

TELLING NUMBERS

Eradicating malaria by 2050: why study says it can be done

A REPORT in The Lancet concludes that it is possible to eradicate malaria as early as 2050 — or within a generation — with the right strategies and sufficient funding.

Republic of Congo) account for 36 per cent of global cases. On the other hand, 38 countries had incidences of fewer than ten cases per 1,000 population in 2017 and reported just 5% of total malaria deaths.

Modelling a world free from malaria

The report used new modelling to estimate plausible scenarios for the distribution and intensity of malaria in 2030 and 2050. Analyses indicate that socioeconomic and environmental trends, together with improved coverage of malaria interventions, will create a world in 2050 with malaria persisting in pockets of low-level transmission in equatorial Africa.

To achieve eradication by 2050, the report identifies three ways to accelerate the decline in malaria cases. First, the world must improve implementation of malaria control programmes. Second, they must develop and roll out innovative new tools to overcome the biological challenges to eradication. Third, malaria-endemic countries and donors must provide the financial investment needed.

Lower incidence, many cases

Since 2000, global malaria incidence and death rates declined by 36 and 60 per cent, respectively. In 2017, 86 countries reported 219 million cases and 4,35,000 malaria deaths, down from 262 million cases and 8,39,000 deaths in 2000.



There is also inequity, with 29 countries (27 in Africa) accounting for the large majority of new cases and 85 per cent of global deaths in 2017.

TOP 10 BY MALARIA CASES, INCIDENCE, 2017

Table with 5 columns: RANK, COUNTRY, TOTAL CASES*, COUNTRY, CASES PER 1,000. Lists top 10 countries including Nigeria, DR Congo, Mozambique, India, Uganda, Burkina Faso, Ghana, Niger, Cameroon, and Mali.

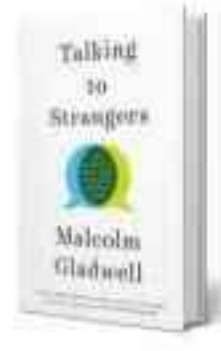
Figures in parentheses are each country's share in global cases (219 million in 2017) Source: WHO Malaria Report 2019 via Lancet

TIP FOR READING LIST

WHY WE MISUNDERSTAND STRANGERS

IN 1938, when Adolf Hitler placed German troops along the Czech border, British Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain flew to meet the German leader to resolve the crisis.

to argue that something is very wrong with the strategies we use to make sense of people whom we don't know. Because we don't know how to talk to strangers, Gladwell argues, we are inviting conflict and misunderstanding.



Talking to Strangers: What We Should Know about the People We Don't Know is a journey through history and news stories

SIMPLY PUT

India vs Pak at UN, since 2014

Ahead of Prime Minister Modi's address to the UN General Assembly, where Pakistan's Imran Khan is expected to bring up Kashmir again, a look at what the two countries have been saying at the UN platform

YASHEE NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 9

ON SEPTEMBER 27, Prime Minister Narendra Modi will address the UN General Assembly (UNGA). An address by Pakistan's Prime Minister Imran Khan will follow.

This will be the first time since 2014 that Modi addresses the UNGA; for the 70th-73rd sessions (2015-18), it was addressed by late External Affairs Minister. The UNGA has frequently been a platform for India-Pakistan jousting, mainly over Jammu and Kashmir.

Modi is back with a stronger majority. Article 370 has been abrogated, Pakistan has been trying to bring international attention to Kashmir, and the ties between the neighbours are strained.

A summary of the UNGA addresses by India and Pakistan over the last five years.

2014 Modi: 'Friendship with neighbours highest priority'

There was speculation that Modi and the then Pakistan PM, Nawaz Sharif, could meet on the UNGA sidelines. They did not. "My government has placed the highest priority on advancing friendship and cooperation with her neighbours," Modi said in his address.

Sharif: 'We cannot draw a veil on the issue of Kashmir'

"Many generations of Kashmiris have lived their lives under occupation, accompanied by violence and abuse of their fundamental rights," Sharif said. "The core issue of Jammu and Kashmir has to be resolved... We cannot draw a veil on the issue of Kashmir, until it is addressed in accordance with the wishes of the people of Jammu and Kashmir."

2015 Swaraj: 'Give up terrorism, sit down and talk'

That year, there were terrorist attacks on a police station on the Jammu-Pathankot



Prime Minister Narendra Modi at the 69th session of the UNGA in 2014. PMO website

2016 Swaraj: 'Egregious abuses in Balochistan'

The year saw attacks in Pathankot and then Uri. Pakistan raised the killing of Hizbul commander Burhan Wani; India responded by criticising Pakistani abuses in Balochistan. "The Prime Minister of Pakistan used this podium to make baseless allegations about human rights violations in my country. I can only say that those accusing others of human rights violations would do well to introspect and see what egregious abuses they are perpetrating in their own country, including in Balochistan," Swaraj said.

Sharif: '3 generations of Kashmiris saw oppression'

Earlier, Sharif had said: "Three generations of Kashmiris have only seen broken promises and brutal oppression... When I assumed office... one of my first priorities was to normalise relations with India... Yet today ceasefire violations along the Line of Control and the Working Boundary are intensifying..."

2017 Swaraj: 'We produced scholars, you produced terrorists'

That year saw Kulbhushan Jadhav sen-

2018 Swaraj: 'Pakistan glorifies killers'

India cancelled a meeting between Foreign Ministers after agreeing to it. After Pakistan's Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi accused India of involvement in the 2014 Peshawar school attack, Swaraj responded: "We are accused of sabotaging the process of talks... Talks with Pakistan have begun many times. If they stopped, it was only because of Pakistan's behaviour... Pakistan glorifies killers; it refuses to see the blood of innocents."

Sharif: 'Will share proof of India violating human rights'

"A new generation of Kashmiris has risen spontaneously against India's illegal occupation — demanding freedom from occupation," Sharif had said. "Burhan Wani, the young leader murdered by Indian forces, has emerged as the symbol of the latest Kashmiri Intifada, a popular and peaceful freedom movement... I would like to inform the General Assembly that Pakistan will share with the Secretary General a dossier containing detailed information and evidence of the gross and systematic violations of human rights committed by Indian forces in occupied Jammu and Kashmir."

2017 Swaraj: 'We produced scholars, you produced terrorists'

That year saw Kulbhushan Jadhav sen-

NRC numbers: what earlier estimates said

SEEMA CHISHTI NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 9

THE FINAL National Register of Citizens (NRC) published on August 31 contained 19,06,657 exclusions, less than half the number of exclusions in the final draft of July 2018.

What is the basis of the assumption that Assam actually has many more "illegals" than the NRC figure of 19 lakh?

The NRC process picked up steam after the Supreme Court order in the Assam Sammilita Mahasangha & Ors vs Union Of India & Ors case (December 17, 2014).

Paragraph 13 of the order quoted from a report submitted to then President K R

Narayanan by the then Governor of Assam, Lt Gen S K Sinha, in 1998: "The dangerous consequences of large scale illegal migration from Bangladesh... need to be empathetically stressed. No misconceived and mistaken notions of secularism should be allowed to come in the way... The spectre looms large of the indigenous people of Assam being reduced to a minority in their home state.

It was in this backdrop, the order noted, that a writ petition was filed in 2000 by (Assam's present Chief Minister) Sarbananda Sonowal "assailing the Constitutional validity of The Illegal Migrants (Determination by Tribunals) Act, 1983 and the rules made thereunder."

In his report, Lt Gen Sinha mentioned an answer in Parliament on May 6, 1997 by then Home Minister Indrajit Gupta, which esti-



An NRC Seva Kendra in Guwahati. Dasarath Deak/Express Archive

mated 10 million illegal immigrants in all of India. The report said "Home Ministry/Intelligence Bureau source, the 10 August 1998 issue of India Today has given the breakdown of these illegal migrants", with "4 mil-

lion" in Assam.

The SC order noted: "On 14th July, 2004, in response to an unstarred question pertaining to deportation of illegal Bangladeshi migrants, the Minister of State, Home Affairs, submitted a statement to Parliament indicating therein that the estimated number of illegal Bangladeshi immigrants into India as on 31st December, 2001 was 1.20 crores, out of which 50 lakhs were in Assam."

On August 31, state BJP president Ranjit Dass said: "In 1991, former Assam Chief Minister Hiteswar Saikia had said there are 30 lakh illegal Bangladeshis in Assam. Then, Congress Home Minister Sriprakash Jaiswal told the Rajya Sabha that 50 lakh illegal Bangladeshis are there in Assam. Even Indrajit Gupta in the H D Deve Gowda government had talked of around 42 lakh illegal foreigners... So how can we today accept the figure of 19 lakh?"

THIS WORD MEANS: VOLFEFE INDEX

Covfefe to Volfeffe: A way to track Trump's Twitter impact on markets

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 9

SOON AFTER midnight on May 31, 2017, United States President Donald Trump posted one his most talked-about tweets: "Despite the constant negative press covfefe". The tweet didn't make much sense, but the non-existent word "covfefe" opened up a universe of interpretations, jokes, and memes.

For the many critics of Trump, "covfefe" rapidly became the symbol of his incoherent and erratic behaviour, which they said raised questions about the handling of both the President and of his Twitter account. A month later, a Democratic Congressman introduced legislation titled The Communications Over Various Feeds Electronically For Engagement Act (or Covfefe) Act, aimed at including the US President's social media posts under the purview of the Presidential Records Act of 1978.

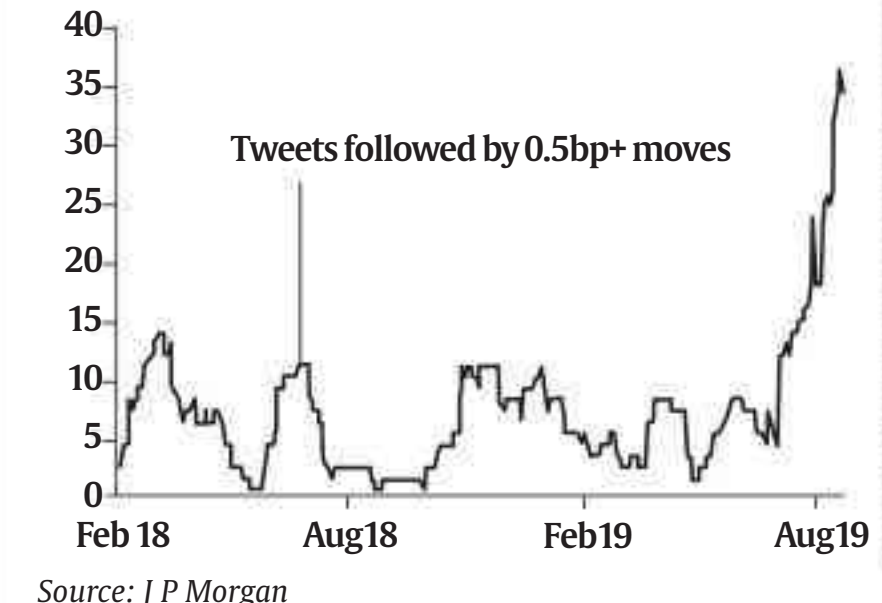
Morgan, one of the largest investment banks in the world, has published a research paper introducing the "Volfeffe Index", which seeks to track the effect of President Trump's tweets on financial markets.

The Volfeffe Index

A standout feature of Trump's Twitter presence is the sheer volume of his tweets. According to the paper, published September 6, Trump has produced more than 10,000 tweets since taking office. More importantly, the pace of tweeting has accelerated in recent months to over a dozen non-retweets a day on his personal account.

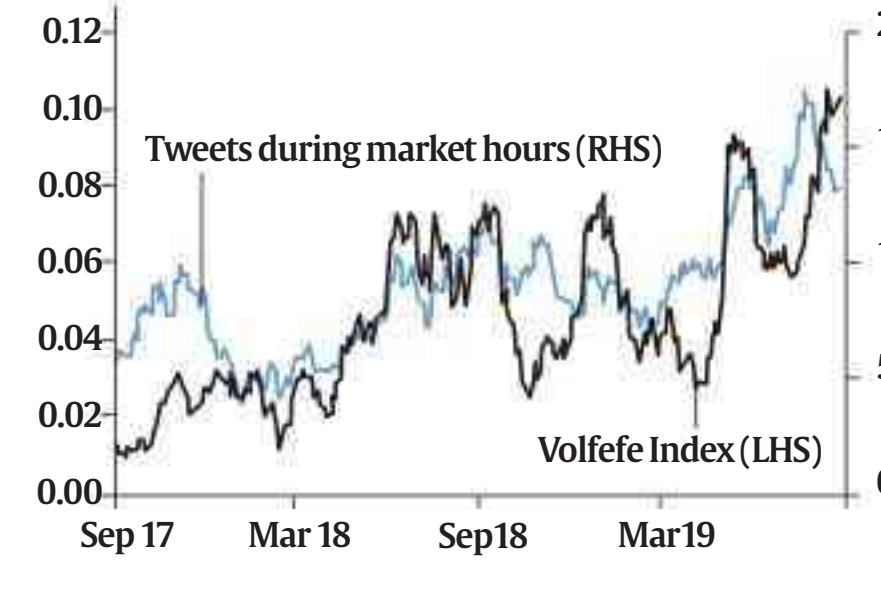
According to J P Morgan's analysts, there is now "strong evidence that tweets have increasingly moved US (interest) rates markets immediately after publication". It is noteworthy that Trump's twitter activity peaks between 12 noon and 3 pm — a

A SURGE IN MARKET-MOVING TWEETS



Source: J P Morgan

VOLFEFE INDEX AT PLAY



timeframe when it can move the markets the most. But, given the volume of daily tweets — an average of 10 since the start of 2016 — how does one know which tweet is likely

to move the market and which isn't? Hence, the Volfeffe Index, "which analyzes a rolling sample of recent tweets to judge how impactful the President's remarks have been on volatility in US inter-

contribute to market uncertainty.

Market-moving tweets

Analysts have defined "market-moving" tweets as those that are followed by half a basis point change in US government bond yields within five minutes of the tweet's publication. According to this metric, as Chart 1 shows, the frequency of such tweets has been going up sharply.

The analysts also tried to deduce the keywords that featured in such market-moving tweets. In the list that they drew up, 'China', 'billion', 'products' came out on top, followed by 'dollars', 'tariffs' and 'trade', and then 'inflation', 'economy' and 'reserve'.

How effective? Chart 2 shows how the Volfeffe Index helps identify the frequency of market-moving tweets during market hours. On the whole, the J P Morgan model found that only 146 tweets out of roughly 4,000 non-retweets occurring during market hours from 2018-present were market-moving ones.



The Indian EXPRESS

FOUNDED BY RAMNATH GOENKA

BECAUSE THE TRUTH INVOLVES US ALL

Regime reveals itself

A hundred days on, Modi 2.0: Its purpose is the show of power, nationalist fervour, social control



PRATAP BHANU MEHTA

NEIGHBOUR'S COURT

NSA Doval suggests that removal of restrictions on people in the Valley hinges on Pak behaving itself. That's problematic

IN THE WEEKS since the revoking of special status of Jammu & Kashmir, in response to Pakistan's repeated attempts to internationalise the matter, India's position has remained firm and unchanged: It is an internal issue. Indeed, the government's decision to carve the state into two Union Territories, thus centralising its governance, could also be seen to have robbed Pakistan of agency and leverage in the Valley. The world has heard since August 5 about how Pakistan was using Article 370 to foment trouble in J&K, and that that was a pressing reason to do away with it. In this context, it is a little puzzling that National Security Advisor AK Doval, in remarks during a media interaction last week, has chosen to bring Pakistan back into the Kashmir discourse in a manner that appears to return to it some of that agency.

By linking the restoration of communication and removal of other restrictions in the blockaded Valley to "how Pakistan behaves", the NSA appeared to suggest that the neighbour still holds crucial influence in Kashmir. And that the rights of people in the Valley, that they are entitled to as Indian citizens, would hinge upon the next steps taken in Islamabad or Rawalpindi. Not only does this contradict another assertion by him in the same media interaction — that he was "fully convinced that a majority of the Kashmiris totally support" the legal abatement of Article 370 — it also seemed to be at cross purposes with the government's other efforts to present India as the sole arbiter of Kashmir's destiny.

As India prepares to look the world in the eye with the right words on the continued communication shutdown in the Valley at the UN at the General Assembly and Human Rights Council, the messaging will be crucial. The NSA has said that the arrested politicians and activists would be released when "the environment conducive for the functioning of democracy is created". It is not clear who he is addressing in that remark, but it would be fair to say that as it was the Centre that suspended all political activity in the Valley, it also has the responsibility to bring it back. It seems disingenuous to point to Pakistan at this juncture, in the aftermath of a momentous decision by New Delhi that has disrupted status quo in the Valley. According to NSA Doval's assessment, there are 230 Pakistani militants waiting to infiltrate the Valley and create trouble. It should be the responsibility of the Army, with all the resources at its command, to ensure that they do not enter. But the sins of Pakistan cannot be a reason for punishing India's own.

SEIZE THE PACT

India must join regional trade partnership, hook into global value chains, address issues afflicting competitiveness

ON SUNDAY, TRADE ministers from the 16-nation regional comprehensive economic partnership (RCEP) group pledged to resolve their issues on the proposed free trade agreement (FTA) by November, when their leaders meet next for the ASEAN summit. So far, the Indian government has been cautious about joining this trade block. But, as pressure from RCEP members mounts, the government will have to carefully think through its strategy on trade pacts. Given the nature of global trade, joining these FTAs will not only gradually facilitate the country's integration with global value chains, but provide greater opportunities for investment as well.

The RCEP is a proposed free trade agreement between the 10 ASEAN countries and their FTA partners, namely India, China, Japan, Korea, Australia and New Zealand. Once concluded, it will account for 25 per cent of the global GDP and 30 per cent of global trade. Part of India's reluctance to join this trade pact stems from the view that the country has not benefited from its FTAs with countries like Korea, Malaysia and Japan. After these pacts came into effect, imports from these countries surged, while exports did not rise commensurately, leading to a widening of the trade deficit. India already runs a trade deficit with most of the 16 RCEP countries. Opening up its market further could worsen the situation. Large sections of India Inc are concerned that being part of RCEP would lead to an influx of more competitively priced Chinese products in both the consumer goods and industrial segments. Thus, eliminating tariffs for a significant section of traded goods is bound to face resistance from domestic industry. A slowing economy will only exacerbate such fears.

Part of the explanation for this dismal performance under FTAs can be attributed to higher compliance costs, administrative delays etc. But with India's exports being almost flat over the past five years, shunning such trade pacts is not a prudent approach. One should be mindful that the long-run benefits from joining these trade blocks will outweigh the short-term costs. To be sure, India should negotiate concessions and safeguards for sensitive sectors. Further, the proposed tariff reductions could be phased over a five to ten-year period which will give time to the industry to adapt. But the costs of not going forward with the trade pact, under pressure from industry, will be great. India must seize this opportunity to hook into global value chains, while addressing the deeper issues that afflict manufacturing competitiveness.

A JUMBO ROMANCE

A Wayanad tusker in Kerala shows a different kind of love is possible

IRULAM IS IN mourning. Maniyan, a wild tusker that used to frequent this village bordering the Wayanad Wildlife Sanctuary in Kerala, died last week. During the weekend, villagers took out a silent procession to mourn the death. It was a rare occasion in a region where herds of wild elephants are known to raid crops and ransack homes in search of food and tuskers in musth are known to trample the unsuspecting villagers who stray on to their path.

Maniyan, however, was different. Even his occasional entry into human habitat never went beyond pulling down the odd bag of salt; when villagers offered fruit, Maniyan would stretch his trunk. He had learnt to co-exist with the villagers, and in turn, taught the villagers to do so too. This, in a district where 67 people had died in a decade in human-animal conflict, a majority of them killed by wild jumbos. In fact, this contradiction runs deep through the Malayalis' relationship with the elephant. The feared beast of the jungle becomes a loved creature once he is tamed. In April, the famed Thrissur Pooram, a temple pageant that features a large number of decked up jumbos, came under a cloud when fans of an aged and ailing elephant, Thechikottukavu Ramachandran, insisted on his participation — Ramachandran, who killed 13 persons, had become some sort of a security risk. Maniyan and Ramachandran present two extreme cases of the Malayalis' romance with the beast.

The elephant has shaped the Malayali imagination like no other animal, celebrated in literature, cinema and in every act of joy and celebration. However, the jumbo's life has only been worse off for this fear-laced affection. The taming of the beast and its later life in chains should rank among the worst kind of torture inflicted on animals. Despite many campaigns, it continues, and is defended in the name of love for the elephant. Maniyan offers a different narrative — a one-off story perhaps — in which love is not predicated on a life in chains.

THE FIRST HUNDRED days of Narendra Modi's second term as prime minister raise a profound question that goes beyond a mere cataloguing of the government's actions and policies: What is the nature of the regime we are spawning? As we look at the hundred days, two political phenomena stare us in the face. The first is that despite a very poor economic performance, Modi remains immensely popular. Even his staunchest critics have to acknowledge that he has made himself an inescapable figure, someone who has colonised our consciousness so much that even criticism only serves to underscore his importance and reinforce his inescapable hold. His triumph is not what he does; it is that he is the focal point of everything we do.

The second is that the authoritarian consolidation of this regime over Indian democracy continues unabated. Almost all independent institutions have been reduced to ciphers. The characteristic hallmarks of authoritarian domination have intensified: The state defines a single national purpose and everyone has to march to the same drum beat; the population has to be kept in a permanent state of nationalist arousal to paper over all social and economic contradictions; thought control has to be exercised in order to achieve what Leszek Kolakowski in another context called "the mental and moral sterilisation" of society.

Even majoritarianism is openly justified. In case you think the fears of majoritarianism are a red herring, listen to Swapan Dasgupta, not known to be a BJP critic, writing in *The Telegraph* (August 22) "Many of the fears in the Muslim community are undeniably overstated and tailored to the pre-existing belief that the Modi government is inherently fascist in nature. However, two factors stand out. First, the fears, however misplaced, are nevertheless real; and secondly, the Muslim stakes in the political power structure are more tenuous than ever before. It is the second issue that needs addressing." After suggesting both that Muslims are to blame for their lack of response to Modi, and that the BJP is weak in its outreach, Dasgupta reaches this conclusion: "Hindus and Muslims may not be battling each other on the streets but neither are they talking to each other. This is not a healthy situation and can trigger an un-

There is an odd thread linking Kashmir and the mishandling of the economy that speaks to the regime type. The thread is this. Even in the context of the economy, three things are striking. All governments have to put up a brave face. But it is difficult to remember a time when it was so difficult to get the government to accept the truth about the economy; or when the premium on public and professional discourse marching to the state's tune was as high. So, like Kashmir, the truth remains shrouded in a fog of triumphalism and complacency. Second, the approach to handling the economy has also had the same traits: Power, moralism and control.

healthy move towards greater ghettoisation." When Swapan Dasgupta begins to worry that the regime is producing ghettoisation, we should worry about the estrangement that lies ahead.

The hundred days is not a catalogue of specific actions, some good some bad. They are certainly marked by Modi's energy, drive, imperiousness and unerring instinct to dominate the political discourse. They, rather, reveal the consolidation of a regime type.

When the purpose of the regime is the show of power, nationalist fervour and social control, "bold" action will be the order of the day. In some sense, the government's unprecedented move in Kashmir is a demonstration of all three regime traits; whether they are actually aimed at solving the problem at hand is an open question. Only in the context of a regime like this can a shutdown of a state, the decimation of constitutional federalism, the suspension of civil liberties, the creation of a climate of fear over reporting from Kashmir, and the heightened risk of war and conflict, be presented as a triumph.

But there is an odd thread linking Kashmir and the mishandling of the economy that speaks to the regime type. The thread is this. Even in the context of the economy, three things are striking. All governments have to put up a brave face. But it is difficult to remember a time when it was so difficult to get the government to accept the truth about the economy; or when the premium on public and professional discourse marching to the state's tune was as high. So, like Kashmir, the truth remains shrouded in a fog of triumphalism and complacency. Second, the approach to handling the economy has also had the same traits: Power, moralism and control. Demonetisation, which wrecked the economy, was a show of power, pure and simple, not linked to any defensible economic objectives. The basic diagnosis on which the government operated was that what ails India is corruption, which a dose of moralism and arbitrary government crackdown can cure. The chimera of chasing black money in the wrong places (while intensifying the hold of a small plutocracy), underlies the government's approach to everything from regulation to taxation, wreaking havoc in an already

precarious system.

It also serves the purpose of giving this government the one thing it wants over everyone above all else: Control. So Indian capital now has been pummelled into submission. While there are some individual measures that are laudatory, the fact is there is no consistent framework in terms of which the government has diagnosed the economy, no sense of the ends we are trying to achieve. But when the exercise of power wears the garb of virtue, all is forgiven.

On the economy, the government has finally been mugged by reality. It will respond, but so far there is no evidence of a blueprint out of our troubles. The prospects of a triumphalist narrative on that front are dim in the short run. So it is very likely that the regime type will continue to manifest itself on the institutional and cultural front. A possible nationwide NRC, the building of a temple at Ayodhya, a possible nationwide anti-conversion legislation, will be the new manifestations of power, nationalism and control. Some measures, like the triple talaq law, will use liberal pretences, but for authoritarian ends. But the striking characteristic of the first hundred days is the consolidation of a power structure that is instinctively geared to total control: Amit Shah and Yogi Adityanath, with all their political talent, are the future ethos of the BJP.

The question the emerging regime type raises is this. Is the danger India facing that it is, through propaganda and misinformation, being hoodwinked into a path that leads away from its potential greatness? In which case, how long will we put up with the politics of illusion? Or are these hundred days revealing a darker truth about ourselves? Is, somehow, this exaltation of power, control and nationalism a completion of our own deepest desires? We are not in a grip of an illusion: This is who we want to be. On this view, Modi's popularity is not because he is peddling an illusion to us; it is because he is peddling the truth about ourselves. How worried you are about the first hundred days in part depends on which side of this debate you are on.

The writer is contributing editor, *The Indian Express*



TAHIR MAHMOOD

MY FRIEND, RAM

Ram Jethmalani was feared and respected for his candour on political matters

MY NONAGENARIAN FRIEND Ram Jethmalani has passed into life hereafter. We had known each other for over four decades and had very different views on many matters of national importance. At academic seminars, meetings and workshops we differed — always in a highly civilised manner — on nuances of legal issues, especially those with political overtones. These interactions usually ended with an agreement to disagree.

I had my first academic encounter with Ram in 1977 at a family law conference I was compering. Zealously supporting the demand for implementing the constitutional provision relating to the uniform civil code, he concluded his presentation with the argument that minorities should accept the demand "as a price for living in this country." Before inviting the next presenter, I confronted him by asserting that minorities were not just "living" in this country, they were its equal citizens, entitled to all the fundamental rights enshrined in the Constitution. Realising his impropriety, Ram returned to the podium to explain that he wanted to say minorities should accept the uniform civil code as part of their duty to respect constitutional ideals. Seven years later in October 1985, he and I had a dialogue in the columns of *The Indian Express*, on the issue of uniform civil code.

In 1999, when I was Chair of the National Minorities Commission, Prime Minister Atal

Bihari Vajpayee named him as the law minister. Ram soon icked up a bone with Chief Justice AS Anand, my old friend and classmate in Lucknow, and quit his job. Unable to decide who to support, I kept mum.

Ram began his legal practice in Karachi with the city's leading lawyer Allah Baksh Brohi who, like him, was destined to be his country's law minister. After moving to India, he taught law at a Bombay college. Later, he shifted to Delhi and served four times as the Chair of the Bar Council of India. During the dark days of Emergency, Ram shot into fame for his criticism of the mighty PM of the day. He entered politics soon after. In 2004, Ram contested the parliamentary election from Lucknow to oppose Prime Minister Vajpayee, and lost.

In the legal profession, Ram earned fame for defending all sorts of people — politicians, scamsters, alleged criminals and many others. His clients included navy commander K M Nanavati, BJP stalwart L K Advani, yoga guru Baba Ramdev, Andhra Pradesh's Y S Jaganmohan Reddy, Bihar's Lalu Prasad, stockbrokers Harshad Mehta and Ketan Parekh, mafia leader Haji Mastan, Kashmiri separatist Afzal Guru, and even former Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi's killers. Ram once said: "I decide according to my conscience who to defend. A lawyer who refuses to defend a person on the ground that people believe him to be guilty is himself guilty of professional misconduct."

conduct". I often advised students seeking admission to the PhD programme under my guidance to take up research on his briefs, but they were overawed both by his legal acumen and the nature of cases he handled.

In 2013, Amity University conferred on Ram an LLD degree *honoris causa*. The university's Founder-President Ashok Chauhan concluded the valedictory speech with the words: "We pray that he lives for another hundred years." Ram instantly retorted, "God listens only to reasonable prayers".

For those interested in hearing from the horse's mouth the story of Ram's successes and failures, he has left behind two books, which are partly in the nature of memoirs. The first of these, curiously titled *Conscience of a Maverick*, was published in 2007. Seven years later, to counter criticism, he wrote another book, *Maverick Unchained, Unrepentant*. Its blurb spoke of an undeniable truth about the author's personality: "Ram Jethmalani, respected and feared for his candour in matters political, remains an enigma to many. Controversy neither leaves him nor intimidates him." Ram indeed remained enigmatic till the last breath of his life.

May his soul rest in peace.

The writer is former Chairman, National Minorities Commission & Member, Law Commission of India



SEPTEMBER 10, 1979, FORTY YEARS AGO

DEMOCRACY IN DANGER JANATA PARTY LEADER, Jagjivan Ram, said today that democracy was in greater danger now than ever before. Addressing a largely attended Harijan rally at Ajmal Khan Park, Ram said he had full confidence in the people who, in the 1977 Lok Sabha elections, revived democracy while democracy was breathing its last. He said democracy was in danger now because of the twin forces of dictatorship represented by Mrs Gandhi and fascism represented by Charan Singh. Amidst applause from the crowd, Ram declared that in the next elections the Janata Party would win with a greater majority. He said the party's opponents were already panicking.

CREDIT CORRUPTION THE GUPTA COMMISSION has revealed that over the years, the Punjab National Bank and the Central Bank of India advanced Rs 90 lakh and Rs 22 lakh respectively to Maruti Limited in violation of all norms and procedures — most of which were repeatedly changed whenever Sanjay Gandhi wanted them to be changed. The rate of interest was lowered when he asked for it. At one turn after another, the company exceeded the authorised credit limits. At no stage did either of the banks make any appraisal of the credit requirements or the feasibility of the project that was undertaken by Maruti Limited. And, at no stage did Maruti give a list of the items

it was hypothecating in return for the loans.

HAVANA SUMMIT THE HAVANA SUMMIT of non-aligned countries have called for intensification of the armed struggle against the Muzorewa government in Rhodesia and the South African occupation regime in Namibia, and expressed unreserved support for all liberation movements. The heads of state and governments of a hundred countries, in a resolution adopted last night, called for sanctions against Israel to force the Jewish state to give up all occupied territories including Jerusalem and agree to the setting up of an independent Palestinian state.

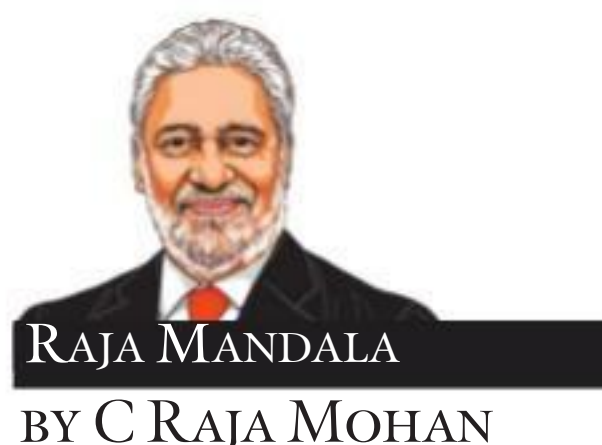
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WHAT THE OTHERS SAY

Brexit, a project supposed to enhance Britain's international stature has only served to diminish it. —THE GUARDIAN

A different world view

Realists in Islamabad are arguing for diplomatic relations with Israel. This is part of a new urgency to revamp the country's foreign policy



RAJA MANDALA
BY C RAJA MOHAN

THERE IS MUCH speculation in the Pakistani and Israeli media about imminent establishment of diplomatic relations between the two countries. Whether this turns out to be true or not, Pakistan is undoubtedly in the middle of a major debate on its international relations. To be sure, the idea of having ties with Israel has been discussed before in Pakistan. The current discourse, however, is part of a new urgency to revamp Pakistan's foreign policy.

One of the compelling factors in Islamabad's rethink has been its difficulty in mobilising international support against Prime Minister Narendra Modi's muscular policies towards Pakistan and Kashmir. Another is the growing sense in Islamabad and Rawalpindi about Pakistan's current alienation from its traditional allies in the West and the Muslim world. Pakistan's "deep state" — or the moniker now in vogue, "miltabishment" — is eager to put the nation's foreign policy back on track and correct the emerging international tilt (with the honourable exception of China) in favour of India.

Pakistan's vigorous foreign policy rejigging is complemented by the decision to implement harsh economic reforms mandated by the IMF, which has come to Pakistan's rescue for the 13th time in the last four decades. The danger of an immediate political backlash has been neutralised by the military establishment's decision to lock up a former president, Asif Ali Zardari of the PPP, and two former PMs, Nawaz Sharif and Shahid Khaqan Abbasi of the Muslim League. When Nawaz Sharif's daughter Maryam Nawaz took to the streets to mobilise people against the government, she soon found herself behind bars.

The July visit to Washington by the Army Chief General Qamar Javed Bajwa underlined the miltabishment's determination to end the steady deterioration in bilateral relations with the US since the beginning of this decade and a more rapid decline under President Donald Trump. In offering to "extricate" the US from Afghanistan and facilitating a peace deal between the US and the Taliban, the miltabishment saw the road to strategic rehabilitation in Washington and more broadly with the West. Whether this strategy will survive the suspension of the peace talks with the Taliban, announced by US President Donald Trump over the weekend, remains to be seen.

Pakistan's debate on engaging Israel is also driven by the belief that India's special relationship with Israel has given Delhi many advantages. Pragmatists in Islamabad and Rawalpindi have argued that normal relations with Israel would improve Pakistan's standing in the US and help dent India's influence in Washington and disrupt its part-

nership with the influential Jewish community in America.

Realists in Islamabad also point to the profound changes taking place in the Middle East and the growing engagement between Israel and some of the Sunni Arab states like Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates, that have been among Pakistan's closest partners. Although they do not have diplomatic relations with Israel, shared threat perceptions about Iran have nudged Riyadh and Abu Dhabi closer to Jerusalem. (At present Egypt, Turkey and Jordan are among the few Arab and Muslim countries that have diplomatic relations with Israel.)

Pakistan has debated the merits of engaging Israel ever since India established full diplomatic relations with Israel in 1992. But it was General Pervez Musharraf who opened up Pakistan's debate on Israel in the early 2000s. Despite Musharraf's clear-eyed logic of Pakistan's self-interest in establishing ties with Israel, there was no forward movement in Islamabad. The general could not overcome Pakistan's ideological narrative that called for unflinching opposition to the Jewish state in the name of proclaimed solidarity with the Muslim ummah.

Can General Bajwa do what General Musharraf could not? If you are a sceptic you might say it is a bridge too far. After all, Pakistan has long told itself that India and Israel were alike in their "occupation" of Kashmir and Palestine. And that the insurgency in Kashmir, backed by Pakistan, was the same as Palestinian "Intifada" against Israel.

If you are a cynic, however, you might believe that Rawalpindi can easily finesse the ideology of Pakistan if it can score some gains against India. Should Delhi be worried about an engagement, covert or overt, leading to normalisation of relations between Pakistan and Israel? Not really.

Delhi is aware that Jerusalem will welcome formal or informal relationships with any Islamic country, big or small. Ending its isolation in the Islamic world is a major priority for Israel. Although Pakistan sees Israel as an enemy, Israel has no reason to reciprocate the sentiment.

Much in the manner that India pursues relations with all the major players in the Middle East, without reference to their mutual rivalries, Israel would like to do the same in the Subcontinent. Israel would certainly bet that if Islamabad makes a move, Dhaka would find it easier to overcome its own Islamist resistance to relations with Israel. Normal relations with the South Asian Muslims — who constitute more than 40 per cent of the world's Islamic population — will be a huge diplomatic triumph for Israel.

Some in Delhi might love to see Pakistan eat its long-standing rhetoric on Hindu-Yehudi conspiracies. More seriously, it will be easier for India to deal with a Pakistan that defines its interests as a territorial state. Delhi has found it hard to normalise relations with Islamabad that sees itself as a religious cause. But if Pakistan were a normal country, there would be much room for give and take and the political basis for peaceful coexistence.

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

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

CUT THE HYPE

THIS REFERS TO the editorial, 'Mission continues' (IE, September 9). The failure of the lander, Vikram, could well be a technical issue and it's quite likely that the snag will be rectified. But the political class needs to learn a lesson. The launch of the Chandrayaan was made an event. Schoolchildren were invited to witness the rover's progress. All these could have been done with the positive intent to make students interested in science but it put unnecessary pressure on the ISRO scientists.
Suchak D Patel, Ahmedabad

HURTING ECOLOGY

THIS REFERS TO the editorial, 'Sweet freedom' (IE, September 9). The government has signalled its seriousness about blending of petrol with ethanol. It has also relaxed environment clearances norms for storage of ethanol. Such aggressive measures to increase the production of this water-guzzling crop and put pressure on the ecosystem.
Deepak Singhal, Noida

DUAL BOOST

THIS REFERS TO the article, 'The problem of skilling India' (IE, September 7). Employers are finding it difficult to find workers with required skills. The economic slowdown has aggravated matters. So, the issue needs to be addressed both from the perspective of skilling

and boosting the economy.
Tapomoy Ghosh, Purba Bardhaman

ROLE MODEL

THIS REFERS TO the editorial, 'The true original' (IE, September 7). After returning from injury, Steve Smith has become the world's highest run-getter this year. He is a role model for young players.
Subhash Vaid, Noida

LETTER OF THE WEEK AWARD

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

THE WINNER RECEIVES SELECT EXPRESS PUBLICATIONS

A stake in the moon

It is time to ponder the future legal, political, economic implications of the window of opportunity that India is helping to open up



PRATIK KANJILAL

THE US AIR Force Brigadier General, Homer A Boushey, an aeronautical engineer, a friend of rocketry pioneer, Robert Goddard, commanded the USAF's first jet fighter group and retired as deputy director of air force research and development. Despite such an illustrious career, he is chiefly remembered as a real-life Dr Strangelove. He owes this unsavoury and undeserved reputation to his speech at a Washington aero club in 1958. The venue wasn't exactly strategically significant, but US News and World Report published an extract including a sentence that lingered in public memory for decades: "He who controls the moon controls the earth."

Boushey's opinion was voiced when the tide of the war of perceptions — an important component of the Cold War — had turned against America. Sputnik had been beeping its victory cry from the skies for months, and the USSR had manned missions on the drawing board. Yuri Gagarin and Valentina Tereshkova would take to the skies in three and five years, respectively. The tide of global perceptions would turn decisively only in 1969 with Apollo 11, which planted the stars and stripes on the moon. But after 1972, NASA lost interest in putting space boots on the lunar regolith. The geopolitical point had been made, and there was nothing more to be said. *Roma locuta, causa finita.*

But almost 50 years later, the race to the moon has heated up again, and it is no longer just about perceptions. China's Chang'e 4 mission is exploring the dark side of the moon. India's Vikram may have crashed, but failure is not unusual in space — Israel's Beresheet craft crashed into the moon in April — and is best regarded as experience gained for future missions. Three nations have soft-landed craft on the moon. In a few years, there will be five or more. It'll begin to

get crowded up there, and competitive. Will the laws of space be able to keep pace?

The moon was to be governed by the international community under the Moon Treaty of 1979, which failed for want of ratification by nations conducting manned spaceflight. By default, it is governed by the Outer Space Treaty, a document with high-minded principles adopted by the United Nations in 1966, which defines space as the province of humankind, to be used for the advancement of science and of all nations. It recognises no territorial or ownership rights, and goes to the extent of allowing nations to inspect each other's facilities. At the time, and in the time of Boushey's speech eight years earlier, in which the dark side of the moon was seen as a fine location for hidden nuclear missile bases, the focus was on the prevention of militarisation and nuclear conflict, and the encouragement of scientific cooperation for universal benefit.

The Outer Space Treaty bears strong similarities with the highly successful Antarctic Treaty System of 1959, which emphasised these very imperatives. Cynics and wags have always held that Antarctica became the province of science because it was good for nothing else, penguins having no commercial value. When the Moon Treaty sought ratification, our satellite, too, was regarded as a barren, inhospitable waste, rewarding only for science. But, from the late eighties, as knowledge and technology evolved, human motives changed too, and the space community began to discuss the fascinating question of material benefit from the moon and planets.

The first proposal was to mine the lunar regolith for Helium 3, a potential source of clean and safe nuclear energy. The leadership of the Chang'e programme had stated Helium 3 as a mission goal. India's Chandrayaan-1 carried Helium-3-specific payloads, and the search for the valuable isotope will be continued by Chandrayaan-2's orbiter. But, feasibility remained in question. While low lunar gravity could make mining cheaper, establishing a human habitat on a barren world would be prohibitively expensive.

Chandrayaan-1 changed that perception by confirming the existence of water or hydroxyl (-OH, the anion of the water molecule) on the moon. The universal solvent is the ba-

sis for a carbon-based ecosystem. It is likely to be a product of the proton-rich solar wind, and is speculated to collect as ice in the polar regions, where low insolation would reduce vapourisation. Significantly, the Vikram lander was to touch down closer to the lunar south pole than any previous mission.

Meanwhile, though weapons remain banned from space, the military is not. In 2015, in the course of military restructuring, Beijing established the People's Liberation Army Strategic Support Force, which has an interest in space. In 2018, the US president Donald Trump proposed a United States Space Force. This does not reflect the imperatives of the Outer Space Treaty, but rather, national imperatives to protect future strategic assets and goals. Competitiveness is an essentially human trait, and in the future, a stake in the moon could not only confer prestige, but also material and geopolitical gain. Recall the history of the internet, which was conceived under the aegis of the state and academia, but grew explosively in commercial hands. Now, space exploration and research, traditionally the province of governments, is seeing strong private interest.

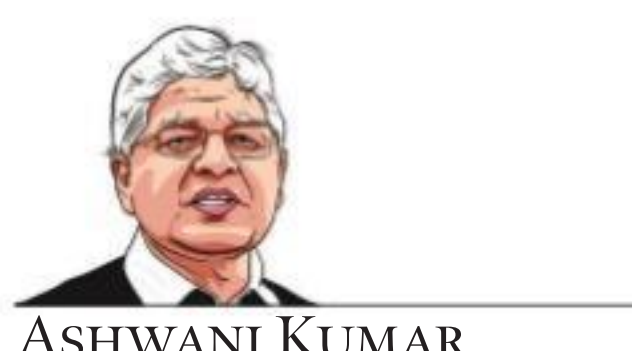
Frontier explorers generally cooperate while the environment is hostile. Litigation and conflict follows when they are secure and in a position to generate assets and value. The Outer Space Treaty may be unequal to such a development. Meaningful case law and precedents have not developed, since most of space litigation has been about patent infringements and satellite interference, or has been frivolous. Material infringement would be a novelty which lunar explorers must work out.

India's lander may have failed, but that is only a setback in the perceptions game. The orbiter, which hosts almost all the science in the project, remains in service. With two successful remote sensing missions, India has effectively joined the tiny club of frontrunners in the race to the moon.

pratik.kanjilal@expressindia.com

Kashmir, beyond legalities

The Modi government needs to recognise the essential dignity of its people



ASHWANI KUMAR

A CONSTITUTION BENCH of the Supreme Court is set to hear in October a batch of petitions challenging the constitutional validity of the Modi-Shah gamble in Kashmir. Substantial questions of law premised on the first principles of constitutionalism arise, which will need to be addressed by the Court.

The essence of the petitioner's case is that the disavowal of Article 370 is an assault on the nation's asymmetrical federalism that recognises India's pluralism and diversity. The decision is seen as the negation of a solemn historical obligation to the people of Kashmir codified in the Instrument of Accession. It is contended that Clause (3) of Article 370 cannot be used to emasculate the constitutional guarantee now deemed permanent. The critics argue that the sovereign power to reorganise states cannot be an instrument for diminution of the status of states, considering the federal nature of our polity — a non-negotiable component of the basic structure of the Constitution. A core legal objection is about non-endorsement of the Union government's unilateral decision by elected representatives of the people, whose will, it is contended, can-

not be substituted by the governor, acting as representative of the central government. The curtailment of civil liberties and denial of the citizens' right to communicate are seen as a frontal assault on our Constitution. The Kashmir move can be critiqued, as Christophe Jaffrelot wrote in this newspaper, as "a turning point towards the making of an ethnic unitary state", infracting the basic structure of the Constitution.

The contra arguments advanced in defence of the decision are not without their appeal. In a valiant defence of the decision, Home Minister Amit Shah invoked social and economic justice, the principle of gender equality and hope for peace and progress in the state through the devolution of full benefits of development to the Kashmiri people, in pursuance of the constitutional guarantee of equality under Article 14. It is asserted that the time has come for Kashmiris to enter into a new national pact to strengthen the edifice of peace and local democracy in the state.

This situation requires the court to give meaning to the Constitution in new settings as society changes. The significance of the

content of the Constitution, it is argued, varies from age to age. Succeeding generations must discover the way forward in the image of their own experiences, without the shackles of history. The government contends that Article 370 is expressly stated to be a temporary constitutional measure, whose applicability and use is essentially a function of the government's evaluation of its efficacy in a given context. The Court will be cautioned against entering into the "political thicket" citing absence of "judicially manageable standards". The government may also argue against the "absolutism" of rights and contend that constitutional adjudication is essentially about balancing and proportionality.

Given the prevailing national mood, the "historical unacceptability of originalism" as a mode of constitutional interpretation has a seductive appeal. The Supreme Court has repeatedly cautioned against the danger of stultifying the spirit of the Constitution by static judicial interpretation (Puttaswamy 2017, Navtej Johar 2018 et al). In Puttaswamy, the Court said: "The interpretation of the Constitution cannot be frozen by its original understanding. The

Constitution has evolved and must continuously evolve to meet the aspirations and challenges of the present and the future."

The uncertainty of any legal challenge notwithstanding, it seems that the decisive battle between the contrary narratives on Kashmir will not be fought in court rooms or in the drawing rooms of Lutyens Delhi. And history beckons us all to accept that those who feel robbed of their dignity cannot be tamed forever by a muscular state. As Francis Fukuyama writes in a recent work, "a humiliated group seeking restitution of its dignity carries far more emotional weight than people simply pursuing their economic advantage". The challenge before the government, therefore, is to win an uncoerced allegiance of the Kashmiri people by recognising their dignity and identity — the "ultimate driver of history", as Hegel said. Whether the government can do enough to assure the Kashmiri people of its sincerity in this regard is the question.

The writer is former union minister of law and justice. Views expressed are personal