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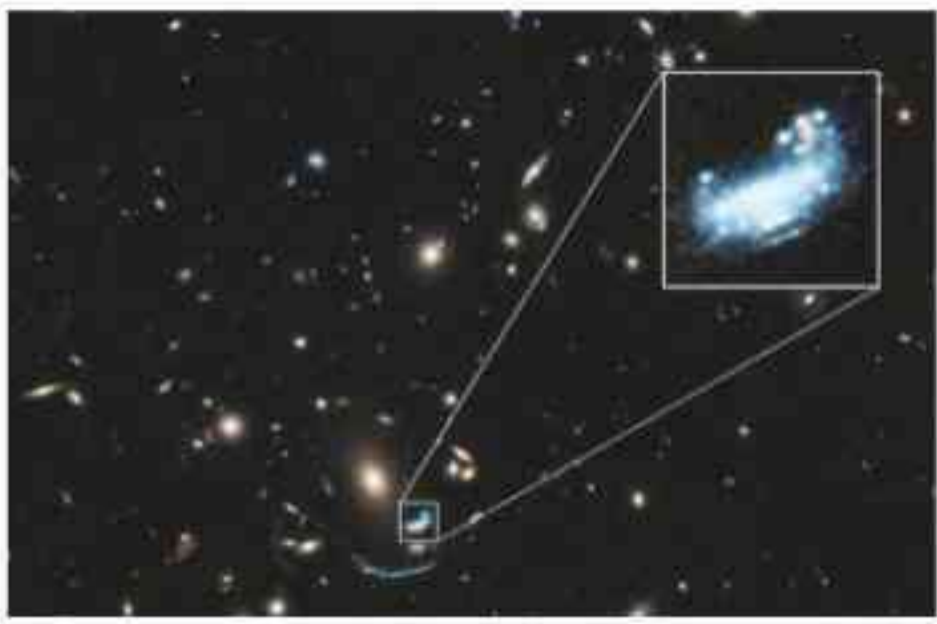
#ExpressExplained

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THIS WORD MEANS

GRAVITATIONAL LENSING

A natural phenomenon that magnifies light around galaxies. NASA plans to use it to study how Sun formed



A Hubble Space Telescope image of the galaxy SDSS J1226+2152, being magnified and distorted by the immense gravity of a galaxy cluster in front of it. It is one of four galaxies that will be studied with Webb. NASA

USING NASA's James Webb Space Telescope as a sort of time machine, researchers plan to investigate how new stars are born. For this, they will take the help of a natural phenomenon called "gravitational lensing". The phenomenon occurs when a huge amount of matter, such as a massive galaxy or cluster of galaxies, creates a gravitational field that distorts and magnifies the light from objects behind it, but in the same line of sight, NASA explained on its website. In effect, these are natural, cosmic telescopes; they are called gravitational lenses. These large celestial objects will magnify the light from distant galaxies that are at or near the peak of star formation. The effect allows researchers to study the details of early galaxies too far away to be seen otherwise with even the most powerful space telescopes.

"We're studying four galaxies that appear much, much brighter than they actually are, because they've been highly magnified up to 50 times. We'll use gravitational lenses to study how those galaxies are forming their stars, and how that star formation is distributed across the galaxies," principal investigator Jane Rigby said in a NASA statement.

The Milky Way today forms the equivalent of one Sun every year, but in the past, that rate was up to 100 times greater. NASA now plans to look billions of years into the past in order to understand how our Sun formed. The programme is called Targeting Extremely Magnified Panchromatic Lensed Arcs and Their Extended Star Formation, or TEMPLATES. While it is an acronym, the meaning of TEMPLATES goes deeper, NASA said — the programme will set a template for future studies.

TIP FOR READING LIST

HOW MIGRATION SHAPED EUROPE

MIGRATION HAS long been acknowledged as part of the history of the United States, but in Europe, it is often seen as something transient or recent, or compartmentalised in various component countries. Peter Gatrell, a historian at the University of Manchester, sets out to explode such myths. *The Unsettling of Europe: The Great Migration, 1945 to the Present* looks at how modern European history has been shaped by migrants, whether moving from one part of a country to another, between European countries, or from another continent. It argues that migrants have played a critical role in rebuilding Europe's prosperity, and are an important part of the continent's cultural and social sphere.

The book is packed with individual accounts of migrants of their experiences

across a period of more than six decades between World War II and the recent refugee crisis in European countries. These include stories of forced relocation in the postwar period, colonists returning to "mother countries", economic migrants from developing countries, the expansion of the European Union, Indian-origin migrants coming from East Africa.



The book also retraces the history of xenophobia in Europe, recounting controversial assertions by Winston Churchill and Charles de Gaulle, the 1968 'Rivers of Blood' speech, and the recent anti-immigrant rhetoric across the continent. Europe, Gatrell says, has had a record of welcoming migrants when it needed them, only to act uncharitably during economic downturns.

AMITABH SINHA
PUNE, AUGUST 25

DURING PRIME MINISTER Narendra Modi's visit to Paris last week, a substantial part — nine out of 34 paragraphs — of the joint statement by India and France was dedicated to the related issues of climate change, biodiversity, renewable energy, and ocean resources. It talked about the two countries' commitment to enhanced climate actions, their support for new low-carbon technologies, and their ongoing efforts to accelerate development and deployment of renewable energy. It mentioned the need for sustainable use of marine resources, acknowledging the link between environment and security, and promised to work towards "ocean governance".

The two sides also promised to develop, by next year, strategies for containing their greenhouse gases in the long-term period, possibly for the next 30 or 50 years. From India's point of view at least, a longer-term low-carbon pathway would be a new development.

Countries & climate targets

Under the 2015 Paris Agreement on climate change, which will come into force next year, every signatory country is supposed to declare and implement a climate action plan, called Nationally Determined Commitments (NDCs). Until now, countries have mostly announced their targets for 2025 or 2030. India's declared targets, for example, are for 2030. It has said it would bring down its emission intensity, or emission per unit of GDP, by 33 to 35 per cent by 2030 compared to 2005 levels. It has further promised to ensure that at least 40 per cent of its electricity in 2030 would be generated from non-fossil sources, and to create an additional carbon sink of 2.5 to 3 billion tonnes through forests. Each of these actions, and many more for which specific targets have not been declared, would contribute in reducing India's greenhouse gas emissions.



Prime Minister Narendra Modi with French President Emmanuel Macron at Chateau de Chantilly, near Paris, last week. AP

All other signatories to the Paris Agreement have declared similar action plans. NDCs have to be updated every five years. The first set of NDCs were declared in 2015 ahead of the climate change conference in Paris. Countries will have to update these next year. The Paris Agreement asks all signatories to ensure that successive NDCs represent a progression from their current targets. Countries have also been asked to evolve a common time-frame for their action plans. Successive NDCs, therefore, would all be five-year or ten-year action plans.

Longer-term vision

It has long been argued that countries need to finalise and commit to longer-term climate targets, over 30-year or 50-year time horizons. This will not just help in bringing more predictability into climate actions but also make it easy to monitor whether the world was progressing adequately to avoid the catastrophic impacts of climate change. It is argued that short-term targets can lack

the urgency of the task, and can delay ambitious action, so that a couple of decades later, the climb could become so steep that it would be impossible to scale.

In this context, there is a growing clamour to put pressure on the big emitters — China, the United States, European Union, India, Russia, Brazil, Australia — to come up with long-term action plans, in particular to aim for net-zero emissions in the year 2050. The noise is strongest in Europe, since it is the biggest combined emitter from the developed country group after the United States, which has announced a withdrawal from the Paris Agreement under the Trump administration. As part of its NDCs, the European Union of 27 countries has set a combined target of 40 per cent reduction in its greenhouse gas emissions by 2030 from the 1990 levels. Last year, however, it also came up with a long-term vision, saying Europe would aim to become climate-neutral, or attain the goal of net-zero emissions, by 2050.

Two months ago, the United Kingdom

became the first major economy to legislate a law to make itself climate-neutral by 2050. It had been previously aiming to achieve an 80 per cent reduction from the 1990 levels.

As climate-induced extreme weather events bring in more and more disasters across the world, the demand for longer-term commitments on climate action has been increasing. Two recent reports by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) — on the feasibility of containing global rise in temperatures to within 1.5°C from pre-industrial times, and another on state of climate-induced land degradation — have also stressed the need for more urgent and ambitious climate action in longer term.

Long-term action in India

India, being a developing country, is treated differently from developed country parties like the US, European Union or Australia in the Paris Agreement. It is not obligated to take as ambitious targets as the developed world. But India also happens to be the third biggest emitter of greenhouse gases, after China and the United States, if the European Union is not counted as one entity. As such, there have been demands from India, as well as other major developing economies such as Brazil and South Africa, to also come up with longer-term commitments.

In fact, there was a move from France to encourage India to make a commitment like this in the joint statement itself, but New Delhi resisted the pressure. India says, being a developing country, it was already doing much more than many developed countries, and committing to anything more than that was likely to hamper its development imperatives. It has also said that it was on course for achieving all its targets under its NDC well in time, and may even over-achieve them. But New Delhi is also conscious of the fact that the developed countries are far from delivering on their climate promises, especially on their obligation to provide money and technology to help developing and poor countries in fighting climate change.

TELLING NUMBERS

Counting Amazon fires, assessing forest lost

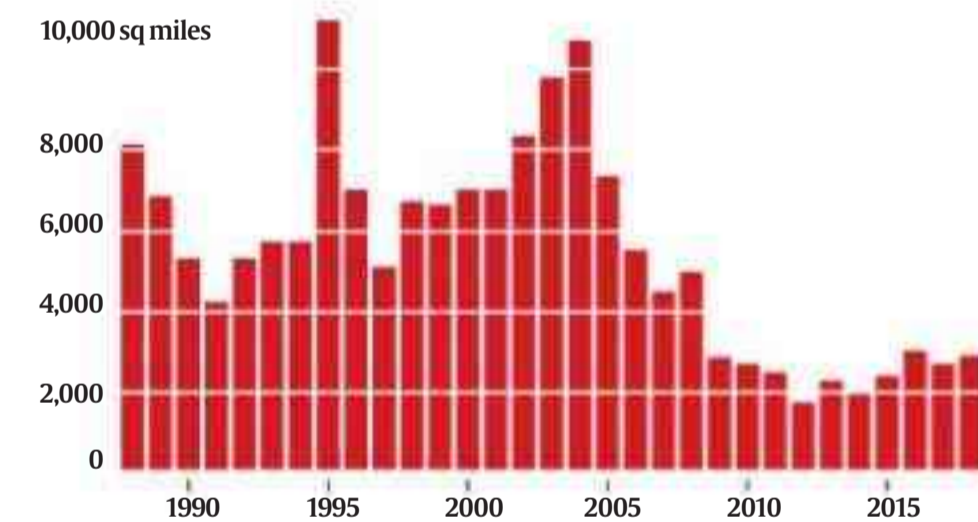
EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, AUGUST 25

AS FIRES rage in the Amazon rainforest, alarming the world and finally prompting Brazil President Jair Bolsonaro to deploy fire-fighting troops, various agencies have been assessing the scale of the disaster. They have been using several metrics — the number of fires, the area likely affected, and the extent of forest lost over the years. The implications are immense as the rainforest contributes 20% of the oxygen in the atmosphere, stores over 450 tonnes carbon per hectare, and plays a vital role in the global water cycle.

Number of fires

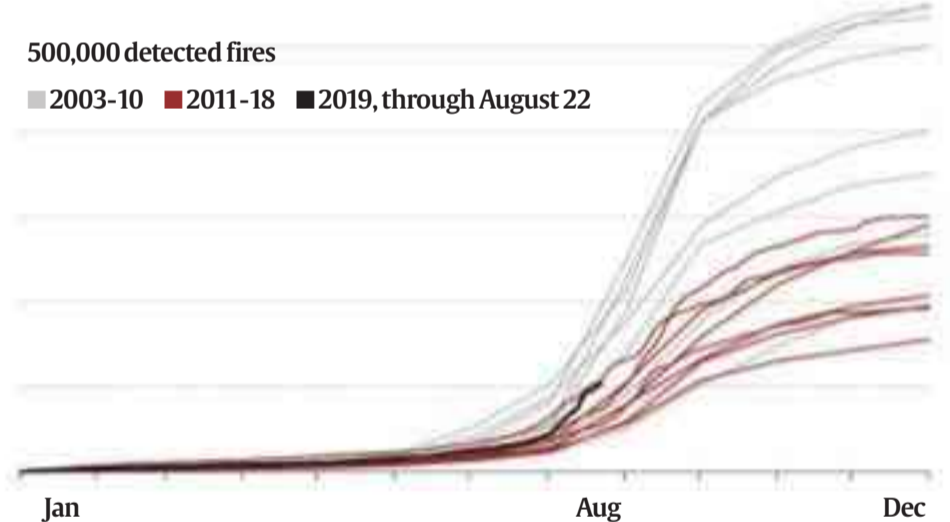
More than 74,000 fires have been recorded by the Brazilian Space Research Agency (INPE) between January and August, BBC reported. There has been an 84 per cent increase in the number of fires compared with the same period in 2018. Most of these fires have been in

ANNUAL DEFORESTATION IN THE BRAZILIAN AMAZON



Source: Brazilian Space Research Agency (INPE) and Global Fire Emissions Database via The New York Times

CUMULATIVE NUMBER OF FIRES EACH YEAR (AMAZON)



the Amazon region. In the region, the number of fires this year is 35% higher than the corresponding eight-month average since 2010.

Area deforested

According to scientists from the University of Maryland quoted by *The New*

York Times, most of the fires are on agricultural land where the forest had already been cleared. "Most of this is land use that have replaced rain forest," *The NYT* quoted Matthew Hansen of the University a saying. Amazon deforestation began in earnest in the 1970s, reaching its peak rate at the end

of the 1990s and the start of the 2000s. In 2004, about 28,000 sq km of forest had been cleared in Brazil. Deforestation then slowed down before picking up again in 2014, but it never reached the same level as the previous decade, Reuters reported attributing these numbers to INPE.

In economic slowdown, a back story about falling investor confidence

HARISH DAMODARAN
NEW DELHI, AUGUST 25

INVESTMENT, unlike consumption, satisfies no immediate want. The businessman putting his money today is basically taking a bet on the future, when it would start yielding returns. Such bets are a function of the "state of confidence" at the time of investment. The investor has to be reasonably, if not absolutely, certain about the prospective yields — again based on today's knowledge of tomorrow.

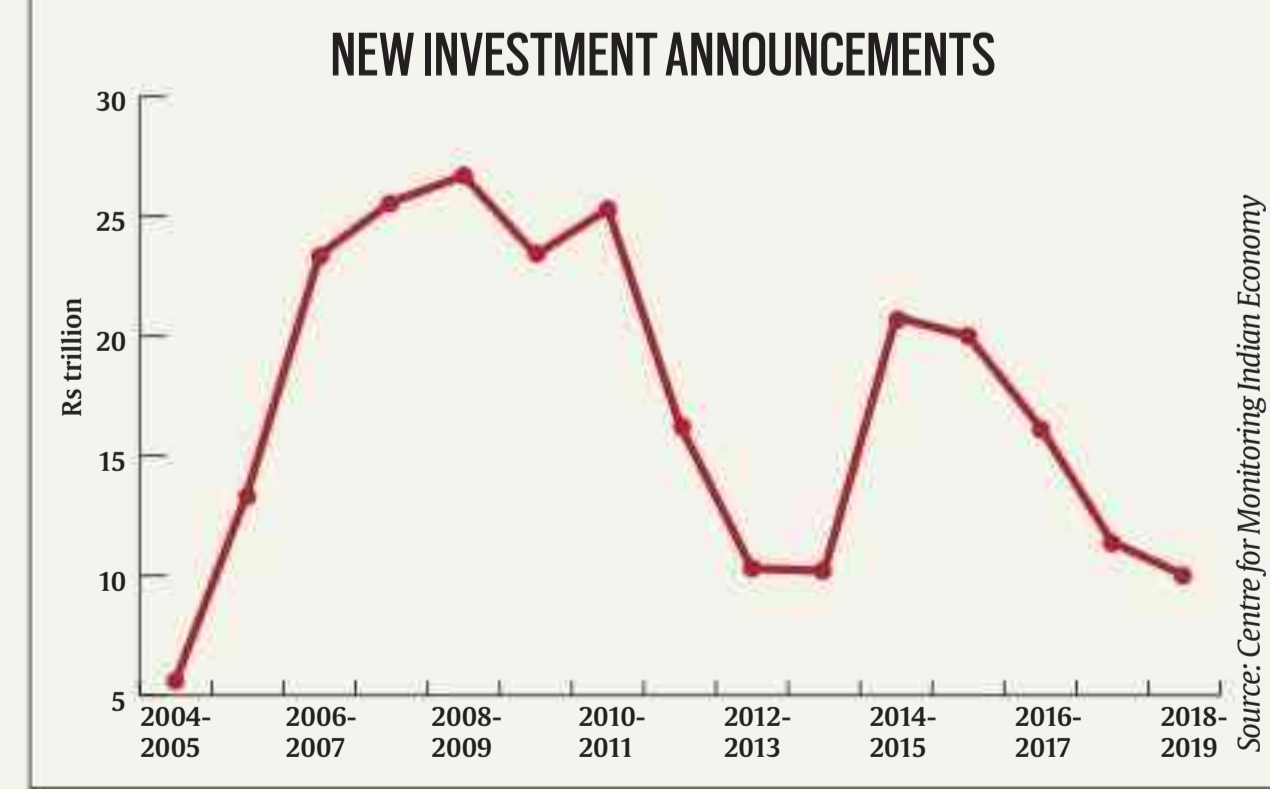
The longer the time horizon, the more uncertain is the above knowledge. As John Maynard Keynes famously wrote, "our basis of knowledge for estimating the yield ten years hence of a railway, a copper mine, a textile factory, the goodwill of a patent medicine, an Atlantic liner, a building in the City of London amounts to little and sometimes to nothing".

India's current economic slowdown is showing because of consumption spending clearly falling, be it on cars or Rs 5 biscuit packs. But the crisis goes back longer, from the time companies stopped investing. Investment is what creates jobs and incomes. These, then, get spent and go into the pockets of others, who, in turn, fuel further consumption and income generation. As this flow of incomes from hand to hand

expands the market, the "state of confidence" for businessmen to invest also goes up, reinforcing the virtuous cycle.

A good indicator of "state of confidence" is new investment proposals. Their value, according to the Centre for Monitoring Indian Economy, fell from Rs 20 lakh crore in 2015-16, to Rs 16.2 lakh crore, Rs 11.4 lakh crore and Rs 10 lakh crore in the following three fiscals. During April-June this year, new projects announced (not all get off the ground) amounted to a mere Rs 74,000 crore, against Rs 3,45,000 crore in the same quarter of 2018-19.

The stalling of the growth engine, in other words, started from around 2015-16. The accompanying chart shows that business confidence did revive in the initial two years of the Narendra Modi-led government, even if the new project proposals may not have scaled the "animal spirits" levels from 2006-07 to 2010-11. Subsequently, though, there has been a steep drop, with the new investment announcements in 2018-19 below even those during the last two UPA years of 2012-13 and 2013-14. The low investor confidence has spilled over now to consumers as well. When investments dry up and people see no new jobs being created, with existing employees also getting laid off, their confidence to spend takes a knock. The slowdown, thus, becomes visible and the earlier virtuous cycle is replaced with a vicious



downward spiral of contraction in consumer spending, incomes, jobs and investment.

Fixing this mess, as Chief Economic Adviser Krishnamurthy Subramanian points out, cannot happen through consumption. Consumers will not spend unless they feel confident about jobs and incomes; the government's prodding banks to reduce interest rates is unlikely to make them take loans to buy homes or vehicles. Reviving the investment cycle is what the economy desperately needs.

But the question to ask is: Who will invest? Investment, as already noted, is a function of confidence about prospective yields from capital expenditures incurred today. Entrepreneurs make their investment decisions based on long-term expectations — and these are often formed by simply taking the existing situation and projecting it to the future.

Suzuki, in 2017, opened its third five-lakh-cars-per-annum car plant in India at Hansalpur, Gujarat. Would it have commis-

sioned this — on top of Maruti Suzuki's Gurugram and Manesar facilities in Haryana that can together produce 15.8 lakh units — in 1997? The answer is no. Any investment is limited by the size of the market it caters to. The time horizon of investors — including Japanese firms known for their long-range planning — is rarely more than ten years. In 1997, Maruti had an installed capacity of just 2.5 lakh vehicles. Even if Suzuki knew that the Indian passenger vehicle market was to grow to 30 lakh-plus units two decades later, the Hansalpur plant would have got built in 2017, not 1997. The Manesar unit, too, came up only in 2007, when the market was "seen" to have expanded enough at that point in time.

In the current situation — where "animal spirits" have swung from the spontaneous optimism of 2006-11 and 2014-16, to extreme risk aversion — the private sector is unlikely to commit to any significant investment for a considerable period. It would require somebody else with a truly long-term investment time horizon, then, to take up the slack. That somebody, who is oblivious to yields or would not extrapolate these from the prevailing situation, can only be the government/public sector.

Consider China. In 1990, its annual per capita GDP, at \$318, was lower than India's \$368, as per World Bank data. But cut to 2018, China's per capita of \$9,771 was nearly five times India's \$2,016. This happened on

the back of an investment-driven growth model, which even Subramanian's Economy Survey for 2018-19 has highlighted. What it does not, however, capture is the role of state-owned enterprises that invested heavily — whether in aluminum smelters and steel mills, empty airports and bullet trains, ghost towns and highways to nowhere, or in developing a homegrown telecom equipment and semiconductor industry — as part of an almost deliberate strategy to create excess capacity. Only they, not private enterprise, could have done that over an extended period, by which time China's GDP had soared from \$361 billion to \$13.6 trillion (India's has gone up from \$321 billion to \$2.7 trillion between 1990 and 2018).

India can definitely do with more public investment, especially in the given situation. But there are three major issues here. The first is, of course, resources: Can, and will, the government risk a further slippage in its fiscal deficit targets? The second has to do with state capacity: Do public sector undertakings have the necessary project execution ability and managers of the calibre of a K L Rao, E Sreedharan or Verghese Kurien today? Third, even assuming they have, are there enough shovel-ready projects, with land acquisition and statutory clearances complete, that can be taken up for immediate execution?

There's probably not much time left to debate.

The Indian EXPRESS

FOUNDED BY

RAMNATH GOENKA

BECAUSE THE TRUTH INVOLVES US ALL

MR JAITLEY

Politician, lawyer and humanist — he had a keen sense of the argument across the aisle

ARUN JAITLEY, WHO died on Saturday at 66, will be remembered as the lawyer-politician who made the sharpest of cases for the party he bore life-long allegiance to, while easily reaching across the political divide. When the BJP was still struggling to make its electoral mark and was still seen as politically "untouchable", he contributed to crafting the arguments that helped power its acceptability and rise in the public-political sphere, and also made it look more coalitionable. As leader of Opposition, during the UPA regime, Jaitley was not just forceful and articulate in Parliament, he was also the debater with a keen sense of the argument across the aisle. As minister in BJP governments at the Centre, he helmed many crucial portfolios, with distinction and poise, and his contributions, like the GST and IBC frameworks, will endure. He became the virtual number two in the Narendra Modi cabinet, till he had to step back due to ill health and Amit Shah moved into the slot. As an organisation man, he was the one his party turned to, more often than not — to strategise for important elections, and to put out the fires within and without.

All through a remarkable journey, as he grew from a student leader who went to jail for the entire period of the Emergency, to the promising second rung leader of the Vajpayee-Advani era, to the prominent power centre in the Modi era, what stood out was Jaitley's affability and ease in straddling different worlds and becoming a bridge between them. This ability is increasingly precious and rare in times more polarised and polarising. Jaitley seemed as comfortable intervening in public debates on the BJP's core ideological issues — one of his last blog posts was in defence of the Modi government's controversial abrogation of Kashmir's special status — as he was in engaging leaders of business and industry and high technology, or in stitching caste coalitions with regional leaders, many of whom did not share the BJP's worldview, but whom he had befriended during his participation in the JP movement against the Indira Gandhi-led Congress regime. He was a staunch and effective critic of the Congress, while playing to the hilt the role of the ebullient and knowing insider of the "Lutyen's elite" — a powerful clique, both imagined and real, that successive Congress regimes are seen to have patronised and presided over, and which his own party, under Modi, has openly challenged and disdained.

For the BJP, the loss is enormous, especially so because it follows in the wake of the deaths, in recent months, of Ananth Kumar, Manohar Parrikar and Sushma Swaraj — all were leaders groomed to take the BJP into the future. For India's public-political life, Jaitley's going away leaves an empty space that will not be easily filled. Of a frontline political leader whose enjoyment of the political bout meant that he was not just tolerant of, but hospitable to, the opponent.

A TWO-WAY STREET

India and France have equal stakes in building a strong partnership on bilateral, regional and global issues

PRIME MINISTER NARENDRA Modi's fourth visit to France in a little over five years marks the consolidation of a relationship that had offered much promise for so long. Although the two sides had declared a strategic partnership way back in 1998, Delhi and Paris had struggled to take full advantage of its many possibilities. That has begun to change under Modi and President Emmanuel Macron. If Macron's visit to Delhi last year raised the level of ambition, Modi's visit last week saw the intensification of efforts to advance civil nuclear cooperation, enhance engagement in civilian and security dimensions of outer space, and outline a new road map for bilateral cooperation in cybersecurity and digital technology. Framing this bilateral cooperation in strategic areas is the deepening political cooperation on regional issues.

French empathy for India's concerns on cross-border terrorism and the external destabilisation of Kashmir has seen consequential results. Paris has offered unstinted support for India on targeting the sources of violent extremism in Pakistan and helped limit the international backlash against Delhi's effort to rewrite the rules of engagement in J&K. This stands in contrast to Russia's growing ambivalence on the issues between India and Pakistan. Russia's deepening ties with China, amid sharpening tensions between Delhi and Beijing, are casting a shadow over its South Asia policies. The US, which had made a definitive tilt towards India on its disputes with Pakistan during the last two decades, appears shaky under President Donald Trump. Seeking to extricate itself from Afghanistan, it appears eager to please Pakistan and Trump is serving up reheated illusions about mediating the Kashmir question between Delhi and Islamabad.

The relations between Delhi and Paris are not a one-way street. France has reasons to see Delhi as a strong partner on bilateral, regional and global issues. A rapidly expanding economy makes India a valuable commercial partner—in a range of sectors including high technology, defence and the unfolding digital revolution. On the regional front, Paris is as concerned as Delhi at the rising Chinese profile in the Indo-Pacific. It would like to work with India to offer credible alternatives to Chinese economic and military assistance in the region. On the international front, France is deeply concerned about the breakdown of the global order under relentless assault from Trump's unilateralism. Macron's decision to have Modi as a special invitee at the G-7 summit is part of the French effort to mobilise India's political weight in building a new "alliance for multilateralism" with like-minded countries. Modi and Macron have equal stakes in building on this agenda.

A shishya's tribute

Arun Jaitley taught me that at work, in politics or otherwise, you can't rest on your past successes



NIRMALA SITHARAMAN

EVER SINCE SATURDAY noon, when I got the phone call — which despite his prolonged and brave battle with illness, I didn't think I'd ever get — I've been reflecting on what Arun ji and I had in common. No amount of introspection has led me to any answers.

Yet, if mentorship is the hallmark of a political career, I've had the best. Did I have a role in the selection of the mentor? None at all, and that is where the role of Providence is.

I come from the country's south, sometimes distant in its connect and preoccupations with the political culture of the north. "Are you a 'TamBram' from Mylapore," he'd asked me on more than one occasion, even after a few years of my having worked closely with him. It was a genuine query that, at times, gave way to light-hearted ribbing at a stereotypical contrast in our sensibilities.

I was, and to a large extent, still am, an alien to Delhi's social circuit, with whom he shared a wonderful rapport, given the gregarious entertainer and raconteur that he was. I'm not a lawyer either, to a lot of whom he was a generous senior, apart from being a role model, given his undeniable legal acumen.

I hardly knew any leader of "stature" in Delhi's political world when I first came to the capital, as a national spokesperson in 2010.

But his *shishya* I became, without doubt. Once in my early days in the party, I prepared a version of a political resolution only to have him send it back to me, saying that the party needed a draft resolution and "not a term paper". We were too close to the deadline already, but despite the pressures of time, somehow, Arun ji knew how to extract the best from me.

Given his legal training perhaps, he was a brilliant speed-reader, with a complete

hold over comprehension. If I laboured a point he'd already grasped, his sense of impatience was palpable. But Arun ji would never stop me — or a few others like me, for that matter — from finishing our piece.

We've also disagreed on matters, but he never gave me the feeling that he contradicted me. Even at his most candid, his clarity of thought and manner of delivery were wedded together so seamlessly that he made sure you didn't take his disagreement personally.

In a city known for its ego and *tu jaanta nahi mein kaun hoon*, Arun ji, for all the heights he'd reached, made sure to communicate with consideration, even when you were wrong, and especially when he knew he was right.

He was also very easy to talk to, given his varied interests. In 2017, after a visit to Russia, I had brought back a photo-book of the collections in the State Hermitage Museum of St Petersburg for him. Before he even opened its cover, he rattled off the names of at least three bookstores overseas — in Paris, Tokyo, and London. He waxed eloquent about each of them, and pointedly asked me where had I got this one from.

His inherent security in showing generosity to his juniors is perhaps encapsulated in one very vivid memory I have: The day I took charge at the Raksha Mantralaya, it was Arun ji who affectionately walked me through the corridors of the majestic South Block and on entering the room, drew the chair and gestured for me to take the seat.

There was nothing Arun ji stood to gain by taking me under his wing, so to speak. Yet, he did. Without ever being overbearing, he'd step in to guide me. With a quick phone-call, or with that dismissive frown on his face, to tell me that I should let some things go, or that I could do better, and to discourage me from negative thought.

His well-known penchant for banter

and *gup shup* was never to hurt or malign anybody. When it came to party karyakartas, he was fiercely protective of them, and would do anything to safeguard their legitimate interests.

In person, though, he was never proficient with praise. When I did something well enough by his standards — initially a press conference, later a parliamentary answer — his pat-on-the-back, as it were, would be limited to a "hmm" and a nod.

That was enough, especially because it reinforced to me the biggest lesson there is to remember: At work, in politics or otherwise, you can't rest on your past successes. There were always ten other things that needed our attention.

Sometime between 2011-2012, as I was on the way back after a particularly tough day in the TV studios, I got a call from him. He asked if I was alright, and told me to go see him the next day. I did so promptly. What he said then will stay with me a long time: "Don't try to win the evening with an argument," he said. "Gently put the facts across, and you'll win the day." This was a time when there was no "power" yet on the horizon, for the BJP. Arun ji always thought of persuasion and ideology as more powerful than noise and catchy remarks to make a point.

He held on to nuance with élan, made subtlety a powerful instrument, and believed that a turn-of-phrase would endear you to the listener. How relevant! For him, etiquette and grace were never to be compromised. And neither were the principles of integrity in public life. I've heard him use the phrase "squeaky-clean" for honest people. It was a quality he deeply valued.

Arun Jaitley, my *guru*, my mentor, and my moral strength, is no more. Ever grateful for the role you played, Arun ji.

The writer is the Union Finance Minister

PLACE WITH A PAST

Understanding Kashmir's rich and long history is imperative in these times



IN GOOD FAITH
SANJAY NAHAR

THERE IS A lack of awareness about the history of Kashmir among people. This was reflected immediately after the recent developments in Jammu and Kashmir hit the headlines. In fact, Indian historians have also been neglecting Kashmir — and important aspects of its culture — in their discourse.

Pandit Kalhana, who first chronicled the history of Kashmir in *Rajatarangini*, sometime in the 12th century, wrote about the land: "Kashmir may temporarily buckle under pressure. However, it cannot be subjugated by using force." In the context of the unsavoury remarks made about Kashmiri women recently, one needs to check a few historical references about them. Kalhana said that the Kashmiri women who danced in Shiva temples to celebrate their devotion during the pre-Islamic period, also had the guts to revolt against unjust kings.

According to the Nilamata Purana, the oldest mythological scripture documenting the history of the land, the first king of Kashmir, Gonanda, was a contemporary of the Kauravas and Pandavas. He and Yudhishtir were coronated at the same time. It also mentions that Gonanda was a relative of Jarasandha, the king of Magadha. During a battle between Krishna and Jarasandha, the latter sought help from Gonanda, who attacked Dwaraka. Gonanda was killed by Balarama in the battle. Damodara succeeded Gonanda. To avenge his father's death, Damodara launched an attack on Dwaraka. However, he, too, met the same fate as his father. His pregnant wife, Yashomati, was pardoned by Krishna. She

gave birth to a boy named Gonanda II, who became the new king. Krishna told those who opposed his decision to support Yashomati that the land of Kashmir symbolised Parvati, Shiva's consort, while the Kashmiri king was a partial incarnation of Shiva. Hence, he should not be punished under any circumstance. Instead, they needed to establish good relations with him.

Moving away from the puranas, Kashmir has influenced Indian history even as almost every branch of knowledge flourished in the region, enriching Kashmiri culture. The Naga, the Kush, the Kapisha tribes had inhabited this land which has been a melting pot of many religious streams. Since the Vedic period, Shaivism, Jainism, Buddhism and Islam have flourished here.

Mesmerised by the beauty of Kashmir, Mughal emperor Jahangir had said that he was ready to forsake all his empire, if only someone offered Kashmir in exchange. The story goes that he had exclaimed, "Gar Firdaus bar-rue zamin ast, hami asto, hamin asto, hamin ast (If there is a heaven on earth, it's here, it's here, it's here)". This land has attracted scholars, seers and religious leaders from across the world. Possessing a rich pre-Vedic culture, Kashmiris also welcomed the Vedic religion, moulding it in their own unique style. Following the rise of Buddhism, Kashmir greeted it too. The religion developed into the Mahayana and Vajrayana sects and spread elsewhere. When Kashmir embraced Islam, it maintained its pre-Islamic cultural traditions, thus shaping Islam in a unique fashion.

The archaeologist and historian Aurel Stein had observed that Kashmir is the only state in India which has preserved its history

of over 5,000 years. Scholars from across the world like Stein, Buhler, Walter Lawrence were attracted to Kashmir because of its history. What ancient Greece has been to the Western world, Kashmir has been to India. Jawaharlal Nehru said that Kashmir had led India intellectually for almost two millennia.

Kashmir also has a glorious political history — for instance, the triumphs of Lalitaditya-Muktapada (725-761). Kalhana says, "Lalitaditya achieved a reputation that this country had never attained before. He invited many scholars to Kashmir. After defeating Yasovarman, the emperor of Kannauj, he took the scholars of Kannauj to Kashmir. One of them was a foremost Kashmiri scholar and the epitome of Shaivism, Abhinav Gupta's ancestor, who originally belonged to Tryambakeshwar in Maharashtra, writes scholar RC Dhere in his book *Tryambak Math*."

The Kashmiri people fondly remember another golden era in their history, the reign of King Zain-ul-Abidin or Bud Shah from 1420 to 1470. He ensured justice to the Kashmiri Pandits, whom his father Sultan Sikander had persecuted and forced into exile. He brought them back into Kashmir. Poet-saints such as Lalleshwari and Nund Rishi also carried forward the tradition of reconciling various ideologies. Marathi scholar Aruna Dhere, who edited the Marathi version of *Rajatarangini*, says: "Before establishing a bond of affection with the Kashmiri people, one needs to understand the underlying innocence but rebellious nature of the Kashmiri people. It is the outcome of the history of thousands of years."

The writer is founder-president of Sarhad, a Pune-based NGO that works in education

FREEZE FRAME

E P UNNY



AUGUST 26, 1979, FORTY YEARS AGO

PRESIDENT VS JANATA
THE RELATIONS BETWEEN the President and Janata Party, which has missed the opportunity to regain power because of Sanjiva Reddy's decision to dissolve the Lok Sabha, continue to be strained. While the President has made it known that he cannot now consider the demand for the replacement of the caretaker government, the Janata president Chandra Shekhar, said that his party would take the issue to the people. The demand for replacement has also been made by Indira Gandhi's Congress. Sanjiva Reddy apparently had explored the possibility of inducting an interim government before he dissolved the Lok Sabha, but his efforts floundered because

of the opposition from Jagjivan Ram.
CRISIS IN CONGRESS
A LARGE NUMBER of Congressmen feel there should be a total change in the Congress leadership. Otherwise, the Congress will not be able to do well in the elections — the present leadership has failed miserably, they say. Unless the Congress projects a new and dynamic image, the party has no future. Some of them are going to demand change in the leadership in the AICC session in Bangalore next month if nothing happens before that. The leadership, especially the party president, has been under fire for quite some time. Even during the last phase of the unity talks

the anti-unity section demanded the resignation of the Congress president.
TARGETING NEWSPAPERS
FORMER HARYANA CHIEF minister, Devi Lal, threatened to call for a boycott of newspapers and make a bonfire of copies if they persisted in criticising the prime minister, Charan Singh, and projecting Jagjivan Ram as the saviour of "Harijans". Devi Lal, addressing a news conference in Chandigarh, attacked three Jalandhar language dailies. These dailies had not only been responsible for the creation of Pakistan, he asserted, their writings had also contributed to the reorganisation of Punjab which gave birth to Haryana.

13 THE IDEAS PAGE

WHAT THE OTHERS SAY

"Pakistan needs justice for Qandeel, and for the many more women whose lives are forever altered or cut short by crimes covered up by the unbearably toxic burden of chadar aur chardiwari."
— DAWN

He helped BJP set the narrative

Arun Jaitley excelled in all his roles. I have never seen someone as well prepared as him in the party's internal meetings



NITIN GADKARI

I FIRST HEARD of Arun Jaitley during the Emergency. He was a few years senior to me and was seen as one of the sharpest and most articulate young leaders of the ABVP. As the years went by and the turmoil of the Emergency years settled down, Arun ji went on to carve a niche for himself as a lawyer. His sound logic and structured, razor-sharp arguments led to him being recognised as one of the top lawyers of the country. At the young age of 37, Arun ji was appointed by the then prime minister, VP Singh, as the additional solicitor general. However, Arun ji's heart was always in politics.

By the late 1990s, Arun ji was seen as among the finest spokespersons of our party. His political arguments carried a well-laid-out structure and would be laced with a fair dose of humour and wit. He maintained dignity at all times and never attacked below the belt.

As the Maharashtra BJP president, I would often interact with Arun ji on various issues, though frequent meetings were not possible. My interactions with Arun ji increased in 2010 when I became the national BJP president and shifted to Delhi.

I was new to national politics and needed guidance. In Delhi, he was my trusted friend and senior associate whom I could blindly trust and speak my heart out to, without any hesitation. There were occasions when I was confronted with a tricky issue. Arun ji was always there for me in such situations with his suggestions and guidance.

Arun ji was an intellectual reservoir for us. His areas of expertise were so vast that often the range of his knowledge would surprise me. Law, finance and, defence were subjects in which he had special expertise. On his day, I would rate him as better than the best that India has ever produced in these fields.

In fact, as party president, I was blessed to have two exceptional Leaders of Opposition in Arun ji and Sushma ji. I would follow their speeches in Parliament closely. Sadly, both of them have left us in the last few days.

Arun ji was one of the best parliamentarians I have known. All his speeches contained verifiable facts and his demeanour carried immense dignity. I would like to

mention three of his finest speeches that I can recall. The first speech was in 2008 in the immediate aftermath of the 26/11 terror attacks, when he censured the UPA government for reducing India to a weak state; the second speech was in 2011 during the Lokpal debate where he famously said, "If we are creating history, let us not create a bad one." The third speech was the most recent one in January 2019 where he decimated the Opposition attack on the Rafale issue by laying out all the facts threadbare. This speech was made in a condition of deteriorating health, as within days of making it, Arun ji left for the US for treatment.

As party president, I would trust Arun ji completely when it came to media strategy or setting the intellectual narrative. I have never seen someone come as well-prepared as him for the party's internal meetings. He would have in-depth analyses of the issues on the agenda ready with him.

It is noteworthy that unlike many of us, Arun ji was not a career politician. His professional identity was that of one of India's most successful lawyers. Politics was his passion and vocation. That explains why he quit his legal career at its peak to pursue a full-time career in politics. In a matter of years, he went on to become one of India's top politicians. That shows his dedication and focus. Arun ji excelled in all his pursuits and responsibilities as he put his heart and soul into them.

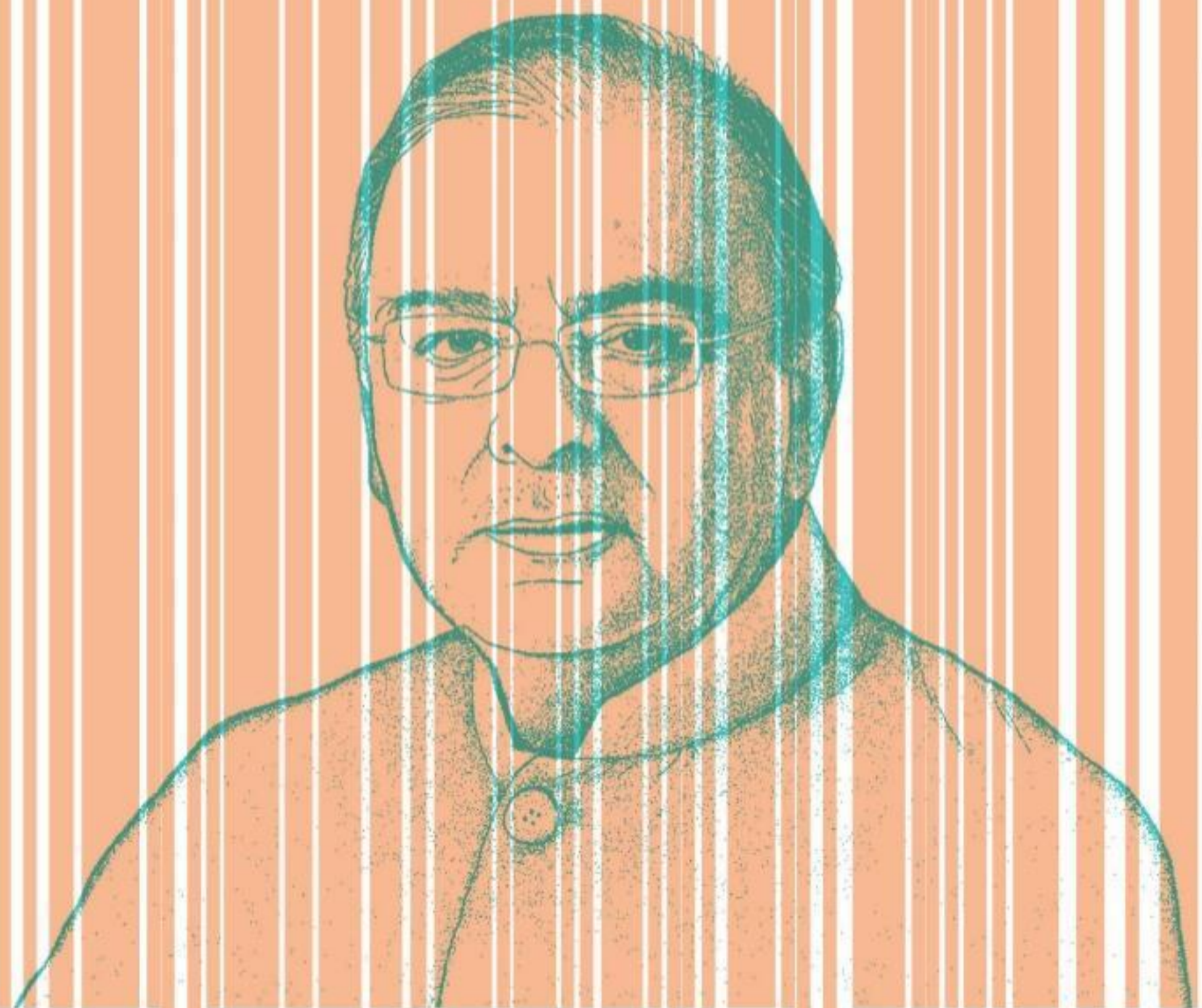
On a personal level, Arun ji and I shared some common traits. Like me, he was a foodie; at times, he disregarded health precautions. He was fascinated by Amritsari street food in much the same way as I love Mumbai street food. Both of us did not carry our political battles beyond the battlefield. Arun ji had friends across the political spectrum. He helped people in need, even if they were his political adversaries. The kind of glowing tributes he has received from Opposition leaders speaks of Arun ji's large-heartedness. His other love was cricket. He was a brilliant cricket administrator.

I was aware of Arun ji's deteriorating health in the last few months. His health condition, however, did not deter him from contributing to our 2019 election campaign. He contributed, as best he could, by helping our spokespersons with regular briefings.

Arun ji opted out of the new government, citing health reasons but offered his help in an informal capacity. That spoke of his selfless nature. He could do anything for the party and the country.

His death has left behind an irreplaceable void in our political narrative.

The writer is the Union Minister for Road Transport, Highways and MSME



CR Sasikumar

My friend, my opponent

Jaitley lived and breathed politics. As Leader of Opposition in Rajya Sabha, he showed himself to be a thinker who understood issues confronting our nation. As minister, he mastered intricacies of several portfolios



KAPIL SIBAL

ARUN JAITLEY, A man of many parts, is no more. The cruel hand of fate has taken him away from our midst.

My association with Arun goes back a long way. I distinctly remember the days when we used to meet Ramnath ji and discuss the state of politics in India. This was the time when the government was targeting *The Indian Express* and Ramnath Goenka was the torchbearer of freedom.

Arun used to brief me on several matters. We were a formidable team. This association continued for many years until we chose our different paths in politics. We belonged to the team of law officers under the National Front government headed by VP Singh, and supported by the BJP, with Soli Sorabjee as the attorney general. I remember Chaudhary Devi Lal, the then deputy prime minister, objected to my being appointed as the additional solicitor general on the ground that my father was close to several Congress leaders. Both Arun and Soli stood by me and informed Dinesh Goswami, the then law minister, that there was no reason why I should be asked to resign. The government was short-lived and within a year, the BJP withdrew support.

Thereafter, I formally joined the Congress party. Arun, wedded to the ideology of the BJP and the party's valiant soldier, drifted

away. Though we were both in the legal profession, we were poles apart when it came to politics. Yet, we continued to be friends. Our respect for each other and what we stood for never diminished.

Arun had both the ability and uncanny knack of garnering information from different sources, which helped him enormously in his career in politics. He knew almost everything about everybody. That did get him into trouble occasionally. But it also helped him to know people's weaknesses and strengths and their association with each other. His relationship with the media was perhaps unmatched and, therefore, his sources of information helped him solve problems that his party faced from time to time. For his friends, he would go to any length, not just to support them but also to empower them.

When the BJP held office at the Centre in 1999-2004, he was a minister in the Union Cabinet. I was in the Opposition, having entered Rajya Sabha in 1998. My entry into politics was lateral but Arun was a natural politician. He breathed politics and lived it. As a minister, he knew how to master the intricacies of the portfolios that he was assigned, both as the commerce minister and the law minister.

But his real rise in politics happened only after he became the Leader of Opposition when the UPA held office at the Centre. His grasp of the subjects that he spoke about, his ability to logically present an argument and be rhetorical when needed are rare qualities in politicians. I do not think that the Rajya Sabha has seen many Leaders of Opposition of his calibre. He could grab the opportunities presented by the moment and turn them into assets not just for his party but also for himself. I think it is in his capacity as the Leader of Opposition that he was nationally

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recognised as one of the few thinkers in the country who understood the issues that confronted our nation. His solutions may not have been ideal but his commitment to the cause of India could never be doubted.

As the finance minister, he found the going very tough. I do not blame him for it. I think the decision to demonetise the currency may not have had his stamp of approval. The downturn in the economy started because of that impetuous decision resulting in a 2 per cent decline in the country's GDP.

He will always be remembered for his sense of balance for he never crossed the *Lakshman Rekha* in politics. While he would never publicly criticise what the government was doing in recent times, I am sure he privately felt that this was not the way forward for our country. His commitment to the BJP was complete and he would, therefore, never be heard criticising the decisions that he may not have agreed with. His was a constructive mind. His political agendas were always for taking India closer to the high table of global politics. But unfortunately, his health did not allow him to realise his dreams.

I met him two weeks ago at his house and we talked about old times, our chats at the Taj Mansingh coffee shop, and the trials and tribulations of politics. He was upfront about his health. Yet he was hoping that things would work out. So was I. His brand of politics was evident when he told me that this country needed the Congress in Opposition. He said that this country needs a two-party system. One party on the left and the other on the right of centre, like in the United States.

His commitment to democratic norms was quite evident. The nation has lost a great son.

The writer, a senior Congress leader, is a former Union minister

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

MISSING ANSWERS

THIS REFERS TO the report 'CBI gets Chidambaram custody for four days' (IE, August 23). No chargesheet or FIR was filed by the CBI or the ED before taking former finance minister P Chidambaram into custody, which puts a question mark on the arrest of the former minister. It is possible that the CBI or the ED might be acting under pressure from the government.

Devendra Khurana, Bhopal

WRONG VIEW

THIS REFERS TO the article 'Empathy stands revoked' (IE, August 23). The writer has sought to portray a dismal picture of Kashmir post revocation of Article 370 on false premises, as if all was rosy and comfortable prior to that. He doesn't know that the very bestowal of special status to J&K by virtue of Article 370 was the result of suppression of strong disapproval and dissent to the grant of such status by a majority of people. It was sheer insolence and conceit of the Nehru-Sheikh Abdullah duo that prevailed over such dissent and special status was granted via Article 370. Sobriety and sagacity of the majority, however, kept the proverbial pressure cooker from bursting in wider national interests.

Ravi Mathur, Ghaziabad, UP

RBI'S TASKS

THIS REFERS TO the report, 'Stimulating demand' (IE, August 25). It is always difficult to decide what a central bank should do, but there is no doubt on the how — "with caution". The Indian financial system is still suffering from the problems caused when last time the authorities tried the unleashing of the "animal spirit", leading to the destruction of shareholder value, scams, NPAs and government bailout. Several recent govern-

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ment and RBI steps diluting the controls were presaging a return to directed lending. The RBI should focus on improving the quality of bank and NBFC governance and risk management, and not tell them how much to expand their business.

Partho Dutta, Kolkata

NO COERCION

THIS REFERS TO the article, 'Victims of an evil system' (IE, August 25). Government servants are supposed to work according to the policies of the leaders but normally they have their own ways since the politicians are not always clean and courageous. However, something must be done to stop such behaviour. Modern techniques must be utilised in investigation to avoid coercive methods.

Subhash Vaid, Noida

VIEW FROM THE NEIGHBOURHOOD



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

IMRAN'S FRUSTRATION

THE CHANGED STATUS of Jammu and Kashmir continues to be a source of both moral outrage, even an assertion of ethical superiority, in the Pakistan media. But, as the consequences of the new reality scripted by New Delhi's actions — the scrapping of special status, the trifurcation of the state — set in, there is also talk in the press in Pakistan of strategies to deal with it.

In its editorial on August 24, *Dawn* remarks on an interview that Imran Khan gave to the *New York Times* in which he expressed "his frustration" at India's rejections of his overtures for peace talks, culminating with the action in Kashmir. "But," remarks the editorial, "while Mr Khan's disappointment is understandable, it is doubtful whether his decision to drop the idea of talks is sensible."

Displaying a commendable consistency in times of polarisation and jingoistic statements, the newspaper sticks to its line — talks are the only solution for the many disputes between India and Pakistan: "While Mr Khan's disappointment is understandable, it is doubtful whether his decision to drop the idea of talks is sensible." But the editorial goes on to say that it is "equally impossible to 'appease' India" and that Pakistan must pursue every diplomatic avenue to highlight the "human rights abuses" in Kashmir.

It adds that "for this, it needs a strong, coherent and consistent strategy, perhaps with input from former diplomats, who have participated in several peace efforts with India without compromising on Pakistan's vision for Kashmir."

CONVOLUTED STRATEGY

Sherry Rehman, a former Pakistani diplomat and the first woman Leader of the Opposition in the country's senate, weighs in on both the political and diplomatic fallout of the situation in Kashmir on August 22 in *The Express Tribune*. Politically, she calls for a unified stand against New Delhi's actions: "Kashmir is a national issue and evokes widespread sentiment in Pakistan. All political parties stand against India's forcible annexation of Kashmir against the will of its people. The resolution passed by the joint session of Parliament reflects this consensus. The government should form a multi-party committee with members who have foreign policy experience to activate the Kashmiri diaspora, meet legislators in P5 countries and international human rights organisations, to highlight the plight of Kashmiris and their right to self-determination under UNSC resolutions."

On the diplomatic front she suggests a host of technical-legal options at Pakistan's

disposal, including the mechanisms under which Islamabad can approach the UNSC, UNHRC, the General Assembly, etc. She then goes on to couch the need for "intelligence gathering" along the LoC as a tool for increasing international opprobrium against India: "With violence in... (Kashmir) likely to rise as curfew restrictions ease, India might divert the world's attention from the indigenous freedom struggle by increasing ceasefire violations along LoC; undertaking a false flag operation in Kashmir; resorting to allegations of cross-border terrorism against Pakistan. To preempt Indian actions, Pakistan must increase intelligence gathering in IoK, especially along the LoC; inform diplomatic missions, including those of the P5, of Indian intentions; highlight the indigenous nature of the freedom movement in Kashmir; and focus on how Indian aggression against the Kashmiri people is the cause of violence in Kashmir."

THE KASHMIRI QUESTION

Subhajt Naskar writing in the *Dhaka Tribune*, on August 18 asks a provocative question: "What about the Kashmiris?" First, he situates the reasons for the dissolution of Article 370 and 35A squarely in the ideological predilections of the RSS and, by extension, a section of the BJP: "The crude obsession of the RSS is that Article 370 formed the very

basis of Kashmir's complex relationship with India as it endowed the region of Jammu and Kashmir with special autonomy and safeguarded the self-determination of Kashmiris. The nullification of Article 35A with Article 370 may further alienate the Kashmiris as it empowered the J&K legislature to define the permanent residents of the state, and their special rights and privileges."

Second, he seems to believe that there is an imminent danger of a demographic change in Kashmir: "In the absence of Art 35A, Kashmir may witness widespread immigration of Hindus into the Valley that eventually will create the hegemony of majority Hindus."

Finally, the article also sees in the move by the Indian government an abandonment of the secular, federal principles that marked the founding of the Republic: "This most recent decision (abrogation of special status) has not only dismantled the Nehruvian notion of peaceful solution of Kashmir but it brought back the idea of communal resettlement to the fore." The article ends with a thought for the people of the Valley: "India has surely in the whole process of forceful assimilation with India, failed the democratic desires of Kashmiris and left the distinct culture of Kashmiriyat far behind. Kashmir continues to remain sandwiched between Hindu-majority India and Muslim-majority Pakistan."