had much greater soft power with Hollywood movies, sports dominance and terrific universities that accepted the best from other countries; the Soviet Union lagged in soft power other than in the Olympic medals tally.

In such a world, countries aligned with one or the other superpower to different degrees. Post World War II, Japan, Germany and the UK were closely aligned to the US and other western European nations were also in the US camp through NATO. India’s non-alignment post Indira Gandhi became Soviet Union-leaning and the US moved closer to Pakistan as a check on the Soviets who had taken control of Afghanistan. One could have argued India made a bad choice, but frankly, we were not very exciting to the US and strong Soviet backing to India after the 1971 war allowed the liberation of Bangladesh.

The Nineties were a tough time in India. The collapse of the Soviet Union left us weak internationally and our economic policies had taken us into a major balance of payments crisis in 1991. This was a blessing in disguise as it forced us to review both our economic policies and our global alignments. With an IMF assisted structural adjustment programme, many parts of the economy were liberalised. After the initial pain, we slowly moved away from the import substituting industry model we had followed and became a more market-friendly economy.

The complete collapse of Afghanistan post the Russian retreat destabilised the country not least because of the actions of Pakistan, Saudi Arabia and US to install a friendly regime. In this mess, the Taliban emerged, much to the detriment of the world. This unfettered meddling in Afghanistan converted an anti-Soviet sentiment into an anti US (or more broadly anti-foreign sentiment) and led to the creation of Osama Bin Laden. The 9/11 attacks followed and with it the reassessment of Pakistan as an ally by the US. The ISI’s activities with al Qaeda and Taliban isolated Pakistan substantially at a time when India was looking for new friends and its economy started to look interesting.

Two forces dominated the geopolitical context in the first decade of the 21 century — China and technology. China became the

second-largest economy in the world with its GDP going from \$1 trillion to \$10 trillion dollars in 15 years. At the same time, the progress in technology was transformative on the back of massive computing power, ubiquitous high-speed connectivity, cheap and unlimited storage and the creation and capture of enough data to make machine learning intelligent and powerful. As a result, technological power and cyber capabilities also became a superpower compulsion. These two developments have led to a change in the basis of power and geopolitical alignment in today’s world. It has all happened in 15 years. Power now needs to be evaluated on four levels — military, economic, cyber and soft power.

Interestingly, now different countries lead in different areas, making alignment and geopolitics more complicated. Militarily, it is still the US and Russia in the lead. China is a clear third. In terms of economic power, the US leads followed by China, and Russia does not figure. In the cyber domain, five countries have established positions - the US, China, Russia, Israel and Iran and others are lagging. Consider the Russian attack on the US elections, the purported cyber-attack by the US on Iran, the banning of Huawei, Iranian cyber-attacks on the Saudis and China’s great strength in digital and artificial intelligence. In soft power, the US leads but China and Russia don’t really feature. In fact, India has a play.

If we just observe India’s actions, it is comforting to note we are following a multilayered strategy, walking a complicated tightrope. We continue to ally with Russia on arms’ purchases with our purchase of the S-400 Air Missile System, despite the threat of American sanctions. Economically, though, we are trying to get closer to the US and are not fighting their unilateral sanctions against Iran on oil, despite the substantial impact on our balance of payments. It is both sad and ironic that despite our great capability in technology and our big presence in Silicon Valley, we lag in cyber preparedness at great risk to ourselves. India’s movement on data localisation is needed. Even Europe has imposed the GDPR. But overall, we need to act fast.

With soft power, India is doing better. We are advancing with our music, food and Bollywood and are going beyond West Asia into the affluent Indian diaspora in the US and UK. In a nightclub in Seattle in early June, I was surprised to see people dancing to Bollywood music. Getting the UN to recognise a World Yoga day has been a master stroke by Prime Minister Narendra Modi. We saw the whole world practising Yoga — at Times Square in New York, outside the Eiffel Tower in Paris, in many cities in China and on top of the Opera House in Sydney. This is a great first step but our inbound tourism still lags behind.

If we act, we are well positioned. Faster arms purchases, developing cyber capability and using technology to address major gaps in education and healthcare are needed. We have the opportunity but not the right to become a third major power. No one will give it to us. Can we work towards taking it?

The writer is chairman, BCG India. Views are personal

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

DISCIPLINE THE PARTY

THIS REFERS TO the editorial, ‘The PM’s message’ (IE, July 4). The prime minister’s message was needed in order to ensure discipline within his own party. BJP workers must take his words seriously because the Indore incident has tarnished image of the party. The unrepentant attitude of Akash Vijayvargiya is worrying and disciplinary action should be taken against him.

Sanjay Chawla, Amritsar

GENDER AND CASTE

THIS REFERS TO the article, ‘Art From Above’ (IE, July). The author brings to fore the issue of discrimination and atrocities targeting women across the social strata, which has almost become a cliché. Whereas a reading of Dalit society in particular makes it explicit that, owing to the lack of gender-based division of labour and greater participation of women in labour, besides the democratic nature of social relations within the family and the community, Dalit women have a certain level of autonomy and freedom.

G Javid Rasool, Lucknow

REVIVE CONGRESS

THIS REFERS TO the report, ‘Rahul quits as Cong chief: Hard decisions, accountability needed’ (IE, July 4). Now that the uncertainty around Rahul Gandhi’s resignation has ended, the Congress should start building an organisational

LETTER OF THE WEEK AWARD

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

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structure that facilitates direct election of the party leader by party workers. A leader elected through such a massive backing is bound to have competence and credibility. Moreover, the decimation of smaller caste-centric regional parties that have been chipping away at its vote bank offers the Congress a good opportunity to regain the centre-left political space. But this is only possible through a robust organisation.

SB Bhalerao, Mumbai

The Urdu Press

LYNCH MOBS

“Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern took charge and empathised” with the community, lynching of Tabrez Ansari in Jharkhand on June 26 has an editorial titled paper believes that “the prime minister has not Tashaddud?” (mob violence). The in Parliament using Tabrez Ansari’s case, the paper expresses says that minorities because. While he appeared to be wanting to do things “would improve after the demn the murder, he ended up deepening the fear in the hearts of minorities Jharkhand government”. The editorial says that PM Modi had said before he took that “this is a kind of a political statement and the second time that his government the PM has tried to evade responsibility towards the progress of 130 crore did not make it clear that as the leader of the country, he had also taken the name of minority BJP, will he put pressure on the Jharkhand government to treat Muslims and said that we don’t treat emment and force them to act?” them like a vote bank as others do. He had ac-

Aag on June 27 has an editorial titled, ‘The PM’s message’, referring to the PM’s message to Tabrez Ansari’s wife. The editorial says that the veil of deception the Muslim that 24-year-old Ansari was killed by a mob kept under.” But within days, says says: “It is sad that the cowards decided to hide the circumstances again “disap- claim the act of violence loudly and pointed to minorities.”

On July 2, Munsiif returns to the theme of lynching. He says: “We need the government fearlessly.” The paper is of the opinion that the serious note of all this and prohibit “women the world over are expected to be in situations and dehshat-pasand loving, but in Tabrez’s case how did they become friendly people) by enacting a law come so harsh and hard? This move is prohibited to force people to chant cern.” The editorial goes onto to involve such people who force others to do Muslim killings in New Zealand and this must get life imprisonment and even death may be considered. Non-bailable war-

rants must be issued against them and one of the victims’ children must get a government job and proper compensation.”

DILUTING ARTICLE 370

THE FORCE WITH which statements to remove Article 370 are being made by Union ministers and those in the ruling party has received much comment.

Inquilab on July 3 speaks of how “a section of our politicians has always stood against the grain of our Constitution”. The paper is alluding to an accommodative and far-sighted drawing up of Article 370, under which Jammu and Kashmir acceded to India. It says: “Amit Shah termed Article 370 as temporary, but he was rebutted point by point by former chief minister of the state, Farooq Abdullah, who said that if the Article is temporary, then the accession of the state is also temporary”. The paper elaborates that “there is no doubt that Narendra Modi and Shah aim to be like other strong leaders of the country. In this quest, they think of Sardar Patel as their ideal... they are perhaps forgetting that even Sardar Patel could not swing Jammu and Kashmir”.

Awadhnama on June 29 states that Amit Shah should look ahead and not backwards. The paper writes: “Shah at one level blames the founder of modern India, Jawaharlal Nehru, as being responsible for Kashmir, but he himself cannot handle today’s Kashmir” The paper links Kashmir and the situation faced by Indian Muslims, since both are exclusionary. It opines that: “The need of the hour is to take Kashmiri youths into confidence and ensure a river of progress flows there. India’s Muslims, too, need to be guaranteed they will be free from mob lynching. Mob lynching is a blot of the face of India.”

CUTTING BOTH WAYS

IN A THOUGHTFUL editorial on July 3, Roznama Rashtriya Sahara discusses social media. It ends by drawing a line, between social media, where non-journalists want to put everything out, as opposed to journalists who must decide what must be put out and how, social concern must be weighed and awareness created without just stoking negativity.

Compiled by Seema Chishti