

**BJP's Telangana challenge**

Just as the Congress party is looking for a leader for its Delhi unit, a similar hunt is on in the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) for a head for its Telangana unit. The BJP is keen on capturing political power in Telangana before the next elections and sees a big opportunity with the shrinking base of Congress and the beginning of anti-incumbency sentiment that is spreading against the ruling Telangana Rashtra Samithi (TRS).

The BJP won four Lok Sabha seats this May and an increase in the percentage of votes polled from 7 per cent to 19 per cent in five months. Secunderabad MP G Kishan Reddy has been made a minister of state for Home with the party's growth in mind.

The present state unit president, Dr K Lakshman, 63, is a senior OBC leader in the party and is respected by the cadre. But he himself lost from the Musheerabad Assembly seat in the December elections. He was also unable to get leaders from other parties to join the BJP.

In the circumstances, Muralidhar Rao who began life as an ABVP leader in Osmania University in the 1980s and later the Swadeshi Jagran Manch is being considered for elevation. Rao is a Velama (like Chief Minister K Chandrashekar Rao), and tried several times to contest for Parliament from Telangana but he could not be accommodated, largely because Ch Vidyasagar Rao (also a Velama) blocked those efforts. But Rao has since been despatched as Maharashtra governor.

Newly elected Nizamabad MP Arvind Dharmapuri has demanded publicly that Muralidhar Rao be made party president. Watch this space.

**OPINION**

P CHIDAMBARAM

## Don't dismember J&K, don't do that cardinal sin

Our foremost duty is to protect the rights of the states, and by protecting the rights of the states, protect the rights of the people of those states. Day after day, we fail to protect the rights of states. We have passed numerous Bills which are on the Concurrent List. There has been no consultation with any state, yet we pass those Bills completely oblivious of the rights of the states. I wrote that we are reducing states to municipal administrations. Today, we have gone a step further. You are not even reducing states to municipal administrations; you will make states your vassal. You will reduce states to colonies, and you think you are doing something which is constitutional.

Sir, be that as it may, what have you done today? You are passing an order under Article 370, by which you are repealing the earlier Application Order and making a new Application Order. Ostensibly, the purpose is to amend Article 370, sub-Article (d), and substitute the words, "Legislative Assembly" for the words "Constituent Assembly". Well, I am sure some wise men in the law ministry may have told you that it is possible. I have no quarrel with anyone's wisdom. I could be wrong and they could be right, but I think you have forgotten that you cannot modify Article 370 by an order under Article 370. Article 370 enables you to modify such other provisions in the Constitution. It is beyond my comprehension how Article 370 order can be used to modify Article 370. I leave it there.

You are doing another thing. You are passing two resolutions today, hoping that you will pass. I am sure you will pass them. Under the first resolution, Article 370 itself will cease to exist. I know this is your manifesto promise. By this resolution, you think that you are repealing Article 370, but in repealing Article 370, you are unleashing the forces which you cannot control.

I have dealt with the fate of Jammu and Kashmir. Yes, there are a number of young men in Jammu and Kashmir, who have taken to violence, who preach secession and who want to split Jammu and Kashmir from the Union of India. No one condones their action, no one supports their action. The Congress party and every other party is implacably opposed to those young men. While, there are thousands of other young men, for reasons which they think are good, pelted stones, thousands of other young men for reasons which they think are good, called *hartals*. I have interacted with them. I led a delegation of Parliament along with Arun Jaitley. When we first visited Jammu and Kashmir, as home minister, they called a *hartal*. The whole state was shut down.

But, when I led a Parliamentary delegation, along with Jaitley and many other distinguished Members of Parliament, the whole state turned out to receive us. Thousands and thousands of people came and represented to us. It was an eye opener for all of us. Not all citizens in Jammu and Kashmir want; in fact, an overwhelming majority in Jammu and Kashmir, do not want secession; do not want to leave the Union of India. You may disagree with me, but, I believe that they want more autonomy. Now, what are you doing by repealing Article 370? I fear, I genuinely fear home minister, that you are pushing thousands and thousands of young men from this column to join the other column of a few hundreds. I sincerely hope that it will not happen. But, if it happens, you will rue this day when you repeal Article 370.

The second thing that you are doing is you are dismembering a state. You think that you are doing it to Jammu and Kashmir. But, what you are doing to Jammu and Kashmir, using these provisions, misinterpreting these provisions, in fact, I could go on to say, by mischievously interpreting these provisions, can be done to any other state. Please tell me, why the mechanism that you have devised to dismember Jammu and Kashmir will not apply to any other state? Please convince us that Derek O'Brien and I are wrong. All you have to do is to dismiss an elected government, dissolve the state legislature, promulgate President's Rule, declare Parliament to be the state legislature for the time being and divide the state.

I told my friend from Odisha, what stops our future government from carving out a Union Territory for the KBK districts? What stops our future government from creating a Union Territory or a new state for North Bengal? What stops our future government from dividing Tamil Nadu? My friends from AIADMK are here. They do not realise what they are doing. The same provisions, the same method, the same resolutions can be applied to any state. But, I think, in doing it for Jammu and Kashmir, you have made a fatal legal error. I won't tell what the legal error is now. You will discover it in due course but my greater concern is, what you are doing today sends a very, very wrong signal to all the states of this country.

Sir, all I can do is appeal, appeal to the Home Minister, even at this late stage, stop, pause, reflect on what you are doing. If you are determined to repeal Article 370, I can do nothing about it. But the other thing that you are doing, dismembering Jammu and Kashmir, for heaven's sake, in the name of the people of India, I appeal to you, don't do that. Don't dismember that state. It is one state. It came to us as one state. I do not want to recall history or those tall personalities who brought Jammu and Kashmir to accede to India. That is history. That is the historical document. It is as important as the Constitution of India but if you wish to ignore history, if you wish to ignore the pact made with Maharaja Hari Singh, if you wish to ignore what Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel was able to achieve in those difficult days, it is your privilege; do what you like but what you are doing is wrong.

Repealing Article 35A is wrong. Amending the Constitution invoking Article 370 is wrong. Doing away with Article 370 is wrong. Do all these wrongs; do all these wrongs; I am willing to, oh my, I am willing to tolerate all those wrongs but for heaven's sake, don't dismember Jammu and Kashmir, don't do that cardinal sin, don't do that monumental blunder.

*Edited excerpts from the speech of Rajya Sabha MP from Congress, P Chidambaram, on the Jammu and Kashmir Reorganization Bill, 2019 and the Jammu & Kashmir Reservation (Second Amendment) Bill, 2019, July 5*

**DID THEY REALLY SAY THAT?**

**"I am very glad that a lot of people referred to Ladakh, Leh and Kargil in their speeches but I want to know that do they really know what Ladakh is? In the last seven decades, Ladakh was not embraced, it was thrown in one corner and there were statements in this House that it was that land where not one speck of grass grows"**

Jamyang Tsering Namgyal, MP Ladakh, on revoking Jammu and Kashmir's special status, August 5



ILLUSTRATION BY BINAY SINHA

Radha Kumar was one of the three interlocutors appointed by the United Progressive Alliance-2 government in 2010 to interact with various sections of Kashmiri society and prepare a report incorporating those views. In an interview to Sai Manish, Kumar expresses anguish on the abrogation of Article 370 and the manner in which the Modi government executed a far reaching Constitutional change without the consent of the very people whose lives it was supposed to affect the most. Edited excerpts:

## 'Past governments eroded Article 370'

**As an interlocutor, one of the options you gave was to abrogate Article 370. Are you satisfied with the way it has been achieved?**

I am ashamed of this Parliament. For such a far reaching Constitutional change, there wasn't even a proper debate. No Parliamentarianism barring a few raised substantive Constitutional and legal issues in either of the houses. It is shameful that a legislative body went about it in the way it did. I haven't been more depressed about anything more than this in my life. The President's order was bad in law.

How on earth can you replace a legislative assembly of elected representatives with the governor? The governor doesn't represent the people of the state but the government of India. Article 370 clearly states that any move to abrogate it must be done on recommendation of the Constituent Assembly. Wasn't it fine to interpret constituent assembly as the legislative assembly to ensure that people's voices are heard while amending the Constitution?

The way in which this was pushed crushed federalism in India. The President of India has to protect the Constitution. Instead he has blatantly violated it.

**Was the time ripe for the abrogation of Article 370?**

We had said in our report that Article 370 was a temporary provision. It would be fair to say that the Congress and other governments in the past eroded Article 370. We have also seen that at every point it has been eroded, there has been more turmoil and alienation among people in Kashmir. So the argument that Article 370 is the problem is completely wrong. The problem all along has been the blatant undermining and erosion of it. The founding fathers of the Constitution put it as a transient provision in the hope that one day Kashmir will be just like any other state in India. But for Kashmir to be like any other state was also to be determined by the will of its people. However, the government has decided to go

## A change agent for transgenders

A transgender student has broken his silence to question taboos and create communities for them to interact, share and earn their livelihood, writes Sneha Bhattacharjee

Born in Malda, West Bengal, Koushik Hore's interest lay in everything feminine. Like every family that would want to keep such traits hidden, Hore's family too grew silent and admitted him to an all-boys school. But, Hore failed to be a boy. Like every other transgender struggling with gender identity, he too was subjected to bullying and became a recluse. What followed was typical — self-doubt, poor academic records and irregularity in school.

That's when he got in touch with a youth development organisation, Prantakatha, in West Bengal. "They were extremely gender friendly and assuring," recalls Hore. It was there he found many like him suffering in silence, facing discrimination and exclusion in all spheres of life. "With the support from Prantakatha, I started forming a space that could give voices to people like me who feel caged by homophobic silence," he says adding "I simply decided to question the silence".

That's how QueerIUs or Queer Identity and Us was born in 2015. It was a youth-led initiative to create dialogue on sexuality, gender, sexual health among queer and non-queer youth. Hore was amazed at the response he got and it made him realise how his silence could create some noise and become a strong voice. "We created queer friendly spaces in colleges and established a Bengal network of queer people mostly led by transgender women across 11 districts of Bengal in the name of Bengal Queer Collective," Hore adds.

Hore recalls how while working under unManifesto campaign supported by the UNFPA in 2016, the LGBTQ community was asked

about their demands. "One of the most significant demands was to create employment opportunities for transgender people," he says. "They are deprived of the right to education, employment and decent livelihood. They are even deprived of proper share of their paternal property because of their distinct gender identity forcing them to resort to begging or risky sex trade," he adds.

Hore realised there was a need to make the transgender community independent. With the help of communities like Prantakatha, Pravah and Youth Collective, Hore started Sathrangi, a trans-feminine Indian livelihood venture, in 2016. It was a livelihood programme for transgender in West Bengal in collaboration with four organisations, Association of Transgenders and Hijras in Bengal (ATHB), Gour Banglar Samghati Samity (GBSS), Amity Trust and Prantakatha who had been working on transgender rights in West Bengal.

It was during one such community-led initiative that he met the founder of Indian School of Development and Management (ISDM), who encouraged Hore to join ISDM's first batch of Post-Graduate programme in Development Leadership, in 2017-18. Hore considers the years at ISDM as being a gamechanger in his life. It not only provided him with the approach to look at life differently, but also honed his skills of how he needed to learn and unlearn, and develop his organisation in the development sector. "I think living life with dignity is an important factor for any human, which I was searching for long. ISDM gave me that

## CHECKLIST EXIT ROUTE: MORE OPPOSITION MPs JOIN THE BJP

■ **Bhubaneswar Kalita:** The chief whip of the Congress — the man senior enough to be trusted by the party with issuing and enforcing party whips — Kalita quit the party earlier this week, ostensibly because of disagreements on Article 370. He is a Rajya Sabha member from Assam and there is no chance of his being re-elected from the state from the Congress when his term comes to an end in April next year. He contested the recently concluded Lok Sabha elections from Mangaldai constituency and was defeated roundly by the BJP's Dilip Saikia.

■ **Sanjay Seth:** On a flight from Delhi to Lucknow sometime in late 2018, Seth, a Samajwadi Party leader, who was sitting next to arch rival Satish Chandra Mishra of the Bahujan Samaj Party in the aircraft, mooted a possible pooling of resources between the BSP and SP to prevent division of votes. After extended negotiations, Mayawati

and Akhilesh Yadav reached an agreement on seat sharing. Despite their efforts, the parties posted a disastrous election result. Seth has opted to resign from the Rajya Sabha and his party, and is expected to join the BJP.

■ **Sanjay Singh:** The 'raja' of Amethi and a Rajya Sabha MP from the Congress has also quit the party and joined the BJP. He was elected from Assam and his term will end in April next year.

■ **Neeraj Shekhar:** Another SP MP, his term will end in November next year. There is no chance of being re-elected from Uttar Pradesh on an SP ticket.

■ **Surendra Singh Nagar:** Although his term doesn't end till 2022, Nagar, who was elected from the SP, has opted to retire. He quit the BSP in 2014 and joined the SP and was given a Rajya Sabha nomination. He lost to the BJP from the Gautambuddh Nagar (Noida) constituency in 2019. And now, he has joined the BJP.

about this in a very specious manner. The reliability and trustworthiness of the Indian state has been lost.

**Who benefitted the most from Article 370 all these years?**

Nobody. It was barely followed. Overtime, various elements like the Supreme Court's jurisdiction and the Election Commission of India's powers were extended to Kashmir. These were not originally envisaged in Article 370. There is no merit in the argument that Article 370 benefitted only two or three families in Kashmir. What has Article 370 got to do with two political families ruling the state over all these years? Have all the corrupt and venal politicians benefitted from the Constitution of India? It is a ridiculous argument to make.

**What repercussions do you see in the coming days and the future?**

From whatever little information is coming through from the valley, I believe that Kashmiris are in a state of shock and despair. It will lead to increased rage, alienation and very likely more people taking to the gun in Kashmir. One thing I am certain of is that Pakistan will try to multiply infiltration and try to flood the valley with guns. Experience over the last 70 years shows that whenever Pakistan is given the opportunity to foment armed violence in Kashmir, it never lets go off it. These series of far reaching Constitutional changes have not just been done without consultation; it has been executed by locking up the people of Kashmir whose voices should have been heard in this process.

**How different are younger generation of Kashmiris in their attitude towards Article 370 than the middle aged and elder ones?**

What I saw in my interactions across age groups in Kashmir was that the elder generation — like the leaders who headed the Hurriyat — were much more eager to negotiate things. They wanted solutions and their attitude had been suitably modified to take into account Indian concerns to arrive at solution for Kashmir.

During the 1990s there was a burning passionate belief among many of the rebels in democracy. They in many ways were fighting for democracy. I do not see this in the current generation of young Kashmiris. Many of them believed that democracy was a complete sham. They thought they would fight either for religion or their fight would be fuelled by plain hatred towards the central government's policies. The younger generation had no clear idea of what they wanted; but clearly knew what they did not want. They had no idea of their future. When you are born into blood and war, how can you envisage a rosy future for yourself. The rebels of 1990s had seen a better world before the turmoil began. The rebels of 2010 had seen nothing in their lives except conflict. Now you have demoted Kashmir to a Union Territory. Only the will of the union government will run large in Kashmir from now. You have told them that governance will be done

through panchayats. This is what the British did. Why is the government repeating a colonial pattern in a state of India?

**There are concerns of a demographic change that will alter the Muslim character of Kashmir?**

Kashmiris have for centuries resented outside settlers and have been protective of their land. Their history has been of one conquest after another. Communal elements in the valley and people like Syed Ali Shah Geelani have forever been taking about how the Indian government wants to change the valley demographically. This is absolute nonsense. There has been no substantive demographic change in the valley as far as reduction in the Muslim population is concerned. If there have been any changes in religious composition, it has been restricted to the Jammu region. We have seen such arguments being raised across India. Communal bigots have said that Muslims have more children than Hindus so they would change India's Hindu majority character. But over these many years the higher birth rate among Muslims hasn't made a significant difference. Hindus still form an overwhelming majority of India.

**But concerns of Muslim population being diluted in Kashmir also stems from the freedom for anyone in India to now buy land in the valley.**

Yes. When left to run its normal course, demographic changes happen very slowly. Now the argument being made is that people from all over India will now flood Kashmir to buy land and property. There are no land laws in Jammu & Kashmir to allow for that. So now the governor will make those laws by an executive fiat. I don't think this will result in significant reduction in number of Muslims. But it will lead to changes in other significant ways. Who will buy land or property in Kashmir? Probably people who want summer houses. Why would people from the rest of India want to go and settle in Kashmir when the state is engulfed in violence and uncertainty. It is obvious that industry and businesses won't go there. So who is left? Maybe some ideologically motivated people from the Rashtriya Swamasevak Sangh (RSS) and the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) will go and settle there.

But this Israeli type settler approach won't lead to millions of people moving into the valley. If we exclude the settler possibility, then the only plausible investment option will be Indians buying summer houses from the locals. With them not being able to live there, it would result in a large number of empty properties across Kashmir. When this happens, the sense of community that prevails in Kashmir will be lost. All of us living in cities live as disparate entities — we live in our own colonies not knowing our neighbours. When this summer house boom happens, the local community will become weaker and be transformed to a service community.



**RADHA KUMAR**  
Author & Academician



"Sapno ki Udaan", a learning centre now supported by the UNICEF, is run by trans people and has already helped 45 kids and adolescents from the manual scavenging community

This realisation further helped me in developing my integrity towards creating safe, inclusive space where all can live without being judged. It moulded my approach in many ways and gave me the confidence to become a confident change agent. My suggestion for a gender neutral toilet in ISDM was not only accepted but also appreciated and implemented," Hore adds.

In the last four years, Hore has co-initiated several activities that aim to create positive impact in the sphere of basic human rights of transgenders. In 2017, he co-initiated an informal learning and care giving centre called "Sapno ki Udaan" that is now supported by the UNICEF. The centre is run by transgenders and has helped 45 kids and adolescents from the manual

scavenging community. In 2018, along with Prantakatha and ATHB, Hore created a LGBTQ network called "South Asian Young Queer Activists Network/SAYAN" within the South Asian countries — Bangladesh, Pakistan, Nepal, Bhutan and Sri Lanka. This initiative was supported by the US Consulate General, Kolkata. The network has been able to conduct three successful conferences till now and a WhatsApp group keeps them connected where they discuss their way forward. In 2019 saw Sathrangi set up a boutique shop in Malda in collaboration with GBSS. The shop is run by three transwomen.

In his bid to break silence, Hore with his initiatives has not only given a voice to the queer community, but also made them independent.



# Human-animal hybrids

The potential payoff for such research is enormous

Japan has just cleared a controversial experiment, which could have major consequences for the future of genetics research. Hiromitsu Nakauchi of the University of Tokyo and Stanford University will be allowed to insert human stem cells into a mouse embryo and allow the resulting hybrid embryo to develop till term. While such experiments have been conducted before, there is normally a time limit of 14 days before the embryo is destroyed. Indeed, many nations have a blanket ban on such experiments.

It is hoped that this experiment will result in insights that allow for entirely new medical transplant techniques. Variations on this

theme, such as the insertion of animal stem cells into human embryos, could also yield very positive outcomes. But this experiment also opens a Pandora's Box in terms of other, potentially nightmarish possibilities.

Pluripotent stem cells can grow into many types of organs. One possible outcome of such experiments could be the development of technologies where human organs are grown in donor animals. Current transplant procedures can be carried out only by the donation of organs from somebody who is genetically compatible with the recipient. There are high rejection rates and immuno suppression drugs that prevent rejection have undesirable side effects.

However, it may be eventually possible to insert the recipient's own stem cells into a pig embryo (or sheep) and, thus, grow a replacement organ that is completely compatible. This particular experiment will start with trying to grow human pancreas cells in rodents and, if that works, attempting the same procedure in pigs. The mouse embryo has been treated to remove information about rodent pancreas cells so there should not be a genetic barrier to growing human pancreas cells.

Growing a human pancreas or liver, or even a new heart, in a surrogate animal could be a game changer. There are over a million people waiting for liver and pancreas transplants. Many lives could be saved if such a process could be developed and standardised.

The inverse process, which is not on the cards, would be even more of a conceptual and ethical reach. Various animals have unusual

genetics, which make them resistant or immune to various diseases. Sharks, for example, are immune to cancer. Some animals have unusual abilities — salamanders can regrow lost limbs. Elephants regrow entire sets of teeth through their lives. If it is possible to isolate the responsible genes and insert these, it could alter the human race.

While Nakauchi and his team intend to proceed with caution, there are obvious ethical concerns. If human DNA proliferates in an animal embryo, the resulting creature would be a new hybrid species. This could be of really special concern if the brain is affected.

The researchers say they would set a cut-off point in terms of proliferation, destroying the hybrid if the proportion of human cells in the brain exceeds 30 per cent. In practice, no experiment had ever resulted in much more than one in 100,000 cells being of human origin. But bringing an embryo to term is new

territory. The hybrid will be monitored for two years before the next experiment, which could involve pigs or sheep.

The potential payoff for such research is obviously enormous. But the risks are also high. Japan is a responsible nation, which has pondered the pros and cons of genetic engineering for years before giving the go ahead. However, this could set a precedent where less responsible governments or private researchers decide to accelerate research processes, throwing caution to the wind.

There is little practical chance of something going seriously wrong at this stage. There are very few labs with the requisite facilities and, perhaps, even fewer scientists with the necessary skills to work in this field. But as a body of work builds up, more research in this domain is inevitable. One can only hope researchers will heed the maxim "with great power comes great responsibility".

# Crafting a fiscally neutral stimulus

With a slew of industries in the grip of a prolonged slump, a package of measures that will boost demand without burdening the exchequer is imperative

AJAY SHANKAR

The Indian economy is experiencing a slowdown. Demand is tepid. Market sentiment is adverse. A normal fiscal stimulus to create demand is ruled out due to the government's commitment to keep the deficit low. The Reserve Bank of India has cut lending rates to stimulate growth. One view would be to wait and hope for the downturn to end as lower lending rates and increased liquidity begin to have an impact. The other would be to also take some unconventional steps that have no — or at best marginal — fiscal implications to stimulate demand.

The auto sector is in distress and is asking for help. One measure which is required for reducing air pollution is to provide incentives for scrapping old commercial vehicles. BS VI fuel would not materially reduce air pollution from old commercial vehicles, such as trucks, buses, tempos and three-wheelers. So, these need to go off the roads if air quality is to get better. Original equipment manufacturers could be mandated to put in place state-of-the-art scrapping yards. They should absorb the cost of disposal. The "polluter pays" principle could be legitimately extended to mean that the manufacturer pays for the final disposal of the product after its useful life is over. This would lay the foundation for moving towards a sustainable circular economy.

An attractive rebate, above the market price, for trading old commercial vehicles for new ones would have a major impact on air pollution. Germany ran a very successful similar "cash for clunkers" programme to mitigate the slowdown in their auto industry following the global financial crisis in 2008. The cash rebate could come from the additional GST revenue flowing from the higher production and sales of these vehicles due to the trade-in scheme. The impact on the fiscal deficit would at best be marginal. In addition, an announcement that after three years these vehicles will not be allowed to run, but will have to be scrapped, would be enough to ensure full replacement of the old fleet. This would be a fairly substantial stimulus for the auto sector. The impact on air pollution would also be significant. In the smaller North Indian cities where highly polluting tempos are the only means of public transport, the improvement in air quality would be immediate.

There are a large number of stressed assets and bad loans arising from incomplete power and housing projects. The credit or financial institutions can take control from promoters by converting debt into equity. Thereafter, their speedy completion can be fully financed without any fear of aspersions. The resumption of work in these thermal power plants and housing projects, and their early completion, would provide another large stimulus to the economy. This would not need any budgetary outlay. The creditor public sector financial institutions would find, after completion of these projects, that the resulting write-offs would be far lower than that entailed by the National Company Law Tribunal route of bankruptcy proceedings.

Housing and related infrastructure has a large multiplier effect in generating demand for upstream industries such as cement, steel and electrical equipment. Since the economic reforms, the state housing boards and urban development authorities have gradually vacated the housing construction space in favour of private developers. These agencies could take up affordable housing projects of the kind that they used to in the past. Provision of land for such institutions by state governments and public institutions at affordable (not market) rates would be



necessary. This would also be a lot easier, as the land is not going to private developers.

A large housing programme for middle and lower income groups would not need any budgetary support. Institutional finance should be able to support the programme, where the normal practice has been for customers to make payments in instalments linked to progress in execution. It would, however, need considerable administrative effort to provide land at below market rates for projects in cities across the country.

**If there are good projects in the infrastructure space, bidding some of them out for construction and maintenance on an annuity basis would spur economic activity**

In the infrastructure space, if there are good projects, having land and clearances, bidding some of them out for construction and maintenance on an annuity basis would also boost economic activity. The payment liability for these projects would start after they are completed. A significant part of railway modernisation could be undertaken through annuity projects. The road sector was able to regain momentum after it took up the hybrid annuity model of execution.

The energy sector also offers possibilities. The speed of the switchover to electric mobility would depend on the rapidity with which the public charging infrastructure for electric vehicles, from two-

wheelers to three-wheelers, cars and buses, is rolled out. The lower GST rates now introduced would make a real difference only after the charging infrastructure is in place. The oil companies are cash-rich and can be directed to create the infrastructure. Electricity distribution companies can also be directed to do so, with the investment being accepted for tariff determination by the regulatory commissions. Bringing in the distribution companies is required for creating charging stations for personal cars and two-wheelers in parking places in residential areas.

The economics is now clearly in favour of electric vehicles and they will take over market share rapidly from conventional vehicles once charging facilities are provided. Government directives about phasing out conventional vehicles will not be needed. Energy Efficiency Services Limited could also attempt to replicate its success story with LEDs and try to replace all the energy-inefficient pumps presently in use with efficient ones through bulk procurement for urban water supply undertakings, industrial clusters and farmers in partnership with distribution companies. Bulk procurement would result in lower prices. Some concessional financing could also be provided.

A stimulus to generate demand for domestic goods and services is imperative to reverse the slowdown. This can be done without compromising on fiscal rectitude.

*The writer was Secretary, DIPP, and is currently Distinguished Fellow, TERI*

# Road map for wider city gas distribution

SURESH P MANGLANI

India witnessed a paradigm shift in the city gas distribution (CGD) sector in 2018-19. Proactive efforts by the Petroleum and Natural Gas Regulatory Board (PNGRB) over the ninth and tenth bidding rounds are expected to take nationwide CGD coverage to a new high. The development presents an opportunity to give more than seven out of 10 Indians living in 400 districts across 27 states and Union Territories seamless access to cleaner fuel.

Under these rounds, 21 entities committed to invest in the new CGD network. With this, India will now see fast track development of compressed natural gas (CNG) and piped natural gas (PNG) infrastructure.

Currently, PNG connections reach 5.1 million homes, and there are 1760 CNG stations across more than 100 districts. We are now looking at a 10-fold rise, with 50 million new PNG connections and 10,000 new CNG stations. The opportunity also opens the door to users of public transport, restaurants, hotels, small eateries, temples, crematoriums and micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs).

The next eight years will see a massive jump in PNG and CNG infrastructure, with the laying of over 20,000 km of steel pipelines and 100,000 km of polyethylene pipelines, attracting investments of \$15-20 billion.

Enhanced mobility of CNG vehicles has been a major impediment to its adoption by owners of private vehicles. The expanded CNG network will offer customers the option of choosing a CNG station convenient to them, on the lines of other retail products and services.

The scale of the above numbers will make India a key destination for all major global suppliers of compressors, dispensers, meters, fittings and technology solutions. Domestic suppliers and construction contractors have started adding new capacities to reap the full benefit of the huge upside in infrastructure development.

India will reap substantial social and economic benefits through development of green fuel corridors, generation of millions of jobs and a major thrust to MSMEs, not to mention the enormous impact on the environment by cutting air pollution.

It also promises to give a significant push to start-ups and homegrown government initiatives such as Skill India and Make in India. This will also be an integral component of India's plan to increase the share of natural gas to 15 per cent of its energy mix.

The key issue is whether we are prepared to deliver these big numbers. While the answer is yes, we need to critically review the cumbersome and time-consuming processes and policies in place since the pre-PNGRB era, and be open to bring in reforms.

**The scale of the PNG and CNG network will make India a key destination for all major global suppliers of compressors, dispensers, meters and technology solutions**

It is essential that the government's philosophy of improving ease of doing business percolates down to the implementation of key projects such as CGD network expansion. Ease of doing business must be reflected in approval processes. Conventional systems involving multiple authorities should make way for a fast-track, milestone-based professional certification process.

While PNGRB has granted authorisation, infrastructure development has to take place under the authority of state governments and various central governmental authorities. Besides, the PNGRB and the petroleum ministry, state governments, gas transportation companies, oil marketing companies (OMCs) supporting co-location of CNG stations in petrol pumps, pollution control boards, Petroleum and Explosives Safety Organisation (PESO), National Highways Authority of India (NHAI), Indian Railways (IR) and public works departments (PWDs) are key stakeholders playing important roles in the development of CGD networks. Currently, CGD entities have to approach each of the stakeholders and clear their permission processes.

One way to resolve such impediments is to bring all key stakeholders on a single platform by constituting a CGD Development Council (CDC). The CDC may include representatives of the ministry of petroleum and natural gas, ministry of finance, state governments, NHAI, IR, the PNGRB, PESO, OMCs and other stakeholders.

The key plan of action for the CDC should be to formulate a single uniform policy for the whole country. The overarching goal is to fast-track CGD development through single-window clearance, formulation of policies to incentivise natural gas adoption (by developing freight corridors), rationalisation of various government charges, a grievance redress mechanism, and inter-stakeholder issues.

The council would be a standing forum for at least the next three years, meeting every quarter. It will be an empowered body and should be in a position to take binding decisions. It will have the authority to call any agency, CGD company or gas transmission company, or seek the help of professional agencies.

Coherence and strong government will drive the initiative. The central government can urge the state governments to see the larger benefits of developing PNG and CNG infrastructure in states.

CDC will be a forum where all stakeholders can deliberate and take informed decisions. CGD companies will have to put their full resources solely into achieving committed PNG and CNG numbers. This will also increase the share of natural gas in the energy basket, as committed by India at international forums.

*The writer is CEO, Adani Gas Ltd*

## OTHER VIEWS

### Congress disarray in face of govt move on J&K worrying

It is bad news for a democracy that prides itself on its checks and balances

Even though scrapping the special status of Kashmir has long been an important feature of the BJP's core ideological agenda, the Narendra Modi government took everyone by surprise with its move to render Article 370 ineffective and bifurcate J&K into two Union Territories. But none more so than the Opposition, especially the Congress. And then it has spoken in different voices, with many of its prominent younger leaders like Jyotiraditya Scindia, Deepender Hooda and Milind Deora publicly backing the government, saying that the revocation of Article 370 is the national interest, even as seniors like Ghulam Nabi Azad accuse those who support it of being ignorant of history.

Rahul Gandhi had stepped down as president after the party's embarrassing showing in the Lok Sabha elections, and the aftermath of his decision has exposed a reality hidden in plain sight: Remove the Gandhi at the helm, and you have a party that has forsaken all structures and processes, one that has no mechanisms of survival and movement left. With the Congress floundering visibly, therefore, the smaller regional parties are evidently making their own calculations about the viability of opposing the BJP, and many are joining the band-



wagon. The inability of the Opposition to hold its ground is bad news for a democracy that prides itself for its argumentative spirit, and its checks and balances, especially at a time when they will be needed to handle the fallout of the Centre's move in Kashmir.

*The Indian Express, August 9*

### Back to square one

Ties with India: Pak must reconsider

Pakistan's decision to expel India's High Commissioner, snap trade relations and observe August 15 as a black day in supposed solidarity with the people of Jammu & Kashmir is a serious setback for diplomatic relations. Sections of Indian civil society have legitimate concerns about the actions of the BJP Government in emptying out Article 370 and the continuing lockdown of the Valley, but this does not license Pakistan to interfere in what the MEA correctly described on Thursday as India's internal matter.

In the days to come, India can expect Pakistan to raise the Kashmir issue at the United Nations, mobilise the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation and send envoys

to friendly capitals. India's economic clout has grown enormously in the last couple of decades, and given doubts in the Western world about Pakistan's overt and covert support to Islamist terror, New Delhi has the space to deal with Islamabad's efforts to "internationalise" the Kashmir issue. Downgrading diplomatic relations between troubled neighbours is never a good idea. Diplomacy is a mechanism to ensure that channels of communication remain open. While India and Pakistan have used back channels in recent years, the presence of seasoned diplomats in Delhi and Islamabad has always benefited the two countries.

*The Hindu, August 9*

### Countering radicalisation

A humane approach may be effective

Radical measures need not be the only way of cleansing a radicalised mind. Patience, engagement, dialogue and — this cannot be emphasised enough — empathy often hold the key to the success of deradicalisation programmes operated by the keepers of the law. One such module run by the anti-terrorism squad in Maharashtra — reportedly the only such initiative in the country that is run by a state police force — seems to have met with considerable success. Perhaps that is because of the adoption of a humane, rather than draconian, approach. Data suggest that in three years, the programme has succeeded in reintegrating almost 114 men and six women who had been seduced by extremist ideolo-

gies. The suspect was subjected to patient counselling and hours of conversation. It is not uncommon for the Maharashtra police to seek the help of private counsellors to tackle the problem.

There is thus a strong case to argue that reforms in the policing system entail training and sensitisation of its personnel, especially in the lower rungs, to deal with the threat of radicalisation effectively. Maharashtra police's sensibility seems to have enthused several other states to follow in its footsteps. But there is only so much that the police can do in this respect. The spectre of radicalism cannot be excoriated as long as politics and society remain toxic.

*The Telegraph, August 9*



# Opinion

SATURDAY, AUGUST 10, 2019



## ON J&amp;K'S FUTURE

Prime Minister of India, Narendra Modi

J&K will not remain an UT forever. You will get the opportunity to elect your representatives soon. I want to tell the people of Jammu and Kashmir that your representatives will come from among you

## Turning vegetarian could help fight global warming

IPCC research shows shows dietary changes could bring emissions down by 8 billion tonnes annually by 2050

**I**T HAS BEEN clear for sometime that the fight to lower greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, and mitigate climate-change impact, rests on a drastic rethink of global land use. A large part of land use is tied to human diet, from pastures for grazing of meat animals to agriculture. A new report by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) on climate and land says a plants-based diet will be kinder on the planet than a meat-based one. It recommends that governments, especially those of rich nations, where meat consumption is high, work on reducing this.

Land use and management, including agriculture and deforestation, contribute almost a quarter of the GHG emissions. Unless land is managed more sustainably, keeping global warming under 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels, is impossible—countries, thus, have included land-use, land-use change and forestry in their Intended Nationally Determined Contributions announced as part of the 2015 Paris Agreement. While deforestation for pastures to graze cattle, like in Brazil and Colombia, is particularly emission-intensive, cattle, too, produce large amounts of methane, a potent GHG. Besides, the emission foot-print of manufacturing animal-feed, water- and electricity-use in raising and slaughtering of meat animals, and processing/packaging of meat is significant. The IPCC report, thus, says that balanced diets that are plant-based and feature sustainably-produced animal-sourced food “present major opportunities for adaptation and mitigation”. Indeed, by 2050, the report says, dietary changes could free up millions of square kilometres of land and reduce global carbon emissions by upto 8 billion tonnes annually (relative to business-as-usual). Though, perhaps with the politics and socio-cultural sensibilities associated with dietary habits in mind, authors of the report have refrained from telling people what to eat. Given land use across the world contributes \$75-85 trillion to the global economy annually (2011, based on the value of the dollar in 2007)—this is many times the world’s combined GDP—influencing land use in favour of more sustainable practices is also a fraught economic question, with the livelihoods of hundreds of millions of people tied to it.

The risks a shifting to a largely plant-based diet also must be considered. Rice-farming, for instance, accounts for 24% of agricultural methane emissions. In a country like India, where rice is a staple and one of the largest agricultural exports, pushing a plant-based diet could result in more demand for unsustainably produced rice. Also, nitrous oxide emissions—a potent heat-trapper, with one tonne being equivalent to 265 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> over 100 years—from agriculture have almost doubled since the 1960s, given fertiliser application has increased nine-fold globally. Besides, research by the Carnegie Mellon University shows that, without reducing caloric intake significantly, simply changing the diet to include the US department of agriculture (USDA) advised food mix, or reducing caloric intake while sticking to the USDA food mix recommended for a healthy weight, will increase GHG emissions and energy/water use.

The window to act on sustainable land use is narrowing fast. Human use already affects 60-85% of forests and 70-90% of other natural ecosystems. Land—the forests on it as well as the soil—plays a key role as a carbon sink. But, with manifest climate change effects, desertification and degradation of land is becoming an ever-growing threat, and humans are responding with even more unsustainable use—fertiliser use, excessive groundwater extraction, stripping down of rainforests, etc, are key examples. The IPCC report, therefore, calls for stepping up efforts to keep the land productive while enhancing its carbon-absorbing capacity—a carefully calibrated, primarily plant-based diet could be one way to do this.

## Tackling lynch mobs

Rajasthan has come up with a law, other states must too

**R**AJASTHAN HAS DONE well to, in response to a Supreme Court recommendation, come up with a special law to deal with lynch mobs. Though the Opposition protested against the “Rajasthan Protection from Lynching Bill, 2019” and argued that existing laws were good enough, this is not quite true; though, while the Opposition argued that some of the Bill’s provisions—even two persons can be defined as a mob—could be misused by classifying other crimes as mob violence, this is something that needs to be kept in mind by the investigating authorities. The Bill makes lynching a cognisable, non-bailable and non-compoundable offence, punishable with up to seven years imprisonment and fines of ₹ 1 lakh if the victim is injured, and this goes up to life imprisonment when the violence results in the victim’s death. And, in a bid to deter mob violence, the Bill treats conspiracy, aiding, abetting, and attempt at mob lynching in the same way as it does perpetrators and assailants, and even recognises creation of a hostile environment, distribution of offensive materials, etc, as allied criminal offences. Moreover, the Bill is not only retributive but also rehabilitative, stipulating that victims of mob lynching be compensated by the state government under the Rajasthan Victim Compensation Scheme, and that the state take necessary measures to assist in the rehabilitation of any such victims who might suffer a displacement.

Other states need to take a cue from Rajasthan and come up with similar laws at the earliest. Ideally, as the Uttar Pradesh State Law Commission did last month, when it came up with a draft anti-lynching law, there should also be strict rules for the police and others in authority whose job is to prevent lynching. This includes punishment for not providing protection to the victim if violence was apprehended, failure to act on time, failure to record details of the crime, and so on; if there is no provision to penalise those whose jobs are to prevent such crimes, chances are all laws will come up short. This is a shortcoming in Rajasthan’s Bill. Amazingly, though the state’s law commission took the initiative on its own, Uttar Pradesh has yet to come up with an anti-lynching law; and this is despite the fact that Uttar Pradesh has recorded 20 distinct incidents of mob violence resulting in 11 deaths since 2015. While the number of those killed/attacked by lynch mobs is likely to be much smaller than those in conventional crimes like murder, the purpose of lynch mobs is to generate fear in certain communities/classes of people; to that extent, the punishments have to be as stringent as possible.

## More MEDICS

Govt has done well to accept the findings of the WHO report on quacks, the one it had contested earlier

**T**HE GOVERNMENT’S DESPERATION over clearing the air on the National Medical Council (NMC) Bill has forced it to accept and acknowledge a problem that it had, only last year, denied even exists. The NMC Bill talks of bridge course to enable Ayush practitioners to prescribe allopathic medicines—this will take care of the poor doctor-patient ratio that India has. As per a *Times of India* report, while the government, in January last year, had termed “erroneous” the WHO finding that nearly 57% of those practising allopathic medicine in the country didn’t have any medical qualification, now, it has included the figure in its FAQs over the NMC Bill. The NMC Bill talks of Community Health Providers—healthcare professionals who can be trained with the bridge courses.

India’s doctor-population ratio remains a sickly one doctor for a thousand people. Thus, it is crucial to accept the case for having community health providers. India needs more doctors, and ideas like converting district health hospitals into medical colleges make eminent sense. Until this can be achieved, the country needs to work with what it has. Besides, as Devi Shetty of Narayana Health and Srinath Reddy of Public Health Foundation of India highlight, India’s problem is over-medicalisation. Reddy points to the case of mid-level health workers in Chhattisgarh who have proved better than doctors at treating primary care conditions, especially malaria. He emphasises the need to train nurses to become ‘nurse practitioners’ and ‘nurse anaesthetists’. Shetty, on the other hand, says that “even in the litigation-happy US, 67% of anaesthesia is given by nurses, not doctors”. If more of community health providers can do the same, it would only help rural health care. More important, it would make more sense to impart the necessary training to a large talent pool of health professionals that let quacks thrive.

## NO PROOF REQUIRED

NO ECONOMY HAS SUSTAINED GDP GROWTH WITH A REAL POLICY RATE ABOVE 1.75%. FOR THE LAST TWO AND A HALF-YEARS, THE REAL POLICY RATE HAS AVERAGED 100 BP HIGHER IN INDIA

# Monetary policy: Facts, Opinion, Governance

**T**HIS TIME, MP does not mean Member of Parliament, but Monetary Policy. What I want to discuss today is the FOG surrounding monetary policy in India. It used to be the case, around the world, that a deliberate fog was created around central bank speak. That changed post the 2008 financial crisis. Central banks around the world went for three Cs—Clarity and Consistency in Communication. All advanced country central banks go for the 3Cs; among EMEs, I don’t know, but what I hear foreign investors say is that the developing world is much closer to the advanced economies than to India.

Is India as different as claimed by “experts”? My own experience, and interpretation, is that India is very different because the experts (perhaps including those at the Central Bank) look at monetary policy very differently. Most importantly, Indian experts look at the monetary policy through nominal lenses; economics is about the real world. After all, nobody talks about nominal GDP growth; when we discuss growth, it is growth adjusted for inflation. Why don’t we do the same with the MP variable called the repo rate—or talk of real borrowing and lending rates?

On August 7, the MPC reduced the repo rate by 35 bps, to 5.4%. The first publication to be off to the races was *Bloomberg Quint* which headlined its story “35 Basis Point Cut Takes RBI Rate To 2010 Level”. The story was accurate. In April 2010, the RBI raised the repo rate to 5.25%. CPI inflation at that time was 13.3%, WPI inflation was 10.5%, and the SBI lending rate was 11.8%. IIP was growing at 13%.

It certainly doesn’t take a weatherman economist to figure out that the repo rate of 5.4% in August 2019 is not even on the same planet as April 2010, let alone be uttered in the same line. But, I want to quote from some of the editorials after the RBI move. *Business Standard* opined that “the central bank is doing its part by progressively reducing the cost of money” (emphasis added). Editorial in *Mint* argued that what the RBI/MPC did

**SURJIT S BHALLA**  
Contributing editor, Financial Express  
Twitter: @surjithbhalla  
Views are personal



was “the best it could have done under the circumstances, grim as they are”. It also quoted Governor Das as stating that the committee felt that “25 bp would have been inadequate, while 50 bp would have been excessive”. And why didn’t RBI undertake a larger cut? The *Mint* view: “Because it did not want to send out a panic signal by easing monetary conditions too much, too fast”.

The MPC action (inaction) came against a backdrop of central banks around the world sending out panic signals by cutting lending rates. But to continue with the editorials. The *Financial Express* headlined its editorial “RBI is doing its bit, over to government now”. There is elaboration a few lines down. “But the central bank can only do so much. Indeed, it is doing more than its best to create a conducive lending environment for banks”. *Economic Times* editorial, “Slashing rates by 35 bp, dumping multiples of 25 bps as the quantum of rate change, signals non-routine concern over growth, as also restraint to avert any panic. It also signals RBI’s capacity to go beyond convention” (emphasis added).

There is a surprising uniformity (identity?) in the editorials—in addition to the fact that they have got the simple fact of cost of money grotesquely wrong. If I were Governor Das, I would be worried. After every Budget, industry gives a strong heads-up to whatever fiscal policy package the government comes up with. Out of 10, the ranking is always—good, bad and ugly budgets, the same—a robust 9. A lot of us (including the pink newspapers) have criticised this hypocrisy and this “Big Brother is watching” fear. This lack of objective analysis is worrisome. But, why have sheep newspapers not conducted objective analysis

of RBI/MPC actions?

What could the editorials have said? They could have pointed out that inflation is phenomenally low, and below the notional 4% target for the *third* successive year. While the nominal repo rate is the same as 2010, the real repo rate is at 2.6% compared to minus 8.1% in April 2010. Stated differently and equivalently, the cost of capital (repo rate) today is nearly 11 percentage points (ppt) higher. SBI lent money then at 11.75%—today, the nominal lending rate of SBI is higher (with much lower inflation) by 2 ppt at 13.75%.

The system is broke, including the experts who report on the system. The same experts blamed the lack of liquidity for the economic slowdown, not the high real rates. Everyone was shouting lack of liquidity as the cause for slow and declining growth in 2018. With this expertly felt lack of liquidity in 2018, industrial production growth Jan-May 2018 averaged 5.4%. With ample liquidity (and all the papers quoted above congratulated RBI for successfully introducing the much needed liquidity in 2019), IIP growth has averaged 1.9% in 2019. The first five months of 2010 IIP growth averaged 11.9%. But wait a minute—weren’t we coming out of the 2008 financial crisis and that is why IIP was so high in 2010 and not because of real interest rates? There is partial truth in that.

Compare first five months of 2011 with 2019. Industrial production growth: then 6.8%; today 1.6%. Real repo rate: then minus 2.8%; today plus

**Every monetary statistic contradicts the expert assessment that monetary policy is reducing the cost of money**

3.4%. Real SBI lending rate: then 3.6%; today 11%. Liquidity: then ample; liquidity today, ample.

Das took over as RBI Governor in December 2018. He has been in office for only eight months and it is unfair to assess performance over such a short time period. Nevertheless, few facts are relevant. Eight months prior to Das’s arrival, inflation had averaged 3.9%, repo rate averaged 6.3% and the real repo rate averaged 2.4%. Over the last eight (Das) months, (till July 2019), inflation has averaged 110 bp lower 2.8%; the repo rate has averaged 20 bp lower at 6.1%, and the real repo rate 90 bp higher. Liquidity is very stressed in 2018 (according to many experts, that was the cause for the slowdown) and very ample in 2019.

Every monetary statistic contradicts the expert assessment that monetary policy is reducing the cost of money. It is simple math really—if inflation goes up by 10%, and my cost of borrowing goes up by 5%, the cost of money has come down. And just the opposite when inflation declines more than the

repo rate. Why is this simple math seemingly not understood by experts?

There are additional factors constraining growth in 2019 and beyond. Tariff wars have intensified, world growth has slowed down, and our competitors are lowering real rates and lowering tax rates. We are raising both. The expert media fully recognises (most of them do) that higher tax rates in a slowing economy will slow GDP growth even more. But, why this arrogant dismissal of the one factor the rest of 180 countries find the most potent cyclical, and structural factor, to enhance growth? More than a decade ago, Deputy Governor Rakesh Mohan opined that lazy banking was an important and unique aspect of Indian banking. But, why do experts endorse lazy banking as a solution to our growth problems?

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### PM Modi’s address

PM Narendra Modi’s post-Article 370 abrogation TV address to the nation has come in for fulsome praises from many people, including the media, for reaching out to Kashmiris with a slew of promises. But, the moot question is whether his promises of early polls, restoration of statehood, benefits to government employees on par with their counterparts in UTs, filling government job vacancies and investment will make up to the people of Kashmir for what they were robbed off—special status. At best they are a balm inefficacious in healing the deep wound to the Kashmiri psyche. People do not trade their identity for favours. Winning the hearts and minds of Kashmiris alone will facilitate their integration into India. The withdrawal of special status and privileges is not the way to win their *vishwas* (trust). As for the promise of development, human development indices in Kashmir are relatively better than in most parts of India. We are also struck by the incongruity of a leader of a party that never tires of accusing the secular parties of ‘Muslim appeasement’. PM Modi did not speak a word on the deployment of more troops and the house arrest of Valley’s mainstream leaders. Why leaders like Ghulam Nabi Azad and Sitaram Yechury are prevented from visiting the people of the Valley while NSA Ajit Doval is featured interacting with the local residents defies understanding. If what is going on in the name of Hindu revivalism in the rest of the country, the reading down of Article 370 may well be a move to superimpose Hindutva culture onto Kashmir’s indigenous culture or *Kashmiriyat*. The hailing of the annulment of special status as the ‘correction of a historical wrong’ by *Hindutva wadis* says it all!

— G David Milton, Maruthancode

Write to us at feletters@expressindia.com

## Household savings in India

Policy environment for savings in India is sub-optimal. This is particularly true of the household sector, which has been the largest contributor to overall national savings

### NIRVIKAR SINGH

Professor of Economics, University of California, Santa Cruz  
Views are personal

**I**NDIA HAS TWO fundamental problems in its pursuit of higher economic growth. First, it needs to increase investment. Second, it needs to increase savings. Both investment and savings have fallen as percentages of GDP, and are below the levels needed to support GDP growth of 8-10% a year. There is a counter argument that higher growth itself will rekindle animal spirits of investors, but I think the starting point has to be with creating prospects for better investment returns. The investment slowdown is related to the collapse of the preceding investment boom, which included too much corruption and, more generally, misallocation of capital. Until the overhang of bad assets is cleaned up, so that credit flows more freely again, investment will stagnate. The government has been trying, but perhaps not hard enough. The battles with RBI on this front have also not helped. Efforts to attract foreign investors will also not achieve too much until the financial sector and corporate balance sheets are cleaned up. Even then, the policy framework for investment has to improve, in terms of taxation, infrastructure, and stability.

The savings side is trickier, but also has the potential for plucking some low hanging fruit, with the right degree of policy attention. This is because the policy environment for savings in India is sub-optimal. This is particularly true of the household sector (including smaller firms in the Indian case), which has been the largest contributor to overall national savings. The other sources of savings—corporations, government and foreigners, are potentially important, but their determinants are more complicated, including whatever factors determine the investment climate, and the politics of government expenditure. Households, however, can be potentially reliable sources of savings.

There are three interrelated aspects of household saving where policies can

be changed to make a difference. First, the level of household savings has fallen in recent years, despite high real (though not nominal) interest rates. Second, Indian households tend to put a relatively smaller proportion of their savings in financial assets, versus physical assets such as gold and real estate. Third, Indian households put relatively little of their financial savings into long term savings such as pensions and insurance products, versus bank accounts. All three factors result in a paucity of funds that can be intermediated into productive investment.

Tarun Ramadorai, who headed the RBI committee on household savings that reported in 2017, has pointed out that the tax incentives for long term savings through pensions are muddled and weak. He has made detailed proposals for clarity and simplicity in the design of pension schemes and the tax incentives that accompany them. This is about more than just “nudges,” and requires significant, but straightforward, policy changes. The government may be worried about possible losses of revenue through tax breaks, but this seems to be an area where the returns will justify any short term revenue hit.

Last year, Radhika Pandey, Ila Patnaik and Renuka Sane, in the India Policy Forum, provided a detailed empirical analysis of the impact of tax breaks on household financial savings, and found that such incentives must be carefully designed to avoid distortions between different types of financial saving. They also emphasised the need for more sensible regulations, giving insurance companies and pension funds more room to invest in assets other than government bonds. In brief, household savings have to be channelled efficiently to more productive investments.

The need for better channelling of household savings is driven home by a more recent analysis by Patnaik and Pandey, in an NIPFP working paper. Gov-

ernment policy on this front does not seem to be coherent or sufficiently evidence-based. Budget proposals often seem to be piecemeal and fragmented. Nevertheless, one can characterise this area as low-hanging fruit, because there is so much room for improvement. Despite the nuances of having different types of financial saving, with different types of institutions and regulations for collecting and channelling them, the underlying economic behaviours are not difficult to model and analyse.

A comprehensive, evidence-based policy approach to household financial savings will also help draw attention to institutional weaknesses in financial services and financial intermediation. It can be politically difficult to deal with such weaknesses without an overarching goal. Improving the level, composition and channelling of India’s household saving can provide the requisite framing for political feasibility of more fundamental institutional reforms, as well as reforms in tax policy and regulation for the financial sector. Institutional reforms here could include a greater role for private sector firms, more competition, and more effective use of digital technology. Patnaik and Pandey make all these points, and they just need more detailed modelling and simulation for evaluating policy options.

None of the above makes redundant the need for continued improvements in the climate for non-financial firms to do business, or to innovate, or to export. All the real aspects of producing and selling things in India are subject to hurdles that the government has the power to reduce or remove, if it decides it wants to be growth-promoting rather than rent-seeking or populist in its policy stance. But higher growth requires higher investment, and that will need more household financial saving, channelled to productive uses. This is an area that needs better policy attention than it has received.



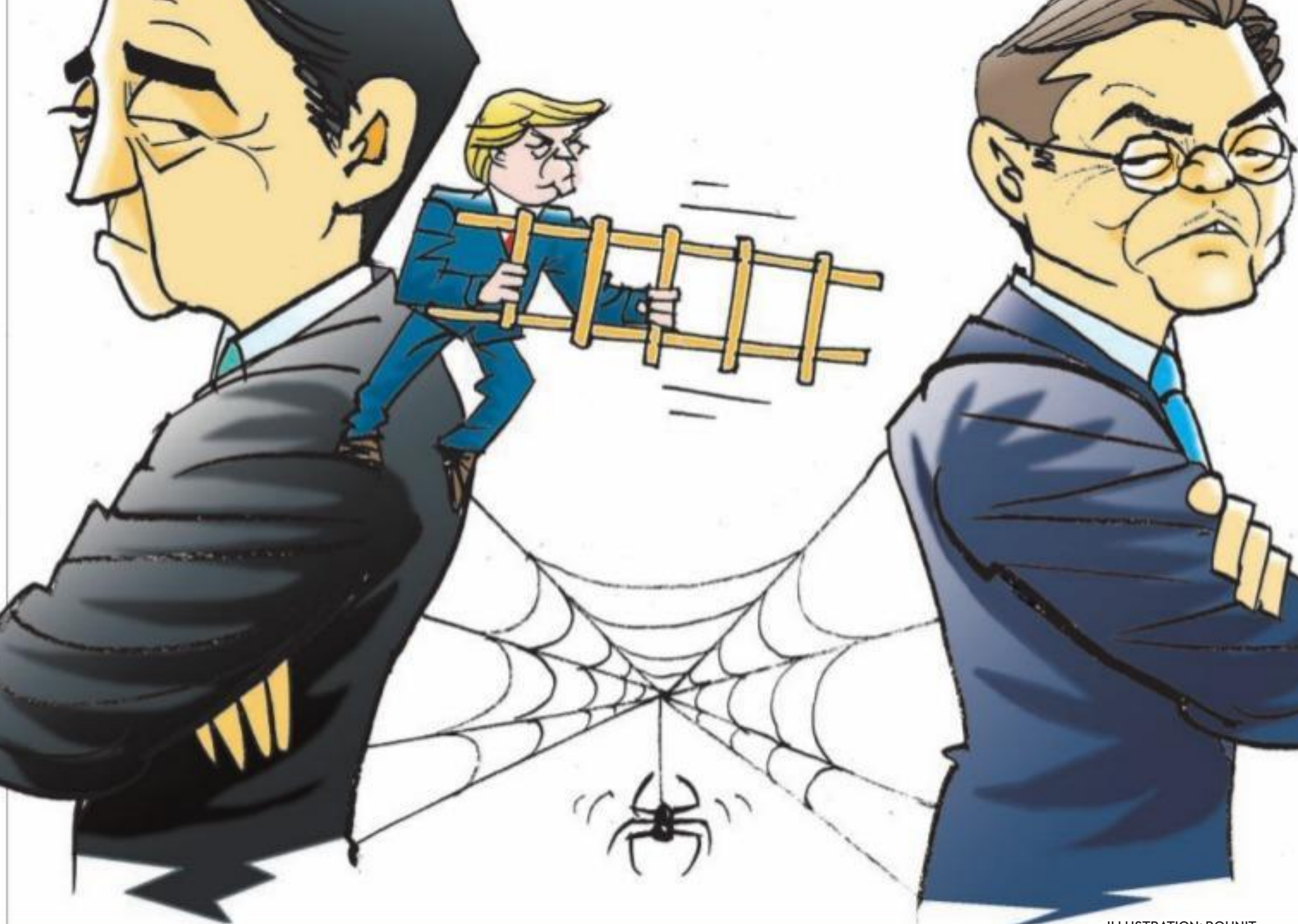
JAPAN-KOREA TRADE

# DISPUTE Japan seeks to emerge from the shadow of history

The biggest trade war of recent times, the US-China dispute, is tied to forced technology transfer and intellectual property rights. But the Japan-South Korea dispute appears tied to Japan's long and our struggle to emerge from the pages of history—caught in the net of history whilst seeking to escape it. Prime Minister Shinzo Abe's attempts to amend the Constitution and the current trade skirmish between Japan and South Korea can be traced back to history—a history that Japan seeks to put behind, but so far with little success.

In fact, Japan's new era, the Reiwa era (literally, beautiful harmony), began May 2019 with the abdication of the Chrysanthemum Throne by Emperor Akihito. The abdication marked the end of the three decades of the Heisei era (peace everywhere). With the Tokyo Olympics 2020 scheduled next year, there is much optimism in the air—an understanding that it will repeat for Japan what Tokyo Olympics 1964 did, which boosted its economic renaissance.

Japan's aspirations reflect in the winds of its domestic politics under the 64-year-old Abe, now in his seventh year of office. In fact, the years of political instability seem to have passed. If Abe stays in office until November 2019 (which is a certainty), he will surpass 2,886 days in office (toll by PM Tarō Katsura in the early 20th century) and become Japan's longest-serving PM in history. Some achievements, as Abe articulated at Davos 2019, are



**ANURAG VISWANATH**

The author is a Singapore-based Sinologist, and adjunct fellow at the Institute of Chinese Studies, Delhi. Views are personal



growth in Japanese GDP by 10.9% (in his six years of office), female labour participation hitting 67% and an ageing population (above 65) accessing job opportunities. But observers such as

political scientist Lully Miura say that Abe continues to be in power because of “an exceptional combination of specific conditions,” including his foreign policy and the administration managing

its public image carefully. But it is Abe who has sought to turn a page in Japan's constitutional history, seeking an amendment for the first time in its 72-year history. Japan's surrender in the Second World War led to a postwar pacifist Constitution. Despite being a formidable power in its own right, Japan is dependent on the US for defence—it is bound to the US by a defence treaty (1951, revised in 1960) where the US has military bases in Japan in exchange of protecting Japan in case of an attack. Abe and his

allies have sought a revision of the Constitution, seeking the formalisation of Japan's de facto military, Self-Defense Forces (SDF), which would entail parting with the Article 9 (no-war clause) of the Constitution. Article 9 says that “land, sea and air forces, as well as other war potential will never be maintained.”

The recent July elections to the upper house of Parliament (House of Councillors) impacted amendment. Of the 124 seats, Abe's Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) and Komeito won 71 seats (57+14), and the Constitutional Democratic Party (CDP) 53 seats in the 245-member house. The parties in favour of amending the Constitution, the LDP and allies Nippon Ishin no Kai (Japan Innovation Party) and Komeito (total of 157 seats), fell short of the two-third ‘super-majority’ (164 seats) needed to initiate the amendment. A day after the elections, Abe sought to keep the issue alive by discussing it. He now seeks amendment in 2020. The issue of Japan's military status continues to be

History is also at play in Japan-South Korea relations, both staunch US allies, but who cannot see eye to eye. Japan and South Korea have several common concerns, including the security dilemma in the peninsula (North Korea and China), but a trilateral (US-Japan-South Korea) has not become

Relations between the two are rocky because of ‘historical animosity’ that dates back to Japanese colonisation of the peninsula (1910-45). In fact, the recent move by Japan to strike South Korea off its ‘white list’ (of 27 preferential trade partners) effective August 28 is not because of a trade dispute per se, but because of history.

The dispute sparked when the South Korean Supreme Court ruled that Japanese companies Nippon Steel, Mitsubishi Heavy Industries and Nachi Fujikoshi compensate wartime forced labour. Japan views this as flogging the acrimonious past. As Japan views it, this was resolved in 1965 when relations were normalised, and in terms of reparations, Japan paid \$2.4 billion by way of loans and aid to Korea.

But the issue of forced wartime Korean labour in mines and factories,

the forced prostitution of Korean women to provide sexual services to the Japanese army—‘comfort women’—and the plight of the Koreans who continue to stay in Japan (regarded as second-class citizens) has haunted bilateral ties. In 2015, President Park Geun-hye inked what Japan called a deal to “finally and irreversibly” settle the issue of ‘comfort women’ through a \$9-million deal, which many viewed as a pittance. In 2018, the foundation that Japan funded to support and provide funds to the ‘comfort women’ was dissolved. Japan was alarmed with the decision of the South Korean court to order the seizure of Japanese assets, which viewed as damaging Japanese trade and investment in South Korea.

Citing ‘national security grounds’ of ‘declining trust’ between the two, Japan slapped exports to South Korea with restrictions. Japan has targeted three chemicals (hydrogen fluoride, fluorinated polyimide and photoresists) used by South Korean companies in smartphone displays and chips. This will disrupt the supply chain of South Korea's semiconductor and automobile industry, and companies such as Samsung, SK Hynix and LG will be affected. Japanese exports to South Korea now need case-by-case approval.

South Korea has responded with strong public opinion and visible nationalist boycotts of Japanese products in the supermarkets, and South Korea wants to stop military-intelligence sharing with Japan, which has implications on the security of the peninsula. But Japan is unrelenting.

The issue shows no immediate signs of abating, with the US unable to resolve the acrimony of the past. While the US will eventually step in and resolve the posturing, for South Korea, with legislative elections in April 2020 round the corner, backing down may indicate ‘loss of face’. The biggest trade dispute of recent times, the US-China dispute, is tied to forced technology transfer and intellectual property rights. But for Asia's quiet sentinel Japan—be it constitutional amendment or trade dispute with South Korea—both are tied to its long and arduous struggle to emerge from the pages of history. The US and now Japan are cases in point of the new dynamics in international relations, where economics is a powerful instrument of political arm-twisting, and so is history.

**Relations between the two are rocky because of ‘historical animosity’ that dates back to the Japanese colonisation of the Korean peninsula (1910-45)**

DATA

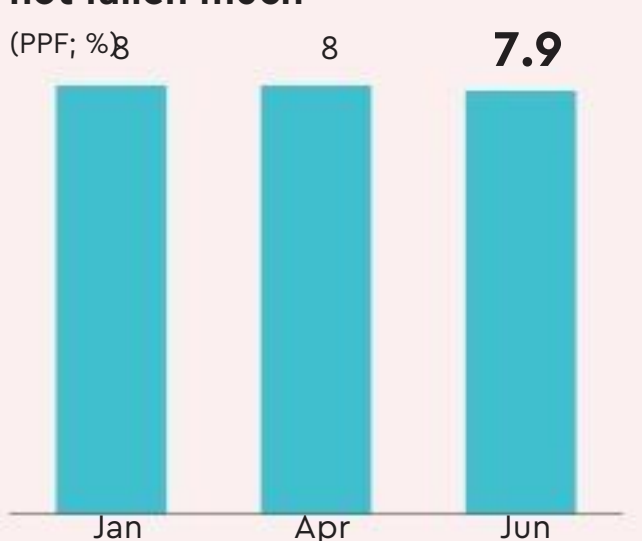
## DRIVE Poo

WHILE THE RBI has cut the repo rate by 5 basis points to 6.25% for the first time in 15 months, the onus is now on banks to cut their lending rates to spur economic activity. In response to the policy, the country's largest lender, the State Bank of India, has reduced the Marginal Cost of Funds based Lending Rate (MCLR) across all tenors by 15 basis points. Banks have been very slow in passing on the benefits of the central bank's rate cuts to their customers. To be sure, before Wednesday's rate cut, the central bank had cut the repo rate by 75 basis points this year between February and June. However, the transmission of policy rate cuts on fresh loans of banks was only 29bps. The earlier RBI announcement to benchmark new floating rate loans to the

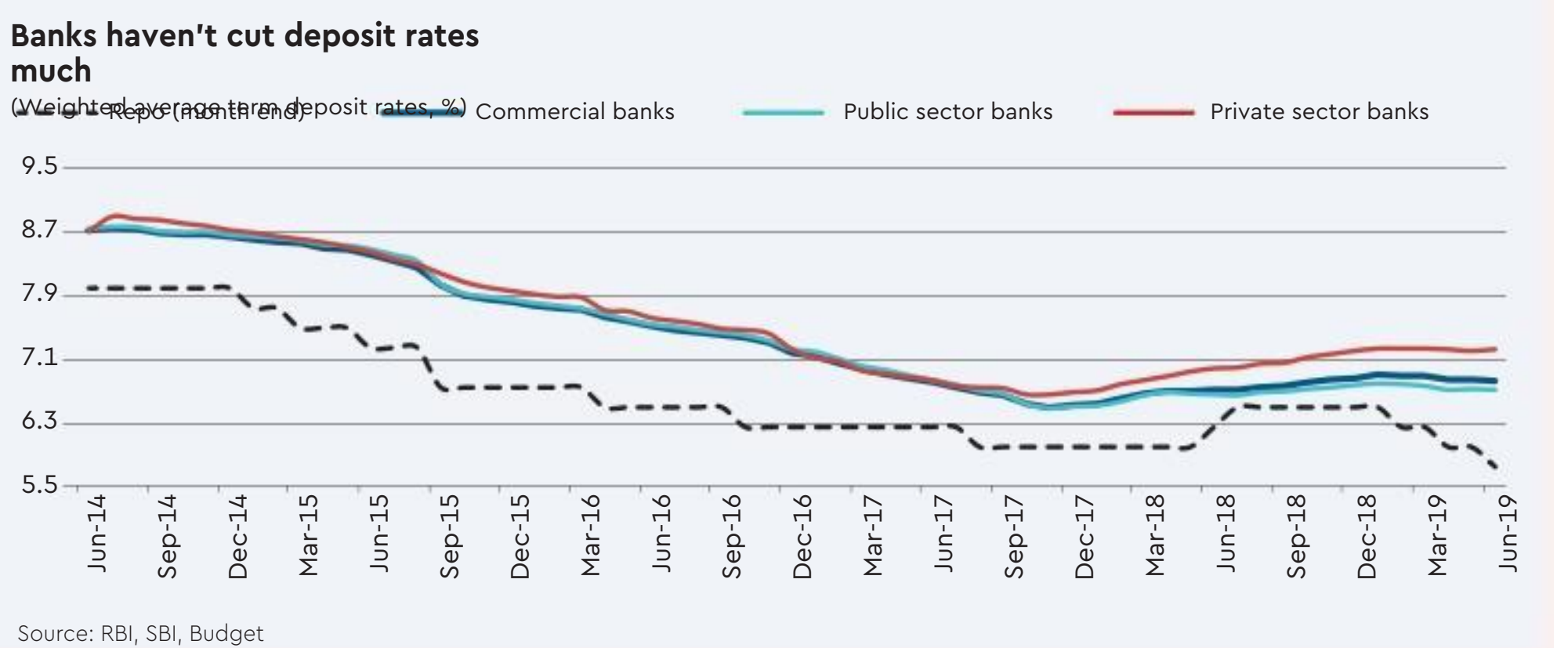
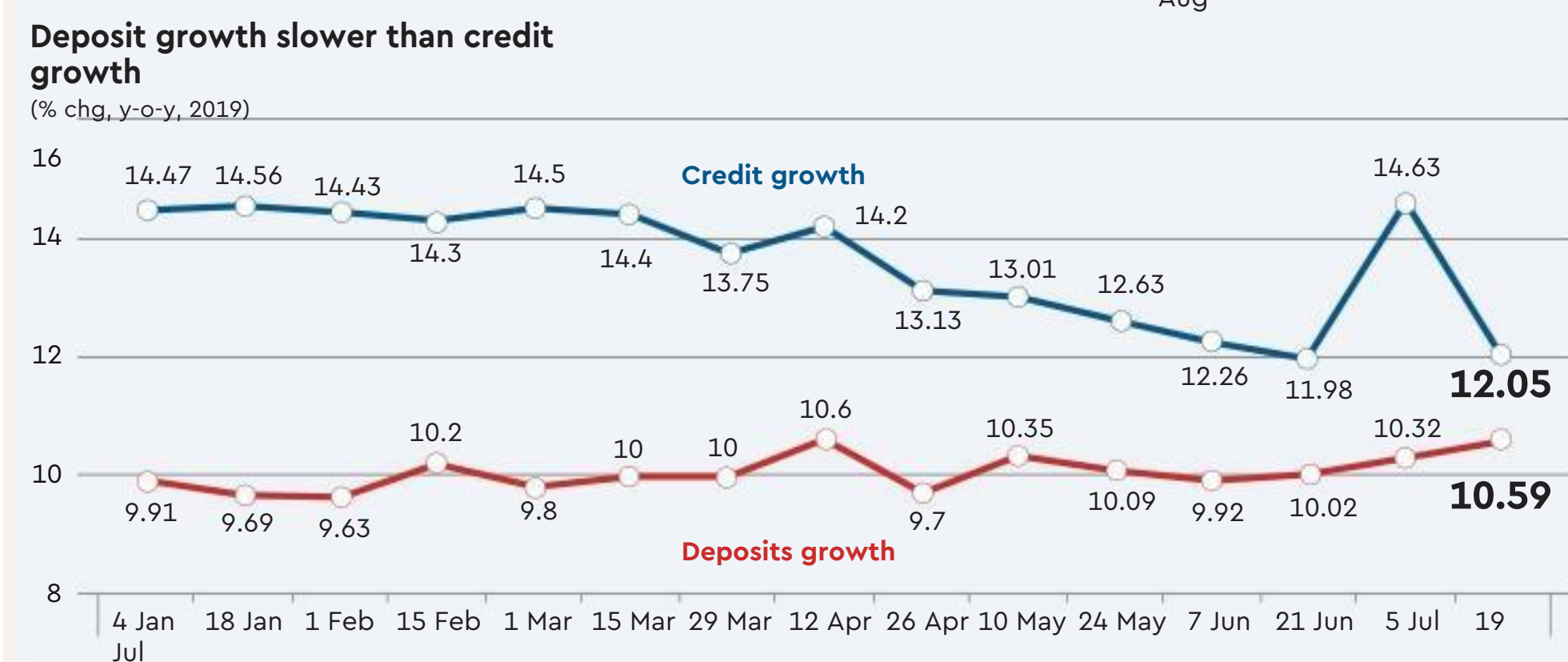
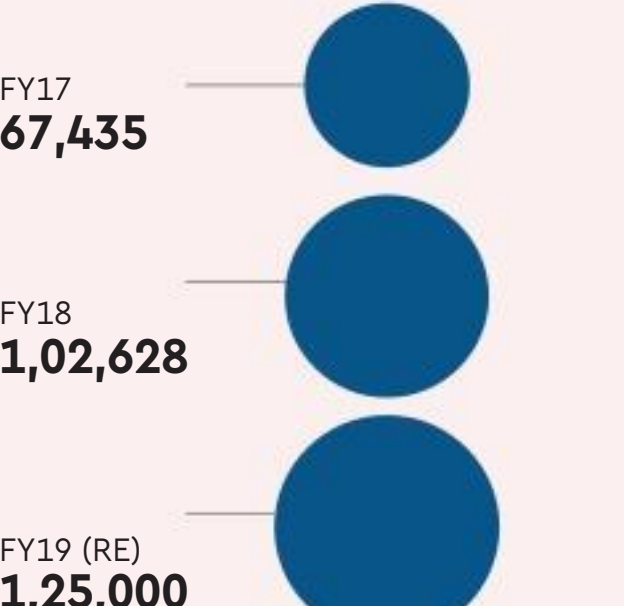
external benchmark appears to have been taken off the table. The RBI has been unable to reduce the MCLR across all tenors. Inflation growth in deposits. As a result, deposit rates have remained flattish as banks have found it challenging to pass through rate-cuts, and small savings—given they are still offering much higher rates than bank deposits—are cornering growing shares of the deposit pie. For example, while the five-year deposits rate of the SBI is 6.5%, the five-year post office term deposits fetch 7.7% and Public Provident Fund is fetching returns of 7.9%.

The central bank has injected liquidity, which means the supply-side is being taken care of, and has also made it easier for banks to lend to non-banks, and this should improve liquidity. Going forward, transmission should improve given surplus liquidity in the financial system.

Small savings rates have not fallen much



Deposits grow in small savings





ACROSS  
THE AISLE

P CHIDAMBARAM

If the precedent is followed, it is only a matter of time before Darjeeling will be carved out as a Union Territory out of West Bengal. The routine will be to ask the state Assembly to "express its views" or impose President's rule and dissolve the Assembly. Other targets that spring to mind are Bastar district, KBK districts of Odisha, hill districts of Manipur and Bodoland in Assam

I HAVE written often on Jammu and Kashmir but today is different. J&K is no longer the same J&K. It is no longer a state. It has been dismembered. There are now two Union Territories — Ladakh and Jammu & Kashmir. Never before under the Constitution of India has a state been reduced to a Union Territory.

On August 5 and 6, 2019, the government succeeded in winning Parliament's approval for three things:

**1. Repeal and substitution of Article 370:** Article 370 was replaced by invoking clause (1) of Article 370 and amending clause (3) of Article 370. Whether it was a fatal legal error or a over-clever legal stratagem, only time and the courts can tell. Mortals like us can only describe it as a constitutional manoeuvre worthy of the well-known contortionist Sofie Dossi. The new Article 370 with just one clause is no longer a special provision, it simply applies the whole of the Constitution to J&K.

**2. Obtaining the views of Parliament on the proposal to dismember the state of Jammu and Kashmir and create two Union Territories:** The right to express views had been vested in the Constituent Assembly that had drafted the J&K Constitution. Miraculously, in one stroke, that Constituent Assembly became the Legislative Assembly of J&K and then became Parliament! So, Parliament was passing the Resolution after obtaining the views of Parliament. I suppose there is a metaphysical principle here that

is beyond the comprehension of mortals.

**3. Reorganising the state of Jammu and Kashmir and creating two Union Territories:** The Jammu & Kashmir (Reorganisation) Bill, 2019, pretended to follow past precedents that had created two states out of one, except that the Bill created two Union Territories out of one state. Naturally, the Treasury Benches did not seem to mind; what came as a surprise was that regional parties that are ruling states — AIADMK, BJD, JD(U), TRS, AAP and YSRCP — did not find anything amiss, and voted in favour. The TMC walked out.

A DANGEROUS  
PRECEDENT

If the precedent is followed, it is only a matter of time before Darjeeling will be carved out as a Union Territory out of West Bengal. The routine will be to ask the state Assembly to "express its views" or impose President's rule and dissolve the Assembly. Other targets that spring to mind are Bastar district, KBK (Kalahandi-Bolangir-Koraput) districts of Odisha, hill districts of Manipur and Bodoland in Assam.

The more important issues are not the legal questions but the political questions. Before or during the exercise that culminated on August 6, the government did not consult the Legislative Assembly of J&K before the Assembly was dissolved on November 22, 2018. The gov-

ernment did not consult the mainstream political parties or their leaders, four of whom were former chief ministers. The government did not consult the Hurriyat Conference because the Modi government has refused to recognise them or talk to them. Needless to say, the government did not seek the opinion of the people, not even through interlocutors.

The government justified its action as fulfilling the BJP's manifesto promise. That is only partly true. Repeal of Article 370 was indeed a promise of the BJP but, certainly, the BJP did not promise to dismember J&K and create two Union Territories. Even if Ladakh had to be carved out as a Union Territory, the residual state of Jammu & Kashmir could have remained a state. To a pointed question why this was not done, there was no answer.

PEOPLE IGNORED, BUT  
WILL PREVAIL

The success or failure of the government's extraordinary actions will be decided by the little over 7 million people of the Kashmir Valley — not by the thousands of troops deployed by the government. How will the people of the Valley react to the actions of the government?

■ The repeal of Article 370 will be regarded as a breach of a constitutional guarantee as well as a breach of promise made by Jawaharlal Nehru, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel (assisted by N Gopalaswami Ayyangar and VP Menon),

Babasaheb Ambedkar and the other makers of the Constitution.

■ The people will also regard the actions as a repudiation of A B Vajpayee's famous statement that a solution to the Kashmir issue will be found within *insaniyat, jamhooriyat and Kashmiriyat*.

■ The carving out of Ladakh as a Union Territory (Leh wanted it, Kargil opposed it) will be regarded as an attempt to divide the people of J&K on religious lines.

■ The creation of a Union Territory of Jammu & Kashmir will be regarded as an attempt to humiliate the people of the Valley and diminish their political, economic and legislative rights.

What is clear to me is that in the eyes of the BJP the Kashmir Valley is just a piece of real estate and not the seven million citizens. In the BJP's eyes, the history, language, culture, religion and struggle of the Kashmiris are irrelevant. There are thousands of Kashmiris who, while opposed to violence and secession, had resorted to dissidence or throwing stones. They stood in one column to demand more autonomy. On the next column were the militants and young recruits who took the gun. The most catastrophic consequence will be — god forbid — if the thousands in the first column move to the second. The BJP will realise that the price of real estate is not cheap.

Website: pchidambaram.in

@Pchidambaram\_JN

## FIFTH COLUMN



TAVLEEN SINGH

Did Article  
370 preserve  
Kashmiriyat?

OF THE arguments made against the abrogation of Article 370 all of last week by a plethora of Kashmir 'experts', the one that irritated me most was the one about Kashmir 'losing its identity'. Which one? The one in which Hindus and Muslims lived together in total harmony? The one in which Kashmiri Islam was so moderate that unveiled women prayed in mosques? Or the current 'identity' in which Hindus have been ethnically cleansed from the Valley and Islam prevails in its most fanatical form? Having witnessed the changes in Kashmir's identity first hand, let me remind you of them.

The Prime Minister in his speech last Thursday spoke of a time when Kashmir was so popular with Bollywood's filmmakers that almost not a single film was made without a romantic song being shot somewhere in the Valley. He urged filmmakers to return to Kashmir and spoke of how it had 'the potential to become the world's largest tourist destination'. That Kashmir existed once but no longer does. It was destroyed not by political problems and alienation but because of the advent of the new Islam that blew into the Valley in the Eighties, when money started pouring in from Saudi Arabia to groups like the Jamaat-e-Islami.

By 1989 came the armed insurgency and Pakistan got involved. Its Kashmiri agents ensured that the Hizbul Mujahideen stole the struggle for 'azadi' from the secular JKLF so jihadist Islam began to infuse a political movement. Soon Kashmir's Pandits were ethnically cleansed from the Valley and in the streets of Srinagar appeared bearded young men who marched into liquor shops and forcibly closed them down by smashing bottles of liquor on the pavements. Cinemas were forcibly closed and women who did not veil their faces risked having acid thrown at them. A new 'identity' was imposed on Kashmir. Tourists continued to come but the magic of the old Kashmir was gone. Can it return? I am not sure. But, if anything can help bring it back, it is probably the abrogation of Article 370.

Personally, I did not like the manner of its abrogation. I think it is wrong and dangerous to impose political change by locking people up and denying them all means of communication. It should never happen. Not in Kashmir or anywhere else in India because it damages our democracy. But, I also believe that Article 370 was no more than a symbol of Kashmir's special status. In reality Kashmir enjoyed hardly more autonomy than any other Indian state, but because of its supposed special status has been a playground for secessionists and jihadists.

It is not at all surprising that Pakistan is so incensed that Imran Khan virtually warned of nuclear war becoming a real possibility. Pakistan's ambassador to the United Nations appeared on Christiane Amanpour's show to declare that it was the 'human rights' of the Kashmiri people that Pakistan was most concerned about. Ms Amanpour would have done well to ask her about the 'human rights' of the people of Balochistan, but did not. She would have done well to ask about the jihadist groups that have turned Kashmir into a killing field, but did not.

Kashmir's identity today is that of an Islamic state in the making. The young men who now lead the insurgency make this clear every time they make a new ISIS-type recruitment video. India cannot allow an Islamic state. Kashmir cannot either. Its economy is almost entirely based on tourism, and tourists do not flock to jihadist countries no matter how beautiful they are, for the simple reason that religious fanaticism can turn even paradise into a kind of hell.

As for the fear that with the abrogation of Article 370 Kashmiris will lose their identity, that really is a stupid fear. India has allowed diversity to flourish to a fault. It is hard to find Indians who do not first identify the state they come from, then their caste and religion before they identify themselves as Indians. Kashmiris can be found in every major tourist destination in India, from the beaches of Goa and Kerala to the high mountain resorts in Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand, and nowhere have they shown the smallest sign of losing their 'unique' identity.

The fact that so many have been forced to leave Kashmir for destinations where thousands more tourists go is because Kashmir lost its special magic when the jihadists took over. If they had not taken over and started laying the foundations of an Islamic republic, it is possible that Kashmir would already have become 'the world's largest tourism destination'. To use a sledgehammer to abrogate Article 370 was unwise and risky. But, if it can bring back the magic that Kashmir once had long, long ago, then the risk will be worthwhile.

Follow Tavleen Singh on Twitter

@tavleen\_singh

Once upon a time  
there was home

SHALINI LANGER

CAN EVERY house become home? Or do places stop mattering beyond a certain age? As we moved place to place in childhood, staying two years at most in the small towns that father was posted to, home took shape for me mostly as a collage of memories. And memories knew no geographical boundaries, no language barriers, no son-of-the-soil whiff.

I remember a shiny long corridor at one place where my sister and I would play, where she the more intrepid one would catch butterflies and I jealously pretend I was only concerned about the poor winged things. I remember sun-dappled lunches in a huge lawn somewhere, where mother would let loose her long, long hair to dry. I remember dark, dark nights from another place, where we would catch fireflies and then wonder at the horrid smell in our palms. I remember the fascinating green-blue eyes of a girl at a school further south, a first for me (I would know her as a 'Chitpawan Brahmin' much later). I remember my first snow day up north, an impromptu picnic basking school, and chortling later that morning as our wet socks left to dry on the coils of an electric heater by our unsuspecting mother got burnt. I remember a cold morning dragging my very young sister for a long walk to school through a hill town on missing the bus, making a halt at a tea stall. I remember scooter chases by father and his friends through the then largely empty streets of another town, with us children egging them on. I remember the sparkling black stone of the parapet of the poshest apartment complex we had stayed in, deep, deep south.

And yet, in all those years of moving about the country, there was one place that promised a solid certainty: Jammu. Again, in the curious way memory works, it seemed that way despite us spending only around 15 days a year during summer holidays there. The city felt ours to claim not just because of the many aunts, uncles, cousins it held, but also the 'special' place it indisputably occupied in the imagination of the rest of the country. Even if people mistakenly took you for a Kashmiri, and you cor-

rected that error, a certain awareness of history tinged the conversation that followed. As resentments and violence stoked the gulf with Kashmir, one both strained against as well as more closely held on to that umbilical cord. And through it, to the other side of the border, guilty but also fascinated by the violence that bound us all. And what would our present mean without that history? How far can one shed one's roots without being left rootless?

Given the insubstantial time I spent in Jammu, I am perhaps an interloper to comment on the overnight change in its status, from 'special' to one half of a Union Territory. But given it is the city of my ancestors, I retain a right to mourn a sense of loss. Of never seeing Jammu the same way again. Of wondering whether it is the city's resentment towards Kashmir that empowers the government to shut millions of people out, or to stage the charade of passing off five persons eating a meal in a curfew-clamped town, served in incongruously large pots on a deathly quiet street, as "normalcy". Of having to ward away thoughts regarding what drives my RWA, in a Delhi colony miles and miles from J&K and L (the coupling of those three parts seems almost ordained by larger forces), to hold a "tea party" in "celebration" of the death of Article 370, and to recite a reworded *Hanuman Chalisa* where Narendra Modi is Bajrang Bali.

Around the time that "historical wrongs" were being corrected, a lot of other things happened. Another building caught fire in the national capital and another wall collapsed, claiming lives; the financial capital and its surroundings again went under following a burst of rain; an alleged rape victim fighting for her life was flown out on court orders from her state, so as to continue her battle for justice; on the other end of the country, four people died in a dash across 300 km to prove the same citizenship that is being enforced with an iron hand in Kashmir; a woman died in a fire without her parents in Kashmir getting to know till the day after; a 17-year-old drowned reportedly trying to escape security forces while NSA Ajit Doval assured his audience in the Valley that their children would have a future; and I put my son on the Delhi Metro telling him and myself not to think about a "high alert".

But, we couldn't care less. "We had Kashmir" — and all was well with the world.

Meanwhile, the RWA moved on, to more pressing matters, of "useless" guards, and a police that couldn't stop neighbourhood robberies.

shalini.langer@expressindia.com

## Write... I am a Miya

GAINED IN  
TRANSLATIONABDUL KALAM AZAD  
আব্দুল কলাম আজাদ

OVER THE last few months, the controversy on and around Miya poetry has received an overwhelming response from readers, poets, critics, public intellectuals and online trolls. The controversy regarding this new genre of poetry led to the filing of four police complaints in different parts of Assam, which was followed by an outpouring in favour of the poets, poetry and the causes they spoke about. Most important is the support and curiosity from the mainstream Assamese community, whom the bullies wanted to incite against Miya poets. People from the mainstream Assamese communities organised Miya poetry reading and discussion sessions, invited Miya poets to recite and speak while they were hiding from police. However, those in the opposition responded with more virtuosity, sometimes with death and rape threats to the poets.

Miya poetry as a genre started in 2016. But much before that, one night, most probably in the late summer of 2015, I met Shalim M Hussain, one of the finest poets and translators from the region. We were discussing the issues faced by our community, ranging from floods and erosion to identity-based violence, discrimination, oppression and violation of human rights in the process of citizenship contestation and determination. Through the discussion, we resolved to use various art forms to create awareness among the communities.

That night on the terrace of Shalim's apartment in New Delhi's Zakir Nagar, we translated Bob Dylan's *Blowin' in the wind* to the Miya dialect, reflecting the suffering and agony of our community. Soon after, Shalim translated Gil Scott Heron's *The revolution will not be televised* and recited it. He also helped translate a Bengali song on water, sanitation and hygiene to Miya and we started using it in our campaign for development in *char* (river island) areas.

We call ourselves the first generation of progressive and professional social workers, civil rights activists, and writers who have pledged to use the Indian Constitution to defend our rights. We use a number of secular and democratic campaign tools to amplify our voice; poetry, especially performance poetry, is one of them.



CR Sasikumar

In the meantime, the preparation of the National Register of Citizens (NRC) was underway. People from our community hoped the NRC would be a panacea to all our problems. Hundreds and thousands of educated youths volunteered to make the NRC project acceptable among the community and help the poorly lettered collect documents and file their application forms. The NRC authority had already made the legacy data (digitised government records of 1951 NRC and subsequent electoral rolls till 1971) available for the general people. A large number of people of our community, who have been constantly displaced because of annual floods and erosion, ethnic conflicts and forcible eviction by government over the last several decades, had hardly any access to these invaluable documents.

In the last week of April 2016, Dr Hafiz Ahmed, president of Char Chapori Sahitya Parishad and a strong propagator of Assamese language and literature among our community, wrote a poem in English and posted it on Facebook: "Write/Write Down/I am a Miya/My serial number in the NRC is 200543/I have two children/Another is coming/Next summer/Will you hate him/As you hate me?..."

This poem went viral and other young poets started responding to him through poems. The young poets also started reclaiming "Miya", a slur used against us, as our identity with pride. This chain of Facebook posts continued for days, reiterating the violence, suffering and humiliation expressed by our community.

As time passed, more poets wrote in various languages and dialects, including many Miya dialects. The nomenclature 'Miya Poetry' got generated organically but the poets and their associates have been inspired by the Negritude and Black Arts movements, and queer, feminist and

Dalit literary movements, where the oppressed have reclaimed the identity which was used to dehumanise them.

The trend transcended our community. Poets from the mainstream Assamese community also wrote several poems in solidarity with the Miya poets while some regretted not being poets. Gradually, this became a full-fledged poetry movement and got recognised by other poets, critics and commentators. The quality and soul of these poems are so universal that they started finding prominence on reputed platforms.

For the first time in the history of our community, we had started telling our own stories and reclaiming the Miya identity to fight against our harassers who were dehumanising us with the same word. They accused us of portraying the whole Assamese society as xenophobic. The fact is we have just analysed our conditions. Forget generalising the Assamese society as 'xenophobic', no Miya poet has ever used the term 'xenophobic' nor any of its variants. The guilt complex of our accusers is so profound that they don't have the patience to examine why we wrote the poems.

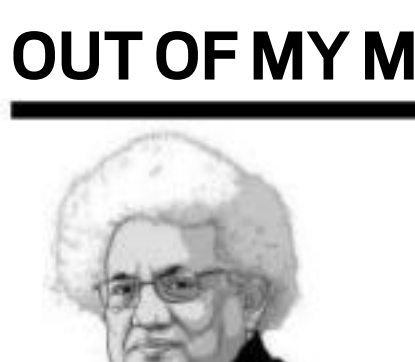
Another accusation against us is of weakening the Assamese language when most of our poems are written in Assamese language and a few in Miya dialects. We fail to understand how writing Miya poetry in Assamese could weaken Assamese?

Anyway, the controversy is now dying down gradually. Miya poetry is getting much wider readership and the Miya poets and their associates (like me) have learnt new skills: how to remain calm while facing threats of all sorts, coordinated online bullying, and the anxiety of their loved ones, and to continue to write, promote poetry.

Azad is an Assam-based researcher.

Translated from Assamese by him

## OUT OF MY MIND



MEGHNAD DESAI

MODI 1.0 was all about economics. Toilets were built, rural areas electrified, houses provided. Bank accounts and digitisation introduced, roads and canals built, ports modernised. Modi 2.0 is all about politics. Narendra Modi wants to reconstruct a new India Post Nehru Gandhi Era. Hence, the removal of Article 370.

Some Gordian knots need to be cut, not unravelled. Jammu and Kashmir is

## BJP as party of the 21st century

such a knot, an anomaly in the Indian Constitution. Narendra Modi and Amit Shah have cut the Gordian knot of the Kashmir problem. They have removed Article 370 which was still in the chapter on transitory measures in the Constitution since its introduction way back.

It created an anomaly in the federal structure, Jammu and Kashmir (plus the unmentioned Ladakh) were not fully integrated into India. The accession ceded foreign affairs, defence and communications to the Centre but in all other subjects in the Central and the Concurrent list, the Legislative Assembly had to be consulted by Parliament. J&K could not benefit from Indian laws of non-discrimination against women or reservations. Citizens from the

rest of India had no access to jobs, buying land or investing in business. J&K was and was not a part of India. The only way, internationally acceptable, was to have waited till a plebiscite could be held in both parts of J&K. Not only did Pakistan fail to withdraw its troops as required but it has conceded Gilgit, a part of the original J&K, to China. There is thus no prospect of J&K-wide plebiscite, as required by the UN.

Modi has changed the narrative. Modi 1.0 startled the country with demonetisation. It was (in my view) a great idea but the failure of new currency to be ready on time made its implementation more painful than it needed to be. Modi 2.0 has been much more careful and well-prepared in his super-shock move. Home

Minister Amit Shah has emerged as the indispensable partner Modi needs. The entire operation was kept secret. Troops were moved and tourists removed under the camouflage of military risks. While the reorganisation Bill was listed, the stroke of removing Article 370 was done by the President. This is because whatever other differences, J&K was under President's rule, with the Legislative Assembly dissolved. Parliament had the right to legislate on behalf of J&K. It was a small window but it satisfied the constitutional requirements for removing Article 370.

The bifurcation is a crucial piece of legislation. Ladakh is a vast territory, totally different from the Kashmir Valley and

Jammu. It is sparsely populated but a huge source for solar energy. It will be the first Buddhist-majority Union Territory (UT), a first for India. J&K becomes UT as well but only temporarily. The Ladakh people have welcomed the bifurcation. The Modi-Shah team obtained a two-thirds majority in the Rajya Sabha and a better than 5:1 majority in the Lok Sabha, which would suffice for a constitutional amendment.

The Indian democratic system has voted for a decisive change in the hegemonic party. The first victory of Narendra Modi was treated by the Old Guard as an anomaly. But the second victory has now established the BJP as the governing party of the 21st century. Be ready for Modi 3.0.



## LAHORE

## Pakistan ups the ante over Kashmir



India's decision to revoke Article 370 and bifurcate the state of Jammu &

Kashmir into two Union territories has not gone down well with Pakistan.

A meeting of the National Security Committee (NSC) on Wednesday took some important decisions in response to India's move, including downgrading diplomatic ties and suspending trade. Pakistan has also expelled the Indian envoy and decided not to send its High Commissioner-designate to India.

The sharpest reaction perhaps came from Federal Minister for Science and Technology Fawad Chaudhry, who broke down during his speech on Kashmir at a joint session of Parliament and suggested that Pakistan cut off diplomatic ties with India. Ever since Prime Minister Imran Khan took oath, the government has tried its best to normalise ties with India, but "the conduct of the Indian leadership has been abhorrent", Mr. Chaudhry told *The Hindu*.

"We must take a strong stand... we have to fight it out if needed. This will not be a traditional war. From Washington to London and from Riyadh to Tehran, the world will feel the heat of this war," Mr. Chaudhry said. "It is time for the world to wake up and make the BJP realise that it can't play with fire".

The NSC decisions followed Prime Minister Khan's warning that India's decision could lead to further violence in the Kashmir Valley and even escalate tensions between the two nuclear-armed countries. Pakistan has also decided to review all bilateral agreements with India and take the Kashmir issue to the UN General Assembly and the Security Council.

According to journalist Gharidah Farooqi, the decision to expel the Indian High Commissioner is a precursor of the things to come. "Even though diplomatic ties are not cut-off with India completely, the strain in the already tense relationship is visible." Pakistan and India currently hold several bilateral agreements "not just on Kashmir but other crucial issues such as trade, water and environment – a review of which would be consequential for the people of both countries, also affecting South Asia in general."

**'A weak state'**

However, some analysts believe that Pakistan's reaction to India's decision was not what it should have been.

Senior journalist Wajahat S. Khan describes Pakistan's reaction in three words: "Unaware. Unprepared.

Unwilling." Mr. Khan said Pakistan's initial reaction, personified by the Prime Minister's lament of "What can I do" [about



Mehmal Sarfraz is a journalist based in Lahore.



**The National Security Council has decided to downgrade diplomatic ties and suspend trade after New Delhi's decision to end Kashmir's special status**

India], topped by a military/intelligence set-up that failed to see this coming, only underscores how weak a state Pakistan is, and how much under pressure it is from the powers-that-be to deliver on Afghanistan and quieten down about India.

"The embarrassing lack of policy articulation, a missing-in-action Foreign Minister, and expectedly clichéd dial-down diplomacy – like not sending the High Commissioner-designate to Delhi, which has been vacant for months anyway – only create one short-term opening for Pakistan: the UNGA in New York, this September, may be Pakistan's best shot at embarrassing India, but not vanquishing it," he added.

Legal expert Jamal Aziz said that the Indian government's move to revoke Article 370 and unilaterally alter the status quo on Kashmir is likely to backfire.

"The legal acrobatics displayed by the BJP-led government in tabling these amendments are breathtaking in their audacity and are unlikely to survive a Constitutional challenge before the Indian courts. In particular, the use of a Presidential Order to amend Article 367 and the legal fiction of the Indian Parliament acting as a substitute for the J&K Assembly are decisions which are likely to haunt the Indian leadership in the days to come. They will also have grave consequences for federalism in India."

Had India abided by the UNSC resolutions and held a plebiscite in Kashmir, then that would have definitively determined Kashmir's status, Mr. Aziz said.

"As of now, Kashmir remains a disputed territory under International law but the recent actions have converted the occupation into an annexation which again is blatant violation of International law, specifically the UN General Assembly's Resolution 2625," he added.

## DHAKA

## Bangladesh's battle to contain dengue surge



Mukta Khatun, a college student, was feeling feverish in the middle of

the night. A day later, a quack doctor in a distant Bangladeshi village hastily prescribed her antibiotics and her fever subsided soon afterwards. Her family thought the worst was over. After a pause of three days, Ms. Mukta, 20, felt stomach pain, followed by a bout of vomiting. She was then rushed to an ill-equipped hospital in the district of Magura, about 50 km away. Doctors there recommended her transfer to a better government hospital in Faridpur after she was diagnosed with dengue. After Ms. Mukta landed in the Faridpur hospital, she was bleeding from her nose. A senior doctor recommended immediate blood transfusion as her platelet count plummeted below 20,000, a red flag that sent her family panicking. Hours after the blood transfusion, her relatives started an eight-hour journey on August 4 towards Dhaka with the patient surviving on saline drip.

In the meantime, her elder brother Sagor Hossain, a professional driver, started scouring hospitals in Dhaka to secure a bed for her. Almost all hospitals and clinics were overrun by tens of thousands of dengue patients. "I went from place to place and there were no beds empty for any new patient. One hospital put my sister on its waiting list," said Mr. Hossain as he cupped his face in his hands to hide his tears. As the day wore on, he finally found a bed, a bit costlier, at the Holy Family Red Crescent Medical College Hospital.

Ms. Mukta's case mirrors the common battle for life in Bangladesh, where more than 32,000 dengue cases have been reported in recent times from across the country. Public health officials recorded as many as 2,400 cases of hospital admissions in a daily count. The dengue outbreak that took an alarming turn in July has so far killed about 100 people this year, according to the local media, but the number is far less in the government's record-keeping. The first dengue case in Bangladesh was recorded in 2000 when the viral disease killed 93 people out of the 5,551 reported cases. This year's numbers dwarfed all previous records.

**What went wrong?**

Health specialists blamed it on the changing weather pattern, rains followed by extreme heat, stagnant water, cities' appalling failure in vector and waste management and, finally, human behaviour.

"Climate change and intermittent rains are partly responsible for the massive spread of the disease this year.



Arun Devnath is a journalist based in Dhaka.



**The dengue outbreak in Bangladesh that took an alarming turn in July has so far killed about 100 people this year, report local media**

Stagnant water in and around construction sites in Dhaka is another potential breeding source of *Aedes* mosquitoes," said M.M.

Akhtaruzzaman, manager of the malaria and dengue programme at the Directorate General of Health Services.

The global incidence of dengue has grown dramatically in recent decades. About half of the world's population is now at risk, according to the World Health Organization. One estimate indicates 390 million dengue infections every year, of which 96 million manifest clinically.

The Philippines declared a "national dengue epidemic" after at least 622 people lost their lives this year. At least 1,46,000 cases were recorded in the country from January to July 20, a 98% increase from a year ago. "That means Bangladesh is not the only country suffering from the disease. It's a global health issue," said Mr. Akhtaruzzaman.

After the disease broke out on a scale never seen before, two Mayors of Dhaka faced criticism for their failure to contain the mosquito menace and improve vector management in a city of 17 million people. To speed up efforts to combat dengue, the government forked out 150 million taka (\$1.7 million) for the two city corporations. Earlier, the National Board of Revenue removed all tariffs on the imports of dengue test kits and reagents to boost supply. The Dhaka Medical College Hospital, one of the best-equipped state-run facilities, is setting up intensive care units to cope with the rush of patients.

Over at the Holy Family hospital, Ms. Mukta showed signs of recovery, with her blood platelet count shooting past 1,25,000, taking stress off her family. She regained her strength bit by bit. She was released from the hospital on August 8 as her condition remained stable. But countless others may not be just as lucky.

BEIDAIHE

# When China's leaders and 'elders' meet

 Tucked away 300 km east of Beijing, Beidaihe is a small coastal enclave on the Bohai Sea. Tourists flock to the town, attracted by its sandy beaches, lush greenery and winding trails.

Beidaihe's pleasant scenery, balmy atmosphere and its proximity to Beijing caught the eye of the first generation of leaders of the People's Republic of China (PRC). PRC founder Mao Zedong decided to hold annual retreats at this location, where party seniors could quietly brainstorm the country's most intricate problems in a relaxed atmosphere.

Mao took some momentous decisions during the Beidaihe meetings, including the launch of the Great Leap Forward campaign, and the 1958 shelling of the Quemoy island – the closest Kuomintang outpost to the mainland.

Incidentally, a massive guesthouse, like dozens of similar constructions across China, sprang up in Beidaihe. Its purpose was to house visiting Soviet experts who were partnering China in its "socialist construction" during the 1950s.

Over the years, the end-July or early August Beidaihe conclaves became known for a unique feature, when the leaders of the day were joined by their predecessors, also called "elders". During the informal interaction, the "elders" were free to criticise or offer non-binding advice to the leaders. The opinion of the "elders" has been taken seriously.

Though the previous generation may have left office, many of them continue to exercise influence in the rank and file of the Communist Party of China (CPC), mainly on the basis of ideology, region or policy. "Beidaihe is where and when senior leaders can get together in informal meetings to exchange their views on major policies and therefore, it plays a very significant role in policymaking in Chinese politics," says Alfred Wu, associate professor at the Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy, National University of Singapore, as quoted by the *South China Morning Post*.

The Beidaihe meetings are not announced but there are always giveaway signs that the summer retreat has commenced. An early August report by Xinhua news agency revealed that two senior party functionaries were already in Beidaihe to meet 58 top experts – the brain trust of the country. The two were Chen Xi, who heads the Organisation Department of the CPC and Sun Chunlan, a member of the 25-member Politburo. Ms. Sun is also a Vice-

Premier of China, a position that showcases her remarkable rise from an ordinary worker in a clock factory soon after she



**During the annual Beidaihe conclaves, China's past leaders, known as the 'elders', are free to criticise or offer non-binding advice to the leaders of the day**

passed out from the Anshan Industrial Technology Academy in the northeastern Liaoning province. Chinese media reports say the meeting of the two senior officials with the intellectuals marked the start of this year's Beidaihe conclave.

### Agenda of the meet

The precise agenda of the Beidaihe meeting is hard to discern, but sections of the Chinese media tracking the recent movements of the seven members of the Standing Committee of the Politburo, China's top leadership, have drawn some early conclusions.

According to Chinese publication Duo Wei, popular among expats, the Beidaihe meeting will hope to give clear policy directions to a host of problems confronting China, from the trade war with the U.S. to the unrest in Hong Kong and the situation in Taiwan.

The situation in Xinjiang, where China's "re-education camps" have attracted international criticism for rights violations, is also expected to feature at Beidaihe.

China Central Television (CCTV) reported in July that Wang Yang, the fourth-ranking Politburo Standing Committee member, had attended a three-day conference in the Hetian district of Xinjiang. CCTV introduced Mr. Wang as the head of the Central Committee's Xinjiang Work Coordination Small Group.

Mr. Wang, the troubleshooter, also paid a visit to Qinghai, a high altitude province on the Tibetan plateau, apparently to take stock of the politically sensitive assault on poverty.


Ahead of the Beidaihe meeting, Han Zheng, another Politburo Standing Committee member, has been visiting Shenzhen, China's hi-tech city that is next door to Hong Kong. From Shenzhen, Mr. Han has been authorised to communicate with Hong Kong's top leaders.



Atul Aneja is *The Hindu's* Beijing correspondent.

COLOMBO

# Was the terror plot thicker than the attack?

 In the last week of June, Sri Lankan police recovered a huge stash of arms and explosives in the eastern town of Kattankudy from where Zahran Hashim, the alleged mastermind of the Easter bombings, hailed. It included some 300 gelignite sticks, 1,000 detonators, and nearly 500 T56 live ammunition. The recovery reportedly shocked investigators, who had made considerable progress in their probe of the April 21 attack that claimed over 250 lives.

The search operation was based on information from Mohamed Milhan, one of the five suspects deported from Saudi Arabia earlier in June. Currently in custody, Milhan was a likely heir to Zahran Hashim. "It was an eye-opener, really," a top official, familiar with the probe, told *The Hindu*.

"The material would have been enough for another 25 suicide attacks," the official said, requesting anonymity, given the sensitivity of the investigations. "A crucial source" is how the official described Milhan, who reportedly tried to join the IS but was unsuccessful. A resident of Kattankudy, he left Sri Lanka on April 17, days before the attacks.

The seizure of weapons and explosives based on his clue, seen along with earlier confiscations, has given "a different direction" to the investigations, according to the senior official.

Days after the Easter blasts that suicide bombers carried out at churches and hotels in capital Colombo and in the eastern district of Batticaloa, troops raided a safe house on the island's east coast. In addition to explosives, they seized dozens of white dresses, usually worn by Buddhist women for temple visits or prayers, sparking concern over possible future attacks targeting Buddhists.

While all main suspects, including family members of the suicide bombers, are under custody and heightened surveillance continues across the country, investigators are wary of dismissing the possibility of a "lone wolf attack". "We have to be very vigilant," the official said.

Meanwhile, criminal investigations into the Easter attacks are "nearly complete", according to officials, who are awaiting forensic reports from government analysts and foreign experts, who have been supporting the investigation. By end of the month, they hope to submit a report to the Attorney General's Department, so that prosecutions can be initiated.

With all key suspects are under custody, and details of suicide bombers compiled, investigators are piecing together



**Acting upon information provided by one of the suspects, police seized explosives and ammunition from an eastern town in June**

other information to establish how the individuals linked up and maintained their network.

### Deadliest incident

The Easter day bombings were the deadliest incident in Sri Lanka in its relatively peaceful post-war decade. The country's economy, particularly the tourism sector, is struggling to recover from the shock and impact after three months.

Over 1,00,000 tourists arrived in July, but it is still a 46.9% drop compared to July last year, according to data provided by the Sri Lanka Tourism Development Authority. However, hotels and malls are gradually beginning to draw more people, and Sri Lankans and tourists are able to travel across the country.

In addition to the CID's probe, a presidential committee is investigating the Easter blasts, as is a parliamentary panel that has been collecting testimonies from top security officials, bureaucrats and political leaders.

Earlier this week, Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe, the top most official to appear before the parliamentary committee, said he was yet to get a "satisfactory response" on why he was not briefed about the prior intelligence available with the authorities.

Top security officers knew of a possible terror threat, but both President Maithripala Sirisena and Mr. Wickremesinghe have maintained they did not know.

Multiple accounts from investigators suggest that the IS, which belatedly claimed the attacks, was not directly involved. Local Islamist radicals carried out the terror operation, officials have said.

"In fact, even the suspects in custody are telling us that Zahran had only a small group to start with. He was able to recruit more youth only after the anti-Muslim riots in Digana in 2018," the senior official said.



Meera Srinivasan is *The Hindu's* Colombo correspondent.



## दैनिक जागरण

गलती स्वीकार करना उसे सुधारने की दिशा में पहला कदम होता है

# पाकिस्तान का रोना-धोना

जम्मू-कश्मीर पर रूस के बयान के बाद यह और अच्छे से स्पष्ट हो गया कि इस मसले पर पाकिस्तान को कुछ हासिल होने वाला नहीं है। रूस ने जम्मू-कश्मीर संबंधी अनुच्छेद 370 हटाने के भारत के फैसले को भारत का आंतरिक मामला करार दिया है। कुछ ऐसी ही गय अमेरिका और संयुक्त अरब अमीरात व्यक्त कर चुका है। चीन ने अवश्य लद्दाख को जम्मू-कश्मीर से अलग करके केंद्र शासित प्रदेश बनाए जाने पर असहमति जाहिर की है, लेकिन इसके आसार कम हैं कि वह जम्मू-कश्मीर पर पाकिस्तान के सुर में बोलेगा। ऐसा इसलिए, क्योंकि हंगकांग पर उसे भी विश्व समुदाय से नरम रवैये की दरकार है। पाकिस्तान यह जो उम्मीद लगाए है कि संयुक्त राष्ट्र सुरक्षा परिषद इस मामले में कुछ करेगी उसके पूरे होने की संभावना नगण्य है। बीते सात दशकों में जम्मू-कश्मीर संबंधी सुरक्षा परिषद के प्रस्तावों में परिवर्तन कर चुका है। आखिर वह किस अधिकार से यह अपेक्षा कर रहा है कि सुरक्षा परिषद उसका रोना-धोना सुनने के लिए तैयार होगी?

पाकिस्तान को इसकी भी अनदेखी नहीं करनी चाहिए कि वह वही था जिसने शिमला समझौते को कभी महत्व नहीं दिया। सबसे खराब बात यह रही कि वह अपनी जनता को यह झूठा सपना दिखाता रहा कि कश्मीर उसका हिस्सा बनकर रहेगा। इस सपने को टूटना ही था, क्योंकि यह दिवास्वप्न था। पाकिस्तान के हित में यही है कि वह कश्मीर को भूलकर आगे बढ़े। उसने कश्मीर पर अपना बेजा अधिकार जताकर अपने को तबाही की ओर ले जाने का ही काम किया है। आज अगर पाकिस्तान आतंकियों का गढ़ बन गया है तो कश्मीर को येन-केन-प्रकारेण हासिल करने की जिद के कारण ही। पता नहीं वह यह साधारण सी बात समझने को तैयार क्यों नहीं है कि कश्मीर का मतलब केवल घाटी ही नहीं है। जम्मू भी उसका हिस्सा है और कल तक लद्दाख भी था। इन क्षेत्रों की जनता कभी भी उस रूख-रवैये से सहमत नहीं हुई जो घाटी के कुछ लोग व्यक्त करते रहे। अगर पाकिस्तान यह समझ रहा है कि भारत से राजनयिक, सांस्कृतिक और आर्थिक संबंध तोड़कर अथवा दुनिया भर में शोर मचाकर भारत पर दबाव डालने में समर्थ हो जाएगा तो यह ख्याली पुलाव ही है।

## पुजारियों के लिए भत्ता

पश्चिम बंगाल की मुख्यमंत्री व तृणमूल कांग्रेस प्रमुख ममता बनर्जी पर भाजपा मुस्लिम तुष्टीकरण का आरोप लगाती रही है। इस आरोप ने उस समय और जोर पकड़ लिया था, जब इमामों व मोअज्जिदों को भत्ता देने का एलान किया गया था। जब इमामों व मोअज्जिदों को भत्ता देना शुरू किया गया, तब हिंदू पुजारियों ने भी भत्ते की मांग शुरू कर दी थी। बाद में हार्डकोर्ट में जब मामला पहुंचा तो इमामों व मोअज्जिदों को भत्ता देने पर रोक लगा दी गई, लेकिन दूसरे रस्ते से भत्ता जारी रखने का ममता सरकार पर आरोप लगा। इस बीच जब हिंदू संगठन भाजपा को बंगाल में प्रभाव बढ़ाने में मदद करने लगे तो तृणमूल को भी बात समझ में आने लगी, हालांकि पुजारियों को भत्ता नहीं मिला। अब ममता कैबिनेट के मंत्री राजीव बनर्जी ने शुक्रवार को कहा कि सरकार हिंदू पुजारियों के लिए मासिक भत्ते की लंबे समय से लंबित मांग पर 'गौर' करेगी। भाजपा यह आरोप लगाती रही है कि राज्य में सतारूढ़ तृणमूल कांग्रेस मुस्लिम तुष्टीकरण की राजनीति करती है। इसी आरोप से पीछा छुड़ाने के लिए अब इस समुदाय तक पहुंचने के प्रयास के तहत मंत्री ने कहा कि हिंदू पुजारियों का बहुत बड़ा समुदाय है। वे लंबे समय से वंचित हैं। मैंने उन्हें आश्वासन दिया है कि मासिक भत्ते की उनकी मांग पर गौर किया जाएगा। पश्चिम बंगाल सनातन ब्राह्मण सम्मेलन के इतर उन्होंने पत्रकारों से बातचीत में कहा- 'हमें लगता है कि उन्हें मासिक भत्ता मिलना चाहिए क्योंकि सैकड़ों पुजारी हैं, जिन्हें अपने परिवार को चलाने में मुश्किलों का सामना करना पड़ता है।' तृणमूल पर लगते तुष्टीकरण के आरोपों के बीच ऐसे में यह बयान अहम है। पुजारियों के संगठन के अध्यक्ष श्रीधर शास्त्रीने कहा- 'ब्राह्मण राज्य में वंचित व उपेक्षित हैं। हमारा कोई राजनीतिक जुड़ाव नहीं है। हम बस इतना चाहते हैं कि हमारी मांगों को सुना जाए। जो भी हमारी मांगे पूरी करेगा, हम उसका समर्थन करेंगे।' लगभग 1.83 लाख पुजारी शास्त्री के संगठन के सदस्य हैं। उन्होंने कहा कि 35,000 गरीब पुजारियों की एक सूची जारी की गई है, जिन्हें 2,000 रुपये का मासिक भत्ता दिया जाना चाहिए। भत्ते पर तृणमूल के वादे पर प्रतिक्रिया व्यक्त करते हुए भाजपा के प्रदेश अध्यक्ष अध्यक्ष दिलीप घोष ने पूछा कि ममता सरकार को हिंदू पुजारियों के कष्ट दिखने में इतना समय क्यों लग गया?'

# बोलकर काम करेगा लेजर हथियार

मुकुल व्यास

आपको यह जानकार कुछ अटपटा लग सकता है कि अमेरिकी रक्षा विभाग पेंटागन एक ऐसा लेजर हथियार विकसित कर रहा है जो मनुष्य की तरह आवाज उत्पन्न करता है। शोधकर्ताओं ने हाल ही में इस अनोखे हथियार के परीक्षण का एक दौर पूरा भी कर लिया है। पेंटागन द्वारा विकसित का का रही इस नई तकनीक से संवेदनशील जगहों से लोगों को दूर रखने के लिए उन पर फ्लैशलाइट फेंकने या लाइडस्पॉकरों से संदेश देने की जरूरत नहीं पड़ेगी। यह नई तकनीक पेंटागन के 'नॉन-लीथल वीपस ड्रायवैकॉरेट प्रोग्राम' का हिस्सा है जिसका उद्देश्य दुश्मनों को मारने के बजाय उन्हें दूसरे तरीकों से काबू करना है।

इस प्रोजेक्ट के तहत शोधकर्ता ऐसा लेजर विकसित करने पर काम कर रहे हैं, जो बोलने के अलावा कम दूरियों पर कों के आर-पार संचित संदेश भी भेज सकती है। शोधकर्ताओं का यह भी दावा है कि 'बोलने वाला' लेजर हथियार लंबी दूरी तक भी मनुष्य की आवाज के स्पष्ट सुनाई देने वाले अंश संप्रेषित कर सकता है। इस काम को अंजाम देने के लिए

**इसका मकसद विरोधी को मार गिराने के बजाय उन पर दूसरे तरीकों से काबू पाना है। एक परीक्षण पूरा भी हो चुका है**

यह हथियार 'लेजर प्रेरित प्लाज्मा प्रभाव' का उपयोग करता है। इसके लिए शक्तिशाली लेजर किरणें दाग कर प्लाज्मा की गेंद उत्पन्न की जाती है और दूसरी लेजर दाग कर इस प्लाज्मा में कंपन पैदा किया जाता है। इससे ध्वनि तरंगें उत्पन्न होती हैं। सही फ्रीक्वेंसी पर दागी गई लेजर किरणों से प्लाज्मा में उत्पन्न होने वाले कंपन मनुष्य जैसी आवाज पैदा कर सकते हैं। सुनने में यह साइंस फिक्शन जैसा लगता है, लेकिन एक न्यूज वेबसाइट 'मिलिट्रीटाइम्स डॉट कॉम' के एक रिपोर्ट के अनुसार, सेना के इस्तेमाल के लिए ऐसा हथियार आगामी पांच वर्षों में उपलब्ध होने की संभावना है। इसके द्वारा जारी किए गए वीडियो में इस हथियार का एक नमूना भी दिखाया गया है। वीडियो में इस हथियार को एक दीवार पर कई बार लेजर किरणें दागते हुए दिखाया

गया है। इन किरणों से यह आवाज निकलती है कि 'रुक जाओ वरना हम आप पर गोली चलाने के लिए बाध्य होंगे।' भविष्य में सेना इस हथियार का उपयोग लोगों के किसी खास वर्ग को संदेश या चेतावनी देने के लिए कर सकती है। इस प्रोजेक्ट से जुड़े मुख्य वैज्ञानिक एव लॉ ने न्यूज वेबसाइट को बताया, 'उनका अगला कदम लेजर हथियार के परीक्षण की दूरी को 100 मीटर तक करना है जिसे धीरे-धीरे कई किलोमीटर तक बढ़ाया जाएगा।' हमारा लक्ष्य अंततः एक ऐसा लेजर हथियार विकसित करने का है जो सैकड़ों किलोमीटर दूर तक स्पष्ट संदेश प्रेषित कर सके। इस तरह के हथियार से हवाई जहाज से भी संदेश जारी किए जा सकते हैं और लोगों को सैनिक प्रतिष्ठानों से दूर रहने के लिए चेताया जा सकता है। बोलने वाले लेजर मुख्य रूप से संचार का जरिया होंगे, लेकिन इसमें सुधार कर इसका उपयोग भीड़ को नियंत्रित करने के लिए भी किया जा सकेगा। इस प्रोजेक्ट से जुड़े पेंटागन के वैज्ञानिक एक ऐसे प्लाज्मा लेजर पर काम कर रहे हैं जो कपड़ों में सुराख करके त्वचा पर जलन या खुजली उत्पन्न कर सकती है। (लेखक स्वतंत्र टिप्पणीकार हैं)

संजय गुप्त

**कांग्रेस और उसके सुर में सुर मिला रहे दल कुछ भी कहें, वे इसकी अनदेखी नहीं कर सकते कि दुनिया निर्णायक फैसले लेने वाले नेताओं को ही सलाम करती है**



मोदी सरकार ने एक ऐतिहासिक फैसला लेते हुए जम्मू-कश्मीर संबंधी अनुच्छेद 370 और 35-ए को हटाने की जो पहल की उससे प्रधानमंत्री नरेंद्र मोदी के साथ गृहमंत्री अमित शाह की छवि मजबूत और निर्णायक कदम उठाने वाले नेता के तौर पर उभरी है। यह अफसोस की बात है कि कांग्रेस समेत कुछ अन्य दल यह समझने से इन्कार कर रहे हैं कि अनुच्छेद 370 हटाने का फैसला किसी निजी राजनीतिक स्वार्थ के लिए नहीं, बल्कि देश के भले के लिए लिया गया। इसे प्रधानमंत्री ने राष्ट्र के नाम संबोधन के दौरान अच्छे से स्पष्ट भी किया। उन्होंने जम्मू, कश्मीर और लद्दाख के लोगों को यह भरोसा दिलाया कि जम्मू-कश्मीर की स्थिति में परिवर्तन वहां के हालात बदलने के लिए किया गया। उन्होंने न केवल यह आश्वासन दिया कि जम्मू-कश्मीर को कुछ कालखंड के लिए केंद्र के अधीन रखा गया है, बल्कि असहमत लोगों की आपत्तियों का आदर करने के साथ उनके सवालों का समाधान करने की भी बात कही। इसके साथ ही उन्होंने इस अनुच्छेद से मुक्ति को एक सच्चाई बताते हुए यह कहने में भी संकोच नहीं किया उसकी वजह से अलगाव, आतंकवाद, भ्रष्टाचार और भेदभाव को बढ़ावा मिला। यह एक सच्चाई है। यह अनुच्छेद अलगाववाद को बढ़ाने के साथ कश्मीरी जनता के तुष्टीकरण का भी जरिया बन गया था।

कांग्रेस और कुछ अन्य दल कुछ भी कहें,

अनुच्छेद 370 हटाने का फैसला देश हित में था। यह इससे भी स्पष्ट होता है कि उसे हटाने के प्रस्ताव और जम्मू-कश्मीर को नए सिरे से गठित करने संबंधी विधेयक राज्यसभा में भी आसानी से पारित हुए और लोकसभा से भी। ऐसा इसीलिए हुआ, क्योंकि कई विपक्षी दलों ने भी सरकार का साथ दिया। इनमें से कुछ विपक्षी दल वे भी हैं जो इस पर आपत्ति जताया करते थे कि भाजपा अपने चुनावी घोषणा पत्रों में अनुच्छेद 370 हटाने का वायदा करती रहती है। भाजपा ने अपने इस ध्येय को कभी छिपाया नहीं कि समय आने पर वह इस अनुच्छेद को हटाएगी, जबकि आजादी के बाद उसे तैयार करने का काम एक तरह से गुपचुप तरीके से ही किया गया था। अनुच्छेद 370 शेख अब्दुल्ला और नेहरू की देन था। शेख अब्दुल्ला की कश्मीर का शासक बनने की महत्वाकांक्षा ने अनुच्छेद 370 हटाने की असहमत थे और कांग्रेस के साथ-साथ संविधान सभा के ज्यादातर सदस्य भी। नेहरू के जोर देने पर इसे न चाहते हुए भी संविधान में जोड़ा गया। इसके नतीजे अच्छे नहीं रहे। जिन शेख अब्दुल्ला के प्रभाव में आकर नेहरू ने अनुच्छेद 370 संविधान में जुड़वाया उन्हें एक समय देशद्रोह के आरोप में गिरफ्तार तक करना पड़ा, फिर भी नेहरू



अवधेश राजगुप्त

को अपनी गलती का अहसास नहीं हुआ। उस समय के अनेक नेताओं को इस गलती का अहसास हो गया था। इसी कारण इस अनुच्छेद का विरोध शुरू हो गया था। नेहरू और पाकिस्तानी प्रधानमंत्री लियाकत अली के बीच हुए एक समझौते के विरोध में सरकार से इस्तीफा देने वाले श्यामा प्रसाद मुखर्जी ने जनसंघ की स्थापना कर कश्मीर को दिए गए विशेष दर्जे का विरोध शुरू कर दिया। इस विरोध के दौरान ही जेल में उनकी मृत्यु हो गई। जनसंघ बाद में भाजपा में तब्दील हो गई, लेकिन उसने अपना यह संकल्प कभी नहीं छोड़ा कि अनुच्छेद 370 को हटाया जाएगा। अनुच्छेद 370 हटाने के बाद कश्मीर का सही मायनों में भारत के साथ एकीकरण हुआ है। इस अनुच्छेद को हटाने के बाद ने उस गलती को ठीक करने का काम किया जो नेहरू ने की थी। कांग्रेस चाहती तो समय रहते इस गलती को ठीक कर सकती थी। अतीत में जब अनुच्छेद 370 के कई प्रावधानों को निष्प्रभाव किया गया तब कांग्रेस उसे पूरी तरह समाप्त कर सकती थी, लेकिन शाब्द उसने इसलिए ऐसा नहीं किया ताकि वह संदेश न जाए कि नेहरू

ने एक बड़ी गलती कर दी थी। संभवतः इसी कारण कांग्रेस अनुच्छेद 370 को हटाने की निंदा करना पसंद कर रही है। अपने नेताओं के बयानों से हो रही किरकिरी के बाद भी कांग्रेस और पाकिस्तानी प्रधानमंत्री लियाकत अली के बीच हुए एक समझौते के विरोध में सरकार से इस्तीफा देने वाले श्यामा प्रसाद मुखर्जी ने जनसंघ की स्थापना कर कश्मीर को दिए गए विशेष दर्जे का विरोध शुरू कर दिया। इस विरोध के दौरान ही जेल में उनकी मृत्यु हो गई। जनसंघ बाद में भाजपा में तब्दील हो गई, लेकिन उसने अपना यह संकल्प कभी नहीं छोड़ा कि अनुच्छेद 370 को हटाया जाएगा। अनुच्छेद 370 हटाने के बाद कश्मीर का सही मायनों में भारत के साथ एकीकरण हुआ है। इस अनुच्छेद को हटाने के बाद ने उस गलती को ठीक करने का काम किया जो नेहरू ने की थी। कांग्रेस चाहती तो समय रहते इस गलती को ठीक कर सकती थी। अतीत में जब अनुच्छेद 370 के कई प्रावधानों को निष्प्रभाव किया गया तब कांग्रेस उसे पूरी तरह समाप्त कर सकती थी, लेकिन शाब्द उसने इसलिए ऐसा नहीं किया ताकि वह संदेश न जाए कि नेहरू

ने एक बड़ी गलती कर दी थी। संभवतः इसी कारण कांग्रेस अनुच्छेद 370 को हटाने की निंदा करना पसंद कर रही है। अपने नेताओं के बयानों से हो रही किरकिरी के बाद भी कांग्रेस और पाकिस्तानी प्रधानमंत्री लियाकत अली के बीच हुए एक समझौते के विरोध में सरकार से इस्तीफा देने वाले श्यामा प्रसाद मुखर्जी ने जनसंघ की स्थापना कर कश्मीर को दिए गए विशेष दर्जे का विरोध शुरू कर दिया। इस विरोध के दौरान ही जेल में उनकी मृत्यु हो गई। जनसंघ बाद में भाजपा में तब्दील हो गई, लेकिन उसने अपना यह संकल्प कभी नहीं छोड़ा कि अनुच्छेद 370 को हटाया जाएगा। अनुच्छेद 370 हटाने के बाद कश्मीर का सही मायनों में भारत के साथ एकीकरण हुआ है। इस अनुच्छेद को हटाने के बाद ने उस गलती को ठीक करने का काम किया जो नेहरू ने की थी। कांग्रेस चाहती तो समय रहते इस गलती को ठीक कर सकती थी। अतीत में जब अनुच्छेद 370 के कई प्रावधानों को निष्प्रभाव किया गया तब कांग्रेस उसे पूरी तरह समाप्त कर सकती थी, लेकिन शाब्द उसने इसलिए ऐसा नहीं किया ताकि वह संदेश न जाए कि नेहरू

# विचारधारा की तलाश

हार्य-खंगर



-आप क्या करते हैं जनाव ?  
-जी, एक लेखक हूं!  
-कौन सी पार्टी के लेखक हैं ?  
-यह क्या कह रहे हैं आप...!  
लेखक भी कभी किसी पार्टी का

लेखक होता है क्या ?  
-क्यों नहीं हो सकता...जब एक लेखक को अपनी खुद की पार्टी हो सकती है। तब किसी पार्टी का लेखक होना कौन-सी आश्चर्य की बात है ?  
-खुद की पार्टी मतलब ?  
-मतलब, बहुतेरे लेखक भी किसी न किसी लेखक-गुट से जुड़े ही होते हैं...और क्या ?  
-आप हम लेखकों का मान गिरा रहे हैं ? क्या लेखक के लिए किसी पार्टी से बाबस्ता होना जरूरी होता है ?  
-एकदम जरूरी होता है, श्रीमान ?  
-यह आप कैसे कह सकते हैं ?  
-अरे, जनाव अब आप ही देख लीजिए...कोई लेखक वामपंथी करार दे दिया गया है...तो कोई दक्षिणपंथी...! कोई अगड्ढापंथी है...तो कोई पिछड़पंथी! कोई दलित लेखक है...तो कोई सवर्ण! कोई इस गुट से है...तो कोई उस गुट से! मतलब, बेपंथ का तो कोई भी लेखक ही नहीं है ?  
-होते होंगे कोई लेखक ये पंथी और वो पंथी! मगर हम तो गुटनिरपेक्ष पंथ के लेखक हैं !  
-यह पंथ-निरपेक्ष लेखन तो सुना था, मगर यह निरपेक्ष-पंथ लेखन क्या बला है जी ?  
-जी हम किसी लेखक-गुट या सिपायियों-पार्टी के लिए नहीं लिखते! बल्कि हम तो बस अपने दिल की आवाज

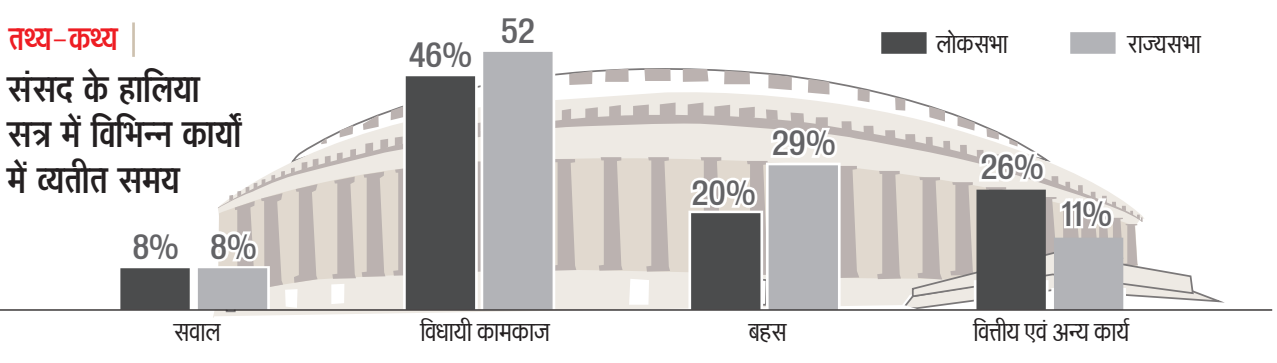


राजेश सेन

**जब एक लेखक की अपनी खुद की पार्टी हो सकती है। तब किसी पार्टी का लेखक होना कौन-सी आश्चर्य की बात है ?**

-क्या करें साहब...आप जैसा निष्ठाप सोचने को दिल ही नहीं करता...!  
-तो इसके लिए लेखकों को क्यों जिम्मेदार ठहराया जा सकता है ?  
-ठहराना पड़ता है साहब...! विचारधारा के बगैरे समकालीन लेखकों को निर्दोष देखने-समझने का दस्तूर जो नहीं है...!  
-अच्छा तो आप ये बताइए कि ये विचारधारा क्या बला होती है...?  
-वही जो ब-रस्ते सिंघासत और सत्ता के हमें पकड़ और समझाई जाती है !  
-तब क्या सिंघासत की भी अपनी कोई विचारधारा होती है ?  
-होती ही होगी...तभी तो वे विभिन्न विचारधाराओं के पैरोकार माने जाते हैं !  
-तब बताइए...सत्ता किसकी विचारधारा होती है ?  
-यह भी सिंघासत का ही अपना दुरुह लक्ष्य होती है !  
-तब यह भी बताइए कि...सिंघासत के लिए विचारधारा बड़ी होती है या फिर सत्ता !  
-वेशक...सत्ता...!  
-तब फिर किसी विचारधारा की किसी सत्ता के आगे क्या बिसात हुई ?  
-निश्चित ही वह सत्ता की बांटी हुई !  
-बिल्कुल, सिंघासत के लिए सत्ता पथ पर विचारधारा की बिसात एक फोलेटिंग पलंग से ज्यादा कुछ नहीं है ! जिस पर पल-दो-पल विश्राम कर चतुर सिंघासत अपने लक्षित पंतव्य की ओर आसानी से ओढ़ बढ जाती है !

response@jagran.com



ऊर्जा

## आभार का चमत्कार

जीवन में किसी उपकार के बदले कृतज्ञता व्यक्त करना एक प्रमुख मानवीय गुण है। यह विनम्रता का परिचायक माना जाता है। जीवन के किसी भी क्षेत्र में सफल होने की आकांक्षा के लिए जरूरी है कि आप शुक्रिया कहना, धन्यवाद देना और आभार जताना सीखिए। इससे सफलता की राह और सरल बनाई जा सकती है। जो कृतज्ञता महसूस करते हैं, उनमें अपनत्व की संभावनाएं अधिक होती हैं। आभार एक ऐसी संवेदना है जो न केवल बेहतर जीवन की राह खोलती है, बल्कि हमें अपनी परेशानियों में भी सुकून महसूस कराती है। जो लोग आभार व्यक्त करना जानते हैं, वे जीवन जीने की कला में पारंगत हो जाते हैं।

उन्हें जिंदगी जीने की कला आती है। तकलीफों और परेशानियों को वे जीवन का हिस्सा मानते हैं, लेकिन उन्हें भरोसा होता है कि वे अपने की बदैलत उस मुश्किल वक्त को भी पार कर लेंगे। ऐसे भाव से आप शारीरिक और मानसिक रूप से अपने भीतर परिवर्तन महसूस करेंगे। एक अध्ययन के अनुसार ऐसे लोग जो अपने जीवन में शुक्रिया शब्द का अधिक से अधिक इस्तेमाल करते हैं, वे जीवन में आने वाली कठिनाइयों के साथ बेहतर ढंग से तालमेल बिठा लेते हैं और कम दबाव में होते हैं। हृदय की सच्ची भावनाओं से प्रकट किया आभार बहुत कारगर होता है। यदि आप किसी बुरे समय से गुजर रहे हैं तो धन्यवाद का एक शब्द आपके दिमाग को ऊर्जा देगा, सोचने की शक्ति को बढ़ाएगा और आपको लक्ष्य पर ध्यान केंद्रित करने की क्षमता प्रदान करेगा। यदि आप हर दिन शुक्रिया के साथ शुरू करते हैं तो आपका सामाजिक दायरा बढ़ता है।

धन्यवाद और कृतज्ञता का नजरिया हमारी सोच और जीवन को विस्तृत बनाता है। आप सौभाग्यशाली हैं कि यदि आपके पास परिवार, दोस्त, स्वास्थ्य, नौकरी, व्यापार और घर है। आपको इन सबके लिए आभारी होना चाहिए। कृतज्ञ या आभारी होने की वजहें किसी अन्य लोक से नहीं आतीं, बल्कि हमारे निकट दैनंदिन जीवन का हर पल हमें कृतज्ञ होने का संदेश देता है।

लेखक गर्ग

## शाह की चर्चा

केंद्रीय गृहमंत्री अमित शाह आजकल नेताओं के बीच चर्चा में हैं। भाजपा के विरोधी दलों के सांसदों की भी तमन्ना है कि उनकी पार्टी के नेता भी वैसे ही हों। दरअसल पिछले सत्र में दो बार, एक तो आतंकवाद पर लागू लगाने के लिए एनआइए बिल में संशोधन और दूसरी बार कश्मीर से धारा 370 के हटाए जाने के वक्त शाह दोनों सदनों में लंबा बोले। बिंदुवार बोले और एक भी सवाल ऐसा नहीं रहा जिसे उन्होंने अनुरतिरित छोड़ा हो। लंबी बहस चली थी और इस दौरान गलियारे में कई सांसदों को आपस में शाह की प्रशंसा करते देखा गया। कुछ विपक्षी सांसद तो यह भी कहते सुने गए कि पार्टी का अध्यक्ष ऐसा ही होना चाहिए, काम तो लेते हैं, लेकिन जीत भी सुनिश्चित कराते हैं।



काम न आया स्टारडम

भाई-भतीजावाद और पैरोकारी के सहारे नकारा को भी नायक बनाने को लेकर राजनीति भले बदनाम हो, मगर इस संस्कृति से दूसरे क्षेत्र भी अछूते नहीं हैं। खासकर हिंदी सिनेमा जगत में तो अभिनेता-अभिनेत्री से लेकर गीतकार-संगीतकार और निर्देशन से लेकर निर्माण सभी में कुछ खास लोगों का सिक्का चलता है। बॉलीवुड में इन्हें अघोषित रूप से फिल्मों धराने का दर्जा हासिल है। जालिहर तौर पर ऐसे प्रभावशाली धराने अपने कैंप के नायक-नायिकाओं का

## राजर्ग

हित देखने में कोई कसर नहीं छोड़ते। ऐसी हित चिंता का ताजा उदाहरण अभी राष्ट्रीय फिल्म पुरस्कारों के चयन के दौरान सामने आया। शुक्रवार को पुरस्कारों का एलान होने के बाद स्टार सलमान खान ने फोन किया। फिल्म 'जैरो' में अभिनेत्री कैटरिना कैफ के अभिनय की तारीफ करते हुए उन्हें पुरस्कारों की सूची में शामिल करने की गुंजाइश तलाशने का प्रयास किया। मगर उन्हें पुरस्कारों की चयन प्रक्रिया पूरी हो जाने और किसी गुंजाइश का रास्ता नहीं होने का संदेश दे दिया गया।

## तुगलकी सेवानिवृत्ति

रेलवे में आए दिन विचित्र कार्य होते रहते हैं जिनका कोई सिर-पैर नहीं होता। इसी तरह का एक वाक्या पिछले दिनों ऑल इंडिया स्टेशन मास्टर्स एसोसिएशन के पूर्व केंद्रीय अध्यक्ष उनीकुण्णन के साथ हुआ जिन्हें 29 जुलाई को अचानक तुगलकी फरमान के तहत जबरन सेवानिवृत्ति का आदेश दिया गया। ऐसा 55 साल की उम्र या 30 वर्ष की सेवा वाले कर्मचारियों को रिटायर करने की नई नीति के कारण हुआ है, लेकिन इस मामले में खास बात ये है कि उनीकुण्णन को ऐसे वक्त पर जबरन सेवा से निष्कासित किया गया जबकि उन्होंने एक कई को स्वयं स्वीच्छक सेवानिवृत्ति के लिए आवेदन कर रखा था और 31 जुलाई को उन्हें स्वतः रिटायर हो जाना था। उनका सर्विस रिकॉर्ड भी बेदाग था, लेकिन गिनती पूरी करने के चक्कर में इस काम में लगे अधिकारियों

ने इस बात पर ध्यान ही नहीं दिया। इससे भी आश्चर्यजनक तथ्य यह है कि इस कदम से रेलवे को उन्हें तीन माह का अतिरिक्त वेतन देना पड़ा, जो कि स्वतः रिटायर होने में नहीं देना पड़ता। गुरुवार को पूरे देश के स्टेशन मास्टर्स ने काली पट्टी बांध कर उनीकुण्णन के साथ हुए इस सुलूक का विरोध किया।

## दाखिले बंद हैं

गर्मियों की छुट्टी के बाद स्कूल खुलने के बाद से ही बच्चों के एडमिशन की दिक्कत से ज्यादातर माता-पिता परेशान रहते हैं। खासतौर पर केंद्रीय विद्यालय में बच्चों का एडमिशन कराने के आकांक्षी अभिभावकों की लाइन काफी लंबी होती है। सभी लोग इसकी सिफारिश के लिए मानव संसाधन विकास मंत्रालय में गुंजाइ की तलाश में रहे हैं। इसलिए इन दिनों मंत्रालय में ऐसे लोगों की आवाजाही जबरन से ज्यादा रहती है। यह सिलसिला स्कूलों में दाखिला बंद होने तक चलता रहता है, लेकिन इस बार मंत्रालय ने ऐसी भीड़ के प्रवेश को रोकने के लिए नया तरीका अपनाया है। मानव संसाधन विकास मंत्रालय के प्रवेश द्वार पर ही बड़े-बड़े शब्दों में 'केंद्रीय विद्यालय में एडमिशन बंद हो गए' का नोटिस टांग दिया गया है।





## उम्मीदें और चुनौतियां

जम्मू-कश्मीर को अनुच्छेद 370 से लगभग मुक्त कर दिए जाने के बाद गुरुवार को प्रधानमंत्री ने राष्ट्र के नाम संदेश में भविष्य का जो खाका पेश किया और विकास के लिए जिन कार्य योजनाओं का जिक्र किया, वे इस बात की ओर इशारा करती हैं कि जम्मू-कश्मीर का भविष्य अब उज्ज्वल है। प्रधानमंत्री के संबोधन में इस बात का भरोसा साफ झलकता है कि कश्मीरियों के साथ भेदभाव के दिन अब लद चुके हैं और उन्हें अब उन सारे कष्टों और पीड़ा से मुक्ति मिलेगी जो दशकों से अनुच्छेद 370 के कारण उन्हें झेलने पड़े हैं। जाहिर है, केंद्र सरकार का सारा जोर अब कश्मीर घाटी में हालात सामान्य बनाने और उसके विकास पर होगा। इसके लिए सबसे जरूरी है स्थानीय लोगों के दिल को जीतना। और कश्मीरियों का दिल तभी जीता जा सकेगा जब सरकार की नीतियों के प्रति उनमें भरोसा पैदा होगा, वे राज्य में विकास होता देखेंगे, नौजवानों को रोजगार और बच्चों को शिक्षा और स्वास्थ्य सुविधाओं का लाभ मिलने लगेगा। अगर केंद्र सरकार कश्मीरियों के लिए इन कसौटियों पर खरी उतरती है तो निश्चित रूप से लोगों का दिल जीत पाना कोई मुश्किल काम नहीं है।

इसमें कोई शक नहीं कि जम्मू-कश्मीर से अनुच्छेद 370 खत्म करना एक कठिन और जोखिमभरा फैसला था। आज कश्मीर जिस हालत में पहुंच चुका है, उसका सबसे बड़ा कारण ही अनुच्छेद 370 रही जिसकी आड़ में स्थानीय राजनीतिक दल भोली-भाली जनता को छलते रहे और अपने नीहित स्वार्थ पूरे करते रहे। अनुच्छेद 370 की वजह से घाटी में अलगाववादी नेताओं की बड़ी जमात पनपती चली गई और पिछले कुछ सालों में पत्थरबाजों की फौज खड़ी करने में अलगाववादी तत्त्वों का बड़ा हाथ रहा। सब जानते हैं कि अलगाववादी नेता पाकिस्तान के इशारे पर काम करते हैं और उससे उन्हें हर तरह की मदद मिलती है। इस समस्या से निपट पाने में जम्मू-कश्मीर का विशेष दर्जा बड़ी बाधा बना हुआ था। ऐसे में केंद्र सरकार राज्य में विकास का कोई भी काम कैसे शुरू कर सकती थी? कैसे वहां उद्योग लगाए जाते? हेरानी यह भी है कि देशभर में बच्चों के लिए शिक्षा का अधिकार कानून लागू है, लेकिन जम्मू-कश्मीर के बच्चे इससे वंचित थे। केंद्र सरकार राज्य के लोगों के लिए जितना भी पैसा देती, उसका बड़ा हिस्सा भ्रष्टाचार की भेंट चढ़ जाता और लोगों को उसका कोई फायदा नहीं मिला। अनुच्छेद 370 की वजह से ही राज्य कुछ दलों और लोगों की जागी बन गया था।

जम्मू-कश्मीर अब पुराने दौर से निकल चुका है। जो नया दौर है वह उज्ज्वल भविष्य की उम्मीदों के साथ बड़ी चुनौतियां भी लिए हुए है। चुनौतियां केंद्र सरकार के लिए ज्यादा हैं। प्रधानमंत्री ने जो एलान किए हैं उनमें विकास और रोजगार पर जोर है, ताकि नौजवानों को भटकने से बचाया जा सके। इसके लिए राज्य में निवेश हो और उद्योग लगे, ताकि युवाओं को काम-धंधा मिले। उन्होंने जम्मू-कश्मीर को सबसे बड़े पर्यटन केंद्र के रूप में विकसित करने की बात कही है। साथ ही फिल्म उद्योग से भी उन्होंने कहा है कि वह कश्मीर को भी केंद्र बनाए जिससे वहां रोजगार के मौके बनें। इसके अलावा जम्मू-कश्मीर के सरकारी कर्मचारियों को भी अब देश के अन्य राज्यों जैसी सुविधाएं मिलेंगी। जम्मू-कश्मीर को पट्टी पर लाने के लिए सरकार को हर मोर्चे पर जूझना होगा। आतंकवादियों और अलगाववादियों की कमर तोड़नी होगी, राज्य को तेजी से विकास के रास्ते पर ले जाना होगा और सबसे जरूरी यह कि बल प्रयोग की नीति को छोड़ कर आमजन के दिल को जीतना होगा। प्रधानमंत्री ने इसका विश्वास दिलाया है।

## सड़क पर हिंसा

सड़क पर लापरवाही से वाहन चलाने से हुए हादसों से इतर मामूली बात पर हिंसा के रूप में एक समस्या दिनोंदिन गंभीर होती जा रही है, जिसमें आए दिन किसी के साथ मारपीट या फिर हत्या तक कर देने के मामले सामने आ रहे हैं। बुधवार रात देश की सबसे बड़ी स्टील कंपनी भारतीय इस्पात प्राधिकरण (सेल) के अध्यक्ष के साथ जिस तरह की घटना हुई, उससे साफ है कि सड़क पर वाहन चलाते हुए कोई व्यक्ति नाहक ही जानलेवा हिंसा का शिकार हो सकता है। दक्षिणी दिल्ली के हौज खास इलाके से जब वे गुजर रहे थे, तब अचानक ही एक कार उनकी कार के आगे खड़ी हो गई, उसमें से चार लोग निकले और बिना किसी बात के उन्हें डंडों और लोहे की छड़ से पीटने लगे। गनीमत बस यही रही कि इलाके में गश्त कर रहे दो पुलिसकर्मियों की नजर उन पर पड़ गई और उन्होंने उन्हें बचाया। लेकिन कल्पना की जा सकती है कि अगर किन्हीं वजहों से गश्त कर रहे पुलिसकर्मी वहां नहीं पहुंचते तो सेल अध्यक्ष के साथ क्या हो सकता था।

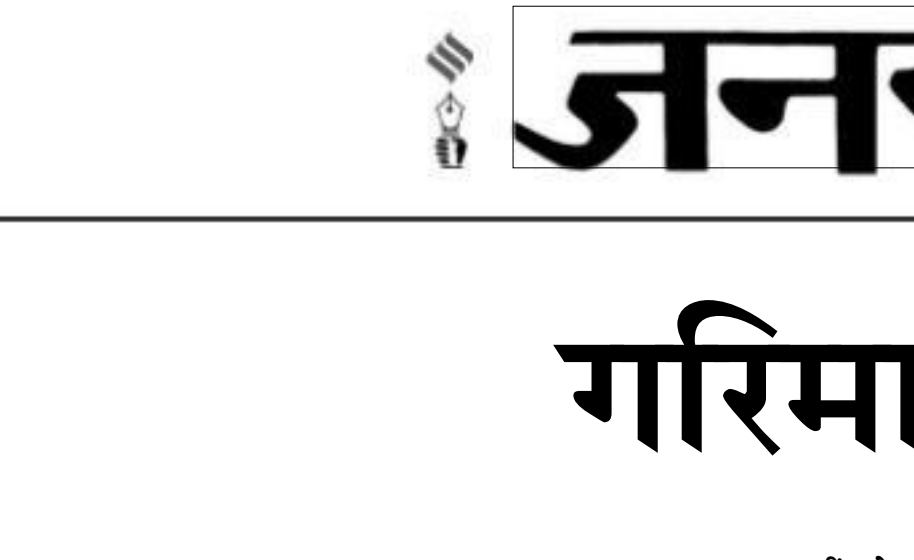
हालांकि यह कोई पहली घटना नहीं थी जिसमें बिना किसी बात के सड़क पर मारपीट की गई हो। हो सकता है कि यह कोई सुनियोजित आपराधिक घटना भी हो। यह जांच के बाद ही साफ होगा। लेकिन ऐसी खबरें अक्सर आती रहती हैं जिनमें बहुत छोटी चूक से वाहन अगर किसी अन्य गाड़ी में धूँ जाए या वाजिब कारणों से भी रास्ता बाधित हो जाए तो लोग थोड़ा खूब्र नहीं रखते और एक दूसरे के साथ बेहद तल्ख भाषा में बहस करने लगते हैं। इसी दौरान कई बार दोनों या फिर एक पक्ष हिंसक हो जाता है और किसी की जान भी चली जाती है। सवाल है कि सड़क पर जिस तरह की गलतियां अनेदखी करने लायक होती हैं या फिर थोड़ी बातचीत से उससे उपजी समस्या को दूर किया जा सकता है, उस पर आपसी बहस का स्तर इस हद तक कैसे चला जाता है जिसमें किसी की जान भी चली जाती है! ऐसा लगता है कि लोगों के भीतर धीरज और सहिष्णुता का पैमाना इतना कम हो गया है कि वे मामूली बात पर भी गाली-गलौज या हिंसा पर उतर जाते हैं। बिना बात के गुरसा होने के बाद उन्हें इसका भी होश नहीं रहता कि इसकी जद में आकर हिंसा करने पर उनके खिलाफ कानूनी कार्रवाई भी हो सकती है।

हालांकि फिलहाल सड़क पर हिंसा के मामलों में जितनी और जिस प्रकृति की सजा है, उसकी वजह से खुद पर लगाम खोने वाले लोग शायद निश्चित रहते हैं। इसके अलावा, शहरी जीवन को रफ्तार के साथ जीने वाले लोग इसमें किसी तरह का खलल नहीं चाहते और सड़क पर मामूली बाधा से उनका धीरज छूट जाता है। यह एक तरह से खुद को श्रेष्ठ मानने की कुंठा से भी जुड़ा होता है जो थोड़ा-सा मौका पाते ही बेलगाम होकर फूट जाता है। नतीजतन, कई बार किसी को बुरी तरह हिंसा का शिकार होना पड़ता है तो किसी की जान भी चली जाती है। इसी के मद्देनजर हाल के दिनों में यह मांग तेजी से उठी है कि वाहन चलाते हुए अपने बर्ताव पर लगाम खोने वालों के खिलाफ सख्त कानून बनाए जाएं, ताकि सड़क पर हिंसा की मानसिकता वाले लोगों को ठोस सबक मिल सके। सड़क पर सुविधाजनक और सहज तरीके से वाहन चलाना किसी का अधिकार हो सकता है, लेकिन अगर इसमें यातायात नियमों के साथ-साथ जरूरी सलीका नहीं है तो इससे हिंसा करने वाले के सभ्य होने पर भी सवालिया निशान लग सकते हैं!

## कल्पमेधा

**अगर तुम्हारा स्वभाव ही है तो चिंता करके कष्टों का आह्वान करो, लेकिन उसे पढ़ीसियों को उधार मत दो।**

**- रुडयार्ड किपलिंग**

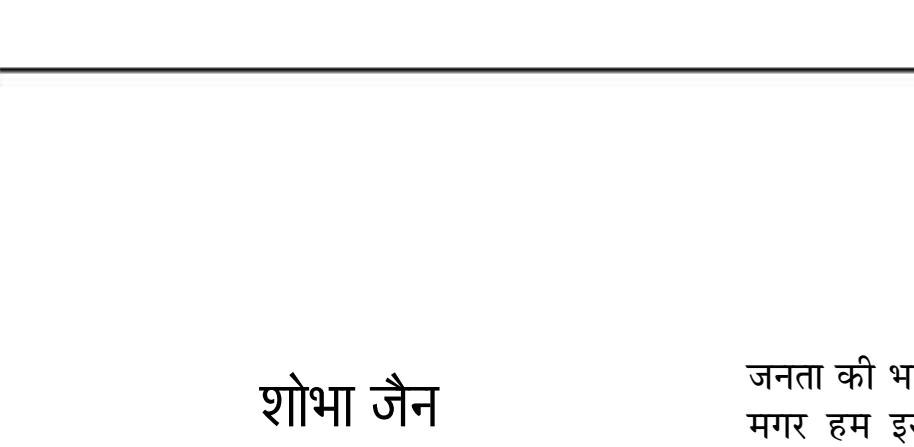


**अब हर पार्टी के सांसदों-नेताओं को दोनों सदनों में सावधान रहना पड़ेगा। सत्तर साल देश की जनतांत्रिक राजनीति में युगांतकारी परिवर्तन हुए हैं। उसका ताजा उदाहरण 2019 का आम चुनाव रहा है। इस लोकसभा चुनाव में जनता स्वयं आगे आकर चुनाव लड़ी। जनता समझती है कि देश कहां सुरक्षित है, किसके हाथ में सुरक्षित है, किसे चुनना चाहिए।**

सत्तर सालों में लोकसभा और राज्यसभा के सैंतीस दिनों की कुल बैठकों में बत्तीस विधेयक लोकसभा और सैंतीस बिल राज्यसभा में पारित हुए। 17 जून 2019 से 6 अगस्त 2019 तक चली लोकसभा में शून्यकाल के दौरान पहली बार एक हजार से अधिक मुद्दे उठाए गए। सन 1952 के बाद यह पहला मौका है जब सैंतीस बैठकों के बावजूद एक दिन भी कार्यवाही बाधित नहीं रही। और 1952 के बाद भी पहली बार ऐसा हुआ है जब सदन का व्यवधान शून्य रहा और इसमें सदन के सदस्यों की अहम भूमिका रही। राष्ट्रपति के अभिभाषण पर तेरह घंटे से अधिक चर्चा हुई और एक सौ तिरासी तार्रांकित प्रश्न पूछे गए। सबसे अच्छी बात तो यह रही कि ज्यादा से ज्यादा नए सदस्यों को बोलने का मौका दिया गया। इस सत्र में शून्यकाल में दो सौ पैंसठ नए सदस्यों में से दो सौ उनतीस सदस्यों को अपनी बात कहने का मौका मिला। छियालीस नई महिला सांसदों में बयालीस को शून्यकाल के दौरान बोलने का अवसर मिला। लोकसभा में लगभग एक सौ सैंतीस प्रतिशत काम हुआ, जबकि राज्यसभा में एक सौ तीन प्रतिशत। राज्यसभा की सत्ताईस बैठकों में बत्तीस विधेयक पारित हुए। पिछले सत्रह साल में उच्च सदन में यह सबसे सफल सत्र रहा।

देश आश्चर्यचकित था जब राज्यसभा में तीन-तलाक बिल पारित हुआ। लोगों को भरोसा नहीं हो रहा था। लोकसभा में तो भाजपा और एनडीए की संख्या दो-तिहाई से अधिक है। वहां पर विधेयकों का पास होना लगभग तय ही होता है। पर राज्यसभा जहां भाजपा या एनडीए के पास अभी बहुमत नहीं है, से भी तीन तलाक बिल के पास हो जाने से सभी हैरत में रह गए। काँग्रेसी सदस्य मान कर चल रहे थे कि लोक सभा में इनकी संख्या बल है पर राज्यसभा में तो विधेयक पास नहीं होने देंगे। लेकिन प्रधामंत्री और गुहमंत्री की कुशल रणनीति से जब राज्यसभा में भी विपक्ष चौरसी और सत्ता पक्ष सौ मतों से तीन तलाक विधेयक को मंजूरी मिल गई तो सभी को लगा कि अब राज्यसभा में काँग्रेस और विपक्ष में कोई एकता नहीं है। तीन तलाक पर अच्छी बहस हुई। चर्चा के दौरान कुछ दलों ने बहिष्कार किया पर अधिकतर दलों ने मतदान किया।

राज्यसभा में काँग्रेस सहित कुछ विपक्षी दलों की भावना को मजबूत करते हैं। वर्षों से लंबित बिलों का पारित होना यह दर्शाता है कि देश का मन-मस्तिष्क बदल रहा है। लोगों ने अब अपने अलावा देश के बारे में भी सोचना शुरू कर दिया है। यही कारण है कि



**गांधी**जी ने कुछ स्वप्न देखे थे, जिनमें से एक था—ऐसे स्वराज की स्थापना हो, जो भाषा, जाति और धर्म की संकीर्ण भावना से परे आदर्श समाज के निर्माण का हो। लेकिन आज की जो हालत बाम अपने चारों ओर देखते हैं, उससे यही लगता है कि हम इस स्वप्न को बहुत पीछे छोड़ आए हैं। इन दिनों आक्रामक भाषा चलन में है। इसे चलन कहा जाए या सभ्यता का हास— सोचती हूं कि आखिर क्या कहा जाए इसे? समय और युगिन संदर्भों में बदलाव के साथ लोकतंत्र में भी भाषा के जायके बदल रहे हैं।

माना जाता है कि मनुष्य भाषा में जीता है। हम जिस समय में जी रहे हैं, वह विश्व बाजारवाद का दौर है। हम आधुनिकता के अंत और उत्तर आधुनिकता की ओर अग्रसर एक ऐसे काल में हैं, जिसमें समय मनुष्य का न होकर मशीन का है... उपकरण का है और नई-नई अवधारणाओं का है। स्वतंत्रता प्राप्ति के बाद हमने अपने देश में लोकतांत्रिक शासन-व्यवस्था को स्वीकार किया, जहां जनता के चुने हुए प्रतिनिधि देश की कानून और व्यवस्था का संचालन करें।

जो सरकार जनता के द्वारा चुनी जाती है, उसमें

## खतरे में अर्थव्यवस्था

देश की वित्तीय स्थिति नाजुक है। सरकार और निजी क्षेत्र दोनों पर इसका असर साफ नजर आ रहा है। अर्थव्यवस्था में मंदी की वजह से कारपोरेट जगत बेहाल हुआ जा रहा है। इस मंदी का असर संग्रहण पर भी पड़ रहा है। सरकार के राजस्व संग्रह लक्ष्य पूरे नहीं हो पा रहे हैं। वित्त वर्ष 2016-17 में अप्रत्यक्ष कर संग्रह में बढ़ोतरी की दर बीस फीसद थी जो 2017-18 में घट कर 5.8 फीसद रह गई। इसका असर देश की आर्थिक वृद्धि पर पड़ रहा है। जीएसटी आर्थिक सुधारों के लिहाज से एक अच्छा कदम था, लेकिन जीएसटी के तहत अनुमानित कर संग्रह नहीं हो पा रहा है। जीएसटी संग्रहण में स्टाफ की कमी, राज्यों से सहयोग नहीं मिलना और केंद्र व राज्यों में तालमेल की कमी जैसे कारणों से अप्रत्यक्ष कर की वसूली बहुत कम हो रही है। इसका राजकोषीय संतुलन पर असर पड़ रहा है। सरकार राजकोषीय संतुलन साधने के लिए ओर विदेशी उधारी बढ़ा रही है और दूसरी ओर देश की जनता की बचत को उपयोग में ला रही है। इसके अलावा, निर्यात बढ़ाने लिए भी ठोस कदम नहीं उठाए जा रहे। सरकार ने इस साल के बजट में आयत शुल्क को बढ़ाया है। सिर्फ आयात को कम करके सरकार भुगतान संतुलन को सुधारना चाहती है।

● ***दीपक गिरकर, इंदौर***

## रफ्तार की उम्मीद

हाल में भारतीय रिजर्व बैंक ने सुस्त पड़ी

सत्रहवीं लोकसभा और राज्यसभा के सैंतीस दिनों की कुल बैठकों में बत्तीस विधेयक लोकसभा और सैंतीस बिल राज्यसभा में पारित हुए। 17 जून 2019 से 6 अगस्त 2019 तक चली लोकसभा में शून्यकाल के दौरान पहली बार एक हजार से अधिक मुद्दे उठाए गए। सन 1952 के बाद यह पहला मौका है जब सैंतीस बैठकों के बावजूद एक दिन भी कार्यवाही बाधित नहीं रही। और 1952 के बाद भी पहली बार ऐसा हुआ है जब सदन का व्यवधान शून्य रहा और इसमें सदन के सदस्यों की अहम भूमिका रही। राष्ट्रपति के अभिभाषण पर तेरह घंटे से अधिक चर्चा हुई और एक सौ तिरासी तार्रांकित प्रश्न पूछे गए। सबसे अच्छी बात तो यह रही कि ज्यादा से ज्यादा नए सदस्यों को बोलने का मौका दिया गया। इस सत्र में शून्यकाल में दो सौ पैंसठ नए सदस्यों में से दो सौ उनतीस सदस्यों को अपनी बात कहने का मौका मिला। छियालीस नई महिला सांसदों में बयालीस को शून्यकाल के दौरान बोलने का अवसर मिला। लोकसभा में लगभग एक सौ सैंतीस प्रतिशत काम हुआ, जबकि राज्यसभा में एक सौ तीन प्रतिशत। राज्यसभा की सत्ताईस बैठकों में बत्तीस विधेयक पारित हुए। पिछले सत्रह साल में उच्च सदन में यह सबसे सफल सत्र रहा।

देश आश्चर्यचकित था जब राज्यसभा में तीन-तलाक बिल पारित हुआ। लोगों को भरोसा नहीं हो रहा था। लोकसभा में तो भाजपा और एनडीए की संख्या दो-तिहाई से अधिक है। वहां पर विधेयकों का पास होना लगभग तय ही होता है। पर राज्यसभा जहां भाजपा या एनडीए के पास अभी बहुमत नहीं है, से भी तीन तलाक बिल के पास हो जाने से सभी हैरत में रह गए। काँग्रेसी सदस्य मान कर चल रहे थे कि लोक सभा में इनकी संख्या बल है पर राज्यसभा में तो विधेयक पास नहीं होने देंगे। लेकिन प्रधामंत्री और गुहमंत्री की कुशल रणनीति से जब राज्यसभा में भी विपक्ष चौरसी और सत्ता पक्ष सौ मतों से तीन तलाक विधेयक को मंजूरी मिल गई तो सभी को लगा कि अब राज्यसभा में काँग्रेस और विपक्ष में कोई एकता नहीं है। तीन तलाक पर अच्छी बहस हुई। चर्चा के दौरान कुछ दलों ने बहिष्कार किया पर अधिकतर दलों ने मतदान किया।

राज्यसभा में काँग्रेस सहित कुछ विपक्षी दलों की भावना को मजबूत करते हैं। वर्षों से लंबित बिलों का पारित होना यह दर्शाता है कि देश का मन-मस्तिष्क बदल रहा है। लोगों ने अब अपने अलावा देश के बारे में भी सोचना शुरू कर दिया है। यही कारण है कि

देश हित में लाया जाएगा तो भाजपा मत विभाजन में जीत सकती है। यही कारण था कि जम्मू-कश्मीर राज्य पुनर्गठन विधेयक लाया गया। संकल्प सबसे पहले राज्यसभा में लाने का निर्णय प्रधानमंत्री और गुहमंत्री ने लिया। देश में किसी ने नहीं सोचा था कि धारा 370 और 35ए को समाप्त करने वाला विधेयक लाया जाएगा। राज्यसभा में पांच अगस्त को जैसे ही गुहमंत्री ने जम्मू कश्मीर में दस फीसद आरक्षण और जम्मू-कश्मीर राज्य पुनर्गठन विधेयक प्रस्तुत किया, सत्ता पक्ष की बांछे खिल गई और विपक्ष में सन्नाटा छा गया था। सदन हतप्रभ था। काँग्रेसी और टीएमसी सहित डीएमके और सपा ने विरोध के स्वर उठाए। राज्यसभा में सभी सदस्यों के द्वारा उठाए गए एक-एक सवाल का जवाब गुहमंत्री ने दिया। इसी बीच प्रधानमंत्री भी सदन में आ गए। विपक्षियों ने मत विभाजन मांगा। मत विभाजन में काँग्रेस सहित विपक्षियों को मात्र इकसठ



और भाजपा को एक सौ पच्चीस मत मिले।

स्वास्थ्य क्षेत्र में सुधार से संबंधित चार विधेयक-राष्ट्रीय चिकित्सा आयोग विधेयक-2019, होम्योपैथी केंद्रीय परिषद (संशोधन) विधेयक-2019, भारतीय चिकित्सा परिषद (संशोधन) विधेयक-2019 और दंत चिकित्सक (संशोधन) विधेयक-2019 दोनों सदनों द्वारा पारित कर दिए गए। विशेष रूप से राष्ट्रीय चिकित्सा आयोग विधेयक, 2019 चिकित्सा क्षेत्र में एक क्रांतिकारी सुधार है जो चिकित्सा शिक्षा, चिकित्सा व्यवसाय और चिकित्सा संस्थानों से संबंधित सभी पहलुओं के विकास और विनियमन के लिए एक राष्ट्रीय चिकित्सा आयोग के गठन तथा आयोग को सलाह देने और सिफारिश करने के लिए एक चिकित्सा सलाहकार परिषद के गठन का प्रावधान करता है।

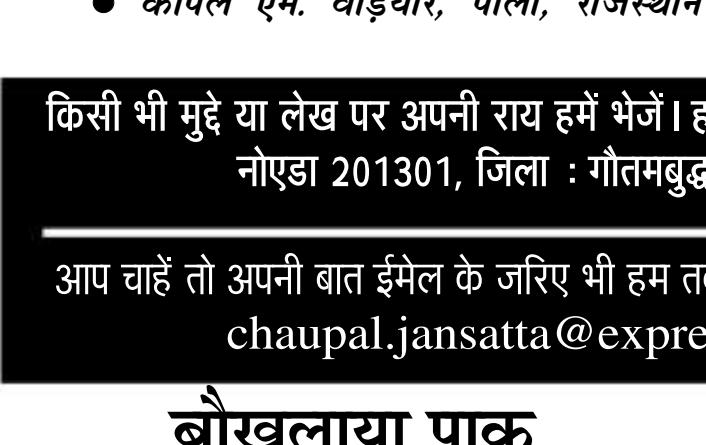
देश में सामाजिक और लैंगिक न्याय प्रणाली को और मजबूती प्रदान करने के लिए भी कुछ विधेयकों

# निज भाषा

जनता की भाषा की प्रधानता होना भी स्वाभाविक है। मगर हम इसके ठीक उलट स्थिति में जी रहे हैं। अंग्रेजी ने जिस प्रकार हमारी अपनी भाषाओं का विकास अवरूढ़ किया है, इससे स्वभाषा से लोगों की दूरियां बढ़ती ही जा रही हैं। बाजार की सुविधा के लिए गढ़े जाने वाले शब्द जन्म ले रहे हैं। हम टेलीविजन पर उपभोक्ता सामग्री के विज्ञापनों में इस विरूपीकरण को देख सकते हैं, जिसमें अंग्रेजी और हिंदी की खिचड़ी से निर्मित अशुद्ध भाषा से संपन्न परिवारों की जीवन-शैली और मूल्यों को प्रदर्शित किया जाता है।

इसमें कोई दो राय नहीं कि अंग्रेजी बहुत ही समृद्ध भाषा है और आजकल संसार के कई समृद्ध देशों में राजभाषा के रूप में ही स्वीकृत है। मगर है यह विदेशी भाषा ही और हमें इस सत्य को स्वीकारने में कोई शर्म नहीं कि वर्चस्व की इसकी तमाम कोशिशों के बावजूद आज भी इसमें समूची जनता का एक नगण्य अंश ही कुशलता प्राप्त कर सका है। स्वतंत्रता प्राप्ति के बाद से ही देश में भाषाओं की प्रगति में काफी तेजी आई है, लेकिन स्वभाषा का प्रयोग अपनी सुविधानुसार तोड़-परोड़ कर किया जा रहा है। माल बेचने और गांव-कस्बों में नए बाजार बनाने के लिए

इस्लामिक देशों के संगठन ओआइसी ने भारत के रुख का विरोध जरूर किया है, पर ये भी ज्यादा अहमियत नहीं रखता, क्योंकि एक और ओआइसी के कुछ सदस्य संयुक्त अरब अमीरात और बांग्लादेश निजी स्तर पर भारत के पक्ष में हैं। कुल मिला कर पाकिस्तान अंतरराष्ट्रीय स्तर पर अलग-थलग पड़ गया है। इसी बौखलाहट में उसने भारत से राजनयिक और आर्थिक संबंध तोड़ने जैसे कदम उठाए हैं। उसने ये फैसले अताकिंक और आवेश में आकर उठाए हैं, इसमें कोई दो राय नहीं। इतिहास गवाह है कि जब-जब



**किसी भी मुद्दे या लेख पर अपनी राय हमें भेजें। हमारा पता है : ए-8, सेक्टर-7, नोएडा 201301, जिला : गौतमबुद्धनगर, उत्तर प्रदेश**

**आप चाहें तो अपनी बात ईमेल के जरिए भी हम तक पहुंचा सकते हैं। आइडी है :**

**chaupal.jansatta@expressindia.com**

### बौखलाया पाक

जब से भारत ने जम्मू-कमीर से अनुच्छेद 370 को खत्म किया है, तभी से पाकिस्तान अंतरराष्ट्रीय स्तर पर इसका जोर-शोर से विरोध कर रहा है। लेकिन भारत के खिलाफ अभियान में उसे अबेकड़ा सफलता नहीं मिल रही है। पाकिस्तान का सबसे बड़ा हथपद होने का दावा करने वाले चीन ने भी इस मसले पर इतना जोर नहीं दिया जितनी पाकिस्तान को उमीद थी। अमेरिका ने सिर्फ इतना ही कहा कि हम घटनाओं पर नजर रखे हुए हैं। रूस, ब्रिटेन और फ्रांस ने तो पूरी तरह पाकिस्तान की अनेदखी की। हां,

को इस सत्र में पारित किया गया। यौन अपराधों से बच्चों का संरक्षण (संशोधन) विधेयक-2019 पॉनोग्राफी में बच्चे के चित्रण को अपराध घोषित करने के अलावा बच्चों के साथ होने वाले यौन अपराधों के लिए ज्यादा कठोर सजा का प्रावधान करता है जो बीस साल तक या कुछ मामलों में शेष जीवन के लिए कारावास तक बढ़ाई जा सकती है।

राष्ट्रीय सुरक्षा तंत्र को मजबूत बनाने और राष्ट्रीय सुरक्षा पहलुओं और मानवाधिकारों के बीच संतुलन कायम करने के लिए इस सत्र के दौरान राष्ट्रीय जांच एजेंसी (संशोधन) विधेयक-2019, गैरकानूनी गतिविधियां (रोकथाम) संशोधन विधेयक-2019 और मानवाधिकार संरक्षण (संशोधन) विधेयक-2019 पारित किए गए। इसके साथ ही वेतन अधिनियम 1936, न्यूनतम वेतन अधिनियम 1948, वोनस भुगतान अधिनियम 1965 और सामान पारिश्रमिक अधिनियम

1976 को आपस में मिला कर वेतन संहिता विधेयक, 2019 को कानून का रूप दिया गया है। उपभोक्ता संरक्षण विधेयक-2019 पहले के कानून को रद्द करके और उपभोक्ता अधिकारों के प्रोत्साहन, संरक्षण और उन्हें लागू करने के लिए केंद्रीय उपभोक्ता संरक्षण प्राधिकरण की स्थापना का प्रावधान करके उपभोक्ता संरक्षण तंत्र में आमूल-चूल परिवर्तन लाने का प्रावधान करता है। मोटर वाहन (संशोधन) विधेयक-2019 का उद्देश्य सड़क सुरक्षा से जुड़े मुद्दों को सुलझाना, नागरिकों को सहूलियत देना, सार्वजनिक परिवहन, स्वचालन एवं कंप्यूटीरकरण को सुदृढ़ करना, अधिनियम के प्रावधानों के उल्लंघन पर जुर्माना राशि बढ़ाना है।

पिछले पांच-छह वर्षों के दौरान राज्यसभा और लोकसभा चैनल को लेकर जनता की रुचि बढ़ी है। इन दोनों चैनलों के माध्यम से देश के

नेताओं, सांसदों का आकलन शुरू हुआ है। इसीलिए अब हर पार्टी के सांसदों-नेताओं को दोनों सदनों में सावधान रहना पड़ेगा। सत्तर साल देश की जनतांत्रिक राजनीति में युगांतकारी परिवर्तन हुए हैं। उसका ताजा उदाहरण 2019 का आम चुनाव रहा है। इस लोकसभा चुनाव में जनता स्वयं आगे आकर चुनाव लड़ी। जनता समझती है कि देश कहां सुरक्षित है, किसके हाथ में सुरक्षित है, किसे चुनना चाहिए। जनतंत्र की परीक्षा में जनता अच्छे नंबरों से उत्तीर्ण हुई। अब देश के जनप्रतिनिधियों को भी अच्छे नंबरों से उत्तीर्ण होते रहना चाहिए। अब देश में जहां दोनों सदनों पर पुनः देश का अदृट विश्वास जाोगा, वहीं राज्य विधानसभाओं को कामचलाऊ सत्रों के बजाय उत्कृष्ट कार्य करने वाले अधिक दिनों का सत्र चलाना ही होगा। लोकतंत्र संवाद और बहस से मजबूत होता है न कि इससे भागने से।

*(लेखक भाजपा के राज्यसभा सदस्य हैं।)*



कुछ इस पर निर्भर करता है कि हमारी सांस्कृतिक सोच क्या है, समाज के बारे में हमारी दृष्टि और भूमिका क्या है। विदेशी भाषा में शिक्षा पाने से हमारा स्वतंत्र चिंतन कुंठित हो गया है। यह बात प्रत्यक्ष रूप से भले न स्वीकार की जाए, मगर सत्य यही है। आशा यही की जाती है कि हमारी लोकभाषाएं आधुनिक ज्ञान-विज्ञान के क्षेत्र में विकसित हो सके। हमारा उतम साहित्य इस इसी दिशा में विकसित हो, क्योंकि स्वराज की सार्थकता स्वभाषा की उन्नति से ही संभव है। इसके लिए लोकतंत्र में भाषा की मर्यादा बनी रहे, यह भी उतना ही महत्वपूर्ण विषय है, जितना चुनाव में वोट डालना।

साहित्य में जो भाषा मनुष्य को संस्कारित करती है, वह राजनीति में भी अपना असर बनाए रखे। यह भी समाज के साथ कुशल राजनीतिकों के दायित्व का हिस्सा होना चाहिए। गांधीजी का जो आत्मनिर्भर बनाने का स्वप्न है, वह केवल स्वभाषा से ही संभव है, क्योंकि जिस प्रकार जड़ कटा वृक्ष पुष्प और फल नहीं दे सकता और शीशू ही अपनी हरियाली खोकर सूख जाता है, उसी प्रकार अपनी भाषा से कटा देश भी कमजोर हो जाता है। हमारी जड़ें हमारी भाषा हैं। इसके बिना देश की समृद्धि संभव नहीं। हमारे लिए भाषा से प्रेम की भी जरूरी अहमियत होनी चाहिए।

ताकि जनता भी सचेत रहे और गलतियां न करें। मगर दुख की बात है कि नए मोटर वाहन कानून में काले शीशों वाली कारों और वाहनों को छोड़ दिया है जो जुर्म के चलते-फिरते अड्डे साबित हो रहे हैं। वाहनों के साथ सड़कों पर अतिक्रमण और इनकी जानलेवा हालत पर संबंधित अधिकारियों, ठेकेदारों और अतिक्रमणकर्ताओं पर भी जुर्माना जरूरी है क्योंकि भारी रोड टैक्स के बाद भी इनकी हालत में कोई सुधार नहीं होता। इस वाहन कानून पर सरकार को जनता और यातायात पुलिस से खुल कर राय लेनी चाहिए थी। देश में कानून तो बहुत हैं मगर उनके ठीक से पालन करवाने वाले बहुत ही कम हैं। इसके लिए सरकार को और अधिक नियुक्तियां करनी होंगी जिससे आय और अनुशासन के साथ रोजगार भी बढ़ सकता है।

● ***महेंद्र मान, अलीपुर***

### कैसे आएगी हरियाली

विश्व पर्यावरण दिवस पर सोशल मीडिया जैसे वॉट्सएप और फेसबुक पर बहुत सारे पेड़ लगाए गए, यानी की बहुत मित्रों के पास से पर्यावरण दिवस की शुभकामनाएं वाले संदेश आए। बहुत सारे मित्रों ने पेड़ लगाते हुए फोटो फेसबुक पर पोस्ट किए और हजारों लाइक और कमेंट बटोरें। लेकिन पर्यावरण दिवस के अगले दिन न किसी ने पेड़ लगाते फोटो पोस्ट किया और न ही कहीं से शुभकामनाएं आईं। जाहिर है, अगले दिन ही सब पेड़ों को, पर्यावरण को भूल गए। इस हकीकत को नहीं भूलना चाहिए कि मीडिया और सोशल मीडिया में पेड़ लगाते हुए फोटो खींच कर डालने और छपवाने से धरती पर हरियाली नहीं आने वाली। इसके लिए वाकई जुटने की जरूरत है।

● ***सौरभ कुमार टाकुर, मुजफ्फरपुर***