



The Indian EXPRESS

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RAMNATH GOENKA

BECAUSE THE TRUTH INVOLVES US ALL

Five years of Make in India



CHRISTOPHE JAFFRELOT AND VIHANG JUMLE

There is a contradiction in trying to attract foreign investors before reforming labour, land acquisition laws

UNCHECKED DECLINE

Trade data suggests weak domestic and global demand. Tinkering won't do, government needs to push reforms

INDIA'S MERCHANDISE EXPORTS continued their subdued performance, contracting by 6.57 per cent in September this year. Over the first half of this financial year, exports have contracted by 2.39 per cent, indicating that GDP growth is unlikely to have received a fillip from the external sector in the second quarter as well. Equally worrying, non-oil non-gold imports, an indicator of domestic demand, contracted for the 11th straight month, indicating continued weakness in domestic demand. Coupled with sluggish investment activity, as leading economic indicators suggest, these numbers point towards a subdued economic outlook in the near term. Unsurprisingly, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) has lowered its forecast for economic growth to 6.1 per cent this year, down from its earlier estimate of 7 per cent — bringing it in line with the Reserve Bank of India's (RBI) assessment of the Indian economy.

Part of the decline in exports can be traced to a fall in petroleum exports. But, it is cause for concern that exports of major labour intensive segments such as gems and jewellery, garment and leather products, continue to decline. In fact, non-oil exports have contracted by 1.7 per cent in the first half of this financial year, with 22 of the 30 major export segments contracting in September. In part, the sluggish export performance can be attributed to a synchronised global slowdown. Exports of other nations have also been weak during this period. In fact, the IMF has also lowered its forecast for global GDP growth to 3 per cent. Then there are issues of competitiveness that afflict exports. An overvalued exchange rate and a complicated GST process exacerbates matters. But, the collapse in imports is equally worrying. Imports have contracted by 13.85 per cent in September, and by 7 per cent over the first half of this year. Excluding oil and gold, imports of other items have contracted by 5.6 per cent in the April-September period, signalling weak consumer and industrial demand. The situation is likely to have been exacerbated by inventory destocking — which along with risk aversion by banks could explain the collapse in credit flow to the commercial sector during this period.

The government has announced several steps to boost exports. But these are not enough. At this juncture, mere tinkering will not suffice. The government must draw on its political capital to push through contentious reforms that address the deeper structural issues plaguing the economy. Even in the midst of a slowdown in global trade, India, which accounts for around 2 per cent of global trade, should look aggressively to expand its share. After all, in the current economic environment of subdued domestic demand and investment, exports could provide the much needed boost to growth.

PRIME MINISTER NARENDRA Modi launched the Make in India campaign on September 25, 2014 with these words: "I tell the world, 'Make in India'. Sell anywhere but manufacture here." Modi aspired to emulate China — a country he had visited many times as Gujarat chief minister — in attracting foreign investment to industrialise India. The objective was, officially, to increase the manufacturing sector's growth rate to 12-14 per cent per annum in order to increase this sector's share in the economy from 16 to 25 per cent of the GDP by 2022 — and to create 100 million additional jobs by then.

Five years later, this policy has produced contrasting results. Foreign direct investment (FDI) has increased from \$16 billion in 2013-14 to \$36 billion in 2015-16. But this remarkable achievement needs to be qualified from two standpoints. First, FDIs have plateaued since 2016 and second, they are not contributing to India's industrialisation. FDIs in the manufacturing sector, in fact, are on the wane. In 2017-18, they were just above \$7 billion, as against \$9.6 billion in 2014-15. Services cornered most of the FDIs — \$23.5 billion, more than three times that of the manufacturing sector. This is a clear reflection of the the Indian economy's traditional strong points, where computer services, for instance, are remarkably developed. But can a country rely on services without developing an industrial base? The response is clearly no and this is why "Make in India" was initiated.

The idea, then, was to promote export-led growth: Foreign investors were invited to make in India, not necessarily for India. But few investors have been attracted by this prospect, and India's share in the global exports of manufactured products remains around 2 per cent — China's is around 18 per cent.

Why has Make in India failed to deliver? First, a large fraction of the Indian FDI is neither foreign nor direct but comes from Mauritius-based shell companies. Indian tax authorities suspected that most of these investments were "black money" from India, which was routed via Mauritius. Second, the

productivity of Indian factories is low. According to a McKinsey report, "workers in India's manufacturing sector are almost four and five times less productive, on average, than their counterparts in Thailand and China". This is not just because of insufficient skills, but also because the size of the industrial units is too small for attaining economies of scale, investing in modern equipment and developing supply chains. Why are companies small? Partly by choice, because labour regulations are more complicated for plants with more than 100 employees. Government approval is required under the Industrial Disputes Act of 1947 before laying off any employee and the Contract Labour Act of 1970 requires government and employee approval for simple changes in an employee's job description or duties.

Infrastructure is also a problem area. Although electricity costs are about the same in India and China, power outages are much higher in India. Moreover, transportation takes much more time in India. According to Google Maps, it takes about 12.5 hours to travel the 1,213 km distance between Beijing to Shanghai. A Delhi to Mumbai trip of 1,414 km, via National Highway 48, in contrast, takes about 22 hours. Average speeds in the China are about 100 km per hour, while in India, they are about 60 km per hour. Railways in India have saturated while Indian ports have constantly been outperformed by many Asian countries. The 2016 World Bank's Global Performance Index ranked India 35th among 160 countries. Singapore was ranked fifth, China 25th and Malaysia 32nd. The average ship turnaround time in Singapore was less than a day; in India, it was 2.04 days.

Bureaucratic procedures and corruption continue to make India less attractive for investors. It has made progress in the World Bank's Ease of Doing Business index, but even then, is ranked 77 among 190 countries. India ranks 78 out of 180 countries in Transparency International's Corruption Perception Index. To acquire land to build a plant, for instance, remains difficult. India has slipped 10 places in the latest annual Global Competitiveness Index compiled by Geneva-based World Economic Forum (WEF).

plant, for instance, remains difficult. India has slipped 10 places in the latest annual Global Competitiveness Index compiled by Geneva-based World Economic Forum (WEF).

There was clearly a contradiction in the attempt to attract foreign investors to Make in India before completing the reforms of labour and land acquisition laws. Liberalisation is not the panacea for all that ails the economy, but it is a prerequisite if India intends to follow an export-oriented growth pattern.

A significant move in this direction was made last month with the reduction of the company tax from about 35 to about 25 per cent (at least on paper), a rate comparable with most of India's neighbours. This reform is also consistent with the government's effort to compete with South East Asian countries, in particular, to attract FDIs. This competition has acquired a new dimension in the context of the US-China trade dispute. After the Trump administration increases tariffs on Chinese exports to the US, several companies will shift their plants from China to other Asian countries. Some of them have already done so. According to the Japanese financial firm Nomura, only three of the 56 companies that decided to relocate from China moved to India. Of them, Foxconn is a major player which will be now assembling its top-end iPhones in India. Whether other big multinationals will begin to show interest at manufacturing in India remains to be seen.

But India will have to face another external challenge too as it sees capital fleeing the country. The net outflow of capital has jumped as the rupee has dropped from 54 a dollar in 2013 to more than 70 to a dollar in 2019, at a time when oil is becoming more expensive.

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PULLBACK AND CHAOS

US withdrawal from Kurdish Syria, the manner in which it has been done, augurs more instability in the region

ON OCTOBER 15, US President Donald Trump tweeted that "after defeating 100% of the ISIS caliphate... I said to my generals, why should we be fighting for Syria and Assad to protect the land of our enemy? Anyone who wants to assist Syria in protecting the Kurds, whether it is Russia, China or Napoleon Bonaparte. I hope they do great, we are 7,000 miles away". The most charitable view of Trump's withdrawal of US forces from north-east Syria, an area under Kurdish control with its capital in Rojava, is that he is attempting to fulfill his promise of extricating the US from the conflicts it has been embroiled in across the globe ahead of the 2020 US presidential elections. The manner of the troop withdrawal, though, has strengthened the Bashar al Assad regime, sharpened the conflict in the region, as well as increased the influence of Russia in West Asia. From a US foreign policy perspective, these outcomes are an unmitigated failure. For regional and global security, they augur a time of instability.

In the immediate aftermath of Trump's decision, Turkey's President Recep Erdogan ordered his troops into the region, and there are reports of civilian casualties. US troops had suffered minimal casualties and were a buffer protecting the Kurdish forces. Erdogan, who is facing a violent Kurdish-led insurgency in his own country, seems to be seeking a deeper strategic buffer through military control of Syria's autonomous Kurdish region. In a corner, and abandoned by their US allies, Rojava has sought assistance from Assad, and Russia and Iran too are expected to back the Assad regime, filling the power vacuum left by the US. Erdogan, for his part, seems undeterred by the sporadic threats of sanctions and other diplomatic consequences by the US and NATO.

Trump's sudden withdrawal, without getting security guarantees from Ankara, is likely to be counterproductive. First, the claim that the "ISIS caliphate" has been defeated may be technically true, but many IS fighters retreated into remote parts of Iraq and Syria. Since the conflict in Syria began in 2015, the Kurds, helped by their US allies, were instrumental in the fight against the Islamic State. The remnants of the IS, now, may be emboldened. Second, the Assad regime, which the US accused of war crimes, has consolidated and its influence is certainly waxing, along with that of Russia. Finally, an aggressive and expansionist Turkey could pose a long-term challenge to the regional balance of power. It has long been a NATO ally and even houses a US military base with nuclear capabilities. In the near term, what is required is well-thought out, firm diplomacy by the US and other world powers, that goes far beyond what President Trump's tweets have hinted at.

A WIN-WIN

In embracing both Atwood and Evaristo, the Booker prize makes a heartening statement

THE 2019 BOOKER Prize for Fiction has been awarded jointly to Margaret Atwood, for *The Testaments*, and Bernardine Evaristo, for *Girl, Woman, Other*, opening up a backlash against the selection of two winners, when the rules, tweaked in 1993, stipulate that the prize cannot be shared. But this has been an unusual Booker season in more ways than one, and, mostly for happy reasons.

Of the 13 books on the longlist this year, eight were by women. The shortlist of six had four women authors. The 1959-born Evaristo is the first black woman to win the Booker since its 1969 inception. Atwood, at 79, is the oldest-ever winner. Once we get past the statistics — and ruffled emotions — we could take a moment to let it sink in that this could well be the year when the Booker Prize came of age. In rebelling against convention and going beyond discussions of colour, age or other restrictive notions, it has embraced both the overarching genius of Atwood and the sparkling originality of Evaristo's achievement. A vocal advocate of inclusive literature and gay rights, the eight-book-old Evaristo has worked for the stage and radio, besides writing short fiction, poetry and essays. Atwood, who won the Booker first in 2000 for *The Blind Assassin*, needs little introduction.

This is not to say that the inequity will end with this year's award. Dana Beth Weinberg and Adam Kapelner of Queens College-CUNY, in a 2018 paper published in the journal *PLOS One*, presented sobering findings — books by women were revealed to be priced, on an average, 45 per cent lower than books by men. For writers of colour, especially women, the numbers are starker. But the conversation around women's writing must be more widely joined. As one of the Booker judges, Afua Hirsch, wrote, "You cannot compare them. But you can recognise them both. And I'm glad this is what we did."



BADRI NARAYAN

B R AMBEDKAR often expressed how the Indian village was the setting for the discrimination of Dalits, and that they should migrate to cities. Dalits do suffer from the myriad oppressions heaped on them by dominant castes and along with other marginal sections of society, have migrated to cities, towns and kasbahs and settled mostly in slums. They constitute about 17 per cent of the country's urban-dwelling population. In Uttar Pradesh, slum dwellers constitute about 14 per cent of the urban population, according to the 2011 census. Most of them are poor and from marginalised sections.

Slums have emerged as sites for the practice of Hindutva politics. We are habituated to viewing this section of people as subjects who desire and demand houses, jobs, ration cards, medical treatment, etc. But they also aspire towards creating small temples in their bastis, where they can assemble, worship and share their joys and sorrows (sukh-dukh) with their neighbours. With economic betterment, slum dwellers are also aspiring for religious empowerment. Dalits and other marginalised people residing in slums are becoming increasingly aware of their religious identity as Hindus.

The RSS and its various affiliates enter slums through running schools, organising medical camps, etc. RSS shakhas are also expanding their footprint among the urban poor by giving them a "Hindu" identity. Small Hindutva organisations with various names such as Hindu Yuva Vahini and Hindu Rakshak Sangh have been working in the

SAFFRON IN THE SLUMS

Among the urban poor, two strands of Hindutva mobilisation are emerging

juggi-jhopari colonies in various UP cities.

These two types of organisations have differing strategies. On the one hand, the RSS and some of its affiliates are working among the urban poor through "sewa" and "sahyog". On the other hand, various small Hindutva outfits are trying to mobilise these slum-dwelling populations through an aggressive Hindutva discourse. The RSS-generated discourse is aimed at reshaping their identity as "Hindu Nagrik", by inspiring them to imbibe and perform various Hindu sanskaras. In contrast, the other organisations are trying to produce a proud identity as Hindus among Dalit slum dwellers.

The tone and tenor of these two Hindutva-based campaigns is producing two different political cultures. These may overlap, but they also diverge into two streams of Hindutva identity. The first positions itself as a "soft Hindu" identity, while the second is a proponent of an aggressive Hindutva. At times, the RSS looks uncomfortable with the presence and growing influence of these smaller, aggressive Hindutva outfits. The Sangh appears to have some difficulty in handling these groups. One may find conflict and contestation between these two streams of Hindutva politics.

Both kinds of outfits help to create a political ambience that likely helps a party like the BJP. But they are producing two different kinds of Hindutva subjectivities: The first wants to appropriate the communities in these slums within its own Hindutva frame; the second does not tolerate any difference in

identity and culture.

It is certainly the case that only a thin line separates the two political cultures emerging in the slums of UP. But both these strands are working separately. Some people, who form the backbone of the smaller groups, may have been part of an RSS shakha at some point in their lives, but they have now evolved their own ways of functioning.

At one point, slums were considered a space for radical Ambedkarite and Left politics. That appears to be changing in UP. From the initial years, when Kanshi Ram used these sites to evolve Bahujan politics, they are now turning into Hindutva spaces.

The transformation of these social locations from the BSP's "blue" to saffron is taking place at a rapid pace. Since Hindutva groups use religious identity as an important axis of social, political and cultural mobilisation, they have managed to link the economic aspiration in UP's slums with religious empowerment.

Today, in the slums, one can view well-organised programmes featuring chants of the Sunder Kand Path and Hanuman Chalisa. The RSS is also working towards building small temples dedicated to Hindu deities.

Both types of Hindutva organisations see religious conversion as a threat in these societies and view their work as antidote to the same. They claim that their efforts are strengthening Hindu society.

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OCTOBER 17, 1979, FORTY YEARS AGO

PAK ELECTION DELAYED
PAKISTAN PRESIDENT General Zia-ul-Haq postponed national elections indefinitely, banned all political activity in the country and imposed press censorship. The elections had been set for November 17 by Zia. In a nationwide broadcast, he said he took the stringent measures because the November 17 poll would not have led to a stable government. The broadcast followed speculation that the army general would not carry out the promised elections because of a fear that the daughter of the late Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, whom Zia overthrew two years ago and who was hanged last April, would have ridden to victory on a sympathy vote.

ECONOMICS NOBEL

THE NOBEL PRIZE in economics was awarded jointly to American Theodore Schultz of Chicago and West Indian-born Sir Arthur Lewis of Princeton University, for pioneering work into economic development research. The prize was given to Schultz and Lewis "for their pioneering research into economic development with particular consideration of the problems of developing countries", according to the citation by the Royal Academy of Sciences.

POOR BUTLER

AN ITEM IN the London *Financial Times* notes: "A class of Eton boys was asked the

other day to write a story about poverty. 'There was once a very poor family,' wrote one 13-year-old. 'The father was poor, the mother was poor, the children were poor. Even the butler was poor.'"

NEW SIKKIM GOVT

AJANATA PARISHAD ministry, headed by Nar Bahadur Bhandari, will be installed in office in Sikkim. Bhandari told newsmen, after the governor had invited him to form the ministry, that his government would work vigorously for the all-round development of Sikkim. The single-tier ministry will be compact, not exceeding eight members, he added.

15 THE IDEAS PAGE

Light on national security

Signs of long-pending reforms are finally visible. But the lack of clarity about the role of Chief of Defence Staff and bellicose talk by politicians and soldiers are not reassuring



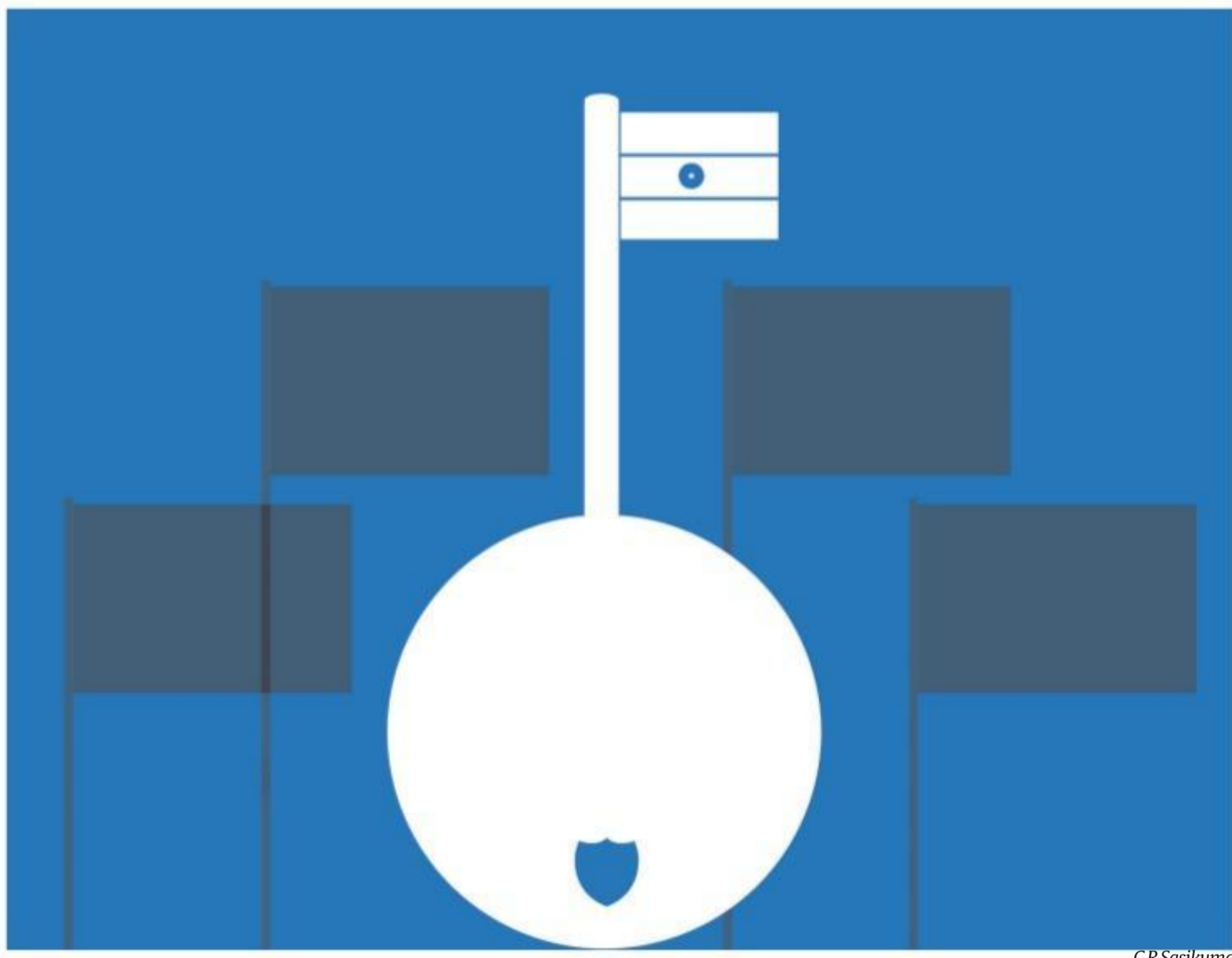
ARUN PRAKASH

STRATEGIC CULTURE IS said to have a significant impact on national security and state behaviour. In 1992, RAND Corporation analyst, George Tanham had pronounced that a combination of "lofty Hindu philosophy and a fatalistic outlook" had prevented the development of a strategic culture in India, and that "... Indian elites showed little evidence of having systematically thought about national strategy". Tanham's contentions were contested by those who argued that being heirs to the rich philosophy of Vedic literature, epics like the Ramayana and Mahabharata, and the wisdom of Chanakya's Arthashastra, Indians had never lacked a strategic culture. They also, stressed that, right from independence, India had followed a pragmatic grand strategy, scripted by Jawaharlal Nehru. Its elements included, domestically, secular federalism, a socialist command-economy, pursuit of self-reliance and externally, and a policy of non-alignment to avoid military conflicts.

This Nehruvian legacy was accompanied by a utopian proclivity for pacifism and disdain for the armed forces, rooted in phobia about military coups. According to Yale University professor, Steven Wilkinson, the Congress party evolved "specific 'coup-proofing' strategies to balance the power of the military during India's first decade". Most of these measures have remained in place ever since: The military continues to be excluded from the government's policy/decision-making process and the armed forces HQs are still subordinated to a civilian Department of Defence. Wilkinson suggests that the growth of the Central Armed Police Forces from 29,000 in 1961 to 1.1 million in 2017 is another "coup proofing" measure to "balance" the 1.3-million army.

The past five years have seen the last vestiges of the Nehruvian legacy being progressively swept away. Conclusive proof of this came when the present government ordered retaliatory raids, in peace time, on Pakistani soil. These not only marked a major shift of political focus that brought national security to centre stage, but also shattered two shibboleths: First, that India's timidity, disguised as "strategic restraint", was a chronic affliction; and second, that any armed incursion into Pakistan, ran the risk of a nuclear response. The latter, in any case, was an excessively alarmist view, given that the nuclear "red lines" informally signalled by Pakistan are far more stringent.

With the 2019 election-campaign behind us and politics having resumed normal tempo, there has been speculation whether the NDA government's newfound focus on national security signifies a strategic transformation or merely a vote-garnering election gambit. Such scepticism was not unjustified, given that the BJP's 2014 election manifesto, had promised to "address the issue of organisational reforms" in defence, and to "ensure greater participation of armed forces in the decision-making process of the MoD". While the ensuing five years saw no change in South Block, some recent "straws in the wind" may indicate growing political



CR Sasikumar

interest in national security issues. The most significant of these and one that demands our close attention is the long awaited initiation of national security reforms. One hopes that the April 2018 appointment of the National Security Adviser (NSA) to head the newly constituted Defence Planning Committee and his post-election elevation to cabinet rank were harbingers of this reform-process.

A lack of transparency, however, raises larger questions about the roles of the Raksha Mantri (RM), the Chiefs of Staff and the Defence Secretary vis-a-vis the NSA in the new ambit of national security decision-making. While Prime Minister Modi's announcement, on August 15, about creation of a Chief of Defence Staff (CDS), received widespread welcome, it adds a new and complex dimension to India's national security paradigm.

A CDS must not be created in isolation because, normatively, it carries with it a whole eco-system that could transform India's national security, if correctly implemented. In theory, as the senior-most armed forces officer and Chairman Chiefs of Staff Committee, the CDS would be the military adviser to the PM and RM. Apart from his key role in the nuclear command chain, he would evolve a prioritised tri-service perspective plan for force modernisation and enable fiscal support. This task would be immeasurably facilitated by the issuance of a national security doctrine/strategy which highlights national aims, objectives and interests, and clearly defines the military wherewithal required to achieve them.

The CDS would oversee the integration of the armed forces HQs with the civilian MoD and implement "jointness" amongst the three armed forces, progressively ushering in the theatre command concept. In reality, however, if not empowered adequately or if

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found in conflict with the NSA, the CDS could easily be reduced to an inconsequential "paper-tiger".

Another topic that two RMs, in succession, have dwelt upon — albeit in passing — is the principle of "no first use" (NFU) of nuclear weapons embedded in India's 2003 Nuclear Doctrine. NFU was adopted, not merely as a token of nuclear restraint and responsible conduct, on India's part, but also because it is, by far, the least burdensome and inexpensive form of nuclear-deterrence.

While ambiguity and doctrinal unpredictability may be useful to keep one's adversary off-balance, nuclear deterrence is far too serious a matter to be the subject of off-the-cuff public utterances by senior politicians. On the other hand, a formal review of the nuclear doctrine (including the NFU undertaking) is long overdue and must be undertaken.

In similar vein is casual, bellicose talk about "re-taking" of Pakistan Occupied Kashmir, presumably by military means. Let us remember that a major part of J&K's territory has been in our physical possession since the state legally acceded to India in 1947. Whether the hearts and minds of the people of the Valley are with us, remains a question unanswered. Once peace and prosperity prevail in our J&K, it is more than likely that the people of PoK would clamour to join their Indian brethren.

Finally, a word of advice for our military leadership. It is most heartening for the citizen to hear, from them, that our troops are in fine fettle and combat-ready. However, one's confidence evaporates when they are heard parroting political rhetoric or indulging in bombast. We are not Pakistan, and dignified reticence on the part of our soldiery would be far more reassuring.

The writer is a retired chief of naval staff

WHAT THE OTHERS SAY

"Instead of solving the problem, the US is increasingly creating a problem for the world. It is hoped the US can reflect upon itself. As a superpower with far-reaching interests, the US will benefit the most from a benign world order."

— GLOBAL TIMES, CHINA

Intelligence of the future

AI could transform the world. India and UAE could be partners in the transformation



SULTAN AHMED AL JABER

I REMEMBER watching the 1997 battle of the chess "grandmasters", one a person and the other a machine. The machine, IBM's Deep Blue supercomputer, eventually defeated the human, world chess champion Gary Kasparov. And I wonder what the result would be today if an AI-run machine were to be pitted against the current world chess champion Magnus Carlsen.

The result probably would be the same but with one difference — the play would be far more exciting than it was more than two decades ago. Deep Blue didn't use techniques that would be considered true AI by today's standards. Instead it relied on "brute force" methods of calculating every possible option at high speed, rather than analysing gameplay and learning about the game.

Since 1997, AI has advanced a great deal, but so has our understanding of this extraordinary technology. Therefore, the more important question today is not whether AI could outsmart some of the most brilliant minds on earth, but how we can leverage AI as a powerful and tremendously efficient tool.

Governments and businesses around the world are determined to make the next decade a truly transformative time, with experts predicting that by 2030 AI could contribute \$16 trillion to the global economy. However, the humankind, not AI, will be the real driver of such transformation.

The UAE's founding father, the late Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan, understood the real driver behind any substantial progress: "No matter how many buildings, foundations, schools and hospitals we build, or how many bridges we raise, all these are material entities. The real spirit behind the progress is the human spirit, the able man with his intellect and capabilities."

I strongly believe that to fully unleash the potential of AI, we must first advance research of this technology and bring it to the forefront of academia. Indeed, the UAE created the post of Minister of State for Artificial Intelligence at the same time as it assigned Advanced Skills to the Minister of State for Higher Education. This was done because the UAE firmly believes that AI and these advanced skills go hand in hand.

Advanced technologies, such as AI, are becoming all the more indispensable. It is, therefore, paramount for individuals to master these skills in this rapidly transforming world.

It is in this spirit that education leaders need to shape the future for our schools and universities. That's why the UAE and Abu Dhabi recently announced the establishment of the world's first graduate-level, research-based AI university — the Mohamed bin Zayed University of Artificial Intelligence (MBZUAI). Our goal is for the new university to equip and empower graduate students from around the world to lead us into the AI-driven era.

And I firmly believe MBZUAI provides another great opportunity for India and the UAE to work together and benefit both countries along the way.

India is already the UAE's second-largest trade partner and the UAE has become India's third-largest trading partner, with the total non-oil trade between the two countries recorded at \$35.9 billion in 2018. The long and close relationship between the two countries, built on historical, deep-rooted and age-old cultural, religious and economic ties, can now extend to advanced AI-focused education, which can help contribute to India's march towards the ambitious goal of becoming a \$5-trillion economy.

MBZUAI will help build the necessary AI ecosystem that the world needs to leverage the full potential of this technology. To realise this, the university will offer post-graduate (MSc and PhD) programmes in the key areas of AI: Machine Learning, Computer Vision, and Natural Language Processing. All of these are critical to catalyse social progress around the world, and especially on our continent that is home to some of the fastest developing nations in the world.

India has historically produced a large number of engineers, mathematicians and software developers every year. By 2020, India will be the youngest country in the world, with a median age of 29 years.

Implementing a national AI strategy at the scale of a country like India will require an upskilling of this young talented workforce and student body. I hope that India and the UAE, with the world's first Minister of State for Artificial Intelligence and the first dedicated graduate level research-based AI university, will work together as the two countries, and the world, enter a truly AI-empowered era.

The writer is UAE minister of state and Chairman of the Board of Trustees of the Mohamed bin Zayed University of Artificial Intelligence

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

A FINE BALANCE

THIS REFERS TO the article, 'Govt calling the SC shots?' (IE, October 16). Article 124 gives primacy to the President on appointments to the higher judiciary, with the President being bound by the advice of the council of ministers. So in effect, the executive has an upper hand. The Supreme Court should have given the NJAC a fair trial before adjudicating on its fate. The judiciary lost an exceptional opportunity to work with the other branches of the government in an institutional arrangement. The NJAC would have institutionalised the process of appointments in the higher judiciary, by keeping executive adhocism in check.

Sudip Kumar Dey, Kolkata

WIN THE HEARTS

THIS REFERS TO the editorial, 'Erasing the slate' (IE, October 16). The government's attempt to write off the past political legacy in J&K and experiment with new or middle rung of leaders is not prudent. It will not assuage the sentiments in the Valley. The government's action can be likened with the country's colonial rulers. J&K is an integral part of India and these developments further alienate its people.

Deepak Singhal, Chennai

CAPTAIN AGAIN

THIS REFERS TO the editorial, 'Running the game'. The appointment of former Indian Cricket Team Captain Sourav Ganguly as BCCI President is heart-warming news. It's good to learn that Ganguly's priority is first-class players and clearing the mess at the richest cricket body in the world. Issues like why there is no Indian umpire in the ICC Elite panel and reducing the gulf between women and men's cricket should also be Ganguly's priorities. Total transparency when it comes to financial management is something the BCCI cannot put on the backburner. With Anshuman Gaikwad and Shantha

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.

Rangaswamy having been elected as Indian Cricketer Association's representatives, issues pertaining to former players like pension will be taken care.

Bal Govind, Noida

STUBBLE PROBLEM

THIS REFERS TO the report, 'Court tells NGT, more subsidies will not reduce stubble burning.' (IE, October 16). The burning of crop stubble is a problem that comes to haunt Punjab and Haryana every year and its effects are seen on the rising pollution levels in the neighbouring Delhi. In 2015, the National Green Tribunal had banned the burning of crop stubble but the farmers in Punjab and Haryana continued the practice. One solution could be to use machines to weed out the crop residue.

Devendra Khurana, Bhopal

MANTO REDUX

THIS REFERS TO the article, 'Where do I belong?' (IE, October 14). Obtaining a legal identity is so convoluted, so complex that if Sadat Hasan Manto was alive today, he would have found us all as flustered as his iconic character, Toba Tek Singh.

Sangeeta Kampani, Mumbai

Between image and reality

Under Yogi Adityanath, Uttar Pradesh is making a break from its past



MRITYUNJAY KUMAR

WHEN A respected English news magazine adjudged UP chief minister Yogi Adityanath as the best performing CM across big Indian states on Independence Day eve, it was an endorsement of his government's work in the past two-and-a-half years. The Adityanath government has already reached milestones that a majority of previous governments couldn't accomplish in their full tenure.

The figures speak for themselves. By creating over 2.5 lakh jobs in the government sector and over 20 lakh jobs in the private sector, the government has surpassed the job-creation record of the Samajwadi Party and Bahujan Samaj Party regimes. Another achievement of the Adityanath government is getting the status of best-performing state on 20 different counts, including the implementation of Central schemes. Be it the construction of over 25 lakh houses under the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana and 2.61 crore toilets under Swachh Bharat, 1.35 crore LPG connections under Ujjwala Yojana and 1.1 crore power connections under the Saubhagya scheme, the state is number one in the country. Adityanath's first decision as CM was to waive Rs 36,000 crore worth of loans of over 86 lakh farmers. Since then, UP has become the first state to make DBT payment to its farmers.

The central government has honoured the state for making maximum purchases through e-markets. It is also number one in establishing micro, medium and small en-

terprises. The Adityanath government has paid a record Rs 73,000 crore to cane farmers, who were reeling under crop losses. The government's earnings have increased by almost 24 per cent under key heads as compared to the SP regime. The revenue under six major heads — excise, commercial tax, transport, mining, GST and VAT, and registration — has gone up to Rs 1.2 lakh crore in 2018-19, compared to Rs 86,000 crore in 2016-17 under the SP regime.

Law and order has been UP's bane and lawlessness reached its zenith during the SP regime. Adityanath took the menace by its horns. The elimination of over 100 and the arrest of over 10,000 dreaded criminals has not only broken the sway of anti-social elements, but has also restored people's confidence in the government and the police. Those who accuse the government of pursuing an "encounter policy" should realise that there is no policy as such. It's just a matter of giving operational freedom to the police to tackle crime.

Those who still cite cases like the Unnao rape case — more of a social issue than a law and order problem — should actually see the difference on ground. The government also cleared the long-pending recruitment of 75,000 police personnel and is all set to recruit many more.

On the education front, the biggest feat of the UP government has been the decimation of the copying mafia in board examinations.

The examination centres which were hotspots of organised copying have been debarred.

During the previous regimes, MoUs would be announced but nothing much followed. We have already seen two groundbreaking ceremonies in which investment worth Rs 1.50 lakh crore — out of Rs 4.28 lakh crore pledged at the February 2018 investors meet — has actualised.

The Lucknow Metro has been operationalised. Work on the Agra and Kanpur metros is on the fast track. The government is also targeting a 24-month deadline for completing three expressways — Poorvanchal, Bundelkhand and Ganga. These super highways will provide direct road access to the national capital: One can drive down to any corner of the state from Delhi in 8-10 hours.

The success of the government in controlling Japanese encephalitis in eastern UP is the stuff of folklore. When over 60 children died at Gorakhpur's BRD Hospital in August 2017, Adityanath was unfairly criticised. Everyone forgot that he was the only leader from eastern UP who fought for the eradication of encephalitis — from Parliament to the street. He, however, took the criticism in his stride and marshalled a final assault on the menace. Result: The number of deaths from AES has dropped from 655 in 2017 to just 42 in 2019 (till September 15). The number of JE cases has dropped from 93 to just 4.

When have you seen a CM who visits

three different locations in the state to have a first-hand account of development work, comes back to the state capital to hold a cabinet meeting in the evening and then again sits through hours-long power-point presentations of the departments or video-conferencing with districts? It's this work culture that has led to the success of mega events like the Kumbh — the biggest so far visited by nearly 22 crore people — and Pravasi Bharatiya Diwas.

The biggest endorsement of the UP CM's work was the affection shown by the people of UP in the Lok Sabha elections. While the critics and Opposition were expecting a safe-forging of the forging of an opportunistic alliance between the SP and BSP, Prime Minister Narendra Modi's charisma and Adityanath's work stunned the naysayers. The honour didn't come as a surprise to those who have been watching Adityanath ever since he became an MP at the age of 26 in 1998. He had been one of the best performing MPs for nearly two decades. But one would hardly find his mention whenever MPs' report cards were discussed.

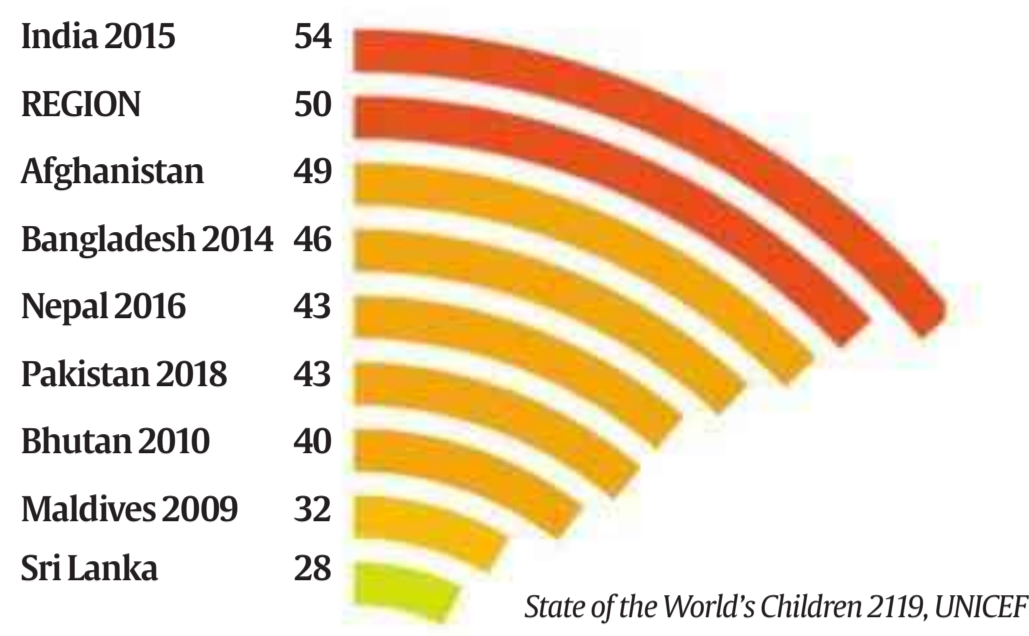
Since Adityanath wears saffron and takes pride in being a torch-bearer of Hindutva, there has been a sustained design to ignore all his work as a people's representative. Can there be a starker example of intolerance?

The writer is media adviser to the UP chief minister

TELLING NUMBERS

Half of India's children suffer from malnutrition: UNICEF

STUNTED, WASTED OR UNDERWEIGHT, U-5s (%)



ESHAROY NEW DELHI, OCTOBER 16

ON TUESDAY, UNICEF released its State of the World's Children report for 2019. The first UNICEF report in 20 years on child nutrition, it comes on the heels of the Global Hunger Index report released by the organisation Welthungerhilfe. The UNICEF report found that one in three children under the age of five years — around 200 million children worldwide — are either undernourished or overweight. And in India, every second child is affected by some form of malnutrition.

The report said 35% of Indian children suffer from stunting due to lack of nutrition, 17% suffer from wasting, 33% are underweight and 2% are overweight. According to government figures, stunting and wasting among children in the country has reduced by 3.7 per cent and the number of underweight children have reduced by 2.3 per cent from 2016 to 2018.

Among countries in South Asia, India fares the worst (54%) on prevalence of children under five who are either stunted, wasted or overweight. Afghanistan and Bangladesh follow at 49% and 46%, respectively. Sri Lanka and the Maldives are the better performing countries in the region, at 28% and 32%, respectively.

India also has the highest burden of deaths among children under five per year, with over 8 lakh deaths in 2018. It is followed by Nigeria, Pakistan and the Democratic Republic of Congo, at 8.6 lakh, 4.09 lakh and 2.96 lakh deaths per year, respectively.

The report said "an alarmingly high number of children" are suffering the consequences of poor diets and a "food system that is failing them". "Almost two in three children between six months and two years are not fed food that supports their rapidly growing bodies and brains. This puts them at risk of poor brain development, weak learning, low immunity, increased infections and in many cases, death," it said.

UN officials said in India, poverty, urbanisation as well as climate change are some of the factors that are driving poor diet. Only 61% Indian children, adolescents and mothers consume dairy products at least once a week, and only 40% of them consume fruit once a week. One in five children under age

HIGHEST BURDEN OF DEATH AMONG CHILDREN (IN 1000s) UNDER AGE 5, 2018

| | |
|------------|-----|
| India | 882 |
| Nigeria | 866 |
| Pakistan | 409 |
| DR Congo | 296 |
| Ethiopia | 191 |
| China | 146 |
| Indonesia | 121 |
| Tanzania | 107 |
| Angola | 94 |
| Bangladesh | 89 |

5 has vitamin A deficiency, which is a severe health problem in 20 states. Every second woman in the country is anaemic, as are 40.5% children. One in ten children are pre-diabetic. Indian children are being diagnosed with adult diseases such as hypertension, chronic kidney disease and diabetes.

"In recent decades, our diet has dramatically changed because of both globalisation and urbanisation. India moved away from seasonal food as well as traditional food one hand and consumption of processed food has increased on the other. Obesity is spiralling out of control, not just in the developed nations but also in developing countries," said Shariqua Yunus, Chief of Nutrition, World Food Programme.

Chief, Nutrition, UNICEF India, Arjan de Wagt said although poverty has not been eradicated entirely, India has progressed from extreme poverty, but access to nutrition is still a major challenge in the country. "Last week I visited Gujarat. At one of the schools I was visiting in a village, right next to this small school was a kiosk selling chips and sodas. I asked where fruit was sold, and they told me that at least 5-6 km away. So this is obviously a problem where unhealthy cheap processed food is so easily available. Many governments are now considering taxing products like sodas. On the other hand, I have never seen the mobilisation of such large numbers for any programme such as that being done for Poshan Abhiyan (National Nutrition Mission) launched by the government, or such financial commitment being made to such a programme. What the government needs to do is to ensure it is sustained," de Wagt said.

INPUTS BY MEHR GILL

SIMPLY PUT QUESTION & ANSWER

Hunger index: Why India trails

In Global Hunger Index report, India has the highest percentage of children who suffer from acute undernutrition. On other parameters, where India has improved, the pace has been relatively slow

UDIT MISRA NEW DELHI, OCTOBER 16

THE LATEST Global Hunger Index (GHI) has ranked India a lowly 102 among the 117 countries it has mapped. In 2018, India was pegged at 103 but last year 119 countries were mapped. So while the rank is one better this year, in reality, India is not better off in comparison to the other countries. The GHI slots countries on a scale ranging from "low" hunger to "moderate", "serious", "alarming", and "extremely alarming". India is one of the 47 countries that have "serious" levels of hunger.

On the whole, the 2019 GHI report has found that the number of hungry people has risen from 785 million in 2015 to 822 million. It further states that "multiple countries have higher hunger levels now than in 2010, and approximately 45 countries are set to fail to achieve 'low' levels of hunger by 2030".

What is the Global Hunger Index?

The GHI has been brought out almost every year by Welthungerhilfe (lately in partnerships with Concern Worldwide) since 2000; this year's report is the 14th one. A low score gets a country a higher ranking and implies a better performance.

The reason for mapping hunger is to ensure that the world achieves "Zero Hunger by 2030" — one of the Sustainable Development Goals laid out by the United Nations. It is for this reason that GHI scores are not calculated for certain high-income countries.

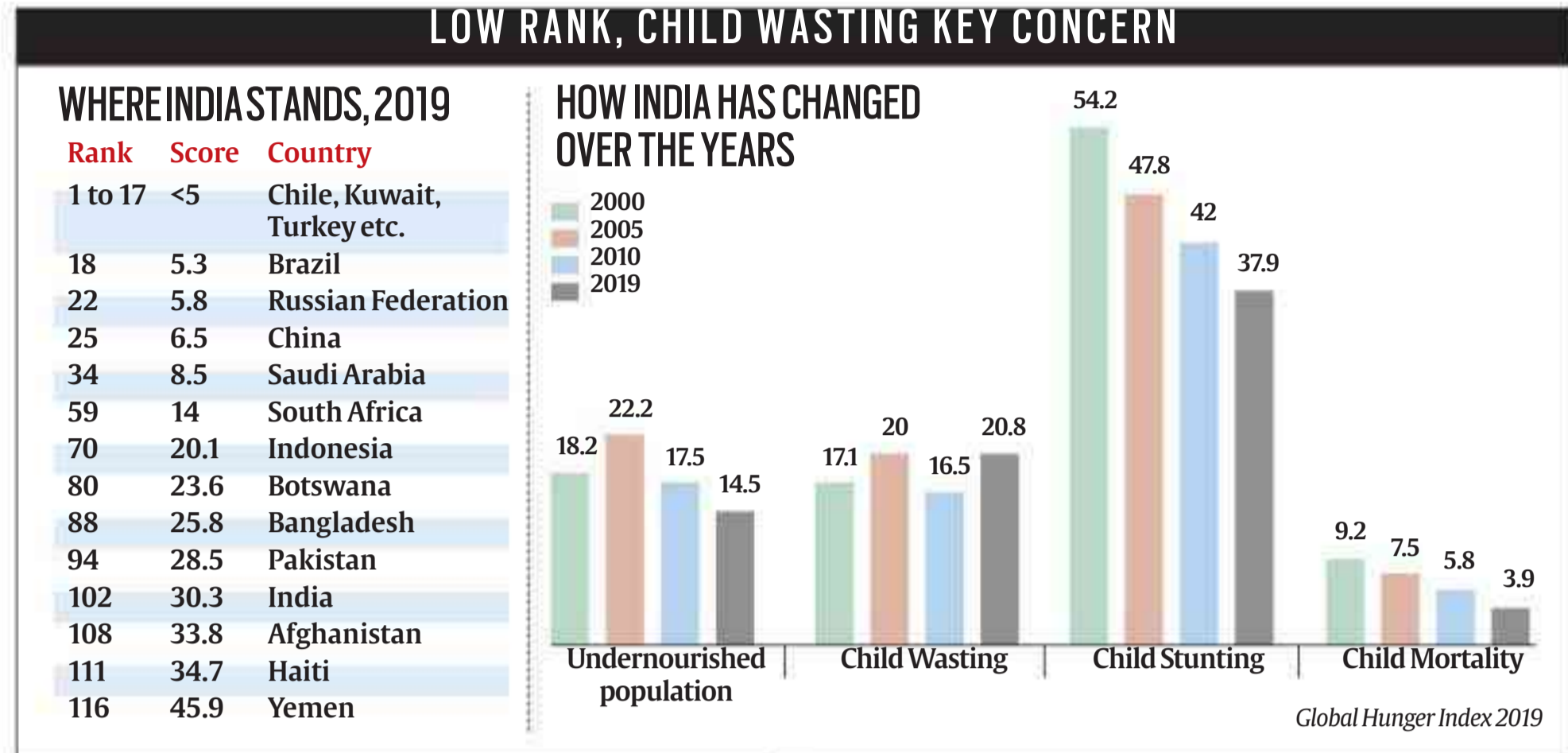
While in common parlance hunger is understood in terms of food deprivation, in a formal sense it is calculated by mapping the level of calorie intake.

But the GHI does not limit itself to this narrow definition of hunger. Instead, it tracks the performance of different countries on four key parameters because, taken together, these parameters capture multiple dimensions — such a deficiency of micronutrients — of hunger, thus providing a far more comprehensive measure of hunger.

How does GHI measure hunger?

For each country in the list, the GHI looks at four indicators:

Undernourishment (which reflects inadequate food availability): calculated by the share of the population that is undernourished (that is, whose caloric intake is insufficient);



Child Wasting (which reflects acute undernutrition): calculated by the share of children under the age of five who are wasted (that is, those who have low weight for their height);

Child Stunting (which reflects chronic undernutrition): calculated by the share of children under the age of five who are stunted (that is, those who have low height for their age);

Child Mortality (which reflects both inadequate nutrition and unhealthy environment): calculated by the mortality rate of children under the age of five (in part, a reflection of the fatal mix of inadequate nutrition.

Each country's data are standardised on a 100-point scale and a final score is calculated after giving 33.33% weight each to components 1 and 4, and giving 16.66% weight each to components 2 and 3.

Countries scoring less than or equal to 9.9 are slotted in the "low" category of hunger, while those scoring between 20 and 34.9 are in the "serious" category and those scoring above 50 are in the "extremely alarming" category.

What is India's score relative to those of the others?

Among the BRICS grouping, India is ranked the worst, with China at 25 and a score of just 6.5. Within South Asia, too, India is behind every other country. Sri Lanka, Nepal, Bangladesh and Pakistan (in that or-

der) are all ahead of India.

Some of the other countries ahead of India are Saudi Arabia (rank 34), Venezuela (rank 65, even as its score has doubled from just over 8 to over 16, because of the socio-economic and political crisis), Lesotho (rank 79), Burkina Faso (rank 88), and North Korea (rank 92).

In stark contrast to India, which has the world's largest democracy and one of the biggest economies, most of the countries below India on the GHI — Afghanistan, Haiti or Yemen etc — are either poorly governed or war-torn or ravaged by natural calamities.

Why is India ranked so low on GHI?

With an overall score of 30.3, India finds itself sandwiched between Niger (score 30.2, rank 101) and Sierra Leone (score 30.4, rank 103). In 2000, India's score was 38.8 and its hunger level was in the "alarming" category. Since then, India has steadily improved on most counts to reduce its score and is now slotted in the "serious" category.

But the pace of India's improvement has been relatively slow. Nothing illustrates this better than the trajectory of Niger and Sierra Leone, which in 2000 had scores of 52.1 and 53.6, respectively, and found themselves in the "extremely alarming" category of hunger — and were much worse off than India.

So, even though India has improved its score, many others have done more and that explains why despite achieving relatively fast

economic growth since 2000, India has not been able to make commensurate strides in reducing hunger.

What are the reasons for which India's improvements have been slow?

For one, notwithstanding the broader improvements, there is one category — Child Wasting, that is, children with low weight for their age — where India has worsened. In other words, the percentage of children under the age of 5 years suffering from wasting has gone up from 16.5 in 2010 to 20.8 now. Wasting is indicative of acute undernutrition and India is the worst among all countries on this parameter.

"India's child wasting rate is extremely high at 20.8 percent — the highest wasting rate of any country in this report for which data or estimates were available. Its child stunting rate, 37.9 percent, is also categorized as very high in terms of its public health significance... In India, just 9.6 percent of all children between 6 and 23 months of age are fed a minimum acceptable diet," states the report.

"In 2014 the prime minister instituted the 'Clean India' campaign to end open defecation and ensure that all households had latrines. Even with new latrine construction, however, population's health and consequently children's growth and development as their ability to absorb nutrients is compromised," it said.

What is keeping the Pixel 4 out of India?

SHRUTI DHAPOLA NEW DELHI, OCTOBER 16

IMAGINE BEING able to control your smartphone without touching it. Or dismissing a notification or snoozing an alarm with just a wave of your hand. The idea, then called 'Air Gestures', was first propagated by Samsung with the Galaxy S4 and more recently with the Galaxy Note 10 series.

Now, Google Pixel 4 will use a radar-based Soli chip to introduce Motion Sense, a feature that provides similar touchless, gesture-based controls. Soli also enables a Face Unlock feature on the Pixel 4. But the Soli chipset is also the reason why the Pixel 4 phones are not making their way to India. A look at the reasons:

What Project Soli is about

Project Soli, driven by Google's Advanced Technology and Projects (ATAP) team, was first showcased in 2015. The idea is that a radar chip can be used to detect hand movements and gestures to interpret what they could mean. It's only recently that Google figured out how to reduce the size of this radar chip and fit it on



A Google Pixel 4 is displayed at a launch event in New York on Tuesday. AP

the front of the smartphone, still ensuring accuracy. That's why it is coming to Pixel 4.

Soli is a dedicated radar chip on the front of the Pixel to collect and interpret raw data from hand gestures. Google says the miniature radar understands human motions at various scales, from the tap of finger to the movements of the body. It is always sensing for movement while maintaining a low foot-

print — keep in mind Soli is not a camera and doesn't capture images.

Soli relies on a custom-built machine learning (ML) model. Google says these models run on the device and data is never sent to their servers. The radar chip emits electromagnetic waves in a broad beam and when a human hand interacts with this, some of these waves are reflected back to the antenna. The ML model quickly interprets properties of the reflected signal to carry out the required command.

This Motion Sense technology allows Pixel 4 users to wave their hands to snooze an alarm or skip songs or go back to the last song without touching the screen. Users will have the option of turning Motion Sense on or off.

Why not India

Motion Sense will only work in countries where this radar tech has been approved for consumer use. The list includes "US, Canada, Singapore, Australia, Taiwan, and most European countries". India has not yet given the go-ahead for this technology.

A Google spokesperson said the company has a wide range of products they make

available in regions around the world. "We determine availability based on a variety of factors, including local trends, and product features. We decided not to make Pixel 4 available in India. We remain committed to our current Pixel phones and look forward to bringing future Pixel devices to India."

The Soli radar chip works on the 60 GHz spectrum frequency as has the least interference for the kind of minute movements Google wants to track. However, the 60 GHz spectrum is not commercially usable in India.

In a consultation paper titled 'Proliferation of Broadband through Public Wi-Fi Networks', the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India wrote that "most countries have already delicensed the 60 GHz band and this band has a good device ecosystem. The 60 GHz band is also known as V-band or WiGig band (Wi-Fi at 60 GHz) using IEEE 802.11ad protocol." The TRAI also recommended that the "...V-band (57-64 GHz) may be explored for allocation to the telecom service providers." But that is yet to happen.

Without this available, it would not have made sense for Google to bring the pricey Pixel 4 to India.

How a waqf is created, and the laws that govern such properties

APURVA VISHWANATH NEW DELHI, OCTOBER 16

AS THE arguments in the Ayodhya-Ram Janmabhoomi case concluded on Wednesday, the Supreme Court-appointed mediation panel submitted a fresh report offering a "consensual settlement" between parties. In any settlement, the role of the Sunni Waqf Board, a key party to the case, would be significant as the administration of a waqf property is legally determined.

What is a waqf?

Waqf is the property given in the name of God for religious and charitable purposes. In legal terms, permanent dedication by a person professing Islam, of any movable or immovable property for any purpose recognised by the Muslim law as pious, religious or charitable. A waqf can be formed through a deed or instrument, or a property can be

deemed waqf if it has been used for religious or charitable purposes for a long period of time. The proceeds are typically used to finance educational institutions, graveyards, mosques and shelter homes.

A person creating the waqf cannot take back the property and the waqf would be a continuing entity. A non-Muslim can also create a waqf but the individual must profess Islam and the objective of creating the waqf has to be Islamic.

How is a waqf governed?

Waqfs in India are governed by the Waqf Act, 1995. A survey commissioner under the Act lists all properties declared as waqf by making local investigation, summoning witnesses and requisitioning public documents. The waqf is managed by a mutawali, who acts as a supervisor. It is similar to a trust established under the Indian Trusts Act, 1882, but trusts can be set up for a broader purpose than religious and chari-



Zafaryab Jilani, advocate for the UP Sunni Waqf Board, at the Supreme Court on Wednesday. Tashi Tobgyal

table uses. A trust established can also be dissolved by the board unlike a waqf.

What is a Waqf Board?

A Waqf Board is a juristic person with power to acquire and hold property and to transfer any such property. The board can

sue and be sued in a court as it is recognised as a legal entity or juristic person.

Each state has a Waqf Board headed by a chairperson, one or two nominees from the state government, Muslim legislators and parliamentarians, Muslim members of the state Bar Council, recognised scholars of

Islamic theology and mutawalis of the waqfs with an annual income of Rs 1 lakh and above.

The Waqf Board has powers under the law to administer the property and take measures for the recovery of lost properties of any waqf, to sanction any transfer of immovable property of a waqf by way of sale, gift, mortgage, exchange or lease. However, the sanction shall not be given unless at least two thirds of the members of the Waqf Board vote in favour of such transaction.

What is the connection between the disputed Ayodhya site and the UP Sunni Waqf Board?

According to the Waqf Act, the Uttar Pradesh Sunni Waqf Board has the power to administer the disputed site. In 1945, in a suit before a Faizabad judge between the Sunni and Shia Waqf Boards, it was held that the Babri Masjid is a Sunni Waqf. The Sunni Central Waqf Board of Uttar Pradesh became a defendant in 1989.

Can a Waqf Board give up its claim to any disputed site?

Since waqf cannot be alienated unilaterally, any unilateral claims by the chairperson of the waqf will have no legal value or bind the Muslim community. Alienating waqf property without prior approval of state waqf boards is an offence and special tribunals established under the Waqf Act have jurisdiction to deal with such disputes.

In the Ayodhya case, seven claimants, including six individual litigants and the Sunni Waqf Board, have filed suits as representatives of the Muslim community. With the arguments concluded and the judgment reserved, it would be too late for the Sunni Waqf Board to withdraw the suits. Even if the Sunni Waqf Board were to withdraw the suit, it would need the vote of two-thirds of the Board which would include members of the Muslim community. The other plaintiffs are still entitled to fight the suit on behalf of their community.